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5th anniversary of 'Operation Swift Retort': Pakistan resolved to safeguard its sovereignty, regional security: PM

Armed forces vow to respond to any aggression against the country

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday said that being a peace-loving country, Pakistan was resolved to safeguard its sovereignty and regional security.

The prime minister, in a message on the fifth anniversary of the Operation Swift Retort, paid tributes to the professional capability and resolve of the Pakistan's armed forces.

On February 27, 2019, the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) had shot down two Indian planes that had violated Pakistani airspace. One of the Indian pilots was captured by Pakistan, but was later handed over as a gesture of peace.

The prime minister said that the Pakistani

armed forces had proved their operational superiority falsifying the Indian claims.

"No one should have doubt that Pakistan is a peace-loving country that was determined to protect its sovereignty as well as the regional security," he remarked.

The prime minister reiterated the resolve that Pakistan would forcefully respond to any aggression against it.

INP adds: On the fifth anniversary of 'Operation Swift Retort', Pakistan's armed forces have vowed to respond to any aggression against the people of Pakistan, the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity with "full might and without any

hesitation".

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A press release issued by the army's media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) today, said: "Feb 27, 2019, marked a significant event in our history, demonstrating the resolve of the people of Pakistan and the professionalism of the armed forces in response to unwarranted aggression from India, motivated by political considerations and electoral concerns.

During the course of meeting, caretaker Chief Minister appreciated the services of officers and other staffers of the CM secretariat during the duration of interim government.

He also distributed shields and commendation certificates among the officers of CM secretariat.

Domki holds farewell meeting with CM Sectt: officers and staff

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki held farewell meeting with the officers, staff and security personnel at the Chief Minister's secretariat on Tuesday.

During the course of meeting, caretaker Chief Minister appreciated the services of officers and other staffers of the CM secretariat during the duration of interim government.

He also distributed shields and commendation certificates among the officers of CM secretariat.

Murad Ali Shah sworn in as Sindh CM

KARACHI (APP): The newly elected Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday took oath of the office at the Governor House.

Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori administered the oath to him as the 38th Chief Minister in an impressive ceremony.

Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, outgoing Caretaker Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar, Chief Secretary Fakhr-e-Alam, provincial secretaries, PPP leaders and dignitaries attended the ceremony.

Murad Ali Shah got 112 votes of the Sindh Assembly members in the election for chief minister on Monday.

This is the third time he has become the chief minister. Earlier, he remained the Sindh chief executive from July 30, 2016 to May 28, 2016, and August 18, 2018 to August 17, 2023.

Pakistan Army shoots down Indian spy quadcopter

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Army has shot down Indian spying quadcopter that intruded into country's airspace along the Line of Control.

Pakistani forces at 12:55 pm on Sunday last shot down an Indian Army quadcopter that was spying in the area near LoC, says in media reports. It is pertinent to mention that the remains of the quadcopter were found yesterday.

An insignia of the Indian Army can be seen in the pictures which confirms that the quadcopter belongs to the Indian Army.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki addressing staff of CM Secretariat during a farewell meeting

62 newly elected MPAs likely to take oath: First session of 12th BA to be held today

Governor nominates MPA-elect Zamarak Khan Achakzai as Presiding Officer for today's session

Independent Report

Quetta: The first session of 12th Balochistan Assembly is scheduled to be held today (Wednesday) at the Assembly's Hall here.

The newly elected MPA from PB-50, Killa Abdullah, Mr. Zamarak Khan Achakzai would administer the oath to the newly elected members of the assembly at maiden session of the newly formed assembly.

The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has nominated Zamarak Khan Achakzai as the Presiding Officer for taking oath from the newly elected members of assembly, as per the notification issued here by

the Governor Secretariat the other day.

In case of absence of Mr. Achakzai, MPA-elect, Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani would administer oath to the newly elected members of assembly.

As many as 62 members of assembly are likely to take oath in the today's session. It may be mentioned here that the Balochistan's provincial assembly had come into being under a Presidential Order on 30th March, 1970, after dissolution of one unit and declaring Balochistan as a separate province.

The first election of Balochistan Provincial Assembly was held on 17th December, 1970 with 21 members in its fold, com-

prising of 20 general seats and one reserved for women.

First session of the Balochistan Assembly comprising of 21 members was held on 2nd May, 1972 at the Historic Shahi Jirga Hall (Town Hall), Quetta.

Mr. Muhammad Khan Barozai and Molvi Shamsud-Din were elected as Speaker and Deputy Speaker, respectively. Sardar Attaullah Mengal served as the first House Leader and Mr. Ghous Bakhsh Raisani as the Leader of Opposition.

Balochistan Provincial Assembly has witnessed Eleven (11) General Elections since then, growing in size to its present membership of 65 with the ratio of 51 General, 11 women and 3 minority seats.



On job training of Royal Saudi Land Forces with Pakistan Army concludes in Multan.

Political leaders' support for reconciliation has greater impact in fostering peace: Info Minister

Govt, international institutions, grassroots organizations contributing uniquely for peace promotion

ISLAMABAD (Online): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi has said



significance at a time when Pakistan is facing economic, political, environmental and other challenges.

Murtaza Solangi further said the media, being an agent of change, has a greater role in challenging extremist ideologies and championing inclusivity as well as amplifying voices of moderation and facilitating dialogue in the society.

He also appreciated the role of US Embassy in Islamabad for initiating measures for sustainable peace and conflict prevention in the Pakistani society.

APP adds: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Tuesday that the Government of Pakistan, international institutions and grassroots organizations had been contributing uniquely for promoting peace, tolerance, and harmony in the country.

