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#### Caretaker CM urges voters to use right of franchise without any fear today Abdul Khaliq Sheikh be-

#### Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has urged the voters to use their right of franchise without any fear as all the necessary arrangements have been finalized for the elections in the province today (Thursday).

The caretaker Chief Minister was on visit to the provincial control room established by the provincial Home department here on Wednesday.

Also present on the occasion were the Corps Commander Lt. General Rahat Nasim Ahmed Khan, caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Zubair Jamali, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, In-



QUETTA: Scenes of devastation after a bomb exploded near the election office of an independent candidate in Khanozai Pishin, Quetta, while security officials are collecting evidence.

#### Communication infrastructure, imperative for GB development: PM

airport.

sectors of all provinces of

velopment of Gilgit-

Baltistan was linked with

the social integration across

He said the overall de-

the country

the area

QUETTA: Polling staff receiving polling material

at distribution Centre for General Elections 2024.

with Iran, Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): He said that a positive Caretaker Prime Minister trend in tourism had been Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on witnessed in the area after

sides other senior civil and military high ups. Speaking on the occasion, the caretaker Chief Minister said that all the necessary arrangements

have been made for the elections in Balochistan. He said that there is need to look the routine incidents and incidents of crimes linked with the elections separately.

He mentioned that deployment of 66,214 jawans of the Pak army, FC, police and levies has been made for the elections

He said that the funds were released by the Election Commission and provincial government timely While on the other hand, the distribution and dispatchment of the polling material has also been completed in the province,



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki being briefed during his visit to Provincial Election Control Room established at Home Department for holding general elections on February 8. Commander-XII Corps Lieutenant General Rahat Naseem Ahmad Khan, Provincial Election Commissioner Mohammad Farid Afridi and others high ups are also present.

# Three-day mourning announced by caretaker CM: 28 dead, 50 others injured in two separate explosions in Pishin and Killa Saifullah districts

Blasts target independent candidate office in Pishin, JUI-F's leader in Killa Saifullah on eve of general elections

Independent Report QUETTA: At least 28 people were killed and 50 others injured in two separate explosions targeting Saifullah. election candidates' offices in Pishin and Killa Saifullah districts on Wednesday.

The caretaker Chief Kakar in Khanozai area. Minister Mir Ali Mardan Domki announced threehave been shifted to the Tehsil Hospital Khanozai, day mourning to mourn the loss of lives in both attacks, while the bodies have also been transferred, the hospital's MS Dr Habib Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai said told the media.

in a presser. The first attack claimed at least 16 people's Habib, most of the injured lives while 25 were injured are in critical condition. after an explosion took place outside an independent candidate's office in Khanozai area of Pishin

**Terrorists not** to be allowed

to disrupt

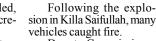
while the second blast took staff has also been called, place outside the Jamiat the provincial health secre-Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUItary told Geo News. F) election office in Killa The second blast tar-

geted the JUI-F office in the The Pishin blast took Killa Saifullah district place outside the political couple of hours after office of independent can-Khanozai blast. didate Asfand Yar Khan At least 12 people were

killed and 25 others injured The injured people in the second explosion, Information Minister Achakzai confirmed. He said JUI-F leader Maulana Abdul Wassay,

who is contesting elections from PB-3, remained unhurt According to MS Dr in the attack. Achakzai said terrorists would not succeed in their

Following the blast, an objectives and added that emergency has been imthe war would continue posed across hospitals in until the elimination of the Quetta for which additional last terrorist



Deputy Commissioner Yasar Bazai told Geo News that most of the injured are in critical condition. "The Balochistan government is sending helicopters from Quetta to evacuate the injured." He added that a high alert has been issued across the district. "To ascertain the nature of the explosion, the bomb disposal squad team reached the site of the incident." The blast site has been sealed for investiga tion, he stated.

Superintendent of Police (SŜP) Akhtar Achakzai told media that investigations into the nature of the explosion are underway.

#### **Transparent**, peaceful election's our national responsibility: Governor

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has underlined the need for making effective coordination among all concerned institutions to ensure free, fair and peaceful elections in the

authority of country and

provinces to the real elected

right of franchise.

province.

other views in a statement issued here on Wednesday. He said that it is very important to make effective

The Governor ex-

ressed these and similar

coordination between all regional and district police officers and other concerned officers and the Election Commission so as to He said that it is our national obligation to conconduct the free and fair duct free and fair elections. elections in peaceful man-Under the given situa-

tion. Governor exhorted the He stressed that the responsibility of keeping law enforcement agencies and concerned departments to make tough security strict vigil on the suspected persons in and around the measures all over the provpolling stations rests with ince especially at the sensithe government and general tive polling stations. He said that this is not public as well.

He said that is also be mere elections rather it is an comes national duty of all political parties and masses exercise to hand over the to ensure free and fair elections, besides the governrepresentatives by using ment and its concerned departments.



RIYADH: Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (Operations), Air Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan in a group photo along with Foreign dignitaries and Pakistan Air Force (PAF) contingent during World Defence Air Show 2024 held in Rivadh.

#### Caretaker government stood by commitment of holding elections on Feb 8: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): people's minds regarding Federal Minister for Infor- the elections. mation, Broadcasting and arliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on and elections are being held (tomorrow), putting Wednesday that the careaside all fears and rumours," Murtaza taker government had stood by its commitment Solangi maintained. of holding general elections on the schedule given by that the caretaker gov-Election Commission of

"We stood by the mise of holding poll

The minister said

He said after oath-tak-

Wednesday said that development of the proper communication system and other necessary infrastructure in Gilgit-Baltistan was important to ensure sustainable development of the area

"The construction of a communication system and other necessary infrastructure can further promote the tourism sector of Gilgit-Baltistan and create opportunities for economic development in the region," he said while talking to a 17member delegation of Royal Foundation of Gilgit-Baltistan, headed by Raja Nazimul Amin.

Prime Minister Kakar said Gilgit-Baltistan was rich in natural resources and the people of the area were very hospitable.

Foreign Office (FO) on

Wednesday said border

crossings with Afghanistan

and Iran will remain closed

to ensure full security dur-

ing the general elections in

Twitter), FO spokesperson

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said:

"To ensure full security

during the general elections,

border crossings with Af-

ghanistan and Iran, would

remain closed both for cargo

spokeswoman said that nor-

mal operations would resume

on Friday. The announcement

came hours after back-to-back

blasts that hit Balochistan's

Pishin and Qila Saifullah, kill-

a surge in terrorist activi-

ties, especially in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and

Balochistan, since the out-

Pakistan has witnessed

ing at least 28 people.

the

and pedestrians".

Furthermore,

Taking to X (formerly

Pakistan on Feb 8.

the upgradation of Skardu Airport to the international He said multiple coun-DUETTA

tries were showing keen in-Baluchistan's Caretaker Interest to collaborate with formation Minister Jan Pakistan in the tourism sec-Achakzai on Wednesday said that terrorists would The prime minister dinot be allowed to disrupt rected the authorities conthe general elections. cerned to devise a strategy While talking to a prito work out a sustainable

vate news channel, he consolution to the issue of elecdemned blasts in Qila tricity in Gilgit-Baltistan. Saifullah and Pishin, as-He also directed to serting the country's redevise a plan for enhancsolve of preventing the tering the quota of GB sturorists to derail the electoral dents in the higher educaprocess. tion and technical education The elections would

proceed as planned as the aretaker government was fully committed to the process, he added.

The minister said,"The state will not bow down before any terrorist group or organization, rather it will chase them till their

complete elimination.'

#### Pakistan fully committed to promote an inclusive

democratic process ISLAMABAD (Online): oreign Office (FO) has said Pakistan is fully committed to promote an inclusive democratic process.

