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India a terrorist state, committing worst atrocities against Kashmiris: PM Kakar

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said that India was a terrorist state, which had been committing the worst atrocities and brutalities against the innocent people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir for decades.

The world was, however, silently watching the Indian state terrorism against the Kashmiris, he regretted while addressing the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day.

The prime minister said for last many years, India was presenting a false narrative and trying to weaken the indigenous movement of the Kashmiris for freedom by wrongly labeling them as

terrorists.

There was a clear difference between terrorism and the people's struggle for independence, he added.

PM Kakar said that the Indian leadership was also claiming that Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir were part of their country.



"On this day, I make it clear that that India should not have any such illusions. We believe in peace and are showing maximum patience and tolerance, but any misadventure in this regard will be forcefully responded." He reaffirmed that Pakistan did not want any con-

flikt in the region, however, it was fully capable of strongly retaliating any attack on its soil.

India, he said, had for many times tested Pakistan's capacity, and if still had any desire in that regard then "we are fully ready to show our might".

He said if India was a true democracy then it should give the people of Kashmir their just right to self-determination, besides restoring all the basic human rights in the IIOJK. PM Kakar said India was also stop the gross violations of human rights in the region along with releasing all the political prisoners. It should also abrogate all the strict emergency laws, besides removing its heavy military presence from the villages and towns of Kashmir.



RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) talking with soldiers during his visit to the front lines along Line of Control (LOC) in Sarian Sector.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi launched Media Helpline app at Press Information Department.

10 policemen martyred in terrorist attack on DI Khan police station

Six policemen were also injured when terrorists targeted the police station in Tehsil Daraban

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): At least 10 policemen were martyred and six others got injured as a group of unidentified militants attacked Chaudhwan police station here in Daraban tehsil in the wee hours on Monday.

According to the police spokesman, the terrorists employing heavy weapons attacked the Chaudhwan police station at around 03:00 a.m.

The police retaliated and an exchange of gunfire continued for around two and a half hours. However, the attackers managed to escape the scene.

In the attack, 10 policemen were martyred and nine others got injured. The martyrs included

Muhammad Aslam, Ghulam Farid, Muhammad Javed, Muhammad Idrees, Muhammad Imran, Safdar, ASI Kausar, Ehtram Syed, Rafi Ullah and Hameed ul Haq while the injured policemen included Ahmad Hasan, Akbar Zaman, Inayat Ullah, Shehrab Khan, Ibrahim and Naqeeb Khan. The injured were immediately shifted to District Headquarters hospital Dera Ismail Khan.

RPO Nasir Mehmood Satti and DPO Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani along with a heavy contingent of police and security forces reached the site and launched a search operation to arrest the perpetrators.

Later, the funeral prayers of the martyred

Solangi says: Media helpline launched for quick redressal of journalist's complaints

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Monday that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MOIB) has launched a media helpline to redress complaints of both local and foreign journalists during elections.

Addressing the launching ceremony of the media helpline, he said, in the present era of digital media it was imperative to upgrade and improve working.

The media-compliant application will be accessible through any browser, Murtaza Solangi remarked.

He said the application was launched for the convenience of local and international journalists and

Any aggression to be responded with full military might: COAS

Pakistan Army well versed with full threat spectrum and perpetually ready to respond effectively; Gen Asim Munir lauds operational readiness of troops

RAWALPINDI (APP): Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir has reaffirmed that any aggression or violation of the territorial sovereignty of Pakistan will be responded with full national resolve and military might.

He was addressing the troops deployed on the front lines along the Line of Control in the Sarian sector near Muzaffarabad today.

The Army Chief said the Pakistan Army is well versed in the full threat spectrum and is perpetually ready to respond effectively. He mentioned that Indian state-sponsored terrorism in Pakistan has now extended to the heinous targeting of individual Pakistani citizens on our soil. Such a callous disregard for international law and norms of the international system is becoming a routine occurrence, and India is now be-

ing openly called out by many countries worldwide, exposing its sham credentials.

General Syed Asim Munir said Pakistan would continue to expose all such attempts and ensure the security of its citizens.

During the occasion, the Army Chief was briefed about the latest situation along the Line of Control. He appreciated the operational readiness, high morale, and effective response of troops to Indian ceasefire violations.

Earlier, upon arrival at the Jammu and Kashmir Monument in Muzaffarabad, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, Prime Minister Azad Kashmir, and the Army Chief laid floral wreaths at the Martyrs' Monument and paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of Shuhada.

They acknowledged that the fortitude, resilience, and unwavering faith of Kashmiris in the face of unabated brutality of Indian occupation forces in IIOJK are exemplary. They said the brewing humanitarian and security crises in the IIOJK seriously threaten regional peace and stability. Pakistan would always stand with Kashmiris in their just struggle for the inalienable right to self-determination in light of UN Security Council resolutions.

They noted that India is attempting to change the demography of IIOJK through illegal administrative and unilateral imposed draconian laws and security clampdowns. Such machinations cannot suppress the will of the Kashmiri people to attain their legitimate objectives.

Nawaz asks Murree constituents to vote wisely for a new dawn

MURREE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif and party chief organiser Maryam Nawaz on Monday pledged to redevelop the country after coming to power.



During the power show in Murree just days before the general elections, Nawaz reiterated that the cost of essentials was much less when he was the prime minister than the present prices. He said he rid the people of the menace of loadshedding.