Training of Royal Saudi Land Forces with Pak Army concludes

RAWALPINDI (Online): Closing Ceremony of "On Job Training of Royal Saudi Land Forces with Pakistan Army" was held at Multan.

The training was conducted from 15 January to 26 February 2024 with a view to foster joint employment and benefiting from each other's experiences, while further consolidating longstanding fraternal relations between Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The training which encompassed conventional as well as sub-conventional operations, culminated with field manoeuvre & battle inoculation exercise, employing air and ground forces.

Commander Multan Corps witnessed the exercise as Chief Guest. The Chief Guest expressed satisfaction over mutual understanding and the training standards achieved.

President Alvi to face dual constitution violation charges, says Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday asserted President Arif Alvi will face dual constitution violation charges after his retirement.

Talking to media men outside the Supreme Court after hearing of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's presidential reference, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said President Arif Alvi is "violating" the constitution of Pakistan by denying summoning the NA session for the swearing-in of the new lawmakers.

It's a constitutional requirement to summon NA session by February 29, Bilawal said and added the president is denying discharging his duties.

The PPP leader said they will replace Arif Ali as president after the swear-

ing-in of the new house and he will face dual constitution violation cases including one of dissolving the assembly despite VONC motion and another of denying calling the session of the lower house of the parliament.

Criticising the PTI founder, Bilawal Bhutto said the man who is incarcerated in Adiala Jail is not ready to learn from his mistakes. "PPP too made mistakes but one has to learn from it."

He urged everyone to exercise their power in their respective constitutional domain and underlined the need for respecting each other despite political differences, as this is the only way forward to steer the country out of crises.

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia agree to further enhance defence ties



RAWALPINDI (APP): Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force called on General Fayyadh bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili, Chief of the General Staff, Saudi Armed Forces and His Royal Highness Lieutenant General Turki Bin Bandar bin Abdul Aziz, Commander of the Royal Saudi Air Forces, during his visit to Saudi Arabia.

Meetings were focused upon further promoting Pak-Saudi defence ties, particularly between the two Air Forces through joint military exercises and technological collaboration.

During the visit, the Air Chief was awarded King Abdul Aziz Badge of Honor of the Excellent Class by Chief of the General Staff, Saudi Armed Forces.

Rain wreaks havoc in Gwadar, inundates entire coastal town

Residents forced to leave their houses as urban flooding brings life to halt in Gwadar, with streets, shops completely submerged; Caretaker CM grieved over flood situation in Gwadar, directs to take prompt action

Independent Report

GWADAR: Heavy rains wreaked havoc in Balochistan's coastal city of Gwadar on Tuesday, bringing life to a halt as water completely submerged roads, streets and houses, disrupting the power transmission system after over 15 hours of down-pour, A rain-producing system entered the country through Balochistan on February 25, under which parts of the province and upper areas were expected to receive heavy down-pours and windstorms from today.

The rainwater entered houses and shops, driving people out of their shelters. Videos showed the entire coastal town heavily inundated with rainwater gushing down on the roads and vehicles making their way through knee-deep water.

Meanwhile the caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki expressed sorrow over the situation

caused due to heavy rains in Gwadar and adjoining areas. He also expressed grief over the damages caused due to flood situation in the port city. In view of the critical situation, Chief Minister directed to the concerned authorities to take prompt measures to provide relief to dwellers.

The Chief Minister said that the continuous rain created extraordinary situation in Gwadar.

He mentioned that the PDMA and district administration are busy in the rescue activities. However, hardships are being faced in carrying out relief activities because the link roads are inundated in the rain water.

The Chief Minister said that necessary directives have been issued to the district administration to provide clean drinking water on emergent basis.

He said that the required machinery has been provided to the rescue teams while people of affected areas are being shifted to the safer places,



GWADAR: View of stagnant rain water after flash flood caused by heavy down-pour of winter season, in Gwadar.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar addressing participants of a ceremony of Pakistan Universities Debating Championship 2023-24 organized by Higher Education Commission at BUTEMS

Governor emphasizes on providing necessary facilities to youth for polishing their hidden potential

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that youth are our precious asset and as such there is a dire need to provide necessary facilities and opportunities to youth so that they are able to polish their hidden potential.

The Governor was addressing the Balochistan Public Sector Universities Debating Championship 2024 organized by the Higher Education Commission at the main auditorium of Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUTEMS)



KARACHI: Governor Sindh, Kamran Khan Tessori administering the oath to the newly-elected Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah.

PTI founder, Bushra Bibi indicted in 190mln pounds financial scandal reference

RAWALPINDI (Online): Judge Nasir Javed Rana of Accountability Court (AC) Islamabad has indicted PTI founder and his wife Bushra Bibi in 190 million pounds financial scandal reference.

The accused while pleading not guilty have rejected the charges.

Upon it court has summoned 5 witnesses of NAB on March 6 for regular trial of reference.

Both of the accused, their lawyers Suleman Safdar, Zahir Abbas Chaudhry and Usman Gill and NAB Deputy Prosecutor General (DPG) were present in the court during the hearing of the case.

The court read out charge sheet to the accused.

The court inquired from the accused you are being indicted. You should tell if you are involved in this case or not.

The former chairman PTI replied what I have to do by reading charge sheet as I know what is written therein. Both the accused pleaded not guilty.

The counsels for the accused while requesting to provide copies of challan again sought 7 days more time.

The court remarked we have already given enough time to you. More time cannot be given.