This was said by FO spokesperson Mumtaz ahra Baloch

Pakistan shuts border crossings while reacting to remarks made by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights regarding the upcoming ISLAMABAD (INP): The lawed militant group Foreign Office (FO) on Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan general elections in Pakistan, She held Pakistan is ended its ceasefire with the fully resolved to uphold rule government in November of law and protect the haman rigits and fundamen-Earlier in the day, Chief tal freedom.

#### Commissioner imposes ban on double riding of bike in Quetta

QUETTA (INP): Commis-

sioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafqaat on Wednesday imposed a complete ban on double riding of motorcycles in Quetta division till Thursday night given security reasons. He said that Quetta snap-checking had in been extended, and vehicles and motorcycles without number plates were being stopped. He said that special directives were issued to concerned officials to arrest those walking outside

without ID cards in Quetta.

elections: Achakzai (APP)



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting of the Royal Foundation of Gilgit Baltistan.

Altogether 1,696 candidates in competition runs for 67 seats: All set to hold general elections on 16 NA, 51 PA seats in **Balochistan today** 

In all 51, 379 polling staff and 65,521 security personnel to be deployed for conducting elections in peaceful manner in province; 5,026 polling stations established; 1,651 polling stations declared highly sensitive

> 1,651 polling stations have been declared as sensitive and highly sensitive respectively. According to the offi-

in peaceful manner in the province. They are included: 19,082 from Army, 31,895 from Police, 14,544 from Levies and 5.094 many as 51,379 poll-ing staff has been deputed for the election process at 5,026 polling stations of the province. They are included: 5.279 presiding officers,

31,252 Assistant Presiding Officers and 15,626 Polling provincial control room has been set up by the provincial

government to monitor the election and polling process in the province. Established at the Provincial Information Technology Department, the senior bureaucrats would remain deputed at the Control Room. Similarly, a control and monitoring room has also been set up at the Provincial Election Commissioner's office. Earlier, the polling mate-rial including ballot papers and other necessary goods were distributed among the polling staff of Quetta at the Unity Law College. Strict security mea-

sures were adopted on occasion of the distribution of election material among the polling staff.

ernment had taken all Pakistan ( ECP). possible steps for en-Addressing the inaugusuring the conduct of ral ceremony of Media free and transparent elec-Coordination and Facilitions tation Center established by Press Information Department here, he said tomorrow morning the voting would start and by midday half of the polling would have been

Referring to specula-

in all parts of the country.

to every part of the coun-

try for the election can-

vassing and received a

'great response' from the

people. He said that his

election campaign across

the country is tantamount

to the 'fact' that only the

PPP represents the center.

at the Pakistan Muslim

League-Nawaz (PML-N)

for 'restricting' its election

campaign to 'few' parts of

the country. "The PML-

N held electioneering in

only a few constituencies

and once again proved it-

self to be a party of

Bilawal also took a jibe

While talking to a pri-

done.

ing of caretaker government on August 17 last year, in his first press briefing here the very next day, the first question he was asked about the elections and his answer was that elections would be tions, he said there were held on the timeframe doubts and concerns in given by the ECP.

#### **Bilawal says PPP free of** any bias, represents centre KARACHI (INP): Paki-

leadership could not spare stan People's Party (PPP) even half an hour to come Chairman Bilawal Bhutto to Karachi and run the election campaign in the port Zardari said that only his city. "The PML-N has also party held public gatherfailed to turn to South ings across Pakistan in con-Punjab and Balochistan. nection with the General Elections 2024 which he said showed PPP's support 'Those who raised 'Vote Ko Izzat Do' (Respect the vote) slogans did not go to three provinces," Bilawal vate news channel, the PPP added Chairman said that he went

He said that prime minster aspirants across the world hold debate ahead of the elections to present their manifesto and plans. "It is regretful that PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif did not accept my debate challenge,' he added.

Citing a comparison held by former finance minister Hafeez Pasha, Bilawal said Sindh is well ahead of Punjab in every sector

The PPP chairman expressed confidence in his party to secure a majority in the general elections 2024, saying that their The PPP Chairman supporters would be cel-said that the PML-N's ebrating on February 8.

Punjab," he added.

OUETTA: On the special directives of the caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki injured of Killa Saifullah bomb blast being shifted to CMH Quetta through helicopter

Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja ordered the police chiefs and chief secretaries of all provinces to put security on high alert following terror attacks in Balochistan ahead of general elections 2024. The election commis-

sioner held telephonic conversations with Chief Secretaries and Inspector-General of Police (IGP) of all provinces. He expressed grief and sorrow over the attacks terror Balochistan, while directing to take steps for immediate

possible.

redressal of such incidents. Sikandar Sultan Raja also ordered to complete deployment of security

personnel as soon as

QUETTA: All is set to hold general elections on 16 general seats of National Assembly and 51 seats of Provincial Assembly in Balochistan today

(Thursday). ltogether 1696 candidates are in the competition run for all 67 general seats of the National and Provincial assem-

**Independent Report** 

blies. hey are included 429 candidates contesting elections on National Assembly

seats.

ince

seats while 1,267 candidates are in the run for 51 Provincial Assembly's or the polling, in all

5,026 polling stations have been established in all 36 districts of the prov-Officers.

Out of them, 1,126 have A been declared as normal while 2,249 and

cial sources, a total of 65,521 security personnel would be de-ployed for conducting elections

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**OPINION** 

#### Daily **Independent**

# Daily A oice of Masse, Independent

## The day before

With political parties instructed yesterday to suspend their campaigns at the stroke of mid-night, the 'pre-poll' part of election 2024 stands completed. All that is now left is for the votes to be cast and counted and for a winner to be declared.

It is slightly disconcerting how suddenly this election seems to have passed us by. The past two months already seem like a haze of court cases and stop-start political activity. For the longest time, one was unsure if polls would be held, and there were fears of another delay. It was not until about three weeks ago that campaigning began in earnest. Initially, the jalsas and rallies were damp affairs. The energy, enthusiasm and richness one usually associates with elections in Pakistan remained missing. It felt as if everyone was merely going through the motions; that a commitment to the process was missing

Much of this was due, perhaps, to the prevailing impression that it was not a fair fight. Out of the two parties that consistently polled among the top two that voters intended to support, one was not allowed to campaign.

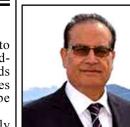
Most of the attempts made by the PTI to mobilise were met with arrests and intimidation. Thereafter, it moved its activities online, where its innovations not only helped it survive, but may have also put it in a position to mount a real challenge.

The other party, the PML-N, only hit the road towards the tail-end of the campaigning period. Indeed, it seemed at one point that it would need a push to start participating, considering how disinterested its leaders were. To its credit, the PPP was the only national party that actually took campaigning seriously. It started much earlier than the others and was able to maintain its energy throughout.

Just as the momentum seemed to be picking up, however, time had to be called. Today, voters will discuss and debate their choices with their families, friends, neighbours and fellow citizens. Tomorrow, they will speak through the ballot box.

The PML-N seems to be in a comparatively strong position after its late burst of activity, and because it seems to have the backing of powerful forces within the state. It will be an uphill struggle for the PTI, which is contesting without its traditional symbol and wasn't able to canvass. Still, the party has shown spirit throughout, and it can pull off an upset if its voters mobilise.

The PPP may prove a dark horse in this race. Even with its support base outside Sindh having dwindled over the years, its deal-making abilities have often seen it beat the odds. It understands better than most how to get ahead. Who will prevail? Not long to go before we find out



Amid swirling rumors, concerns, and a charged atmosphere both domestically and internationally, Pakistan is set to conduct its highly contested and controversial 2024 elections amidst significant economic challenges including stagnant growth, acute balance of payment issues, hyperinflation, and high unemployment

rates. This election is marked by an unprecedented increase in the active voter base, reaching the milestone of 128

million, over half the country's population. This elevates Pakistan to the status of the world's fifth-largest democracy. With an anticipated 80% voter turnout, the nation demonstrates a strong commitment to the democratic process reflecting

the population's strong commitment to the democratic process and their determination to influence their nation's future.