During his last stint in power, Nawaz claimed that the economy was flourishing and businesses were thriving.

He urged the people to vote responsibly as "vote can change the destiny of their generations." He asked the constituents to stamp on the "tiger" (electoral symbol of PML-N) on Feb 8 and become part of development and progress.

He criticised the judges who disqualified him. He said the country was devastated after his removal from office and today they (a reference to judges) were tendering resignations.

Visit Muzaffarabad Monument PM, COAS pay tribute to sacrifices of martyrs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Ch. Anwar ul Haq and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Monday visited the Muzaffarabad Jammu and Kashmir Monument to lay wreaths and pay rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of the martyrs.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the leadership acknowledged that the fortitude, resilience and unwavering faith of the Kashmiris in the face of unabated brutality of Indian occupation forces in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) had been exemplary.

They observed that brewing humanitarian and security crises in the IIOJK seriously threaten regional peace and stability.

Nawaz Sharif pressuring administration, elections must be fair: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has addressed various issues ahead of the upcoming general elections and accused former prime minister Nawaz Sharif of pressuring the administration to influence the decision.

In an interview with VOA Urdu, he emphasized his party's focus on contesting the polls independently, warned against any interference in the electoral process. He expressed confidence that the administration will resist such pressure.

Bilawal reiterated that



KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing the election rally.

CJP, other judges to remain at principal seat of Islamabad in backdrop of election

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa and some other judges will remain at Islamabad principal seat in the perspective of general election taking place on February 08.

They will hear different cases. Three benches will hear cases on principal seat of Islamabad during the week which has commenced from Monday.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by

PM summons important meeting of cabinet today

ISLAMABAD (Online): Care taker Prime Minister (PM) Anwaar ul Haq Kakar has summoned important meeting of federal cabinet today (Tuesday).

According to sources overall economic situation of the country and security situation will come under consideration. The overall performance of care taker government will be reviewed in the meeting.

Rich tributes will be paid to the federal ministers for their outstanding performance. A host of matters including privatization of first women bank will come under discussion in the meeting.

Kashmir Solidarity Day: Protests, calls for freedom echo across Pakistan, AJK

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: On Kashmir Solidarity Day, being observed on February 5, the passion for Kashmiri self-determination burned bright across Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Large-scale demonstrations, symbolic gestures, and passionate speeches marked the day, highlighting the ongoing struggle and demanding international intervention.

In Muzaffarabad, the capital of Azad Kashmir, a grand ceremony unfolded at Azadi Chowk. Participants waved flags, chanted slogans, and formed a chain of human hands connect-

Original CNIC mandatory for casting vote: ECP

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday advised people to bring their Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) to cast a vote on Election Day.

The ECP in a message said no person would be allowed to cast his vote at the polling station without having original CNIC.

No other document including a copy of CNIC, passport and driving license would be acceptable for casting a vote.

The commission further said anyone having an expired CNIC can cast his/her vote.

Mushaal says: World's peace not possible without peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Husseini Mullick, has urged the global community to break their silence and take proactive measures to prevent the ongoing genocide committed by the Modi-led Indian government in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). She was addressing a poster exhibition organized by National College of Arts (NCA) on Kashmir Solidarity Day.

SAPM was accompanied by a focal person of SAPM, Sabien Husseini Mullick. The exhibition organized by NCA served as a powerful platform to raise awareness about the Kashmir issue.



RAWALPINDI: A convoy of army patrols at Rawal road in the city ahead of the upcoming general elections.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Economic rhetoric

On Thursday, voters will elect a new government tasked with managing one of the country's worst-ever economic crises: growth shrank, inflation soared to record highs, the rupee weakened rapidly, and foreign reserves dwindled in the last two years. However, the 'economic programmes' articulated by the three major contenders for power — the PML-N, PTI and PPP — in their respective election manifestos show that none has an actionable short- to long-term strategy to tackle the daunting economic challenges.

More crucially, no party talks of how they intend to accomplish the immediate task of approaching the IMF for another larger and longer funding programme — critical to economic revival — once the current \$3bn facility expires in mid-April, to avoid the prospect of default. Rather than giving the party's roadmap for achieving macroeconomic and other targets in their manifestos, and outlining economic objectives, priorities and policy intentions, each party has made frivolous promises instead. For example, the PML-N, whose leadership likes to harp on the party's 'development narrative' and building a network of motorways and roads, has pledged to create 10m jobs, enhance wages to match inflation and cut electricity bills by 20-30pc. How? They don't explain.

Likewise, the PPP has promised to double salaries, and provide free electricity up to 300 units and subsidies to alleviate the impact of inflation on voters, as well as generate employment opportunities for young labour market entrants.

Though the PTI has avoided populist commitments, its economic plan, like those of the PML-N and PPP, is also heavy on rhetoric, hardly giving concrete strategies to achieve the macroeconomic goals its manifesto defines. Elections are the best time for political parties to send their message to the voters and rally support around their socioeconomic priorities. However, in Pakistan, parties usually avoid providing quantitative, evidence-based policy targets with a detailed overview of how and when they intend to implement their economic promises. A PIDE study of past election manifestos of the major parties shows that these documents did not contain concrete plans and largely comprised empty promises, with no homework done vis-à-vis future goals. While the PML-N is seeking votes for its promise of delivering 'speedy development', PTI is staking its claims on the basis of its 'economic performance' during the Covid pandemic, and PPP on its social welfare agenda. That means these parties do not have any ready economic policy blueprints to work on if voted into power.