The counsels for the accused took the plea copies of reference have to be provided 7 days before indictment. Near about 50 documents are such which are not readable despite the fact these documents are of paramount importance with regard to this reference.

The lawyers were of the view we don't want to raise obstructions in the process of indictment.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

New funds

Pakistan plans to seek a new loan of \$6bn from the IMF under its Extended Fund Facility for a period of three years, Bloomberg reported last week, citing unnamed officials. Discussions with the lender on the new facility are expected to begin in March or April, following the completion of the last review of the ongoing nine-month \$3bn Stand-by Arrangement. The latter arrangement with the IMF, which is due to end soon, had helped the country avert default last summer. However, Pakistan's other creditors — multilateral, bilateral, and commercial included — have thus far been reluctant to help the nation shore up its shrinking foreign exchange reserves and improve its external sector outlook, in spite of the present IMF programme. Their reluctance is evident from the fact that only \$6.3bn in foreign loans, or 35.75pc of the annual budgeted target of \$17.6bn, in the first seven months of the present fiscal year to January, has materialised. But it was not unexpected as foreign creditors are waiting for a larger and longer arrangement between Islamabad and the Fund for medium- to long-term reform policy clarity under the elected government. Two of the three top global rating agencies, Moody's and Fitch, recently cautioned that a larger IMF package is crucial to Pakistan's longer-term economic stability and to unlock other foreign inflows to cover the country's annual financing gap of \$22-25bn for some years.

An IMF spokesperson recently said the Fund was ready, if requested, to support the post-election government through a new arrangement to address Pakistan's financing challenges. It, nevertheless, remains unclear if the authorities have started doing their homework towards a quicker conclusion of the deal — billed as being tougher than the current one — with the global lender. The government was compelled to agree to a slew of measures to cut public expenditure, impose additional taxes on corporates and salaried individuals, hike borrowing costs, increase energy rates, etc, to meet IMF goals under the ongoing loan. Coupled with the unannounced import control to curb the dollar outflow, these measures have caused the economy to contract and kept price inflation up, making matters even more difficult for struggling low-middle-income households.

It is also not apparent how far the incoming minority set-up will be ready to go to secure the IMF funds. But it is as clear as day that it would not have much room to manoeuvre while dealing with the lender of last resort, given the nation's vulnerable external position and its need for securing financing from its multilateral and bilateral partners to stabilise and grow the economy and avoid defaulting on its mounting debt. It is also clear that the new government will have no choice but to make difficult and unpopular decisions, no matter what the political costs.

Flawed climate policy

Ajaz Ahmed

Notwithstanding Pakistan's marginal contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions and the country's greater vulnerability to climate change-driven natural disasters, policymakers seem preoccupied with climate mitigation, ie, GHG emission reduction. COP28 refreshed the resolve of countries to achieve the Nationally Determined Contributions; however, the NDC's focus in Pakistan is on climate mitigation. For example, the NDC document has ambitious but impractical aspirations relating to climate mitigation and cost estimates. However, it hardly makes a strong case for climate change adaptation.

In fact, most policy documents on climate change are silent on the expected returns on investment in climate adaptation and their direct and indirect benefits. While focusing on GHG emission reductions is important, Pakistan's current climate policy takes a lopsided view of climate change. Policymakers and planners must understand that what is needed is investment in climate change adaptation, which could protect against the impact of natural disasters driven by climate change.

A poor country's resource-constrained government may invest billions in critical basic infrastructure like roads, schools, and water supply. But one bout of monsoon flooding knocks down what took decades to build. Such damage aggravates the vulnerability of affected communities by impeding their access to resources and services, and results in delayed recovery.

Conversely, access to basic services improves adaptive capacity and builds community resilience, whereas investing in climate adaptation can protect key infrastructure, resulting in mitigating loss and damage and helping avoid the cost of rebuilding. The relinquished resources in terms of avoided cost could be used for high-impact investments in areas such as human resource development.

Investing in climate adaptation is also critical to preventing the aggravation of existing socioeconomic challenges such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, gender disparity, and food insecurity. These challenges often get worse when a natural disaster hits, as the masses are pushed into poverty and hunger. However, climate resilience can save human lives in addition to reducing the economic cost of natural disasters, which cannot be achieved through focusing simply on emission reduction.

Over a third of Pakistan's population is involved in the agriculture sector, which is directly exposed to climate change-driven natural disasters, resulting in serious implications for food security and livelihood of the low-skilled rural population. The 2023 FAO report on the state of food security and nutrition says that over half of Pakistan's population suffers from moderate to severe food insecurity. This underscores the need to protect the agriculture sector against a worse food crisis. Climate change's impact on agriculture also has serious repercussions for industry through its linkages with the sector, which uses agricultural output as an input. This affects industrial output and thereby the overall performance of the economy. Moreover, the

risk also means adverse impacts for aligned businesses such as seeds, agrochemicals, rented machinery, etc.

It is important to highlight that Pakistan has a relatively big informal economy which provides livelihood to a large fraction of low-skilled workers, who mostly comprise poor rural migrants. Climate change-driven natural disasters often destroy small business establishments such as roadside cafes or food stalls, resulting in the masses slipping into poverty and unemployment. One remedy is to climate-proof these small businesses. This can be helpful in the recovery and building of resilience of the domestic economy. It might require only simple actions such as training and information about climate change and extreme weather events.

Lastly, the implementation of climate adaptation has diverse possibilities from the investment point of view. For example, there are several low-cost climate-adaptation options, which could be taken up by households and local communities with minimal institutional support. The use of nature-based adaptation options for temperature and flood management, farmers' capacity development, and timely communication of disaster information are just a few examples. However, implementing climate mitigation is generally high cost and can only be financed by an institution.

