

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Hub

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 20, Rajab 22, 1445 AH Saturday February 03, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs the 9th meeting of the Apex Committee of the Special Investment Facilitation Council.

Pakistan to continue supporting global efforts for a peaceful, stable Afghanistan: PM Kakar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday reiterated that it was upto the Afghan people and their leadership to decide their future and Pakistan as a brotherly and neighbourly country would continue supporting all global efforts for a politically and economically stable Afghanistan.

He said that he did not regard Afghanistan or the Afghan people as any threat to Pakistan. Afghans had their own culture and land, tied with different affinities and Pakistan expected that no threat or harm should emanate from their soil.

Pakistan, he said, had very explicitly conveyed its concerns to the Taliban interim government regarding terrorist elements' presence and their involvement in terrorist acts and they had realization of it.

He was responding to different questions in a private TV (Khyber News) talk show programme 'Maraka' - Pashu acronym for dialogue.

The caretaker prime minister said that Afghans had undergone hard times in four or five decades, they had witnessed different Afghan factions fighting with each other and the invasion of foreign forces.

He said Afghanistan enjoyed a significant position in the region and as a neighbour, Pakistan wished to enhance that importance by supporting all global efforts for political and economic stability there.

To a question, he said after Swat and Zarb-e-Azb operations, the banned

TTP terrorist elements went to Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Kakar said that it was an unsuitable move by the previous set-up to hold negotiations with the TTP, adding that the Constitution of Pakistan was very clear in that regard and anyone who preferred armed insurgency, would be regarded as 'Takfiri' as Ulama had pronounced.

He reiterated that the state would not negotiate with such groups.

About Maulana Fazlur-Rehman's visit to Afghanistan, the prime minister said it was his private visit and he would not comment on it.

He further said that as a friend and brother, they could give Afghans suggestions and shared opinions, but it was up to them to take make their own decisions.

He said that he did not regard Afghanistan or the Afghan people as any threat to Pakistan. Afghans had their own culture and land, tied with different affinities and Pakistan expected that no threat or harm should emanate from their soil.

Pakistan, he said, had very explicitly conveyed its concerns to the Taliban interim government regarding terrorist elements' presence and their involvement in terrorist acts and they had realization of it.

He was responding to different questions in a private TV (Khyber News) talk show programme 'Maraka' - Pashu acronym for dialogue.

The caretaker prime minister said that Afghans had undergone hard times in four or five decades, they had witnessed different Afghan factions fighting with each other and the invasion of foreign forces.

He said Afghanistan enjoyed a significant position in the region and as a neighbour, Pakistan wished to enhance that importance by supporting all global efforts for political and economic stability there.

To a question, he said after Swat and Zarb-e-Azb operations, the banned

Apex body lauds 'Whole of Govt. Approach' to realise SIFC's envisioned dividends

PM Kakar urges incoming govt to ensure continuity of economic policies by capitalising on the positive momentum, established by SIFC, in the larger interest of the country

SLAMABAD (APP): The Apex Committee of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) on Friday showed profound satisfaction over the overall progress of the SIFC and appreciated 'Whole of Government Approach' in realising the envisioned dividends.

The 9th meeting of the SIFC Apex Committee met under the chair of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar which reviewed various initiatives being steered through the forum.

The meeting was attended by the Chief of Army Staff, federal cabinet, provincial chief ministers and high-level government officials.

The ministries presented progress on the projects and policy initiatives, and gave plans for subsequent endeavours to attract the investment.

The Apex Committee reviewed progress on various measures and appreciated the contribution made for improving macro and micro-economic conditions

of the country.

The body commended the steps taken to build a sustainable ecosystem for nurturing latent potential and attracting investments, with special emphasis on the cross sectoral policy interventions, human resource development, infrastructural uplift and strengthening of domestic dispute resolution mechanism.

The Committee reviewed and appreciated the progress on the level of economic engagements with

friendly countries and underscored the need to efficiently realise investment commitments into economic dividends.

The Apex body also accorded in-principle approval for Strategic Canals Vision 2030 and FBR Reforms. The Chief of the Army Staff assured firm resolve of the Pakistan Army to support the government's initiatives for the economic stability of the country and the socio-economic well-being of its people.

In the end, the prime minister appreciated the role of SIFC, ministries, departments and affiliated stakeholders in accomplishing the major economic milestones as part of the interim government and setting the pace for future endeavours.

He also urged the incoming government to ensure continuity of economic policies by capitalising on the positive momentum, established by SIFC, in the larger interest of the country.

Youth are with PML-N despite propaganda: Nawaz Sharif

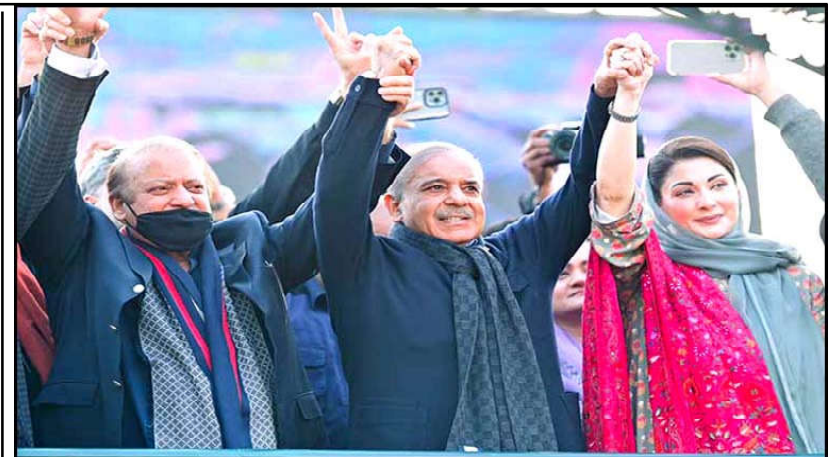
FAISALABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif said on Friday the youth were with his party despite vicious propaganda, and they would play a key role in reemergence of the party as the leading political force of Pakistan.

He was addressing a public gathering at historic Iqbal Park (Dhobi Ghat ground), where he asked the participants to raise their hands who were born on or after 1980. As a large number of the participants raised their hands, he said that clearly negated the propaganda that the youth were with some other political parties, he added.

He said he was impressed by the enthusiasm of the participants in the public meeting. He said, "I have reliable friends and colleagues in Faisalabad since 1980." He particularly named Chaudhry Sher Ali, Abid Sher Ali, Talal Chaudhry, Mian Farooq and Rana Sanaullah and said

they were still steadfast and refused to succumb to any pressure to change their allegiance. He said that his tenure was marked with maximum facilitation to masses. All commodities were cheap and available to everyone during his tenure as the prime minister. He said gold was available at Rs. 50,000 per tola and parents did not face any problem in the marriage of their daughters. "At that time when we were fighting against the twin menace of terrorism and load-shedding, others were observing sit-in to achieve their ulterior motives," he recalled.

Nawaz Sharif said people remembered those days when the PML-N government was sent packing. "If our rule would have continued, we would have been able to fight out poverty and unemployment," he added. He said, "We are committed to weeding out unemployment while the previous rulers befooled masses by raising hollow slogans of providing 10 million jobs."



FAISALABAD: Quaid Pakistan Muslim League (N) Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, President Shahbaz Sharif and Vice President/Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz waving hands towards public during a gathering (Jalsa) at Dhobi Ghat ground

Train service to resume from Quetta today after four days suspension

Independent Report
QUETTA: The train service is going to be resumed from Quetta railway station today (Saturday).