FAFEN in its recent report noted that for the first time, there were more women registered to vote than men between two election periods of 2018-2024, showcasing signifitinuum. cant progress in gender

inclusivity in the electoral process marked by an increase in women's voter registration by 27%, surpassing the growth in men's registration, which was 17% during the same period. This has led to a raised concerns about substantial decrease in the gender gap in voter kistan, highlighting is-

registration from 11.8% in

2018 to 7.7% in 2024. Recognizing the po- disinformation, extensive tential of women voters media censorship, and in the upcoming elec- state intervention in me-

Press Secretary to the President(Rtd); Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC PML(N) have issued a 'record' number of National Assembly tickets to women, which might further encourage female voter participation reflecting a broader movement towards gender inclusivity in Pakistani politics. However, female voter registration and participation in the election process will depend on various factors, including campaign strategies, voter mobilization efforts, and the addressing of socio-cultural barriers that have historically limited women's political participation. As the elec-

tions approach, the focus process. on encouraging and facilitating women's partici-

the PTI faced significant challenges and allegations of unfair advan-tages to the PML(N), highlighting underlying challenges in Pakistan's democratic processes which has been intermittently disrupted by martial laws posing setbacks to the democratic con-

International media, including the Council on Foreign Relations, Al Jazeera, The Diplomat, and DW, along with the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and the European Union, have Balochistan. the 2024 elections in Pasues such as "election engineering,

**Commerce** News

ports underscore the re- campaign is highly comstrictive conditions facing political parties, particularly PTI, whose leadership is significantly constrained, impacting tion symbol. Moreover its their ability to campaign freely. Allegations of an uneven playing field, ex-acerbated by the acerbated by the military's significant pothe litical influence and the barring of key political figures like former Prime Minister Imran Khan, suggest a contentious electoral environment that may not be free or fair, disadvantageous to a positive impression, certain parties and undermining the democratic tion.

**Election 2024: Reaffirmation democratic journey** 

**By Qamar Bashir** 

hensions, the choice of political entities to engage rather than opt for boycotts, delays, or advocate for autocratic solutions underscores a pivotal shift towards deepening democratic norms indicating a resilient commitment to democratic principles amidst adversity. This collective resolve of Pakistan's political factions, intellectual community, and citizens arguably emphasizes the importance of democratic integrity and continuity, effectively curtailing any attempts by undemocratic elements to impose their agenda, thereby safeguarding the democratic process and ensuring its resilience against potential disruptions. PML(N) is running a vigorous campaign, pri-marily concentrated in

central Punjab and Hazara Division allegedly supported by the state machinery while neglecting other key provinces like KP, Sindh, and The PML(N) campaign is well-

organized and directed by Nawaz Sharif, with Maryam Nawaz and Shahbaz Sharif providing provincial governments in strong support. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)'s This stems from the per-

offer larger budgets, promised due to the abgreater decision-making freedom with less scrutiny, sence of its chairman and key leaders, coupled with and fewer financial oblithe lack of its own elecgations compared to the federal government. The public meetings have center, conversely, faces completely been blocked stricter oversight, smaller on the mainstream media, budgets, and heavier and as alternative it is debts, often relying on struggling to leverage foreign loans to function, Social media that too is while spending primarily subjected to planned occurs in the provinces, slow down as and when seemingly without rerequired. Meanwhile, the sponsibility for loan re-PPP campaign, led by payment. Essentially, par-Bilawal Bhutto Zardari as more lucrative and less with Asif Zardari making accountable, raising concerns about national priseems to be gaining tracorities and fiscal respon-

In this election seasibility Amid these appre- son, media outlets, both are also supported by Actraditional and social, have been exceptionally cording to different suractive, providing extenveys, reflecting a close sive coverage of the elecrace, showing leading partion campaigns. Renowned anchorpersons and-neck. took to the streets, engagwoes and security coning with everyday citizens to gauge their elec-Khan's disqualification toral preferences. While adds uncertainty. Other these interactions were parties like PPP hold renot scientifically strucgional strongholds. tured, they did unveil some regional inclinations. In Central Punjab, there seems to be a tilt towards PML(N), with PTI likely to have a significant also receiving notable support. Sindh's rural aradvantage in forming the government at the center eas are predominantly due to its established poleaning towards PPP, while urban centers show mending of ties with the military, which plays a crucial role in Pakistan's a preference for MQM. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly NWFP), a significant sympathy vote appears to favor PTI, reflecting the party's strong foothold in the region. Meanwhile, Balochistan presents a more diverse picture, with no clear dominance by any national party, indicating a fragmented political landscape. Unfortunately there

is also a growing belief PML-N and PTI is exthat mainstream parties pected to be fierce, with are prioritizing forming both parties vying for dominance. The political maneuvering and alliances formed in the run-

tions, both PTI and dia coverage. These re- ability to run an effective ception that provinces up to the elections could be key to determining the outcome in this crucial province

PPP, led by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, may continue to hold sway in its traditional stronghold of Sindh but could face challenges expanding its influence beyond this province due to the current political dynamics and its need to form crucial alliances in Punjab??. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, PTI has historically had ties see provincial power strong support, but the party's current challenges might impact its performance in the upcoming elections. Balochistan's political The crude findings landscape is often more fragmented, with local parties and alliances playing significant roles. The situation in Balochistan ties PTI and PML-N neck- may remain fluid, with Economic various parties and independent candidates likely cerns loom large, while to influence the formation of the provincial government.

Amidst challenges, Pakistan's move towards Based on the discusthe 2024 elections epitosion, survey reports, and mizes the nation's remedia analysis, the PMLsolve to sustain its N, led by Nawaz Sharif, is democratic ethos. Despite the pre-election phase's uneven playing field and significant political entities facing litical base and apparent hurdles, the unanimous decision against election boycotts or delays reflects a collective dedipolitical landscape??. The cation to democratic val-PTI, despite facing signifiues. This commitment, cant challenges including coupled with a notable surge in voter registralegal battles, the disqualification of its leader Imran tion highlighting gender inclusivity, underscores Khan, and issues surrounding its election symthe importance of a bol, may still manage to re- transparent, fair electain some influence, partoral process for Pakistan's democratic ticularly in provinces integrity and future sta-bility. The forthcoming where it has a strong sup-port base??. In Punjab, the competition between elections are a critical juncture, symbolizing not just a political transition but a reaffirmation of Pakistan's democratic journey in the face of adversitv

pation in the democratic process remains crucial for a fair and inclusive electoral outcome. The elections 2024 being the fourth elections since the era of martial law under Pervez Musharraf starting with governments of PPP, PML(N), and PTI reflects the evolving political landscape amidst the pre-election phase, where

# **Germany provides Eur45m** support to Pak on Technical **Development Cooperation**

Dr. Kazim Niaz, Secretary for Economic Affairs Pakistan, and Mr. Alfred Grannas, German Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, witnessed the ceremony for signing of Euro 45 million agreements on Technical Development Cooperation for starting new bilateral cooperation projects. These new agreements are the result of a longstanding and trustful partnership between the two countries.

newly The commissioned projects decades. The impact of the align with the German German development development cooperation cooperation is proof for a

Sustainable economic development, training and employment; Health, social protection and population policy. All on going and new projects work hand in hand with a holistic approach building synergies for well-rounded solutions to effectively tackle complex and global challenges like climate change and inclusion of vulnerable groups such as women and youth.