It has a minimal potential for climate risk mitigation in the short run. Thus, investing in climate adaptation not only makes economic sense but is, with the more prudent use of scarce resources, also a high-value investment.

-- Courtesy Dawn

Israel's partner

Touqir Hussain

No US policy shames its professed 'value-based foreign policy' as much as its Israel policy. Washington has been effectively sitting on the sidelines in contempt of world public opinion while some 30,000 civilians, mainly women and children, have been slaughtered in Gaza.

Seventy-five years of massive US military aid and financial assistance has been the bedrock of Israel's national power. America's absolute political support, especially its wilful advocacy at the UN, has shielded Israel from punishment for its wrongs, inciting more offences and more US support. Why should the US not be considered complicit in Israel's inhumanity in Gaza?

We are mistaken if we attribute Washington's iron-clad support simply to the work of the Israel lobby (AIPAC). Israel is embedded in America's body politic, where its influence is pervasive and deep-rooted. Granted Washington needs a reliable ally to look after its strategic and economic interests in the Middle East. But over the decades, a bevy of high-profile Israel sympathisers in the think tank community, media and financial world have exaggerated Israel's value as an ally and its vulnerability in the region, to make a case for the policy of endless US support and the risks of putting pressure on Israel.

Not just the executive branch but Congress as well has been over-committed to Israel as pressures of public opinion, largely formed by Israel sympathisers and their Christian right ally, and the lure of campaign funding, orchestrated by AIPAC, have hypnotised American

politicians. Policy and politics have aligned to enhance American support for Israel and diminish Washington's leverage. It is complete confidence in this support that has incited Israel's intransigence.

The blanket US protection and sympathy thus given have enabled Israel to violate Palestinian rights for its unrestrained expansionist policies — without any political cost. Acclaimed Harvard professor Stephen Walt summarised this well in his article 'America is a Root Cause of Israel and Palestine's Latest War' in Foreign Policy.

The Gaza conflict has brought little change to the US position. Joe Biden, known to be the most pro-Israel president ever, has no empathy for the Palestinians. He is taking a minimalist approach by focusing only on the humanitarian issue, and even here, he is not putting enough pressure on Israel. He is fighting a tough election where he is under siege on many fronts: immigration, economy and perceived weakness in meeting foreign policy challenges.

In this fraught environment, the last thing Biden wants is to alienate the majority of voters by pressuring Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu will not yield to pressure anyway, hoping it will cause Biden to lose the Muslim vote in key swing states, and thus lose to Trump, his preferred choice. He may prolong the war till the elections.

To escape the dilemma of whether or not to put pressure on Israel, Biden is seeking Saudi help to hold out the promise of normalisation with Israel to get Netanyahu's support for the two-state solution. The Saudis are

not going to oblige without an irrevocable process of establishing a Palestinian home. And Netanyahu is not interested in normalisation. He has added the tragic events of Oct 7 to Israel's long list of alibis to deny the Palestinians their rights and to resume his expansionist policies with a vengeance.

Moves in Congress by progressive politicians in the Democratic Party to attach conditions to aid to Israel in the Foreign Affairs Act will not succeed. Even if it does, such conditions can always be waived by the president. Only the threat of unilateral US action will work. That won't happen, not in an election year.

America does not realise how much influence it would have had in the region and the larger Muslim world had it not appended itself to Israeli expansionism. Washington's ability to shape and influence events in the region is now challenged by China, menaced by Iran, rivalled by India and hindered by Saudi Arabia. On many issues, America is walking alone. Both the US and Israel are locked in policies that are not only morally bankrupt but also go against their respective national interests. The Palestinian future depends on a change of policies within the US and Israel. It will be a different America and Israel where this change takes place. In America, policies have to recover the moral purpose the US always claimed but rarely measured up to. In Israel, as the Haaretz editor-in-chief said in a recent article in Foreign Affairs, "Israelis cannot expect stability if they continue to ignore the Palestinians and reject their aspirations, their story, and even their presence". -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

CPEC new phase focuses on industrial cooperation, agriculture: Ambassador

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan and China have decided to start a new phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with a lot of focus on industrial cooperation, agriculture, mining and energy.

Last year marked the 10th anniversary of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which is a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative.

"Having drawn from the excellent progress that was made during the first 10 years of this corridor, both China and Pakistan have decided to start the new phase with a lot of focus on industrial cooperation and agriculture, as well as mining and energy, (with) a renewed focus on renewable energy," he told China Daily.

Beyond that, in the second phase of CPEC, the two elements of high-quality development and the sustainable nature of the projects will get sharper focus, he said.

"Going forward, we are very excited to start the next phase, building on the very good progress that has been made," Hashmi said. "We have all the ingredients in place", including good-quality infrastructure, he said.

"These are areas which we also find alignment with, so both Pakistan and China agreed to pursue the next phase along these lines," Hashmi said.

Hailing China's global vision, he said the global visions proposed by China, including the Belt and Road Initiative and the concept of building a

community with a shared future for mankind, underscore Beijing's goal of universal prosperity and sharing high-quality development with the rest of the world.

They "demonstrate the notion of win-win that President Xi Jinping has emphasized for a long time", he added.

Hashmi noted that at the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in October, Xi announced an eight-point agenda in relation to the Belt and Road Initiative and that the global community lauds the program as it advances "innovation in development, livelihoods, open economy, (and) compliance with internationally accepted standards when building new projects".