According to the authorities of Pakistan Railways, the train service would be resumed for Peshawar (Jaffar Express) and Karachi (Bolan Mail) from Quetta today.

The operation of Jaffar Express and Bolan Mail remained suspended for four days due to the situation in Mach area.

However, the Pakistan Railways decided to resume the train service after four days' suspension.

The Jaffar Express is scheduled to leave Quetta station for Peshawar at 09:00 AM while Bolan Mail would depart for Karachi at 10:00 AM.

24 terrorists killed in Mach operation, four soldiers martyred

RAWALPINDI (Online): On night 29/30 January 2024, terrorists attacked Mach and Kolpur Complexes in Balochistan. Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) deployed on security offered stiff resistance and forced the attackers to repulse. These terrorists were then hunted down in the ensuring sanitisation and clearance operations which have now been concluded after clearing and securing the area.

During the fire fights and sanitisation/clearance operations, in last three days, twenty four terrorists

have been sent to hell. Terrorist Shehzad Baloch, Attaullah, Salah Uddin, Abdul Wadood and Zeeshan are key terrorists among the dead. Identification process of remaining terrorists is in process.

However, during intense exchange of fire, four brave members of Law Enforcement Agencies, having fought gallantly, embraced Shahadat along with two innocent civilians.

Effective response by Law Enforcement Agencies is a testament of their unrelenting resolve in fight against terrorism.

JUI-F to continue struggle for protection of Islamic values in society: Fazal

PESHAWAR (INP): Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has stated that his

"If voted to power, we will make Pakistan a welfare state where rights of every citizen will be protected."



party will continue to work to make Pakistan an Islamic state after winning the Feb 8 general elections.

Addressing a party election rally in Tank on Friday, Fazl expressed his determination to continue struggle for the protection of Islamic values in society.

Fazl emphasised the right of political parties to present their ideologies to the nation, stating that each political entity possessed its own ideology.

He asserted that the JUI-F had an enduring commitment to politics of tolerance and perseverance.

Pakistan, EU agree to solidify relations under strategic engagement plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the European Union on Friday agreed to further deepen their relations in line with the Strategic Engagement Plan (2019).



The agreement was reached in a meeting between Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell Fontelles.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 3rd Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum in Brussels, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs posted on X.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed global and regional issues, emphasizing the vitality of diplomacy in resolving disputes.

They also highlighted the need to develop partnerships to tackle global challenges.

Caretaker CM announces financial compensation for citizens martyred in Sibi blast

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has announced to pay financial compensation to the bereaved families of those who martyred in the bomb blast occurred in Sibi recently.

According to an official notification issued here by the Chief Minister secretary on Friday, the caretaker Chief Minister has issued orders for payment of the compensation to the

heirs of martyrs.

In this regard, Deputy Commissioner Sibi has been directed to complete the necessary formalities for payment of the compensation to the heirs.

According to the notification, financial compensation would also be given to the injured of the blast.

It may be mentioned here that four citizens were martyred and six others were injured in the blast occurred at Iqbal Chowk Sibi.

Efforts afoot to ensure fair, peaceful elections on February 8: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Interior Minister Dr Gohar Ejaz Friday reiterated his government's commitment for fulfilling duty of conducting free, fair and transparent elections, saying the caretaker setup would remain fully impartial in the entire electoral process.

"Equal opportunities are being provided to all

political parties, there will be no discrimination against anyone," he said while talking to a Private news channel. "All available resources will be provided to all provincial governments for holding transparent and peaceful elections", he added. The Minister urged the public to vote for their future and to maintain the democratic process in the country.

Justice Shahid Jamil resigns as LHC judge

LAHORE (Online): Justice Shahid Jamil Khan of Lahore High Court (LHC) has decided to resign. Justice Shahid Jamil Khan has sent his resignation to president Arif Alvi. Justice Shahid Jamil was appointed as judge in LHC in 2014. He was to retire in 2028. His number in senior list was 11.

NADRA's Dy Assistant Director abducted in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (INP): Unknown abductees kidnapped National Database and Registration Authority's (NADRA) Deputy Assistant Director, Najeebullah in federal capital. A spokesman of Islamabad Police said on Friday that Najeebullah has gone missing since last night when he left home and did not return. According to a private news channel, a case of abduction of NADRA's officer was registered at Ramna police station.

Diplomats briefed on IIOJK situation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ahead of the Kashmir Solidarity Day, Additional Foreign Secretary (Asia & Pacific) Ambassador Imran Ahmed Siddiqui Friday briefed the Islamabad-based diplomats on the developments in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). He underscored the legal, security and human rights dimensions of the situation in IIOJK.

Bilawal vows to block conspiracy to put Nawaz back in PM Office

From Our Correspondent
SHIKARPUR: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto averred on Friday that the public was



aware that only his party could address the prevailing challenges in the country.

Addressing a party election rally in Khanpur tehsil, Bilawal emphasised that the PPP would not let Mian Nawaz Sharif to become prime minister for the fourth time, referring to it as a "conspiracy".

The PPP chief promised to generate employment opportunities for the youth and affirmed that the PPP would collaborate with the people to find solutions to their problems.

Educational institutions to remain closed from February 6 to 9

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Education Department, Government of Balochistan has announced vacations in all the educational institutions of the summer zone of the province from February 6-9, 2024.

According to an official notification issued here on

Saturday, the vacations have been announced due to engagement of the education department staff and teachers in elections.

It may be mentioned here that the educational institutions in winter zone of the province are already closed on account of the long winter vacations.



QUETTA: Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai expressing his views during current affair program of PTV

Faces of those demanding bodies of terrorists involved in Mach terrorism incidents exposed: Jan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has stated that the faces of those demanding dead bodies of terrorists killed in Mach terrorism incidents have been exposed.

These are the companions of those terrorists who were sitting on protest dharna in Islamabad and were trying to prove the persons involved in the terrorism as missing ones.

In an official statement issued here on Saturday, the

caretaker Provincial Minister said that the missing persons whose pictures carried by the protesters in Islamabad included three missing persons were actually the terrorists and killed in the operation of security forces. He also said that our security forces foiled the conspiracy hatched by India.

The so-called missing persons had come for terrorism and their nefarious agenda was to harm the innocent citizens, Jan Achakzai asserted adding that the designs of Mah

Rang and her "terrorist associates" have been exposed to the nation.

The caretaker Minister said that these people are the facilitators of terrorists under the garb of human rights.

He said that certain people, different segments even in the courts, these people were recognized as innocent, but their faces have been exposed to everyone now.

He insisted that the facilitators of terrorists should tender apology to the nation.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Date confirmed

The sense of uncertainty that had taken hold between the nights of Wednesday and Thursday stands broken. We have a green signal: elections will go ahead as scheduled on Feb 8.

The prospects of polls being held all over the country on the same day had been thrown in doubt once again after reports that the ECP had requisitioned a high-level moot yesterday over the worsening law and order situation in KP and Balochistan. The announcement had led some to speculate that an election delay in the two provinces might be on the cards.

A senior ECP official had told this publication that the Commission was deeply perturbed over the recent surge in terrorism-related violence and discussed the option of delaying polls in high-risk areas. Another said, "Anything was possible." Meanwhile, a statement issued on behalf of the army had been more reassuring, promising that the armed forces were ready to protect the "quintessential democratic exercise".

All is certainly not well in the country, not with candidates being gunned down or targeted in gun and bomb attacks on their offices, convoys and rallies.