Both the PML-N and PTI may have given some abstract macroeconomic, export and other targets and priorities in their new manifestos, but do not offer any specifics or practical strategies to achieve these goals if elected to power. Little wonder these parties are unable to consistently pursue their economic policies even through a single budget cycle.

Anti-colonial ally?

Huma Yusuf

Many will recognise the name of the great Russian poet, Alexander Pushkin. Fewer people will know that he is partially of African origin, and that his heritage is routinely touted by Moscow as proof that it is not a European-style imperial power. We may not know this detail, but it is widely appreciated across the Global South, particularly in Africa, where Russia is increasingly valued as an ally helping to balance the excesses of the Global North.

The sense in the Global South that Russia is an anti-colonial ally (despite its imperial past, and its colonising aims in Ukraine) is apparent in the recent documentary Inside Wagner: The Rise of Russia's Notorious Mercenaries. The film shows how the narrative that Russia is anti-West, and so pro-Global South is becoming entrenched, driven further by Russian propaganda, including the production of slick action films glorifying Wagner and the co-optation of African social media influencers. Russian mercenaries' violent tactics and human rights abuses are reframed as sacrifices in the name of stability, particularly in places like Central African Republic, and swept aside in favour of finally standing up to European (and by extension Western) colonial powers.

Why is this relevant to Pakistan? In some ways, we are an outlier. Russia features less in our public discourse, particularly after former prime minister Imran Khan's awkwardly timed visit to Moscow on the eve of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Khan's populism was plugged into these emergent global narratives, and he briefly flirted with pro-Putin positioning as an extension of his anti-US

stance. However, that flirtation was quickly replaced by military pragmatism and pro-Ukrainian messaging, particularly in the run-up to the IMF deal.

Islamabad of late has tried to better balance its ties with Moscow, with celebrations of 75 years of diplomatic engagement last October, and promises to boost trade ties and security cooperation.

But the potential for a serious bilateral relationship is complicated, particularly with the Middle East developments. Pakistan has never been a foreign policy priority for Russia, with most engagement from Moscow being perfunctory. Russia's growing proximity with Iran is another twist: Tehran is allegedly supplying Moscow drones for the Ukraine conflict; Moscow has responded with a pivot towards Palestine in the context of the Israel-Palestine war. This pivot is largely driven by domestic political considerations. As Fiona Hill points out in an interview with Brookings, Moscow is worried that Gaza's fate will stir memories of violent Russian interventions in Chechnya, and pro-Palestinian positioning is considered a way to appease Russia's Muslim population. Still, this also facilitates Moscow's affinity with Tehran. While Russia's pro-Palestine positioning will win it more fans across the Global South, its pro-Tehran, anti-US stance will leave it in murky political waters given the post-conflict scenario shaping up in the Middle East. Given plans for a two-state solution to be tabled in exchange for Saudi recognition of Israel — and all the security guarantees that would entail — the current Muslim unity over Palestine's plight

could fragment along the lines of US/ Saudi vs Russia/ Iran.

Where will Pakistan find itself? While Islamabad's diplomatic balancing act will continue, pro-Russian sentiment is unlikely to become a major feature of public discourse. Indeed, in Moscow's calculations, ours is a geopolitically space already dominated by Russia-friendly Beijing, and so not worth the effort to shape through overtures and propaganda. But that does not mean that Pak-is-tan is completely disengaged from broader Global South narratives.

Pro-Russian narratives in the Global South are in fact anti-colonial and pro-justice. And anti-colonial sentiment will express itself in various ways in an increasingly stressed and resource-scarce world — as demands for climate justice, labour rights, inclusive technology, equitable service delivery and more. Indeed, as authoritarianism creeps, civil resistance will soar. And as I wrote recently, Pakistan is not immune to these trends.

Even during a carefully engineered election cycle, our powers that be have been distracted by civil movements, which they have sought to address through both soft and hard approaches. What subsidies are being deployed to calm tensions in Gilgit-Baltistan, while a security crackdown is intensified in Balochistan. The game of whack-a-mole to manage protest (whether in the form of social and political movements or violent uprisings) will continue in the post-poll settlement as well, and may intensify in response to the political orchestration of this week. As such, Pakistan is firmly in step with the Global South. -- Courtesy Dawn

Living longer

ArifAzad

Education is a strong determinant of higher remunerations in the course of a lifetime and generally, higher education levels result in increased incomes. For instance, a university graduate is likely to earn more than a college graduate. These higher earnings levels create better health outcomes in terms of longer lifespans, healthy lifestyles and enough funds to spend on health maintenance and improvement activities. However, the link between the years of schooling, adult mortality and longevity has been under-researched. This under-examined connection has been somewhat established recently, and estimates for years of schooling and gains in lifespan were produced in a recent global meta-analysis and systematic review. The Centre for Global Health Inequities-Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (Chai-IHEME) issued a global meta-analysis and systematic review that estimates the magnitude of education on mortality risks and lifespans. The study covers 70 locations in 59 countries in 10 languages, including the UK, US, Brazil and China. The findings of the study are far-reaching in terms of policy implications and resources. It goes beyond previous studies on the subject as it is not restricted by time, location and language.