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkmenistan H.E. Atadjan Movlamov called on Interim Federal Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali.

PCJCCI advocates for Karachi coastal project under CPEC to boost Pakistan's economy

LAHORE (APP): The inclusion of Karachi Coastal Comprehensive Development Zone (KCCDZ) project in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will boost Pakistan's economy and enhance industrial and development cooperation between Pakistan and China, covering a total area of about 930 hectares, of which 640 hectares are reclaimed, the environment-friendly KCCDZ envisages four new berths for the Karachi

Port Trust (KPT). Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) President Moazzam Ghurki expressed these views in a think-tank session held here at PCJCCI Secretariat on Tuesday.

Ghurki said that mega project, being built with an expected investment of USD 3.5 billion, would also house a state-of-the-art fishing port, with a world-class fisheries export processing zone to

boost the country's trade potential. The project, he added, would also build up the confidence of global investors towards the country and its entire ecosystem for providing and offering a lucrative environment to set up businesses and gain profits. Furthermore, it has the potential to boost industrial cooperation between Pakistan and China due to its proximity with Karachi, the financial hub of Pakistan.

PCJCCI Senior Vice

Sunova Solar to revolutionize Pak's energy landscape via cutting-edge solar products

Independent Report

LAHORE: Sunova Solar, a global leader in renewable energy solutions, set the stage for a paradigm shift in the country's energy sector with the introduction of cutting-edge Tier-1 Solar products in a momentous event held in Lahore, Pakistan.

The groundbreaking unveiling showcased Sunova Solar's commitment to driving innovation and shaping a

dazzled with anticipation. Attendees were captivated by the unveiling of two incredible modules boasting power ranges of up to 590 W and an astonishing 705 W respectively. These cutting-edge modules aren't just about raw power — they represent a leap forward in sustainability with their double-glass, bifacial design. Imagine harnessing the power of sunlight not only from above but also from below,



sustainable future for Pakistan's energy needs. Over 260 esteemed guests, including industry luminaries like Mr. Tauseef, former chairman of NEPRA, and the visionary Usama Khalid Malik, Director of Strategic Projects, gathered to witness the unveiling of Sunova Solar's groundbreaking innovations. Under the guiding light of Vincent Zhou, the dynamic CEO of Sunova Solar, the event

thanks to ingenious light reflection technology! But the excitement didn't stop there. Sunova Solar also introduced a game-changing bifacial 615 W module, engineered to perfection with its sleek rectangle cells, delivering unparalleled power generation performance. With Pakistan's burgeoning market for renewable energy solutions, Sunova Solar's offerings couldn't have come at a better time.



MULTAN: Vendor displaying tomato bags for bidding at Vegetable Market.

OGDCL earns Rs123.296 bln profit in first half of FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) on Tuesday announced the financial results for the first half of the current fiscal year ended on December 31, 2023 (July-December), posting a profit of Rs123.296 billion.

"Net sales revenue clocked at Rs 235.375 billion translating to Profit after tax of Rs123.296 billion and earnings per share of Rs28.67," the OGDCL said in a news release. The company's Board of Directors (BoD) announced the first interim cash dividend to shareholders at the rate of Rs2.50 per share. "This is in addition to the interim dividend already paid @Rs1.60 per share i.e. 16 percent to its shareholders."

LESCO detects 57,806 power pilferers in 167 days

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has detected a total of 57,806 connections from where the customers were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts (Lahore, Sheikhpura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara) in 167 day of grand anti-power theft campaign. The LESCO spokesman told media here Tuesday that the company has also submitted FIR applications against electricity thieves, out of which 53,333 FIRs have been registered in respective police stations, while 17,666 accused have been arrested. The LESCO has so far charged a total of 76,659,409 detection units worth Rs 2,934,186,637 to all the power pilferers. Grand anti-power theft operations against electricity thieves are being conducted on the directives of the Federal Power Division and the LESCO Chief Executive Officer.

Awareness session on "Benefits of Edible Oil Fortification" held

FAISALABAD (APP): An awareness session titled "Benefits of Edible Oil Fortification, Vitamin A and D deficiency in Pakistan, use of Open and Unrefined Oil and its adverse effects on health" was organized in collaboration with Nutrition International and Punjab Food Authority, here on Tuesday.

The program was attended by representatives of edible oil mills, biscuit manufacturing companies,

hotels and marquees. Zonal Manager Food Fortification Program Mohammad Irfan explained about the fortification program and adverse effects of loose or unrefined oil. He said that more than half of the women and children population in Pakistan are facing deficiency in micronutrients. The deficiencies of iron, vitamins A and D are on the top, he added. He said that fortification is simple but practical method to meet the nutrition elements in the food.

Rupee sheds 07 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Rupee on Tuesday weakened by 07 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 279.27 against the previous day's closing of Rs 279.20. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279.3 and Rs 282.2, respectively. The price of the Euro increased by 87 paise to close at Rs 303.18 against the last day's closing of Rs 302.31, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

LCCI demands withdrawal of power tariff hike

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Tuesday urged the government to withdraw the recent hike in electricity tariff as the industry especially export-oriented unit are unable to afford hike in the price of their basic input for production.

The LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt said in a media statement here that National Electric Power Regulatory Authority

(NEPRA) has jacked up the power tariff by Rs. 7.05 per unit on account of fuel charges adjustment (FCA). They said that repeated hike in power tariff is hitting exports and local businesses, while the majority of businessmen have been sent electricity bills many times more than their monthly income. Electricity is the main input for the industries, if its tariff is not lowered, the manufacturing sector will be destroyed completely thus turning the country into mere a trading place.