There is a clear and present danger from the myriad terrorist and militant outfits operating in the country, who have made plain their intentions to use this sensitive transitional period as an opportunity to sow more chaos in the country.

There is considerable social unrest, not just due to the extreme political polarisation seen in this election cycle but also because of more entrenched issues, such as the discontent of the people of GB and the enforced disappearance crisis plaguing Balochistan.

It is within this challenging environment that law enforcement and security forces have to operate as they strive to protect a nationwide activity that has the participation of millions of citizens. Commendably, they are rising to the occasion and have reaffirmed their preparedness for the task at hand.

It has been stated before, but bears repeating that our security forces and law-enforcement agencies must now dedicate their energies solely to their core job of protecting the people. Taking a confrontational position against those they are responsible for protecting is not just a violation of their oath of service, it also creates unnecessary risks that may imperil the law-and-order situation. All they should focus on is the safety and security of the public. Law enforcers must remember that they are there to fix problems, not become a part of them. As they make their security plans, policymakers should account for the fact that inimical forces seeking to destabilise the country will try to take advantage of its internal divisions. To counter their designs, LEAs and security forces must affirm that they are there for everyone, regardless of their political affiliations or beliefs.

Why suffering?

Syed Fahim

A stillbirth. A toddler diagnosed with Down syndrome. A teenage case of leukaemia. A rare blood disorder in the 30s. Cancer with a single-digit survival rate in the 40s. Death at wholesale rate in a territory — as if collective suffering somehow makes it easier to bear the burden than individual loss. We are surrounded and baffled by suffering. And what follows then is the biggest question of them all: why me? And why this hardship?

But the question that has confounded theologians and philosophers since the inception of humanity is even more fundamental: why does suffering even exist in a world designed by a kind and benevolent God?

Christianity sees suffering as a consequence of the 'disobedience' of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Islam and Judaism proclaim suffering to be a test of faith from God. Buddhism declares dukkha, a result of material attachment, while Hinduism's karma implies one's current suffering as an aftermath of their actions in previous lives.

Some philosophers argue that suffering is a necessary part of human existence, fostering empathy, personal growth, or moral development. Others opine that suffering is a necessary consequence of free will or that it plays a role in the greater good.

In Man's Search for Meaning, psychiatrist Viktor Frankl provides a thoughtful analogy. He asks whether an ape being punctured repeatedly to develop a vaccine would ever be able to grasp the meaning of its suffering. The obvi-

ous answer is it would not; with its limited intelligence, it could not enter the world of man — which is the only world in which the meaning of its suffering would be understandable. He then follows up with a rhetorical question about humans. Can we really understand the reason and the meaning of our suffering while being part of this material world? "Is it not conceivable that there is still another dimension; a world in which the suffering of an ultimate meaning of human suffering would find an answer?" he asks.

Interesting, one thinks, but a grand argument does not ease the pain or dilute my misery. And then comes the backup argument — you are not alone! The list of beings afflicted by grief is led by our prophets. And then there are all and sundry, everyone with a story of their own. The variety and the ubiquity still do not relieve one's agony, but maybe they make it more digestible on the accord of it being somewhat democratic. Here is how I try to wrap my head around it.

Everyone must get through it (Quran 2:155, 2:214, 29:2). This is just by design, the way this universe is programmed. If we think someone is spared and they have it all good in every sense, it is more our ignorance than the absence of suffering.

Nobody will have it more than one could bear (Quran 2:286). While everyone is unique and our sufferings appear unbearable, in the grand factory of this world, we are not much different than pieces of metal coming out of a foundry stamped with their unique tensile and yield strengths.

The Designer knows our limits, and those limits are respected when we are put under these harsh tests.

Every situation is a test. This world around us is a test. Sometimes, the test is of gratitude, and other times the test is of fortitude (Quran 27:40). We feel the burn of the hard situations, but we do not feel the blush of the good times.

If we think we do not deserve such a burdensome test, that is, perhaps, quite true. The Quran says that "if Allah were to impose blame on the people for what they have earned, He would not leave upon earth any creature" (35:45). We are most likely getting much less than we truly deserve.

Our grace in how we deal with it will get us the accolades we need for the later parts of your story (Quran 2:156-157, 2:177). The sufferings of our prophets all had a good ending. But that exactly is the caveat. They graced their sufferings with perseverance, resilience, and patience, which in turn was rewarded by the Lord. Now, does this answer all the questions for me? Maybe not. But perhaps these are not the questions we ought to answer. The question for us is to identify what our test is as we breathe the current breath. Is it the security of our four walls and the roof we shelter under, or the guaranteed next meal?

Or is our test the choking of our airways, the one that we did not foresee, and that we feel we did not deserve? The short answer is: all of the above. And our attitude in dealing with them will determine if we are truly worthy of these tests. -- Courtesy Dawn

Grim Islamabad

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

Sixty years after it was created, Islamabad is still said to be 10 kilometres from Pakistan proper, an oasis of greenery, prosperity and technocracy insulated from the grime, poverty and chaos of the rest of the country. The city's administrative and propertied elite alike indulgently call it Islamabad the beautiful.

It certainly is — or perhaps it is more accurate to now say, was — a pretty city. For the past few weeks, the Margalla Hills within which the metropole nests have been barely visible, a low-hanging and thick cloud of smog generating debate amongst the chattering classes whether the capital is now beating Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar in the AQI stakes.

Once known for its trees and quiet, Islamabad is increasingly the site of incessant road and real estate-related construction. The city has expanded at exponential rates, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) making billions from land auctions whilst dispossessing historical villages. Gated housing schemes are all you see for miles in suburban geographies, and purchasing a motor vehicle is the only way to get from one end of the metropolis to the other.

Since the turn of the millennium, Islamabad's population has tripled from approximately 800,000 to 2.5 million. The majority of those who have migrated into the capital are young and working class. There are low-caste workers from villages in central Punjab and the Seraiki Wasaib, Pakhtuns who have fled their homes due to the 'war on terror', and any number of Baloch, Sindhi, Gilgit-Baltistani and other young people who have

come to study or find jobs.

There is no public transport for them, while health and education are hostage to the dictates of profit. Potable water is drying up. Those who aspire to white-collar lives survive in rented accommodation, while the wretched of the earth can only find shelter in katchi abadis. This working-class majority is not responsible for destroying the ecosystem — that credit goes to property developers, big contractors and the civil-military oligarchy — but it bears the primary costs of environmental despoliation.

Long before this winter's smog made clear that Islamabad is headed on a similar trajectory to the rest of metropolitan Pakistan, Islamabad's working people routinely dealt with violent dispossession from homes and livelihoods. The irony is that katchi abadi dwellers, young students and youth as well as daily wage workers and street vendors face the big stick of the CDA and Islamabad administration in the name of 'legality'.

Forget the land grabbing and other violations of the law by real estate moguls, propertied classes and khaki-led bureaucratic overlords running the city. There is no democratic institution that exists in the capital, with the sole local government poll in 2016 making almost no dent on the city's bureaucratic temples. There are three National Assembly seats in the capital and most bourgeois parties put up high-profile candidates with little connection to the city's working masses — and that is if one doesn't even account for the farcical nature of the coming (s)election.

Islamabad has certainly grown a reputation for hosting protestors

from across Pakistan, but the recent treatment of Baloch women who led a long march into the city clarifies how genuinely democratic voices are treated in what is supposed to be the symbol of the federation.