Both parties highlighted the immense efforts taken in the past

ISLAMABAD (Online): and energy, just transition; targeting the development together' sectors in need. Germany stands Shana ba shana with Pakistan.

cooperation has left its footprints in the country. With the agreement we signed today, we aim to continue our joint path towards a sustainable future in Pakistan. Recently Svenja Schulze, our German Minister for Economic Cooperation and

Development, said 'international cooperation doesn't just help others. Above all, it helps us, because global problems thematic areas of Climate successful cooperation can only be solved

Secretary Dr. Kazim Niaz: "We deeply appreciate the strong Ambassador Alfred support that we have Grannas: "The German- received on technical Pakistani development development cooperation. It would contribute to the Socio-economic development of the country

The German development cooperation has been supporting Pakistani Government initiatives for over 60 years. We work together with our partners in support of their socioeconomic reform agenda contributing to a sustainable, crisis-proof development.

country was interested in

further boosting its

business ties with Pakistan

to achieve mutually

beneficial outcomes.



Dr. Kazim Niaz, Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, and Mr. Alfred Grannas, German Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, witnessed the ceremony for signing of Euro 45 million agreements on Technical Development Cooperation for starting new bilateral cooperation projects on 7th February, 2024 in Islamabad.

Chairman Businessmen Group & Former President KCCI Zubair Motiwala speaks at a meeting of Special Committee for Small Traders held here at Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry. President KCCI Iftikhar Ahmed Sheikh, Senior Vice President Altaf A Ghaffar, Vice President Tanveer Ahmed Barry, Chairman Special **Committee for Small Traders Majeed Memon and** PCLC Chief Hafeez Aziz are also seen in the picture.

## PM AJK chaired meeting about agriculture, livestock

people could invest and

should be made to convince

He said that efforts

make significant gains.

MIRPUR (APP): A meeting AJK PM meeting of the AJK Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq Department of Agriculture expressed that agriculture and Livestock, held in the and livestock were very state metropolis on potential sectors in which Wednesday, tabled various healthy ideas and recommendations for boosting the livestock besides enlarging the peracre yield of agrarian products in the state to meet local needs.

While chairing a planting fruit trees.

China's vehicle sales, output soar in January BEIJING (APP): China's vehicle sales surged 47.9 percent year on year in January 2024 to nearly 2.44 million units, said the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers on Wednesday. The country's vehicle output last

month increased by 51.2 percent year on year to 2.41 million units, according to the association.

Specifically passenger car output and sales stood at 2.08 million units and 2.12 million units, up 49.1 percent and 44 percent year on year, respectively, according to data released by the association.

Commercial vehicle output rose by 66.2 percent year on year to 327,000 units, while commercial vehicle sales soared 79.6 percent year on

people, attract them, and year to 324,000 units. The new energy encourage them to get involved in agriculture, vehicle (NEV) sector especially by focusing on maintained fast growth

for it. momentum last month.

boosting business ties with Pakistan: Kyrgyz Envoy ISLAMABAD (APP): embassy would cooperate Ambassador of with Islamabad Chamber of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan Commerce and Industry Ulanbek Totuiaev on (ICCI) in the initiatives for Wednesday said that his

Kyrgyzstan interested in

promoting business linkages between the private sectors of both countries Speaking at the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President,

He stressed that both countries should develop Islamabad Chamber of sustainable business Commerce & Industry said relations as they have good that Pakistan and potential to cooperate in Kyrgyzstan can cooperate many sectors of the in many areas including economy. He said that a agriculture, industry, business delegation from energy, and tourism.

He said that the geographical location of both countries offers good potential to increase collaboration and play a role in promoting regional Kyrgyzstan was importing trade in their respective pharmaceuticals, sports regions. Pakistan can goods, and other products provide Kyrgyzstan with from Pakistan while it was easy access to many promising markets including the Middle East and South Asia, he added.

Bakhtawari said Similarly, Kyrgyzstan can provide Pakistan with easy access to the Central Asian States.

# Naqvi chairs 3<sup>rd</sup> Chambers of Commerce **Coordination Committee meeting**

Independent Report AHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi presided over the 3<sup>rd</sup> Punjab Chambers of Commerce Coordination Committee meeting held at CM office, here on Wednesday.

Punjab Cabinet, Chief President secretaries concerned specially participated in

Gold rates

up by 400

per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The

from Rs. 169,046, the All

Sindh Sarafa Jewellers

Association reported.

last trading day.

accorded a standing ovation Chamber of Commerce and Punjab and paid tributes to the Industry Imtiaz Dogar said exemplary performance of the CM. They credited CM Naqvi for the establishment of 6 Business Facilitation Centres in Punjab.

Anwar

LCCI

Kashif Secretary, IG Police and acknowledged that the day and night work being undertaken by the CM for the meeting. The the well-being of the completion of his tenure participants in the masses has set a unique has set an emulating Chamber of Commerce example of rendering public precedent for the coming Coordination Committee service. President Sargodha government.

that neither any Chief Minister has done such a huge amount of work since the inception of Pakistan nor "we have seen such an amount of work being done by any other"

President Federation Pakistan Women Chambers said that Mohsin Naqvi before the the well-being of the completion of his tenure has set an emulating

# **Exports increase by** 7.89 % to \$17.7bln in 7 months

per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.400 and was sold at Rs.215,500 on The exports from the Wednesday compared to its country witnessed an sale at Rs. 215,100 on the during the first seven The price of 10 grams months of the current of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.343 to Rs.184,756 fiscal year (2023-34) compared to the from Rs184,413 whereas the corresponding period of prices of 10 gram 22 karat last year, the Pakistan gold went up to Rs.169,360

Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. According to the latest PBS data, exports

ISLAMABAD (APP): from the country increased up to \$17.782 billion during July-January (2023increase of 7.89 percent 24) as against the exports of \$16.481 billion in July-January (2022-23), showing a growth of 7.89 percent.

On the other hand, imports into the country declined by 14.11 percent to \$30.949 billion this year against the imports of \$36.034 billion last year.

exporting dry fruits, and agricultural products to Pakistan and added both countries should do business in more products as they have good potential

He assured that his

Pakistan should visit Kyrgyzstan to explore joint ventures and business partnerships, said a press release issued here. The ambassador said that Independent

Thursday February 08, 2024

# **Governor urges masses** to exercise right to vote

#### Appeals people to maintain brotherhood in election

democracy.

Pakhtunkhwa

PESHAWAR Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali has urged the masses to participate in the enforcers are fully electoral process abiding by the norms of democracy and respecting the electoral rights of each other.

In a message issued here in connection with general elections, the KP Governor also urged the masses to cooperate with the administration, police and polling staff for the peaceful conduct of the electoral process.

He said that KP people had always expressed mutual respect in elections and hoped that the election would be environment completed in the province brotherhood during this in an atmosphere of peace democratic process on and mutual coexistence. election day and extending day in a KP Governor advised full cooperation to the environment.

arrangements have been completed by Election

Commission of Pakistan

for free and transparent

election in Khyber Pakthunkhwa where over

21.928 million registered

voters would decide fate of

713 candidates contesting

for national assembly seats

provincial assembly seats

on Thursday (tomorrow).

Spokesman told APP on

Wednesday that all arrangements for February

8, 2024 general election

were completed in Khyber

Pakthunkhwa including

merged tribal districts where over 1,80,000 trained

polling staff were deployed

He said that there are

for polling duties.

Commission

Provincial Election

(PEC)

process.

**PEC KP says:** 

All arrangements for

election completed

15, 696 polling stations for

21.928mn voters setup in KP

(APP): the masses to remain administration, police, security agencies and polling staff. patient and avoid creating unnecessary rush in polling

stations. He said that law In a statement issued here on Wednesday, the KP Governor said that the prepared to meet any untoward incident adding election is a democratic that political workers process and it is the should respect the tradition of Khyber democratic rights of each Pakhtunkhwa to maintain other and maintain a peaceful, conducive and decorum and discipline pleasant environment on during elections keeping in election the polling station view the basic norms of and the people of the province will have to Governor Khyber maintain this wonderful Haji tradition.