Nawab of Bahawalpur benefactor of Pakistan, rendered invaluable services for the country: Baligh

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rahman attended the unveiling ceremony of the portrait of Nawab Sir Sadiq Muhammad Abbasi, Nawab of Bahawalpur, in recognition of his services at King Edward Medical University today as a special guest. The guest of honour Commissioner Bahawalpur Dr. Ehtesham, Vice Chancellor King Edward Medical University Prof. Mahmood Ayaz, Pro Vice Chancellor KEMU, Prof. Ijaz Hussain, Chief Executive Officer Mayo Hospital Prof. Ahsan Nauman, Prof. Saira Afzal, Prof. Muhammad Moeen and a large number of faculty members were present in the ceremony. After unveiling the

portrait of the Nawab of Bahawalpur, the Punjab Governor while addressing a ceremony said that the Nawab of Bahawalpur was the benefactor of Pakistan and he rendered invaluable services for the country especially in the fields of health and education. Governor Punjab said that Nawab of Bahawalpur also played a very important role in the establishment of Pakistan. He added that Nawab of Bahawalpur established Bahawalpur House and Mosque in Aitchison College. He further stated that after the Maharaja of Patiala, Nawab of Bahawalpur contributed the most in the construction of King Edward's Patiala Block. He said that King of Bahawalpur's inclusion of Bahawalpur in Pakistan

was a great decision. He said that there are many examples of Nawab of Bahawalpur in subcontinent and Punjab in the fields of education, health and public welfare. He said that it has always been a matter of pride for him to come to King Edward Medical University. He further said he made very first visit to King Edward Medical University as Chancellor. He stated that this institution has the oldest and most prominent position in medical education and research. Governor Punjab said that his grandfather was also a graduate of this institution. He further said that Dr. Maqbool Ahmed is an example for the alumni of King Edward Medical University.



HARIPUR: People rescue victims of a passenger bus accident at a road, as a passenger bus fell into a ravine in Sarbrot area of Haripur, more than 12 people died and 15 people were injured.

37 dams constructed, designs of seven projects completed in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): To avert floods and waste of rainy water, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government constructed 37 small and medium dams while 24 are being built in different rivers and water channels while designs of seven dams completed in the province. The Directorate of Small Dams of the Irrigation Department's spokesman

told APP on Tuesday that 37 small and medium dams were constructed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including 15 operated by the provincial government and 11 supervised by WAPDA. Similarly, 19 dams were constructed in merged districts having 0.1377 million-acre cultivated (CCA) and 0.3414 Acres Feet (AF) water storage.

DHA accident: ATC extends judicial remand of teenage driver

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Tuesday extended judicial remand of Afnan, an underage driver involved in a car accident that resulted in the tragic death of six family members in Defence, for another 13 days. Earlier, the police produced the accused before ATC Judge Arshad Javed and requested to extend his judicial remand. The police submitted that the challan (Charge-Sheet) was in final stage of the preparations and it would be filed soon after removing prosecution's objections. At this, the court extended the judicial remand of the teenage driver for another 13 days and ordered for producing him on March 11. Defence C police had registered a case against Afnan which revolves around charges of recklessly crashing his high-speed car into another vehicle.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice (Retd) Syed Arshad Hussain during a farewell meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali.

Public confidence increasing on Wafaqi Mohtasib: Qureshi

Independent Report
FAISALABAD: Number of complaints filed with the office of Federal Ombudsman has recorded a phenomenal increase due to the confidence of people enjoyed by this institution, said Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, Federal Ombudsman. Addressing a meeting in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here on Tuesday, he said that during last year the federal ombudsman office resolved 194,000 complaints in addition to submitting 27 recommendations to provide free justice at doorstep of the masses.

He said that earlier Wafaqi Mohtasib was receiving only 20,000 complaints while its number has now jumped to 194,000 and it is expected to cross the limit of 2 to 2.5 lacs within the next year. These complaints are positively resolved within 60 days while the percentage of resolved complaints is 99.9%, he added. He said that 9 million expatriates are sending precious foreign exchange of \$ 30 bn per annum and efforts have been made to solve their problems on top priority basis. He said that 150,000

complaints are also included in the total complaints resolved by this office. Appeals against the decisions of the federal ombudsman could be lodged with the President of Pakistan but its percentage is hardly 0.4%, he added. He said that article 34 is being exploited to resolve the complaints which could not fall within the purview of the federal ombudsman. "In this connection Alternate Dispute Resolution mechanism has been evolved", he said and added that the consent of both parties is imperative for this system.

Money laundering case: LHC issues bailable arrest warrants of Moonis Elahi's wife

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday issued bailable arrest warrants of Tehreem Elahi, the wife of former federal minister Moonis Elahi, and co-accused, Saira Anwar, over non-appearance in a petition for their bail cancellation in money laundering case. The division bench, headed by Justice Shehram Sarwar Chaudhry, heard the petition filed by

prosecution for bail cancellation of Rasikh Elahi, Tehreem Elahi and other accused in money laundering case. The bench adjourned further hearing till March 18. The prosecution had approached for bail cancellation of the accused, stating that the trial court awarded bail in violation of law. It pleaded with the court to cancel the bail granted to the accused.

ANF seizes over one ton drugs in seven operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to recover over one ton drugs and arrested nine accused, said an ANF headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed that 1 kg Ice drug and 766 grams heroin were recovered from the possession of a passenger going to Bahrain at Faisalabad Airport. 969 grams Ice was recovered from a passenger going to Doha at Peshawar Airport.