For all of its narcissism and lack of concern for working people, Islamabad's — and Rawalpindi's — parasitic ruling class and those who live on its coattails won't be able to fully insulate itself from the downward spiral over which it is presiding. The disaffection felt by Baloch, Gilgit-Baltistani, Pakhtun, Sindhi, and so many young politically conscious people both in their home regions and as migrants in the capital is intensifying. The dastardly killing of a political youth leader in Bajaur shows how little changes in the peripheries. In the capital itself, katchi abadi dwellers and rehri-wallahs are still being ghettoised.

Islamabad's environs are wasting away at the altar of profit and power with no care for the needs of future generations. The tyranny of a socioeconomic order in rural peripheries that forces working people to migrate and massive demographic pressures mean that young people looking for livelihood and dignity will continue to stream into the capital. An ossified administrative centre proudly founded by Gens Yahya Khan and Ayub Khan will continue to benefit from the labour of this mass while grimly refusing to shed its dictatorial essence. Progressive political mobilisation will be the countervailing force and our only hope that Islamabad — and the rest of metropolitan Pakistan — does not become a total graveyard for the working people that make it tick. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Alvi urges equal opportunities for businesswomen to improve economy



ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Federal Minister for Privatisation, Fawad Hasan Fawad administers the signing of Financial Services Agreement for Roosevelt Hotel transaction.

ISLAMABAD (INP): Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan, urged that businesswomen should be provided equal opportunities to grow in the business field that would pave the way for better development of the economy and bring prosperity to the country.

He said that enhanced participation of women in business and other fields is so important to reduce poverty and ensure sustainable development of the country. He stressed that the government should create better opportunities for the economic empowerment of women and focus

on providing them with a safe and conducive workplace environment.

He urged the Chambers of Commerce to support businesswomen in getting cheap loans from banks. He said that 20 to 40 percent of employees in SBP and private commercial banks are women, so chambers of commerce should also encourage their member companies to provide jobs to more women and special persons in their business institutions.

He said that over 20 million children are out of school in Pakistan, and more than 50,000 schools are needed for their enrollment. However, as an alter-

native, mosques can be used to educate out-of-school children. Similarly, mosques can also be used as primary health centers.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries said that to ensure the development and prosperity of the country, it is important to empower women in every sphere of life.

ICCI is working hard to empower women and youth. He said that women are 50% of our population, but their participation in business is meager.

Pak envoy says: Kazakhstan invited to benefit from SIFC framework

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's ambassador to Kazakhstan Nauman Bashir Bhatti on Friday said Kazakhstan had been invited to benefit from the favorable investment opportunities being offered by Pakistan under the framework of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

"I must highlight that Pakistan has established a SIFC and has opened priority sectors for investments. We have invited Kazakhstan to benefit from the favorable investment opportunities of-

ferred under the SIFC framework," he said in response to a question in an interview with 'Kazinform', an international news agency. Highlighting Pakistan's strategic location, the envoy mentioned that his country also provided the shortest route for Kazakhstan's access to the Arabian Sea. "Pakistan remains keen to strengthen its connectivity with Kazakhstan in multiple ways and through multiple channels. The two sides are already working towards this end."

Cargo goods between Pak & Afghan PAJCCI for issuing special passes to truck drivers

PESHAWAR (APP): Coordinator Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi has suggested issuing special passes to truck drivers transporting cargo goods between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In a press statement issued here on Friday, Zia Sarhadi said the sugges-

tion is based on streamlining and smoothing of Pak-Afghan trade which was recently halted for ten days over condition of visas for truck drivers. Around 1000 truck drivers will be issued special passes instead of visas for carrying their goods with ease between Pakistan and Afghanistan, he added.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships namely, Navios Constellation, Eva Tokyo, Ullswater and Bi Jia Shan, carrying Containers, Chemicals, LPG and Coal, berthed at Container Terminal, Engro Terminal, Sui Southern Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Thursday.

A total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Golden Curl and Eva Tokyo are left the port on today morning and another containers ship, Navios Constellation is expected to sail on same day.

A cargo volume of 115,911 tonnes, comprising 70,354 tonnes imports cargo and 45,557 tonnes export cargo carried in 3,427 Containers (1,399 TEUs are Import.

New tech, ranking system should be introduced in cold storage sector: Zaki

Independent Report LAHORE: Regional Chairman and Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Zaki Aijaz said new technology and ranking system should be introduced in the cold storage sector. Racks and pallet systems should be used instead of manual procedures for loading and unloading. He expressed these views while addressing the annual general meeting of the All Pakistan Cold Storage Association (APCSA) at FPCCI Regional Office Lahore.

Zaki Aijaz further said that approved gases should be used instead of using hazardous health gases. cold storage should be divided into small rooms where different products can be preserved at different temperatures. Solar systems should be used. These measures can also make the cold storage sector energy efficient.

He further said that the FPCCI will play its full role in solving the cold storage association's problems. Chairman of All Pakistan Cold Storage Association, Mian Rehman Aziz Chan, said that tariffs on electricity and inflation have significantly increased. The interest is also high, and there has been no reduction.

Due to electricity, inflation, and interest rates, cold storage costs have increased by more than 30%.

PSX stays bullish, gains 609 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with a bullish trend on Friday, gaining 609.18 points, a positive change of 0.98 per cent, closing at 63,002.92 points against 62,393.74 points the previous trading day.

A total of 263,547,879 shares valuing Rs 10,730 billion were traded during the day as compared to 270,537,523 shares valuing Rs. 11,625 billion the last day. Some 336 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 217 of them recorded gains and 92 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 27 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 26,580,417 shares at Rs. 4.68 per share.



RAWALPINDI: A woman purchases handmade baskets from a roadside vendor at Rahmanabad.

Financial advisory services agreement signed Roosevelt Hotel's development

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Privatization Commission on Friday signed a financial advisory services agreement with a consortium led by Jones Lang La Salle Americas Inc (JLL) for joint venture development of Roosevelt Hotel, New York, United States, a property owned by the Pakistan International Airlines Investment Limited (PIAIL).

Caretaker Federal Minister for Privatization Fawad Hasan Fawad witnessed the signing of the agreement, a news release said. Speaking on the occasion, the minister expressed the Pakistan

Government's commitment for developing the historic and landmark site in the heart of financial capital of the world as an iconic structure with the most modern development features and standards.

He expressed his full confidence in the ability and expertise of the Financial Advisory Consortium to find the best possible partners and realize its maximum potential value. In a subsequent meeting, a detailed road map and time bound milestones were also agreed leading to identification and selection of the potential joint venture partners for the project.



LAHORE: Regional Chairman and Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Zaki Aijaz in a group photo with participants during general meeting of the All Pakistan Cold Storage Association (APCSA) at FPCCI Regional Office Lahore.

KP Governor direct varsities to share compliance over 2% admission quota for minorities

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali on Friday issued directives to all the public sector varsities for sharing compliance over two per cent quota for minorities in the province. He issued these directives during a meeting held at the Governor House with a delegation of Civil Society Organization (CSO) representatives led by Qamar Naseem, Programme Manager of Blue Veins organization. Muhammad Rizwan, Provincial Coordinator of the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) was also present on the occasion along with CSO representatives including Zartasha, Faizan, Aliza Mehfooz and Uruba.

The CSO representatives called on Governor to express their gratitude for the support extended by Haji Ghulam Ali in the enforcement of Section 144 for the imposition of a ban on the sale of e-cigarettes on youngsters below the age of 21 and within the vicinity of educational institutions. During the meeting, Qamar Naseem diverted the attention of Governor KP over the non-implementation of 2 per cent admission quota by public sector universities for the minority community. He informed the Governor that during a survey conducted by Blue Veins in the province, it was found that the majority of universities are not utilizing a two per cent quota for minorities as decided by the government.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi offering Dua after inaugurating Multan University of Science and Technology.