While previous studies on educational inequalities focused on high-income countries, this study includes varied economic contexts and regions and produces estimates of adult mortality in the age group 18 to 70 years. The importance of this analysis lies in its identification of under-examined benefits of education by systematically identifying and quantifying the impact of number of years of education on adult mortality risk at a global level. Broadly, the review shows that the number of years spent in education have a relationship with longevity and mortality. In this way, education exercises not only protective effects on adult mortality but also serves a longevity-boosting function.

According to the study, every two years spent at school or university reduces the risk of mortality by two percent. For 18 years of education, the mortality risk declines by a whopping 34pc, while completing secondary education cuts the risk by an impressive 25pc. Therefore, you can add more years to your life with a longer stay at school. Conversely, those missing out on school years or dropping out of school find themselves deprived of health benefits. The report claims that adults not receiving any education face higher risks of ill-health throughout their lives — the effects are comparable to consuming five or more alcoholic drinks daily or smoking 10 cigarettes per day for a decade. It also demonstrates that mortality risk is moderated by health behaviour. Higher education, in turn, shapes access to better healthcare and wholesome lifestyles. Pakistan has one of the highest number of out-of-school children in the world; the dropout rate is elevated as are school absences. These factors have a direct impact on the number of years spent in education and the cumulative effect on mortality risk and healthy lifespans. In Pakistan, education has, so far, been narrowly con-

ceived. Its impact on mortality risk reduction has not been considered in public health strategies. Therefore, pouring more and dedicated money into education and making concerted efforts to keep children in school and beyond can result in better health outcomes for population health, which, in turn, saves governmental and individual expenditure on health, especially in poor households. Policymakers and politicians should see both education and health as intimately connected and focus on improving educational outcomes and retaining as large a number of youngsters as possible from school to university — the best investment in health and education.

A strategy that combines education and health will see not only prosperity but also improved health for the nation in the long term. Our younger generations are affected more by education inequalities that plague our education system. Therefore, enhanced schooling policies and increased resources towards education can act as proactive investment in health, which reduces disparities in learning and well-being. Education is an essential component of the Sustainable Development Goals, which target inclusive and quality education for everyone, gender equality and reduction of inequalities within and between countries. Pakistan has been lagging behind on SDG targets. Dedicating sustained and stipulated funds to education with an 'education-health' lens as the bedrock of investment and policies can turn the tide on low educational attainment and associated low health outcomes. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

AGPR conducts study on loans to employees on direction of President

ISLAMABAD (APP): Auditor General identifies violations of rules in granting of loans to govt employees, recommends to improve existing mechanism on the direction of the President. In response to the concerns raised by President Dr Arif Alvi over the violations of merit and criteria for granting loans to government employees, the Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) has identified weaknesses and violations of rules in the existing system of granting long term Advances (House Building and Conveyance

advances) to Federal Government employees by conducting a special study that suggests recommendations for improving the system. President Dr Arif Alvi, in a letter to AGP, had urged the need to evaluate the current system of granting loans to government employees to ensure transparency, merit and fair play. He had raised concerns over the non-observance of criteria as two separate lists, called the "regular list" and the "out of turn list/priority", were being maintained for granting loans. He observed

that there seemed to be no criteria as to when, why and how an employee was to be moved from "regular list" to "out of turn" (priority) list. This issue had come to light during hearing of representations, filed by different government officers/organizations, wherein incidents of preferential treatment and violations of merit were reported as loans were extended to some of the government employees in violation of General Financial Rules (GFR) and the approved criteria of 07-12-2015. In his letter to the

AGP, the President had also observed that the Principal Accounting Officers (PAOs) of various ministries send lists of employees to AGPR based on their discretion. These out-of-turn loans to employees on the basis of priority were causing grievances and litigation. In response to President's letter, AGP conducted a special study on the long-term advances to Federal Government employees that found violations and discrepancies due to non-observance of the existing rules and procedures.



Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani speaking at the roundtable discussion on "Shared Prosperity, Economic Resilience, and Investments" at the Third EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum in Brussels.

CM distributes allotment letters among landless farmers of Cholistan

LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi distributed allotment letters for 12.5 acres of land to 26,000 landless farmers in Bahawalpur. The allocation of land to Cholistan farmers is poised to uplift the impoverished community and pave the way for prosperity. Under this transformative initiative, each farmer has been granted a lease for 12.5 acres of land for a period of five years. This momentous decision addresses the long-standing grievance of the

underprivileged farmers spanning three districts in south Punjab, namely Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalnagar, and Bahawalpur, according to a handout issued here Monday. The occasion holds immense importance for the Bahawalpur division, commemorating a historic day for the Cholistanis. Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed heartfelt congratulations to the landless farmers of Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, and Bahawalnager for securing their rightful allotment.

PTA committed to ensuring safe online environment for country's youth: Chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Chairman, Major General Hafeez ur Rehman, has said that the PTA is committed to ensuring a safe online environment, particularly for the country's youth and children. In a message on the occasion of "Safer Internet Day", to be celebrated on February 6, he said, "PTA

recognizes the critical role that the internet plays in our lives. We are steadfast in our commitment to ensuring a safe online environment, particularly for our youth and children."The chairman asserted that it is the collective responsibility of all to create a secure and protective digital space, allowing Pakistani users to continue their online activities in a safer environment. He further

mentioned that PTA has collaborated with Meta, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), TikTok, and other organizations to pursue the cause of promoting a safer online environment in Pakistan. "Our efforts for the cause have been recognized, and PTA received the SAMENA Council international LEAD award under the category of "Enabling Child & Youth Safety Online," the



ISLAMABAD: Women wearing traditional Kashmiri dresses as looks warm shawls on a stall at Lok Virsa Museum in the Federal Capital.