Speakers seek state, society role in keeping youngsters from drug addiction

DIR LOWER (APP): Vice Chancellor University of Malakand (UoM), Prof Dr Rashid Ahmad has said that our young generation is exposed to a variety of dangerous drugs and it is the collective responsibility of the state and society to play their role to get rid of the menace of the drug addiction. He was addressing a seminar on "The Changing Landscape of Drug Abuse in Pakistan: Exploring Recent Trends & Challenges Faced in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" here at UoM on Tuesday. He said that the younger generation, which makes up more than 60%

of the population, has the potential to actually turn Pakistan into a wealthy country provided they are equipped with contemporary information. Guest speaker Prof Dr Johar Ali, Dean of Social Sciences University of Peshawar informed participants of the seminar that there are seven million drug addicts in the country. Every year, about 250,000 people die in Pakistan because of drug-related issues. Prof Dr Johar Ali added that the increasing number of addicts is a huge burden on the fragile healthcare system of the country.



PESHAWAR: Traffic warden making driving licenses through DL-Van for journalists in front of Press Club.

NAB distributes cheques of Rs 1.67 bln among Pak Arab Housing victims

LAHORE (APP): National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Lahore, in a ceremony held on Tuesday, distributed cheques worth Rs 1.67 billion to the affectees of the Pak Arab Housing scandal. NAB Deputy Chairman Sohail Nasir and Director General Lahore Amjad Majeed Olakh were the chief guests of the ceremony. Lahore Commissioner Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Director General Sohail Zafar Chattha, Secretary Mines and

Minerals and senior officers of NAB and hundreds of affectees attended the ceremony. Addressing the ceremony, Sohail Nasir, Deputy Chairman NAB, highlighted that the bureau's primary objective is to serve the nation and the country. He emphasized that common people are beneficiaries of NAB policies, enabling them to recover their plundered money. He mentioned that NAB Lahore is actively recovering looted funds from 2,226 affectees of the Pak Arab Housing scandal.

International News

Declare Israel's occupation illegal, Arab states urge ICJ

Monitoring Desk
THE HAGUE: Arab states urged international judges on Monday to rule the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories illegal and Turkiye described the occupation as "the real obstacle to peace" on the final day of hearings in a case examining its legal status. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has been hearing arguments from more than 50 states following a request by the UN General Assembly in 2022 to issue a non-binding opinion on the legal consequences of the Israeli occupation. On the sixth and last day of hearings, Turkiye's Deputy Foreign Minister Ahmet Yildiz told judges the occupation was the root cause of conflict in the region. "The unfolding situation after October 7 proves once again that, without addressing the root cause of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there can be no peace in the region," he said, describing the occupation of Palestinian territories as "the real obstacle to peace" and urging the judges to declare it illegal. Israel, which is not taking part in the hearings,

has said the court's involvement could be harmful to achieving a negotiated settlement, calling the questions posed to the court prejudiced. Palestinian factions have also come under international pressure to end their own divisions over their response to Israel's occupation, the war in Gaza and what political system might follow it. Earlier on Monday, the Arab League's secretary general Ahmed Aboul Gheit described the occupation as "an affront to international justice" in a statement read out by a representative.



A police officer puts handcuffs on Oleg Orlov, the 70-year-old human rights campaigner and co-chair of the Nobel Prize winning Memorial group, after Orlov was sentenced to two and a half years in jail on charges of repeatedly "discrediting" the Russian army, in Moscow.

France's Macron does not rule out Europeans sending troops to Ukraine

PARIS (Internews): French President Emmanuel Macron opened the door on Monday to European nations sending troops to Ukraine, although he cautioned that there was no consensus at this stage as allies agreed to ramp up efforts to deliver more munitions to Kyiv. Some 20 European leaders gathered in Paris on Monday to send Russian President Vladimir Putin a message of European resolve on Ukraine and counter the Kremlin's narrative that Russia is bound to win a war now in its third year. There is no consensus at this stage to send troops on the ground," Macron told reporters. "Nothing should be excluded. We will do everything that we must so that Russia does not win." A White House official said that the United States had no plans to send troops to fight in Ukraine and that there were also no plans to send NATO troops to fight in Ukraine.

Indian runaway train takes 70-km journey

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Indian Railways said on Monday it had ordered an investigation after a runaway freight train loaded with gravel travelled 70 kilometres (43 miles) without a driver. Around 50 carriages set off solo, careering from the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir to Punjab, before being brought to a halt by wooden blocks placed on the tracks on Sunday. "We have ordered an inquiry," Northern Railways spokesman Deepak Kumar said, adding that no one was hurt in the incident. The train, running at 100 kilometres per hour, was captured in a video that went viral on social media. The incident happened after the train stopped at a railway station in Jammu for a crew change, local media reports said. But it began moving down a slope after the driver and his assistant got off. All road crossings on the route were closed to prevent accidents.



AID IS BEING DROPPED BY A JORDANIAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT OVER RAFAH, SOUTH-GAZA STRIP.