Naqvi inaugurates Multan university of Science & Tech

Independent Report
MULTAN: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi, formally inaugurated the Multan University of Science and Technology and inspected various sections of the university. He said, "I am very happy to see the teaching of modern sciences and research facilities at Multan University of Science and Technology". He appreciated the role of the university in promoting technology-based higher education. The university needs to increase the number of

nurse admissions as nurses are in high demand in Pakistan, Mohsin Naqvi said, adding that the government was ready to cooperate with the university in this regard. On this occasion, Provincial Education Minister Mansoor Qadir, the Inspector General of Police, the Secretary of Health, the Secretary of Construction and Communications, the Additional Chief Secretary of South Punjab and concerned officials were also present. Meanwhile, a delegation of College of Physicians and Surgeons Paki-

stan (CPSP) met with Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi in Lahore on Friday. CPSP President Prof Khalid Masood Gondal, Prof Mahmood Ayaz, Prof Amir Zaman Khan, Prof Abrar Ashraf, Prof Muhammad Tayyab and Prof Mustafa Arain were included in the delegation. The delegation of CPSP paid tribute to the services of Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi for the extraordinary reforms in the health sector of Punjab in a very short time. No elected government can compete with the

Punjab Governor says: Overseas Pakistanis playing important role in country's economy

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman was the chief guest at the book launching ceremony of "Zaban-e-Yar Man Turkey" by overseas Pakistani Dr. Tasawar Aslam Bhutta at Governor House Lahore. Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that overseas Pakistanis are the pride and ambassadors of Pakistan. He said that overseas Pakistanis are playing an important role in the country's economy by sending remittances. Governor Punjab said that the book "Zaban-e-Yar Man Turkey" written by a distinguished Australian Pakistani consultant, Dr. Aslam Bhutta has narrated historical camaraderie between Pakistan and Turkey. He said that through this travelogue, the author has described the moments of stepping on the land of Turkey where every corner, every town, and every city tells the stories of long-standing friendship between Turkey and Pakistan. He said that the book "Zaban-e-Yar Man Turkiye" reflects the deep brotherly relations, immense love, respect, and mutual cooperation between two nations.



PESHAWAR: Minister Information and Tourism Barrister Feroze Jamal Kaka Khel visiting picture exhibition in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day at Nishtar Hall.



LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Education Minister, Mansoor Qadir giving a shield to a participant after the D.M.S cores organized by Management Professional Development Department, at a local hotel, in the Provincial Capital.

Minister takes notice of outdated custom of 'Ghag'

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged District Affairs, Industries, Commerce Technical Education Dr. Aamir Abdullah Friday took notice of the complaints about the outdated custom of 'Ghag' in some tribal areas and directed the concerned authorities to take concrete steps for eradicating the heinous crime. In a dispatch issued by the office of the caretaker minister to the respective Divisional Commissioners, Regional Police Officers (RPOs), Deputy Commissioners (DCs) and District Police Officers of the merged districts and former Frontier Regions (FRs) here, it has been stated that under 'Ghag Act' it has been declared a non-bailable and cognizable offense which under Section 4 of the Act.

Election 2024: Great enthusiasm witnesses among voters in merged tribal districts

KHYBER (APP): With only six days left in general election 2024, electioneering reached to its peak in all seven merged tribal districts (erstwhile Fata) where candidates started approaching large tribes seeking their support besides busy in election rallies and door to door meetings to attract voters. From South Waziristan to Bajaur and Khyber to North Waziristan tribal districts, the candidates of different political parties and their supporters were gearing up to elect their representatives for national and KP assemblies for next five years on February 8, 2024. Tribal people started gearing up for another historic moment to poll their

votes for the first time in their history for both National Assembly and KP legislature seats taking place simultaneously at South Waziristan, North Waziristan, Kurram, Khyber, Orakzai, Mohmand and Bajaur tribal districts on February 8, 2024. "I am eagerly awaiting for the February 8 election to cast my first vote," said Asghar Afridi, a voter of tehsil Bara Khyber tribal district. Besides his area's people, he said they would go in groups to polling stations along with families and friends to fulfill the national obligations. Like Asghar, great enthusiasm is being witnessed among vot-

ers in these tribal districts. The earlier election milestone had been achieved in 2019, when 16 seats of the tribal districts in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly were contested for the first time following their merger with the province. The inaugural elections for the provincial assembly seats from the merged districts took place on July 18, 2019 - a year after the general polls of July 25, 2018. Bajaur had two NA seats in the 2018 general elections that had now been reduced to one following the delimitation of constituencies last year. Independent candidates dominated the provincial polls by securing six

seats, followed by the PTI with five in 2019 elections. The candidates of the JUI-F bagged three seats while the ANP and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) both won one each respectively. Three independent candidates joined the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) and formed a new parliamentary party in the province. Of the four reserved seats for women from the merged districts, the PTI secured two while the JUI-F and BAP both acquired one each while the lone reserved seat for minorities was also bagged by the PTI. Dr. A.H. Hilali, ex chairman political science department, university of Peshawar said that Febru-

ary 8, 2024 would be historic movement for tribal people of merged tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would exercise their right of franchise for the second time to elect their representatives for next five years. He said merged tribal districts have a different political culture than settled districts where large tribes play a key role in deciding the fate of candidates. Dr Hilali said that literacy rate in merged tribal districts were significantly improved and expected high turnout in this election compared to last election. In the 2019 polls, Anwar Zeb Khan of PTI had won PK-100 Bajaur-I and Ajmal Khan of the same party was elected from PK-101 Bajaur-II. Similarly, JI's Sirajuddin Khan from PK-102 Bajaur-III, ANP's Nisar Ahmed from PK-103 Mohmand-I, independent candidate Abbas Rehman from PK-104 Mohmand-II, and independent candidate Shafiq Afridi from PK-105 Khyber-I were also elected. Others who emerged victorious included independent candidate Bilawal Afridi from PK-106 Khyber-II, independent candidate Mohammad Shafiq from PK-107 Khyber-III, JUI-F's Muhammad Riaz from PK-108 Kurram-I, and PTI's Syed Iqbal Mian from PK-109 Kurram-I.

International News

Trudeau condemns attack on Canada mosque, says Islamophobia 'has no place' in country

Monitoring Desk
QUEBEC: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Thursday condemned an attack on a mosque in the city of Mississauga in Ontario province, which is being probed as a hate crime and which rights advocates described as being part of a rise in Islamophobia. Police said someone threw two rocks through the window of a Mississauga mosque on Sunday, on the eve of the anniversary of a mosque attack in Quebec City that killed six people in 2017. CBC News said no one was injured in the incident. "Islamophobia has no place in any of our communities," Trudeau said on X, formerly called Twitter. "The attack against a Mississauga mosque earlier this week on the National Day of Remembrance of the Quebec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia is cowardly, disturbing, and unacceptable. I condemn it in the strongest terms possible," he said. The National Council of Canadian Muslims said the attack was "part of an alarming rise in Islamophobic hate across the country." In November, authorities in Toronto said the number of antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate crimes in Canada's largest city had spiked significantly since the start of Israel's military offensive in Gaza. Rights advocates have noted a rise in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in many parts of the world since October 7 when Palestinian group Hamas attacked Israel and killed 1,200, according to Israeli tallies. Since then, Israel has militarily assaulted the Gaza Strip, killing 27,000, according to Gaza's health ministry, and flattening most of the densely populated enclave where nearly all of the 2.3 million population is displaced.

communities," Trudeau said on X, formerly called Twitter. "The attack against a Mississauga mosque earlier this week on the National Day of Remembrance of the Quebec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia is cowardly, disturbing, and unacceptable. I condemn it in the strongest terms possible," he said. The National Council of Canadian Muslims said the attack was "part of an alarming rise in Islamophobic hate across the country." In November, authorities in Toronto said the number of antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate crimes in Canada's largest city had spiked significantly since the start of Israel's military offensive in Gaza. Rights advocates have noted a rise in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in many parts of the world since October 7 when Palestinian group Hamas attacked Israel and killed 1,200, according to Israeli tallies. Since then, Israel has militarily assaulted the Gaza Strip, killing 27,000, according to Gaza's health ministry, and flattening most of the densely populated enclave where nearly all of the 2.3 million population is displaced.



Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi visits the military equipment of IRGC Navy in Bandar Abbas, Iran.

China tells Ukraine to remove its firms from 'sponsors of war' list

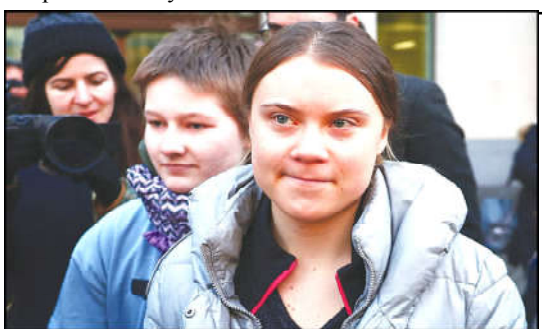
Monitoring Desk
KYIV: China demanded on Thursday that Ukraine immediately remove more than a dozen Chinese companies from a list of firms designated as "international sponsors of war", saying it wanted Kyiv to "eliminate negative impacts". The remarks came after Reuters reported that China's ambassador in Kyiv had told senior Ukrainian government officials last month that the inclusion of the companies on the list could hurt bilateral ties. "China firmly opposes the inclusion of Chinese enterprises in the relevant list and demands that Ukraine immediately correct its mistakes and eliminate negative impacts," a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson told Reuters after the report was published. It did not specify what those impacts may be.

More than 100 Myanmar migrants flee Malaysian detention centre, one dead

Monitoring Desk
KUALA LUMPUR: An undocumented migrant from Myanmar has died in a road accident while fleeing an immigration detention centre with over a hundred others in Malaysia late Thursday, officials said. The incident was the second reported breakout from a Malaysian detention centre in as many years. In April 2022, 582 ethnic Rohingya refugees from Myanmar escaped.

North Korea fires multiple cruise missiles into West Sea

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea fired multiple cruise missiles into the West Sea on Friday, Seoul's military said, continuing a fresh streak of weapons testing as Kim Jong Un's regime ramps up "war preparations". Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the military had "detected at around 11am (0200 GMT) the firing of multiple unidentified cruise missiles" into the sea off the country's west coast. The South Korean military has "stepped up surveillance in close coordination with the United States", the JCS said in the statement. The military is "closely monitoring for signs of additional activity" by the North Korean army, it said, adding they were "closely analysing" the launch. The Friday launch comes three days after the nuclear-armed North conducted what it said was a test-fire of a strategic cruise missile. On Sunday, Kim also oversaw the launch of two Pulhwasal-3-31s, a new type of strategic cruise missile, purportedly from a North Korean submarine. Pyongyang has also claimed this month to have tested an "underwater nuclear weapon system" and a solid-fuelled hypersonic ballistic missile. Unlike their ballistic counterparts, the testing of cruise missiles is not banned under current UN sanctions on Pyongyang. Cruise missiles tend to be jet-propelled and fly at a lower altitude than more sophisticated ballistic missiles, making them harder to detect and intercept.



Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg leaves Westminster Magistrates Court in London after the hearing.

Hamas says it's studying Gaza cease-fire proposal, but appears to rule out key provisions

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Hamas officials said Friday that the group is studying a proposed cease-fire deal that would include prolonged pauses in fighting in Gaza and swaps of Israeli hostages for Palestinian prisoners, but at the same time appeared to rule out some of its key components. Osama Hamdan, a senior Hamas official in Beirut, said the group remains committed to its initial demands for a permanent cease-fire. Hamdan also said the group seeks the release of thousands of Palestinian prisoners being held for acts related to the conflict with Israel, including those serving life sentences. He mentioned two by name, including Marwan Barghouti, a popular Palestinian uprising leader seen as a unifying figure. Hamdan's comments on the prisoners were the most detailed demands yet to be raised by the group in public.

Thunberg goes on trial in London for oil protest

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg went on trial on Thursday for a public order offence related to a protest outside an oil and gas conference held in London last year. Thunberg, who became a prominent campaigner worldwide after staging week-long protests in front of the Swedish parliament in 2018, was arrested on Oct 17. She and others had been protesting outside a hotel where the Energy Intelligence Forum was hosting oil and gas industry leaders. The 21-year-old appeared at Westminster Magistrates' Court on Thursday alongside four other defendants, aged between 19 and 59, who have pleaded not guilty to a single offence under the Public Order Act. The five are accused of failing to comply with a condition imposed by senior police officers to move their protest to designated area near the conference.

Indian Muslim leaders urge government to end mosque-temple disputes

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Top Muslim leaders in India called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government on Friday to end disputes over mosques and Hindu temples, saying the minority Muslim population was feeling under threat and their places of worship should be protected. "Many people in the country are claiming that some of the historic mosques were constructed after the destruction of temples, but these are false accusations," said Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani, president of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board. "We urge the government to put an end to such disputes and save the secular fabric of the nation," he told reporters, flanked by other leaders and clerics.

UN's Palestinian agency nominated for Nobel Prize

Monitoring Desk
OSLO: A Norwegian politician said on Thursday that he has nominated the UN Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA, embroiled in a controversy over the alleged involvement of employees in the Oct 7 raid on Israel, for the Nobel Peace Prize. Labour MP Asmund Aukrust told the Dagbladet newspaper he had nominated the UN Relief and Works Agency "for its long-term work to provide vital support to Palestine and the region in general".

EU approves \$54 billion package for Ukraine after appeasing Hungary

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: European Union (EU) leaders unanimously agreed on Thursday to extend 50 billion euros (\$54bn) in aid to Ukraine, overcoming weeks of resistance by Hungary. Leaders from Western countries have reacted over the aid announcement for the Ukraine. European Council President Charles Michel said, "We have a deal. All 27 leaders agreed on an additional 50bn support package for Ukraine within the EU budget. This looks in steadfast, long-term, predictable funding for Ukraine. The EU is taking leadership and responsibility in support for Ukraine; we know what it is at stake." Reacting on the EU aid announcement, the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said, "Grateful to Charles Michel and EU leaders for establishing the 50bn Ukraine Facility for 2024-2027. It is very important that the decision was made by all 27 leaders, which once again proves strong EU unity." "Continued EU financial support for Ukraine will strengthen long-term economic and financial stability, which is no less important than military assistance and sanctions pressure on Russia." Meanwhile, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said that "We negotiated an offer, and negotiated a control mechanism that guarantees the reasonable use of funds and we also received guarantees that Hungary's money (that the commission has not yet released) cannot go to Ukraine. After a lengthy negotiation we accepted this offer." In addition, EU Commission Chief Ursula von der Leyen said, "Agreement! The European Council delivered on our priorities."