Pak mobile industry thriving despite dire economic indicators

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan battles its prevailing dire economic indicators, it seems that the country's mobile industry has managed to thrive despite rampant inflation and the declining purchasing power of the people. The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority's (PTA) annual report has revealed that local mobile phone manufacturers produced a whopping 84.4 million devices in the last five years.

As per the report, 25 million of these were smartphone devices that were manufactured between January 2019 and September 2023. Furthermore, the regulatory authority said that 33 local and foreign companies locally established manufacturing plants under the Mobile Device Manufacturing (MDM) Regulations introduced in 2021 — with these companies, operating both as standalone entities and through joint ventures, obtained a 10-year MDM

authorisation. The country also has initiated the export of locally manufactured handsets, with 120,000 SEEGO brand mobiles labelled as "Manufactured in Pakistan" exported to the African market in December 2022. The Device Identification Registration and Blocking System (DIRBS), introduced by the PTA, has provided a level playing field for foreign investments in the mobile device manufacturing industry in Pakistan.

Pakistan's exports to China up by 46pc in 7 months

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan's export of goods and services to China witnessed an increase of 46 percent during the seven months (July to January).

According to sources, the overall exports to China were recorded at US \$1.7214 billion during July-January (2022-23). On the other hand, the imports from China into the country during July-January were recorded at US \$7.71 billion against US \$7.66 billion last year, sources added. On January, Pakistan's export of goods and services to China witnessed an increase of 39.44 per cent during the first five months.

Tokyo shares open higher after US rallies

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo stocks opened higher Monday, driven up by the strength of US tech shares that pushed Wall Street indices to new records. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index climbed 0.69 percent, or 248.99 points, to 36,407.01, while the broader Topix index added 0.61 percent, or 15.61 points, to 2,555.29. The dollar stood at 148.40 yen, compared with 148.30 yen on Friday in New York.

Pakistanis drank tea worth over \$336m in six months!

LAHORE: Tea imports into the country witnessed an increase of 5.53% during the first half of the current fiscal year compared to last year's corresponding period, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) data showed. The tea imports into the country increased up to \$336.423 million during July-December (2023-24) compared to the imports of \$318.798 million in July-December (2022-23),

according to PBS data. In terms of quantity, the imports surged by 9.12% as the country imported 139,751 metric tonnes of tea during the period under review compared to the imports of 128,068 metric tonnes. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the tea imports during December 2023 decreased by 16.80% to \$58.869 million from last December's \$70.759 million.

PM Kakar says: Entire nation stands with Kashmiris to support their right to self-determination

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said the entire Pakistani nation stood shoulder to shoulder with its Kashmiri brothers and sisters to support their struggle for the right to self-determination.

not hidden from anyone and the silence of the international community on Indian atrocities on innocent Kashmiris was alarming and reprehensible.



MUZAFFARABAD: Students hold placards to show solidarity with the people of Kashmir, during protest rally to mark the Kashmir Solidarity Day.

KP Governor says: India breaks all records of atrocities, human rights violations in IIOJK

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali, here Monday said that India has broken all records of oppression and brutalities after illegally invaded the Occupied Kashmir and demanded international community take notice of it.

of thousands of Kashmiris were martyred, children orphaned and women were sexually abused at IIOJK.

Gas leakage leaves 2 dead in Havelian

ABBOTTABAD (INP): Two more people on Monday lost their lives in a gas leakage incident in Haavalian village, during the current season death tolls caused by the gas leakage crossed 12.

According to the Rescue 1122 sources, dead persons were identified as Yasar and Mehtab, hailed from the village Tatrila an area of Rajoi Police Station.



LAHORE: Governor of Punjab Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman addressing during ceremony in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day at Al-Hamra Hall, in Provincial Capital.

Pakistan always keeps Kashmir issue alive at global forums: Governor

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said on Monday that Pakistan has always played its role in keeping the issue of Kashmir alive at all forums of the world including the United Nations Organization (UNO) and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

Department of Information and Culture here at Al-Hamra Arts Council where Secretary Information Danyal Saleem Gilani, Director General Public Relations Punjab, Rubina Afzal, Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Mushtaq Mehmood and a large number of people from different walks of life were present.

observing Kashmir Solidarity Day against India's invasion and illegal occupation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Children-plants WHO's 'Own a Tree' initiative fosters strong bond of attachment

PESHAWAR (APP): The unique idea of involving school children in the promotion of green cover by launching an 'Own a Tree' plantation programme has shown an encouraging response of fostering a strong bond of attachment between minors and the plants planted with their nameplates.

Kashmir Solidarity Exhibition starts in Bahawalpur

BAHAWALPUR (APP): A three-day Kashmir Solidarity Exhibition has started at the art gallery of Bahawalpur Arts Council here.

Two more children succumb to pneumonia in Punjab

LAHORE (INP): Pneumonia claimed two more lives of children during the past 24 hours in Punjab.