Ghulam Ali has appealed The governor said that everyone has the right to the people of the province to complete the to use their opinion and election process peacefully expressed the hope that by maintaining the the leaders, and youth workers of different of political parties in the polling camp will spend the day in a friendly

**PO** among three and PK-108. accused held

MULTAN (APP): А proclaimed offender (PO) among the three accused was arrested with as many motorbikes recovered from their possession.

police source, a team of muhafiz squad registered as number- 5 stopped a suspected

While checking the identification through E police app, it was discovered that the motorbike was stolen and its case number 2029/2023 registered with Basti Maluk police station.

**MPA's car** PESHAWAR (APP): Atleast five people were injured in an IED blast near car of former MPA Naseer Ullah Wazir in South Vaziristan.

According to police all the injured were shifted

LAHORE: Punjab's Election Commissioner Ijaz Anwar Chohan talking with media persons at University of Engineering, in Provincial Capital.

## NA-43 Tank anticipates exciting electoral battle

PESHAWAR (APP): In diversity. diversity. The constituency boasts 353 the upcoming 2024 general elections, the Tank district polling stations.

The influential tribe is gearing up for fierce association of Bettani, Jattatar, Kundi, Gandapur, competition in the National Assembly constituency NA-43 Ďera-cum-Tank Marwat and Mehsud holds considerable sway in the This constituency district.

Three prominent comprises one seat in the candidates are vying for the NA-43 seat including Assembly consists of two tehsils of Dera Ismail Khan Kulachi Maulana Asad Mahmood Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, and Paharpur areas and one Dawar Khan Kundi

Tehreek-e-Insaf, Abdullah Nangyal Bettani Indipendent and Muhammad Ramzan Shori Tehreek-e-Labbaik NA-43 is marked by its Pakistan.

#### **Minister Information says: Arrangements finalized** for general elections

Response Force had also **Independent Report** been deployed to meet any PESHÁWAR: Provincial emergency in an effective Caretaker Minister for way. He said that steps had Information, Barrister Feroze Jamal Kakakhel been taken for security of sensitive polling station Wednesday said that all the adding that about 15000 necessary arrangements polling stations had been had been completed for established among which general elections that was some are declared sensitive. the mandate of caretaker The minister said that government. Addressing a

strict action would be taken press conference here, the that were planning to minister said that control challenge of state. Regretting rooms had been established May 9 incident, he said that by election commission. youth were misguided on the home department and day by certain elements to police to monitor the fulfill their nefarious He said that Quick designs.

International News

election process.

# National News

**KP CS reviews** 

arrangements

for general

elections

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief

Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem

Aslam Chaudhry along with

IG Police Akhtar Hayat

Khan, Additional Secretary

Home Abid Majeed and

Commissioner Peshawar

Muhammad Zubair visited

the office of Provincial

Election Commissioner

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.He

reviewed the preparations

with reference to general

elections and polling

materials. The Provincial

Election Commissioner

briefed the delegation about

monitoring and control

room established in the

office.On this occasion,

Joint Provincial Election

Bahadur gave a detailed

2.6 mln people

to cast votes

in Sargodha

SARGODHĀ (APP): A

total of 2,668,700 voters

are set to exercise their right

to vote for five National

Assembly and ten

Provincial Assembly seat of

general election 2024 in

According to a spokesman

for ECP office Sargodha,a

total of 1,417,495 male

voters and 1,251,205

female voters would cast

their votes on February 08.

Sargodha

district.

Aziz

the

Commissioner

briefing about monitoring system.

Page 03

## **Rasool Bangash says: ECNEC** approved two projects for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

**Independent Report** PESHAWAR: Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) approved two projects for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Caretaker Finance Minister Ahmed Rasool Bangash. K h y b e r Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker

restoration

meeting (ECNEC)

infrastructure.

views while representing

the province while

participating in a Zoom

Committee of National Economic Council in his office on Wednesday. Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development Imtiaz Hussain Shah, Finance Secretary Aamir Sultan Tareen and other officials have participated in the meeting.

In the meeting, ECNIC approved PC-1 of Minister for Finance, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Excise Taxation and Narcotics Control Ahmed Rural Roads Development Project (KP-RRDP) with Rasool Bangash has said the cooperation of Asian that every possible effort Development Bank (ADB), in which 1337 km is being made to provide basic facilities to the of roads and 62 bridges are people of the province and planned. The total cost of possible measures are being the project is Rs. 105.45 taken for the development billion, of which 13.5% is of the province and the provincially shares and 86.5% is ADB funded. of He expressed these

The project will provide access to rural areas, upgradation and rehabilitation of floodregarding affected roads will be made possible.

## Journalists under RUDA LHC seeks reply from respondents on petition against allotment of plots

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has sought reply from the respondents on March 13 in respect of the petition filed against allotment of plots to the journalists under Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA)

The court did not ssue stay order regarding allotment of plots to journalists in its written order.

The court however made RUDA advertisement conditional with final decision of the court.

Justice Tanvir Ahmad issued written order of Tuesday hearing on the petition of information department employees Khawaja Muhammad Sami Ullah, Muhammad Rafiq and others.

The counsel of the has been given.

petitioners told the court Punjab Journalist Housing Foundation (PJHF) is an institution. institution works under Information department. The mandate of PJHF is working for the welfare of journalists. The forum mandate is to provide plots to journalist s free of cost and without profit.

The counsel for the petitioners told the court under rules the quota of employees of Information Department on this forum has been earmarked in 2004 law. Issuing forms is job of PJHF.

The counsel for petitioners told the court RUDA is development authority. It has nothing to do with it.

The court inquired what is your objection over the persons to whom quota

continued heavy fighting in

Khan Yunis forced many

more to seek refuge in

International Federation of

Red Cross and Red Cres-cent Societies (IFRC) re-

Della Longa from the

PESHAWAR (APP): All of votes in KP including merged tribal districts. Similarly, 4,180 polling stations were set up for male, 4,287 polling stations for female and motorbike. 6600 collective polling stations in Khyber Pakthunkhwa, he said, adding that 4,178 polling stations were declared and 1,814 candidates of highly sensitive and 5,925 sensitive where police and security personnel would

be deployed for smooth conduct of the election As per ECP's Code of Conduct, there would be a

ban on complete electioneering and persuading voters within 400 meter distance of the polling stations and only polling camps of the polling parties could be established at 400 meters

over 11.944383 million distance in rural areas and male and 99,83,737 million 100 meters in urban areas female who exercise right of the province. to hospital.

in the Provincial Assembly. With a total of 392,214 registered voters, According to a including 214,790 men and 177,424 women, the electoral landscape in

National

**Five injured** in IED blast on former

# US lawmakers reject \$17.6 billion Israel aid bill

ahead

victory

lawmakers voted Tuesday to reject a standalone Israel aid bill denounced by critics as a "cynical" bid to thwart a cross-party border security and foreign assistance package that would include cash for wartorn Ukraine.

Republicans in the House of Representatives scheduled the vote after the Democratic-led Senate released a bipartisan bill Sunday pairing billions of dollars for Israel and Ukraine with some of the strictest immigration curbs in decades.

But support for that \$118 billion package has dwindled, with Donald Trump—who is running for a second White House term—pressuring Republi-cans to avoid handing Presi-

standalone Israel bill would have provided \$17.6 billion in military aid for the country, which is strongly supported by the vast majority of lawmakers in both parties as it responds to the deadly October 7 attacks by Hamas militants. But 167 Democrats

voted no after Biden had threatened to wield his veto, angered that the legis-

U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-

NY) listens to questions during the weekly Demo-

cratic Caucus lunch press conference at the U.S.

**Russian missile** 

Capitol building in Washington, U.S.