QUETTA: Peoples Party (PPP) Candidate for PB-45 Constituency, Ali Madad Jattak inaugurating the election campaign in connection of upcoming General Election 2024, in Quetta.

Domki, Jan & Jamali grieved over death of mother of Zahir Khan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has expressed condolence and sorrow over the death of mother of journalist Zahir Khan Nasar. In a condolence statement issued here on Friday, the caretaker Chief Minister prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul into its eternal peace and give enough strength and patience to the bereaved family to bear the tragic loss of her death. Meanwhile, in separate condolence messages issued here on Friday, the caretaker Provincial Ministers Jan Achakzai and Mir Zubair Jamali have expressed grief and sorrow over the death of mother of Zahir Khan Nasar. They also prayed for the departed soul.

AC issues Toshakhana case's written order

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Accountability Court (AC) of Islamabad on Friday issued its written order regarding the 14 years imprisonment sentence to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) founder and his wife Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana case. AC Judge Muhammad Bashir, in his 44-page detailed judgment, said that the court had testified a total of 16 witnesses during the trial. The order said that the PTI's founder and his wife received a total of 108 gifts from abroad. It further said that the PTI founder's wife received a gift of Saudi Crown Prince, which was reported but not deposited into the Toshakhana.

The judgment said that the two accused used the influence on the private expert who determined the value of the gift. They acquired the gift jewelry set after paying only Rs 9 million while its actual value was over Rs 3.16 billion. According to Sohaib Abbasi, who determined the value of said gift, he estimated the value of the gift lower on the instruction of the PTI's founder. The verdict said that NAB contacted Imran Bashir, a Dubai-based expert on jewellery and antiquities, who estimated the price of set from various dealers. He reported that the value of jewelry set was Rs 3.16 billion.

PNS SAIF visits Sri Lanka during regional maritime security patrol

RAWALPINDI (APP): Pakistan Navy's PNS SAIF visited Colombo, Sri Lanka during its Regional Maritime Security Patrol (RMSP) deployment on Friday. Upon arrival at the port, the ship was received by officials of Pakistan Embassy and Sri Lankan Navy, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. During the stay at the port, the Commanding Officer of PNS SAIF called on senior naval and military officials of Sri Lanka. During the interaction, matters of mutual interests were discussed and enhancement of bilateral ties in all spheres was reaffirmed. The Commanding Officer also conveyed good wishes of Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf for the people of Sri Lanka in general and the Sri Lankan Navy in particular. During stay at the port, the ship's crew visited different Sri Lankan Navy training facilities, and the Sri Lankan Navy officers and men also visited the Pakistan Navy ship.

QWP Chairman calls for fair elections to address challenges

PESHAWAR (APP): Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao emphasized the importance of ensuring free, fair, and peaceful elections to address the challenges facing the country. Speaking at a gathering Charsadda district, he highlighted various issues such as inflation, poverty, law and order concerns, and unemployment. He stressed that whichever political party comes to power must focus on revitalizing the economy and promoting development. He lamented that political instability and high inflation have hindered the country's progress and urged political forces to unite for political and economic stability. He expressed dismay over the neglect of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, stating that the province has been left behind in development due to previous governments neglecting its rights. He criticized the excessive load shedding of electricity and gas in KP despite the province's self-sufficiency in these resources, promising to fight for the province's rights. Sherpao assured that the QWP would fulfill its promises and work tirelessly for the development and welfare of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



QUETTA: Balochistan National Party (BNP) Central Leader, Dr. Nashanas Lehri along with Abdul Shakoar Marri, Leader Muslim League (PML-Q) addressing a press conference, at Quetta press club.

Mind games important for fostering physical, mental growth in youth: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday emphasizing the importance of sports, particularly mind games, in fostering both physical and mental development of youth, said that the chess game helps to instill discipline in individuals' thought processes. Addressing the launch of the Prime Minister's National Mind Sports Initiative, the prime minister highlighted the positive impact of such mind games on mental well-being and said the youth engaged in such healthy activities would become successful professionals in the future. He said these games promote cognitive activity and critical thinking among the players. The prime minister said he was happy that he made a commitment to this special cause, and he will also continue to support and promote this cause in the future. He said every school in the country should have access to this game. Acknowledging the contribution of the federal minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Fawad Hassan Fawad PM Kakar said that due to his personal efforts, the launch of this initiative became possible. Fawad Hassan Fawad, on the occasion, informed that, under the initiative, the facility of mind games would be provided at 10,000 public schools across the country. "We are going to take it across all the public schools in Pakistan, and we are also engaging the corporate sector and inviting the private schools to have this in every single school in the country," he added. The minister said that in the first month, some 100 schools in Islamabad would be given the facility. The minister also recalled the tremendous performance of late Mir Sultan Khan, a native chess player from Sargodha, who won the British Chess Championship in 1929, 1931, and 1932. To acknowledge the performance of Mir Sultan Khan, President Arkady Dvorkovich presented an award to Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, who received the award on behalf of Mir Sultan Khan. The President of the International Chess Federation, speaking on the occasion, said that besides being a mind game, chess was a lot of fun too. He said this game was very important for a country like Pakistan, where millions of young people were growing up. He said, "Some 600,000 kids in 10,000 schools in Pakistan will have the chance to get access to this game. He said the federation will support and train the teachers, who will then train kids." The Managing Director (MD) of the International Chess Federation, Dana Reznicec-Ozola, President of the Asian Chess Federation, Sheikh Sultan bin Khalifa bin Nahyan, and President of the Pakistan Chess Federation, Muhammad Hanif Qureshi, were also present.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar receives an award conferred upon Late Mir Sultan Khan, a Chess player, posthumously from the President of International Chess Federation Mr. Arkady Dvorkovich and President Asian Chess Federation Mr. Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan.

KIIR calls on UN to halt illegal campaign launched by Indian troops in occupied Kashmir

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Chairman of the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), Altaf Hussain Wani, called on UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to halt the illegal profiling campaign disguised as a census by Indian troops in the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). In a joint letter addressed to the UN Secretary General and other UN Special Rapporteurs, Altaf Hussain Wani underscored the move is illegal, unconstitutional, and human rights violations. He expressed concerns about the lack of transparency in the campaign initiated without formal announcements from competent authorities, further unsettling the already anxious residents. Wani emphasized the fear and insecurity prevailing in Occupied Kashmir since the Modi's government revoked the region's special status, saying it is a blatant violation of UNSC resolutions. The Chairman Wani revealed that the census conducted by Indian troops was extracting sensitive information, including family details, ages, and contact information of residents and their family members living outside the region. The distributed "census forms" sought exclusive data such as Aadhar numbers, vehicle registration numbers, and information about CCTV cameras, along with inquiries about family members involved in the freedom struggle. Residents were even asked for photographs and geo-tagging coordinates of their residences. The letter highlighted the invasive nature of the campaign, causing serious concerns among Kashmiri people already living under excessive surveillance. Wani pointed to the Indian security forces' growing interference in residents' private lives, citing databases created since 2019 targeting journalists, academicians, civil society.

Envoys underscore commitment to peaceful, stable Afghan FM urges close cooperation to deal with global challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Additional Foreign Secretary (Afghanistan & West Asia) Ambassador Rahim Hayat Qureshi Friday held a meeting with Chinese Special Envoy on Afghanistan Ambassador, Yue Xiaoyong and discussed issues related to Afghanistan. They underscored their commitment to a peaceful and stable Afghanistan and emphasized the need for enhanced coordination for regional stability. ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Friday urged close cooperation and multidisciplinary international partnerships to deal with global challenges. He was speaking at the 3rd Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum, in Belgium at the invitation of High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell. The foreign minister also joined the Roundtable on 'Shared Prosperity, Economic Resilience, and Investments'.