CM Punjab inaugurates upgraded BVH, safe city project in Bahawalpur

Independent Report BAHAWALPUR: Caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab Mohsin Naqvi arrived in Bahawalpur on Sunday for the inauguration of the OPD, Surgical Ward Upgradation Project at Victoria Hospital.

to the patients, doctors, and paramedical staff. Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi said, "This is your hospital, take care of this lovely building."



MUZAFFARABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar being presented guard of honor upon his arrival at AJK Legislative Assembly.

Two more children succumb to pneumonia in Punjab

LAHORE (INP): Pneumonia claimed two more lives of children during the past 24 hours in Punjab.

Health experts attribute the rapid increase in cases and deaths in Punjab to the environmental pollution caused by smog during the winter season.

International News

127 more Palestinians killed as fighting rages in Gaza

GAZA (INP): Battles raged in Gaza's south Sunday ahead of another visit to the region by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in a bid to secure a new truce as the Israel-Hamas war approaches its fifth month.

dergarten where families were sheltering was hit in the southern border city of Rafah, which is teeming with Palestinians displaced by the war.

compound contained models of Israeli military bases, armoured vehicles, as well as entry points to kibbutzim, the army said in a statement.

Blinken set off Sunday on what is his fifth Mideast trip since the October 7 attack by Hamas that set off the crisis.

"There is no safe place in the Gaza Strip, from north to south," displaced man Mohammed Kloub told foreign media in Rafah, which according to UN figures now hosts more than half of Gaza's population.

During the raid, the army "neutralised" several militants, it said.

He is expected to begin his trip on Monday in Saudi Arabia before visits to Israel, Egypt and Qatar.

Israel has warned its ground forces could advance on Rafah as part of its campaign to eliminate Hamas. Israel's army said its forces had raided a Hamas training facility in Khan Yunis where militants prepared for the October 7 attack.

The Palestinian Red Crescent Society said that at the nearby Al-Amal hospital there were "alarming signs (of) a humanitarian disaster... after 14 days of continuous siege".

The health ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza said at least 127 people were killed in Israeli strikes in the previous 24 hours in the territory.

The Hamas government media office said a kindergarten where families were sheltering was hit in the southern border city of Rafah, which is teeming with Palestinians displaced by the war.

The strikes are the latest blows in a conflict that has spread into the Middle East since Oct. 7, when the Iran-backed Palestinian militant group Hamas stormed Israel from the Gaza Strip, igniting war.



Palestinian children wait to receive food cooked by a charity kitchen amid shortages of food supplies, as the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas continues, in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip.

2 killed in Bangladesh as fighting rages on Myanmar border: police

DHAKA: At least two people were killed in Bangladesh on Monday after mortar shells fired from Myanmar during clashes there landed in a village across the border, police said.

Parts of Myanmar near the 270-kilometre border with Bangladesh have seen frequent clashes since November when rebel Arakan Army fighters ended a ceasefire that had largely held since a 2021 coup.

Philippines ready to use 'forces' to quell any secession attempt-official MANILA (Internews): The Philippine government is ready to use "authority and forces" against attempts to divide the nation, a security official said Sunday, after former President Rodrigo Duterte threatened to separate some southern islands from the rest of the archipelago.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is welcomed upon arriving at King Khalid International Airport, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

US intends further strikes on Iran-backed groups

WASHINGTON (INP): The United States intends to launch further strikes at Iran-backed groups in the Middle East, the White House national security adviser said on Sunday, after hitting Tehran-aligned factions in Iraq, Syria and Yemen over the last two days.

Turkey completes new homes in area hit by devastating earthquake

ANKARA (Internews): Turkey on Saturday handed over keys to newly-completed homes to some of those left homeless after last year's devastating earthquake, one year after the country's deadliest disaster in its modern history.

Russian cosmonaut sets record for most time in space

MOSCOW: Russian cosmonaut Oleg Kononenko on Sunday set a world record for total time spent in space, surpassing his compatriot Gennady Padalka who logged more than 878 days in orbit, Russia's space corporation said.

Australia PM says government 'examining' claims against UN Palestinian agency

SYDNEY: Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said on Sunday his government was probing claims that some staff of the U.N. Palestinian refugee agency (UNRWA) were involved in the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks on Israel, after Australia paused funding to the aid agency last month.

'Unprecedented catastrophe' in Chile as wildfires kill 51

VIA MAR: Chileans on Sunday feared a rise in the death toll from wildfires blazing across the South American country that have already killed at least 51 people, leaving bodies in the street and homes gutted.

Monitoring Desk

MALE: The small but strategically placed Maldives will strengthen its military to defend its vast maritime territory, the new president vowed on Monday after ordering Indian troops to withdraw from the archipelago.

Participation of youth vital to strengthen democracy, political system: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said youth should be engaged in the political system and their energies should be utilized for strengthening democracy in the country.

Speaking during a podcast, he said political parties should be democratic minded to fortify democracy in the country.

Political parties in government should improve their performance to gain political space in the country, he added.

The prime minister said leadership of the political parties should be elected in a democratic manner in order to take democracy forward.

He said the idea of democracy was facing many challenges in Pakistan due

to different reasons and weaknesses in the structure of the civil institutions.

He said the Afghan refugees lived in Pakistan for decades, and used the health and education services and the infrastructure of Pakistan and their businessmen earned billions of dollars through the Afghan transit trade.

The prime minister asserted that Pakistan wanted a friendly government in Afghanistan as was the desire of other countries in the region.