KYIV (Internews): Russia

launched missile strikes on

Kviv and other Ukrainian

cities during Wednesday

morning's rush hour, killing

three people, injuring at

least a dozen more and set-

ting blazes across the capi-

tal, Ukrainian officials said. President Volodymyr

Zelenskiy said that two

people had been killed in the

capital Kyiv and one per-

"Another massive at-

son in Mykolayiv in the

south of the country.

WASHINGTON (INP): US dent Joe Biden a legislative ter months of negotiations of with a bipartisan group of November's election. senators.

Republican House The standalone bill was also opposed by 13 Republicans as it did not Speaker Mike Johnson said after the border and foreign contain budgetary offsets aid bill was unveiled that it would be "dead on arrival" that conservatives have if it reached the lower chambeen pushing for with every proposal for new ber of Congress. The spending. One of Johnson's first actions when he took office in the fall was to shepherd a bill through the House that would have provided \$14.3 billion to Israel But it included steep cuts to the Internal Revenue

Service, which Biden opposed. The ultra-conservative House Freedom Caucus

blasted Johnson for "surlation appeared aimed at rendering" to pressure for undermining the larger an even larger package package, hammered out af- which is not offset by cuts.

#### Miss Japan gives up crown after affair TOKYO (INP): The Miss

Japan crown will remain unclaimed this year after its Ukraine-born winner relinquished the title over reports of an affair she had with a married doctor.

Star Nasia, while the other targeted the British ship Karolina Shiino's Morning Tide". The Houthis "will nomination in January first sparked debate after some carry out more military right-wingers questioned the Miss Japan title being

awarded to a naturalised Japanese citizen. Then a scandal erupted over her private life after the weekly Shukan Bunshun magazine reported on her extra-marital relationship—a no-no for beauty pageant contestants, who are held to squeaky-clean moral standards. Japanese entertainment personalities who have affairs, dabble in drugs or suffer other scandals also often find themselves shunned by their fans and employers. The Miss Japan

Association said it had accepted a request from Shiino to return the crown for "personal reasons" adding that there would be no Miss Japan for 2024.

European Foreign Shiino said she wanted policy chief Josep Borrell "deeply apologise" to who is in Kyiv on a twothose involved, including tack against our state. Six day visit to underline the regions were under the EU's support for Ukraine. the man's wife.



People gather to inspect the remains of a wrecked police vehicle that was destroyed by reported Israeli bombardment at Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip.

## Houthis claim fresh **Red Sea ship attacks**

gets" in self-defence, Saree Monitoring Desk warned on X, formerly DUBAI: Yemen's Houthi rebels said on Tuesday they had struck US and British Twitter.

Security firm Ambrey ships in two attacks in the had initially reported a Red Sea, the latest among drone attack on a Britishowned cargo ship off dozens of incidents that Yemen but later said a prohave disrupted global shipping. Houthi spokesperson jectile had targeted the Barbados-flagged vessel. Yahya Saree said the first It was launched from

attack on Tuesday "tara small boat sighted near the geted the American ship ship, Ambrey said, adding that the projectile did not impact the ship but exploded nearby, causing minor damage. There were no casualties among the crew,

operations against all hostile American-British tarthe British firm said. **Palestinians hope Blinken** visit can deliver Gaza

truce before Rafah assault Blinken's meeting DOHA (Internews): The top U.S. diplomat met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Saudi Arabia's de-facto ruler on Monday during a

lasted about two hours. Middle East visit Palestin-State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said Blinken and the ians hope will clinch a truce before a threatened Israeli assault on Rafah, a border crown prince had discity where about half the cussed regional coordina-Gaza Strip population is tion to achieve "an enduring end" to the crisis.

sheltering. Secretary of State Antony Blinken ar-'The Secretary underscored the importance rived in Rivadh at the start of his first trip to the re-gion since Washington of addressing humanitarian needs in Gaza and preventbrokered an offer, with Ising further spread of the conflict," Miller said in a raeli input, for the first extended ceasefire of the war. statement.

#### Nikki Haley campaign requests Secret Service after security incidents WASHINGTON (Internews): Republican presidential contender Nikki Haley, the last remaining rival to Donald Trump in the primary race, has requested U.S. Secret Service protection, the

campaign said on Monday. While the campaign did not disclose any specific threats that prompted the request, Haley, the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, was targeted in two "swatting" incidents, once on Dec. 30 and once on Jan. 1.

#### 100,000-year-old human footprints found in Morocco **Monitoring Desk**

LARACHE: Archaeologists in Morocco have unearthed more than 80 human footprints dating back around 100,000 vears and believed to be the oldest in North Africa

The footprints, probably left by five homo sapiens, including children, were discovered on the coast of Larache, a city 90 kilometres south of Tangier, by archaeologists from Morocco, Spain, France, and Germany.

#### **UN calls Rafah invasion** war crime; Hamas responds to truce offer fied hostilities in Rafah in

Monitoring Desk this situation could lead to NITED NATIONS: The N aid coordination office a large-scale loss of civilian lives, and we must do ev-(OCHA) warned on Tueserything possible within our day that Israel's invasion of the densely populated southern city of Rafah power to avoid that, Laerke said. He urged the international community to would constitute a war make every possible effort to avoid such a scenario as

"We, as the UN and member states, can bear witness," OCHA spokesperson Jens Laerke told journalists. "We can make it clear that under international humanitarian law, indiscriminate bombing of densely populated areas may amount to war

ported that 8,000 Gazans had left Al Amal hospital crimes. after Israeli authorities guar-anteed safe passage. The The concerns arose as OCHA reported an "increase in strikes" in Rafah IFRC spokesperson described the situation in governorate, with thou-Gaza as "beyond cata-strophic," mourning the death of aid worker Hedaya sands of Gazans seeking refuge in the city, including those fleeing intense fighting in Khan Yunis. Hamad from the Palestine "To be clear, intensi- Red Crescent Society.

Rafah.

# Hamas proposes 135-day Gaza truce with complete Israeli withdrawal

DOHA (Online): Hamas mediators. proposed a ceasefire to quiet the guns in Gaza for four-and-a-half months, during which all hostages would go free, Israel would withdraw its troops from the Gaza Strip and an agreement would be reached on an end to the war.

Israel's government spokesman said Israel was studying the offer intently, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu due to hold a news conference later on Wednesday. Israel's Channel 13

TV quoted an unidentified official as saying some aspects were not acceptable and officials were debating whether to reject the proposal or seek modifications.

The Hamas offer, the reported by Reuters, is a response to an earlier proposal drawn up by U.S. and İsraeli spy chiefs and delivered to Hamas last week

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken discussed the offer with Netanyahu after arriving in Israel following talks with the leaders of Qatar and Egypt, the countries that have acted as mediators in the conflict.

There remain major gaps between the two sides: Israel has previously said it will not pull its troops out of Gaza or end the war until Hamas is wiped out. But sources described Hamas as taking a new approach to its longstanding demand to end the war, now proposing this as an issue to be resolved in future talks rather than a pre-condition for the truce.

A source close to the negotiations said the Hamas contents of which were first counterproposal did not require a guarantee of a permanent ceasefire at the outset, but that an end to the war would have to be agreed before final hostages by Qatari and Egyptian were freed.

strikes on Ukrainian cities kills three enemy's strike. All our services are now working to cope with the consequences of this terror," Zelenskiy said on the Telegram messaging app. The Ukrainian air defence shot down 44 missiles and drones out of 64 launched by Russia in several waves of the attack

said Valeriy Zaluzhnyi

Ukraine's armed forces

commander.

#### Daily **Independent**, Hub



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo during his visit to the office of the Wafaqi Mohtasib **Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan says:** 

## ECP declares 16,766 polling stations highly sensitive, 29,985 sensitive

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has declared 16,766 polling stations highly sensitive and 29,985 as sensitive in the general elections across the country due to the prevailing security situation in those districts.