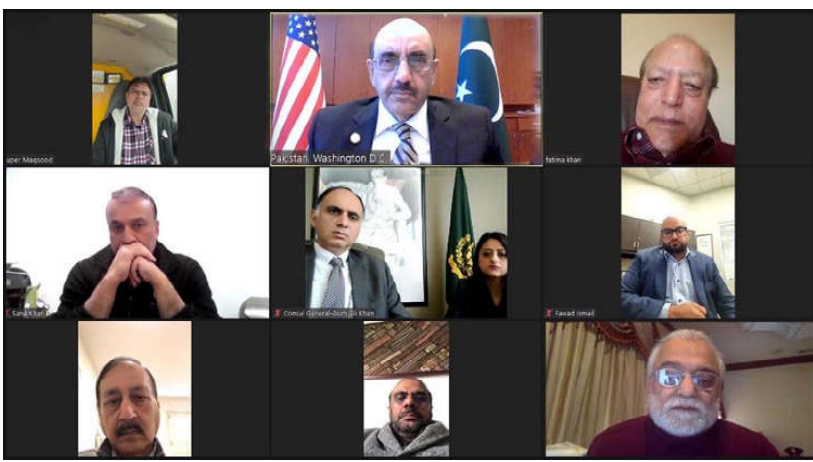
QUETTA: A delegation led by President Government Teachers Association Haji Mujeenullah Gharsheen meeting with Caretaker Education Minister Prof. Dr. Qadir Baloch.

Mushahid stresses 'healing touch' for stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Senate's Standing Committee on Defence Mushahid Hussain Sayed on Friday underscored the urgent need for a "healing touch" in the country. Talking to a private news channel, he emphasized the critical role of national unity and urged political leaders to act responsibly to foster stability in the country. Mushahid remarked that the political parties had been transformed into "family business franchises". He called for learning lessons from the past, cautioning against turning political rivalries into personal enmities. Addressing the root causes of political instability, he pointed out that politicians had not set rules of the game. CHAIRING A meeting held here on Friday regarding the migration policy of medical colleges, he said that the health sector was important while medical education played the role of backbone in the health sector. Abdullah Khan said that the government was attaching priority to the medical sector, adding that the contribution of all departments in the educational field of the province was inevitable, enabling students of the province to seek admission to higher educational institutions of the country. The meeting was attended by Principal, Bolan Medical College, Quetta, Professor Dr. Raz Muhammad Kakar, Additional Secretary, Health Department, Abdul Hameed Zehri, Principal Jhalawan Medical College, Khuzdar, Dr. Samad Gichki, Additional Secretary, Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Syed Naseer Shah, Additional Secretary, Colleges, Higher and Technical Education Department, Shakeel Ahmed, Technical Advisor, Health Department, Dr. Amin Khan Jozgezi, Section Officer Colleges, Aftab, Admn Officer, Bolan Medical College, Quetta, Hamdullah and others.

Change only through power of vote: We would not let anyone spoil peaceful elections in Chaman, other areas: Asghar Achakzai

QUETTA (APP): The provincial president of Awami National Party (ANP) and its candidate on PB-51, Chaman and NA-263, Quetta-II, Asghar Khan Achakzai and other party candidates contesting election on different seats have stated that we would not let succeed any conspiracy of spoiling the peaceful elections in Chaman. He said that public service is the hallmark of followers of the Bacha Khan. The provincial president of ANP and others were addressing different events including the inauguration ceremony of the election cells of the party as well as workers convention and different public gatherings marking the election campaign in Chaman and different other areas and constituencies on Saturday. Others who addressed the events were included candidate of the party for PB-50 and PB41, Zamarak Khan Achakzai, candidate for PB-1, Sardar Aminullah Khan, candidate for PB-2, Allaudin Mandokhail, candidate for PB-3, Malik Amanullah Kakar, candidate for PB-5, Dr Atta Gul Hamzaazi, candidate for PB-6, Izzat Khan Nasar, candidate for PB-7, Wali Dad, candidate for PB-38, Malik Naeem Khan Bazai, candidate for PB-39, Malik Taj Muhammad, candidate for PB-40, Abdul Ahad, candidate for PB-46, Sanaullah Kakar, candidate for PB-47, Abdul Bari Kakar, candidate for PB-48, Ubaidullah Abid, candidate for PB-49, Asghar Ali Tareen, candidate for NA-252, Shazia Watanpal, candidate for NA-253, Fareedullah Dummer, candidate for NA-265, Abdul Rasheed Nasar and candidate for NA-266, Mohibullah Kakar besides others. They in the occasion welcomed all those who joined the party.



WASHINGTON DC: Ambassador Masood Khan in a virtual meeting with the leadership of Pakistan American Chamber of Commerce (PACC) led by its Chairman aqar Ali Khan. Other members of the Chamber included Dr. Sana Khan, Fawad Ismail, Zubair Rao, Maqsood Chaudhry, Dr. Salahuddin and Farrukh, Consul General of Pakistan in Los Angeles Asim Ali Khan and Trade and Investment Counselor Quratulain Fatima, attended the meeting.

Furnace Ignition in SMI SAINDAK

NOKUNDI (Online): On February 2, the reverberatory furnace of Smelter MRDL, Saindak was ignited and started. The company's leadership team, Chinese and Pakistani HODs, and key personnel of Smelter attended the ceremony and jointly witnessed the beginning of the 23rd production cycle of Smelter. Based on the basic reality of Saindak's industry, MCCT (MRDL's superior company) is striving to create a development path that is in line with the local of Pakistan as well as taking the lead in the non-ferrous industry in Pakistan. "Long live China-Pakistan friendship!" Pakistani brothers at the site cheered. Mining industry revitalizes the economy and brings happiness. MRDL's blueprint for the development of surrounding areas is becoming a reality.

Pak desires to strengthen ties with Mongolia: FS

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi Friday met the new Ambassador of Mongolia to Pakistan Tuvshin Badral and discussed matters of mutual interest. Congratulating Ambassador Badral on his appointment, the foreign secretary reaffirmed Pakistan's desire to further deepen Pakistan-Mongolia relations, and strengthen cooperation in all areas of mutual interest.

Mir Hassan Zehri says: Dureji also fell into the hands of vested interests

HUB: Today's grand gathering proved that Dureji also went by your hands, Bhutanese Sahib. These views were expressed by the senior leader of Pakistan Peoples Party and the president of Hub district and spokesperson of Asif Ali Zardari for Balochistan, candidate PB-21 Mir Ali Hassan Zehri, while addressing the rally held at Goth Jameel Bareja and a large number of people welcomed Mir Ali Hassan Zehri. On this occasion, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri and other dignitaries were presented with traditional turbans and gifts. Under the leadership of Mir Ali Hassan Zehri, Jameel Ahmed Bareja and thousands of people from different communities joined the Peoples Party regularly, including Ghulam Haider Bandijo, Abdul Razzaq Chhata, Khamisa Khan Chhata, Muhammad Rafiq Chhata, Ghulam Rasool



QUETTA: Commuters are facing difficulties in transportation due to stagnant rainwater due to poor sewerage system caused by downpour of winter season, at Zarghoon road in Quetta.