He was of the view that the government of Taliban was formed in Afghanistan after the world squandered its opportunities despite spending \$ 2 trillion.

He said the Taliban forcefully took over the government as the United

States and NATO abandoned Afghanistan.

To a question, he said during his tenure, he interacted with the students from the educational institutions of Balochistan, Azad Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan, and shared his views with them and listened to their perspectives.

He said in Balochistan, armed insurgents were masquerading as civil society and speaking the language of human rights for achieving a certain goal.

Those elements never belonged to a mainstream political party but were part of the proscribed organizations in the province, he added.

PM Kakar said some groups in Balochistan wanted to carve out a new country on the basis of iden-

tity and through armed struggle, and they had declared a war on the state of Pakistan.

The stance of those elements was against morality, and the Constitution and laws of Pakistan, he remarked.

The prime minister said most of the people left the country for better jobs and due to economic reasons, however, millions of youth saw their future in Pakistan.

Those people who send remittances from abroad were assets of Pakistan and they were contributing to its economic growth, he remarked.

He opined that there were many people who wanted to return to Pakistan after living their lives in Europe and North America.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi leading Kashmir Solidarity Day Walk from Foreign Office Gate, Constitution Avenue to D-Chowk in front of Parliament House organized by Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan.



RIYADH: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJSC), General Sahir Shamsah Mirza unveiled the Fatah-II Multiple Launch Rocket System (MRLS), at World Defense Show (WDS) 2024 in Riyadh.

Solangi says

Kashmiris created new history of courage, steadfastness against Indian oppression

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi Monday said that every generation of Kashmir has created a new story of courage, bravery and steadfastness by resisting illegal Indian occupation of their homeland.

Delivering his speech at Kashmir Solidarity Day rally here he said the people of Kashmir had been raising their voice against slavery since 1931 during the Dogra rule.

Paying tributes to the

sacrifices of the Kashmiri people, he said their fourth generation was waging struggle against Indian oppression and the time was not far when they will get rid of illegal Indian occupation. He said that at the time of partition of the subcontinent, India illegally annexed the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

He said, "United Nations through its several resolutions had promised to hold a free plebiscite so that they can decide whether they would join Pakistan or India."

People of IIOJK

were constantly raising their voice for their right to self-determination.

The minister strongly condemning Kashmiris genocide at the hands of Indian occupation forces, said, "India cannot be allowed to turn Kashmir into a graveyard."

He reiterated, "Pakistan always stood with the Kashmiri people for their right to self-determination and it would continue its moral, diplomatic and political support for their just cause till realization of their dream of freedom from Indian clutches."

Minister lauds Pakistan Rangers' performance, professionalism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior, Dr Gohar Ijaz on Monday visited the Pakistan Rangers (Punjab) headquarters and appreciated the professionalism and performance of the Rangers.

Director General Pakistan Rangers Punjab Major General Atif bin Akram welcomed the interior minister, who placed the flowers on the martyrs' memorial and recited Fatiha, said



JEDDAH: The OIC Secretary General, H.E. Houssein Ibrahim Taha graced the Kashmir Solidarity Day event as a 'Chief Guest', organized by the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to OIC at the OIC Secretariat.

Bilawal vows to change Karachi's fortune in five years if PPP elected

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Monday stated that if the people of Karachi elected PPP candidates from at least 20 National Assembly seats, the city's landscape will change within five years.

The Pakistan's financial capital 22 and 47 national and provincial assembly seats, respectively.

As part of his electoral campaign, Bilawal addressed the public in various areas of Karachi today, delivering speeches in the form of rallies.

Speaking at a gathering in Keamari's PT Ground, he expressed his vision for the city,



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaah Hussain Mullick addressing at a poster exhibition organized by National College of Arts (NCA) in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day.

Streets of Barcelona, Paris echo with 'Free Kashmir' & 'Free Palestine' slogans

ISLAMABAD (APP): The streets of Barcelona, in a powerful display of unity, echoed with 'Free Kashmir' and 'Free Palestine' slogans as the Kashmiri diaspora and their allies gathered for the annual 'Kashmir Solidarity Day' march.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the event, organized by leaders such as Fahim Kayani of Tehreek-e-Kashmir UK, drew attention to the intertwined struggles of Kashmiris and Palestinians for self-determination.

Fahim Kayani, addressing the crowd, stressed the common goal of liberation from illegal occupations. He highlighted the historical ties between the occupied territories, where India and Israel, as occupiers and allies, have faced united resistance.

British MP Yasmin

a news release issued here.

The interior minister offered a special prayer for the martyrs of Kashmir in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day besides the Rangers Martyrs. He was briefed on the professional affairs of Pakistan Rangers Punjab.

Major General Atif bin Akram said that Pakistan Rangers Punjab will leave no stone unturned in the performance of professional duties.



He reiterated, "Pakistan always stood with the Kashmiri people for their right to self-determination and it would continue its moral, diplomatic and political support for their just cause till realization of their dream of freedom from Indian clutches."

emphasising the potential changes that could occur if the people choose PPP representatives.

"If the people of Karachi elect my representatives, then like local government, the provincial government will also be in our hands, and with your votes, even the federal government will be in our hands," Bilawal declared during his speech.

"Give 20 [NA] seats to PPP, and then within five years, we will change Karachi. We will form our government at the federal level and work on historic projects in Karachi. This city will be given representation as it deserves."