"The Returning Of-ficer, Presiding and Assistant Officers have been delegated first-class magistrate to control the law and order situation at the polling stations, while Pakistan Army will be deployed outside the most sensitive polling stations," the ECP spokesman told APP.

The spokesman said that the ECP will use Elec-tion Management System shifts round the clock.



**QUETTA: Provincial Secretary Health Abdullah** khan and CEO PPHI Hameedullah Khan Nasir inaugurate BHU Model at Kechi Baig.

#### Aircraft carrying Pakistan's humanitarian aid for Gaza people arrives in Egypt ISLAMABAD (APP): A for their onward delivery

special aircraft carrying 100 to Gaza. tons of relief goods donated This brings the total by Pakistan for the suffer- humanitarian assistance deing people of Gaza arrived in Egypt on Wednesday. The plane carrying the fifth tranche of Pakistan's humanitarian assistance consisting of winterized tents, tarpaulins and blankets landed at El-Arish International Airport of Egypt The relief goods were received by the senior dip- tarian needs of the people lomatic officials of Pakistan of Gaza.

(EMS) to transmit and edit the results of the general elections, adding that no decision was taken yet to shut down the internet anywhere on Election Day.

"As many as 90,675 polling stations and 266,398 polling booths have been established across the country to ensure the right of the people to vote, while 1,490,000 election staffers will perform their duties of polling staff," he added.

Wednesday He said the ECP has In an official condemalready fixed the election ation issued here on duties of the officers and Wednesday, the Chief Minemployees for the general ister expressed deep grief polls across the country, and sorrow over the loss of under which the staffers precious lives in the two will perform duties in two

several persons. He also sought report of the subversive acts from provincial Home depart-

He directed to the law enforcement agencies to mobilize all available resources for arrest of the elements involved in the ter-

said that the subversive acts

Zardari flay terrorist incidents

KARACHI (APP): Paki stan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday strongly condemned terrorist incidents in Qila

Salfullah and Pishin areas o

covery of the injured.

Bilawal said the crimi-

2 injured in

blast near

**PTI MP** 

candidate

OUTH WAZIRISTAN

Online): Blast is reported

to have taken place near

vehicle of Nasirullah Wazir

candidate of PTI Parlia-

mentarian from PK-110

been injured in bomb blast

who have been shifted to

hospital. Nasir Ullah was

not present in his car at the

time of explosion. Nasir Ullah is former

MPA and candidate from PTI Parliamentarian.

Two persons have

South Waziristan.

allowed to sabotage peaceful environment of Balochistan are conspiracy to disrupt **Independent Report** the peaceful election pro-QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, cess in the province.

Mir Ali Mardan Khan He directed to the LEAs to take those in-Domki has condemned the volved in the blasts to task explosions took place in On the other hand, he Pishin and Killa Saifullah districts which claimed asked the voters to not be

lives of several persons and scared of the situation and come out of their homes to left many injured on use their right of franchise. He assured that the security arrangements are

Subversive acts in Killa Saifullah,

Pishin conspiracy to sabotage

peaceful election process

Governor strongly condemns blasts: says no one would be

being improved further, and adding he vowed to stop the subversive acts. He expressed sympa-

thy and condolence with plasts and injuries caused to those died in the two blasts and prayed for the departed souls

He also prayed for early recovery of the injured of blasts.

Meanwhile the Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan has condemned the blasts occurred in Killa Saifullah and Pishin in strongest words.

praying for early recovery In an official stateof those injured in them.

of

Balochistan



**Education and Professional Training Madad Ali** 

Over 596,000 Army, CAFs

& Police personnel to

perform election security

Wednesday.

vironment.

Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

ISLAMABAD (APP): As

the cool breezes of the out-

going winter season add flavour to the bright sunny

days, the country's po-

litical fate is going to be

decided on Thursday in

the General Elections

2024 with over 596,000 Army, Civil Armed

Forces and Police person-

nel being deployed across the country to

maintain law and order

for the smooth and fair elec-

sonnel of Army, Civil

Armed Forces and Police

will perform election duty

to maintain law and order

situation in the country,

growth, and its interna-

tional environment and vari-

ous resources are unique

advantages that have helped

official sources said on election duty.

(APP):

**Pakistani youth** 

lauds Beijing's

**Intl environment** 

Å total of 596,618 per-

toral process.

## Thursday February 08, 2024

# <u>President Dr. Alvi briefed:</u> Wafaqi Mohtasib resolves 193,028 complaints; provides relief Rs4.898bn

ISLAMABAD (APP): Wafaqi Mohtasib has resolved a total of 193,028 complaints against the maladministration of government departments and provided relief worth Rs 4.898 billion to the citizens during 2023 The Mohtasib pro-cessed a record 194,099

complaints during 2023, with processing witnessing a surge of 18 per cent, while the disposal of complaints increased by 22 per cent, as compared to 2022.

ment issued here on

Wednesday, the Governor

asserted that no one would

be allowed to sabotage the

peaceful environment of

He exhorted the law

the province at any cost.

enforcement agencies to

take prompt steps against

those elements creating law

and order situation and trv-

ing to disrupt the election

enforcers to foil the nefari-

ous designs of miscreants

who want to spread fear

and harassment on occasion

rected to the concerned au-

thorities to provide best

possible medical treatment

to the injured of Killa Saifullah and Pishin blasts.

parted souls of those died

in the two blasts besides

He prayed for the de-

He also urged the law

the elections in

The Governor di-

process in the province.

Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Ejaz Ahmad

Dr Arif Alvi who visited the office of Wafaqi Mohtasib on Wednesday. The president had a briefing on the com-plaints received and resolved by the Ombudsman to ensure prompt relief to citizens during the year 2023, President Secretariat Press Wing of Wafaqi Mohtasib's decisaid in a press release. sions were implemented

Briefing the president, the federal ombudsman highlighted the role and performance of the institution. He informed that

193,028 complaints were addressed in 2023, with monetary relief of Rs 4.898 48,190 complaints regis-

Qureshi briefed President billion provided to the tered online in 2023, mark ing an increase of 47 per complainants. Furthercent from 2022. Similarly, more, on the recommendations of Wafaqi Mohtasib, as many as 18,000 street 2,321 complaints were received through children were enrolled in Mohtasib's mobile App in 2023, representing a 21 per government schools in Islamabad. The meeting was informed that 85.4 percent

cent increase from 2022 The meeting was also briefed on the Integrated Complaint Resolution System, processing 18,469 complaints in 2023, alonglast year, with efforts underway to further improve the ratio of the implemenside Mohtasib's teams contation. It was stated that the ducting Khuli Kutcheries increased use of technology and inspection visits to adin Mohtasib had enhanced dress people's grievances people's accessibility, with against government agencies



LAHORE: PakArmy soldiers patrol a road to ensure security ahead of general election, in Provincial Capital.

## **Speakers uphold self-determination** at Pak-sponsored event, stressing its integral to freedom

NATIONS attended event, which was UNITED sponsored by Pakistan, in (APP): Pakistan Tuesday told a gathering of diploconnection with Kashmir Solidarity Day. The topic mats and rights advocates at the U.N. that the right of of discussion was "Chalself-determination will not lenges to the realization of be fulfilled until all peoples the Right to Self-Determination in the Contemporary who are under foreign occupation or settler-colo-Global Context", with speakers from all regions of nialism, especially Palestine and Kashmir, are able the world upholding that inalienable right pf peoples struggling for freedom. to exercise that right. "The right of self-de-

termination is bedrock of the modern international the Ambassador Kashmiris and other opsystem," Munir Akram said, warnpressed people will ultiing that historically a colomately secure their right to nial power has never sucself-determination and freeceeded in suppressing the dom as most of us have right of self-determination done through the process of decolonization," the Pakiof a determined people. Ambassador Åkram

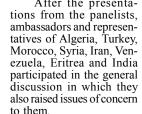
was speaking at a largely-

stani envoy said. EC not using

determination event were: Ms. Fionnuala NiAolain, a professor at the University of Minnesota and former UN rights expert; Ambassador Maged Abdelaziz, permanent observer of the Arab League at the UN: Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, Chairman of the World Forum for Peace and Justice, and Hameed Ajibaiye, perma-nent observer for OIC at the UN

After the presentations from the panelists, ambassadors and representatives of Algeria, Turkey, Morocco, Syria, Iran, Venezuela, Éritrea and India participated in the general discussion in which they also raised issues of concern

We are confident that Palestinians, the



Panelists at the Self- to them.