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PPP slams threats hurled by PML-N's Ataulah Tarar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Slamming PML-N candidate from a Lahore constituency Ataulah Tarar for hurling threats at her party's voters, PPP Senator Palwasha Khan on Monday asked the PML-N to make its stance clear on its leader's aggressive language.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, she appealed to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to take notice of the PML-N leader's language.

She said the reason why Tarar had resorted to such tactics was because he knew fully well that he would taste defeat in the elections.

She claimed that the PML-N had the habit of purchasing votes.

"Do you think that you can browbeat the PPP by hurling threats?" Palwasha asked the PML-N candidate.

It appeared, she went on to say, as if Tarar had watched an Indian movie. "The language he is using is not expected from a civilized man," she added.

The PPP senator said that Tarar should be mindful of the fact that the people hold the PML-N accountable in the elections.

26 outlaws arrested; drugs and weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police apprehended 26 outlaws including twelve professional beggars from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours and recovered drugs and weapons from their possession, a public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

Following these directions, the Karachi Company police team arrested an accused namedly Sagar and recovered 50 liquor bottles from his possession. The Golra police team arrested an accused namedly Nasir Ali and recovered one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from his possession.

Likewise, the Sangiani Police team arrested two accused namedly Wali Muhammad and Muhammad Irfan and recovered 875 gram heroin from their possession.

OIC reiterates call for peaceful settlement of Kashmir issue as per UNSC resolutions

JEDDAH (APP): The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Monday reiterated its call for a just and peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

OIC Secretary-General Houssein Ibrahim Taha said this while addressing at a photo exhibition held in the OIC premises to highlight gross human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Taha also expressed the OIC's pleasure in hosting the event organized by the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the OIC on the occasion of "Kashmir Solidarity Day".

He reiterated the call for the full implementation of the relevant UN resolutions, which emphasized the right to self-determination for the people of Kashmir.

The secretary-general recalled that during the 49th session of the Council of

Foreign Ministers held in March last year in Nouakchott, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Council urged India to reverse all illegal and unilateral measures taken on or after 5th August 2019; stop the gross, systematic and widespread human rights abuses in the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir; and allow unrestricted access to UN Special Procedures, international media and independent observers to visit the occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Houssein Taha also recalled the visit undertaken by his Special Representative for Jammu and Kashmir, Ambassador Yousef AlDobey to the Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

He also reiterated the message that the OIC remained fully committed to working with all relevant stakeholders to find a peaceful and just solution that respects the rights and aspirations of the deserving people of Kashmir.

ICCPO holds high level meeting on elections 2024 security

Also inaugurates Officers Mess and Stable in Security division



ISLAMABAD: According to the details, the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCCPO) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan chaired a high level meeting on general election 2024 security, a public relations officer said.

He said that the meeting was attended by all divisional CPOs, SSPs, DPOs, SPs, SDPOs, SHOs, admin officers, and Muharars.

The officers were briefed on security issues before, during and after the general elections 2024. A central control room for elections will be established in Safe City Islamabad. The ICCPO will personally monitor all security matters

from the control room.

ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan said that the regulations issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan will be ensured and no violation will be allowed in any scenario. Legal action will also be taken against the display of arms, aerial firing and rioters.

He further said that adequate measures for smooth flow of traffic and parking will be implemented. Surveillance cameras will be installed at all sensitive polling stations. Journalists, foreign observers and observation teams covering the elections will be assisted in their duties in a professional manner.

Kashmir Solidarity Day commemorated in Akara

ISLAMABAD (PR): An event was organized at Pakistan Embassy Ankara to observe Kashmir Solidarity Day. Every year, February 5th is commemorated as Kashmir Solidarity Day to reaffirm support to the legitimate Kashmiri struggle for realization of their right to self-determination.



Chairperson Human Rights Investigation Commission of Turkish Parliament MP Ms. Derya Yanik, Deputy Governor Ankara, Bekir Yilmaz, President Institute of Strategic Thinking Gen. @ Guray Alpar and representatives of media, think tanks and civil society attended the event.

While reiterating Turkish support for Kashmiri legitimate cause of self-determination, Chairperson Human Rights Investigation Commission of Turkish Parliament, MP Derya Yanik stated that Turkey has always supported peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute as per the desire of the Kashmiri people and will continue to do so. While expressing concerns over worst human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), she stated it is sad that Kashmir remains as one of the oldest unresolved conflicts in the world. The international system has the ability to resolve any conflict, but unfortunately there is a lack of will and intention when it comes to Kashmir and Palestine. She reiterated that international community needs to play its due role in putting an end to human rights atrocities in IIOJK and implementation of UN resolutions to ensure peace and stability in the region.

UNHCR, PZ announce partnership ahead of PSL 9



ISLAMABAD (Online): Peshawar Zalmi will showcase the emblem of UNHCR on their jerseys, marking a visible commitment to the cause. The Chief Operating Officer, of Peshawar Zalmi, Mr. Mian Abbas and cricketer Mr. Mohammad Haris, presented the official jersey of Peshawar Zalmi to UNHCR's Representative in Pakistan, Ms. Philippa Candler, in Islamabad.

On behalf of Mr. Javed Afridi, owner of the Peshawar Zalmi, Mian Abbas said that war and conflict forced millions of people to become refugees worldwide.

As part of the partnership, Peshawar Zalmi and UNHCR will work together to highlight refugee issues during one of the most popular cricketing contests.