**Gwadar DC seeks** 

rorism incidents. The Chief Minister **Bilawal.** 

Balochistan. livered by Pakistan for The two leaders sympeople of Gaza to 330 tons, pathized with the families Pakistan's Embassy in of those who lost their lives Egypt said on its X timeline. in the bomb blasts and prayed for the speedy re-

Further deliveries are in the pipeline and will be delivered soon, it added. This ongoing support underscores Pakistan's

nals involved in cowardly acts of terrorism should not continued commitment to be spared and urged federal addressing urgent humaniand Balochistan governments to arrest them at the earliest.



QUETTA: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Balochistan Chief, Maulana Abdul Wasay addresses to media persons during press conference.

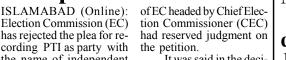
## **Ballot papers** EC rejects plea for recording **PTI** with name of independent candidate

Election Commission (EC) has rejected the plea for recording PTI as party with the name of independent candidate on ballot papers.

The reserved judgment on PTI candidate Suleman Akram Raja has been announced.

candidate PTI Suleman Akram Raja had prayed to EC to record name of PTI against independent candidates of PTI IN form 33.

were formally congratulated



It was said in the decision issued by EC on Wednesday that election symbol was withdrawn for not holding intra party elec-

tion. The decision said Supreme Court has upheld EC decision. Therefore, the plea for recording name of party along with name of candidate in form 33 can-A five member bench not be allowed.



ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan High Commissioner in Malaysia Syed Ahsan Raza Shah met Director General Immigration Dato Ruslin bin Jusoh in Kuala umpur.

During the meeting the high commissioner raised immigration-related issues of Pakistani nationals in Malaysia.

told China Daily.

"I have studied my high school, bachelor and Both sides agreed to



voters scored out from the **Corruption Department.** electoral rolls in the relevant

any internet or public net:

Election Commission (EC) is not using any internet or public net and private net work is being used for re-

The beefed-up secu-This was said by EC rity arrangements for Gen-DG IT Khizar Aziz while eral Elections 2024 have talking to private TV chanbeen ensured for peaceful nel here Wednesday.

conduct of the polls. Some He said RTS is not 106,942 personnel of the being used this time. We Quick Response Force have hold out assurance to nabeen deployed across the tion Election Management country at the request of the System (EMS) is a special Election Commission of software. EMS has been Pakistan to conduct the provided to office of 859 Elections in a peaceful en-Returning Officers (ROs) 4 data entry operators, 4 laptops and IT Equipment Besides, 23,940 security personnel will be have been provided in RO permanently on duty during the elections, office.

He held EMS has been whereas as many as installed in mobile phones 130,882 personnel of the of Presiding Officers. Pakistan Army and Civil Presiding officer will take Armed Forces will be on picture of form 45 and send it to RO. If signals are not coming then form 45 will automatically reach RO whenever signals come.

#### FM holds separate meetings with Norwegian, Australian envoys

ISLAMABAD (APP) Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Wednesday held separate meetings with Ambassador of Norway to Pakistan Per

Foreign Affairs Wednesday, posted on its official account on social media plat-

his career development. were very hard working to Albert Ilsaas and Australian build their motherland. "Beijing is almost my High Commissioner in Pasecond home which helped 'At a very young age, I naturally believed that I kistan Neil Hawkins. me to connect with differwill come to China for study. So, in 2005, my two ent multi-national organiza-During these meetngs, the discussions were tions, different people and focused on enhancing eldest sisters and me came to China for study," he talents bringing a very Pakistan's engagement and unique advantages for my added. Currently working at TANG International career development," he cooperation with Norway and Australia, Ministry of Education, he is mainly re-

greatly influenced my

personal growth," he added. Ammar and his five

other family members have

other family members have studied at the Beijing Insti-tute of Technology (BIT), forging an indissoluble bond with Beijing. His father de-cided to bring the family to China after he saw many

pictures in a magazine re-lated to the infrastructure

development of China as he

felt that the Chinese people

dismissal of employees **ÉCDGIT** ISLAMABAD (Online):

skipping election duty GWADAR (INP): Deputy and four provincial assemblies will be held tomorrow.

commissioner Gwadar on The election campaign by Wednesday sought the dismissal of 81 employees, political parties and indewho skipped election duty. pendent candidates concluded across the country last night.

As per details, Gwadar deputy commis-sioner has penned a letter to the Election Commission mission has completed all arrangements for the pollof Pakistan (ECP) to highing. Ninety-thousand six light 81 employees skipping election duties in the hundred and seventy-five polling stations have been area established in all four prov-

The Gwadar DC has recommended dismissal of inces. the 81 employees of different government depart-

did not join the election

of the National Assembly

go for general elections, the

Election Commission of Pa-

kistan (ECP) has issued in-

structions to the presiding

officers (PO) for maintain-

ing Form-45 after the poll-

Form 14, is known as the

statement of the count, ac-

cording to the Election

the number of valid votes

for each contesting candi-

date and ballot papers ex-

cluded from the count. This

form also includes gender-

disaggregated data on the

basis of male and female

Commission of Pakistan.

Form 45, previously

It is supposed to show

ing process concludes.

duty.

sand one hundred and ments over no-show for twenty-one candidates are election duty. Earlier, in Karachi, RO in the run for the National Assembly seats. For the four provincial assemblies, 12695 candiin PS-110 recommended action against the staff, who

dates are in the field. There are a total of 128,585,760 The General Elections registered voters in the countrv

The Election Com-

A total of five thou-



NASEERABAD: Members of Jamote Qaumi Movement are holding protest demonstration against Returning Officer of the Constituency PB-13, held outside Polling Station in Naseerabad.

#### **ECP** issues guidelines for Form-45 ISLAMABAD (INP):

polling booths. With just only one day to

According to the instructions, the electoral watchdog ordered the presiding officers to prepare Form-45 without failing. "The Form 45 must be signed with their CNIC cards, taking signatures of polling agents at the polling stations," it said.

The presiding officers were told to ensure a brief reason in the form for refusal of signatures by the polling agents, pasting the copy of the form outside after their signatures and handing over to the polling agents

The ECP noted that the presiding officers will be responsible for changes in the form

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#### Saudi Minister lauds The DG immigration informed Syed Ahsan Raza about forthcoming initia-Hajj arrangements tives being taken in this regard.

ISLAMABAD (Online): for winning the award. Saudi Minister of Hajj, Dr. It should be noted that Tawfig bin Al-Rabiyyah, on the occasion of the Int'l congratulated the Minis-Hajj Expo held in Jeddah ter of Religious Affairs, last month, Pakistan Hajj Aneeq Ahmed, on his ex-Mission was presented cellent and active performance related to Hajj arrangements. In a letter re-

before February 25

with the award for the best and active Hajj Mission. In his letter, the Saudi ceived by the Saudi Em- Hajj Minister also directed the Pakistani counterpart bassy on Wednesday, Minister of Religious Affairs to complete the service Aneeq Ahmed and his team contracts for the pilgrims