Sweden clears last hurdle as Hungary okays Nato accession

Monitoring Desk
BUDAPEST / STOCKHOLM: Hungary's parliament approved Sweden's Nato accession on Monday, clearing the last hurdle before the historic step by the Nordic country whose neutrality lasted through two world wars and the simmering conflict of the Cold War. Hungary's vote ended months of delays to complete Sweden's security policy shift and followed a visit by Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson on Friday during which the two countries signed an arms deal. "Today is a historic day," Kristersson said on X. "Sweden stands ready to shoulder its responsibility for Euro-Atlantic security." Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government has faced pressure from Nato allies to fall in line and seal Sweden's accession to the alliance. Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg immediately welcomed Hungary's move. "Sweden's membership will make us all stronger and safer," he said on X. Stockholm abandoned its non-alignment policy for greater safety within the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Jordan air-drops aid into Gaza

Monitoring Desk
AMMAN: The Jordanian army on Monday said it had carried out a series of humanitarian aid drops of food and other supplies into the besieged Gaza Strip, one of them by a French army plane. Jordanian forces made "four air drops carrying aid for the people of Gaza", under the directive of Jordanian King Abdullah II, a statement said. The operation came on the same day that two human rights groups accused Israel of further limiting humanitarian aid into Gaza — where the UN has warned of famine — despite an order from the UN's top court. "The court has determined Orlov's guilt and orders a sentence of two years and six months [...] in a general regime penal colony," the judge said. Orlov was accused of discrediting the Russian army in a column written for the French online publication Mediapart, and fined in October after a first trial.

New Zealand set to scrap world-first tobacco ban

WELLINGTON (Internews): New Zealand will repeal on Tuesday a world-first law banning tobacco sales for future generations, the government said, even while researchers and campaigners warned of the risk that people could die as a result. Set to take effect from July, the toughest anti-tobacco rules in the world would have banned sales to those born after Jan. 1, 2009, cut nicotine content in smoked tobacco products. Biden said he hoped a ceasefire agreement would be hammered out by Mon-

WTO braces for battles on fisheries, agriculture in UAE talks

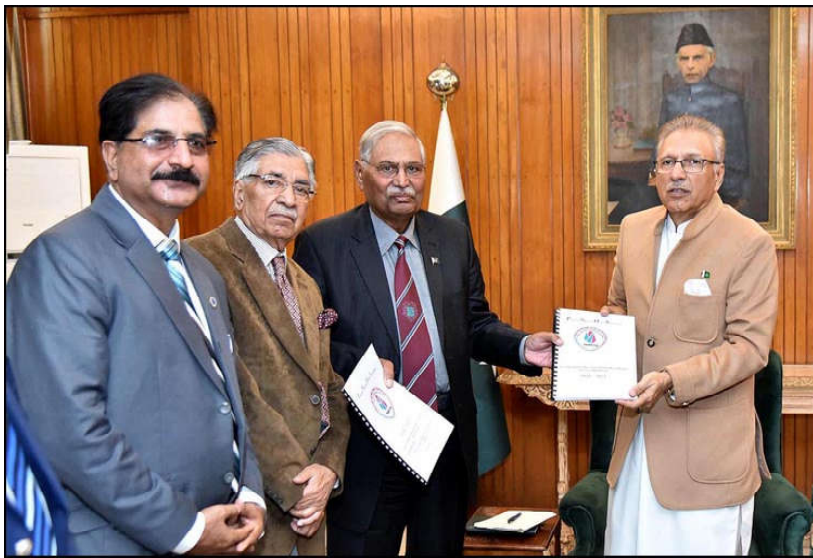
Monitoring Desk
ABU DHABI: The world's trade ministers are set for tough negotiations on Tuesday at a World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting in Abu Dhabi, with fisheries and agriculture taking centre stage. The closed talks will take place on the second day of the WTO's 13th ministerial conference which is scheduled to run until Thursday but could go into over-time amid divisions. There is little hope for major breakthroughs with WTO rules requiring full consensus among all 164 member states. But progress could be made on a new global agreement on fisheries subsidies. After a 2022 deal which banned subsidies contributing to illegal, unreported and unregulated

fishing, the WTO hopes to conclude a second package focusing on subsidies which fuel overcapacity and over-fishing. "We're close. It's doable for sure," said a diplomatic source. "The final push needs a little bit of compromise, a little bit of political will," the source told AFP on condition of anonymity, calling a potential agreement a "very good outcome". The 2022 agreement has yet to take effect as not enough countries have ratified it. But it was seen as a major achievement, marking just the second accord concluded by the WTO's full membership since the global trade body was created in 1995, and the first focused on environmental protection.

Biden says Israel is ready to pause Gaza fighting; Hamas says deal not done yet

DUBAI (Internews): Israel is ready to halt its Gaza attacks for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan in a ceasefire that could be signed as soon as next week, Joe Biden said, though Hamas officials said the U.S. president's remarks were premature as it studies a truce offer. Biden's comments, recorded on Monday and broadcast after midnight on Tuesday, come as negotiators try to hammer out the first extended truce deal in a war that has obliterated the Gaza Strip since October last year. Ramadan is coming up, and there's been an agreement by the Israelis that they would not engage in activities during Ramadan, as well, in order to give us time to get all the hostages out," Biden said. Earlier on Monday, Biden said he hoped a ceasefire agreement would be hammered out by Mon-

day, March 4. Ramadan is expected to begin on March 10. "My national security adviser tells me they're close. They're close. They're not done yet. My hope is by next Monday we'll have a ceasefire," Biden said. Hamas is reviewing a proposal agreed at a meeting in Paris last week between Israel, the United States and mediators from Egypt and Qatar, the most serious push for a ceasefire since the last truce collapsed after a week in November. Two senior Hamas officials said Biden's remarks suggesting the agreement had already been reached in principle were premature. There were "still big gaps to be bridged", one Hamas official said. "The primary and main issues of the ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israeli forces are not clearly stated, which delays reaching an agreement."



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) presenting a report on the activities and accomplishments of PANAH to President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President emphasizes early prevention of diseases to avoid expensive treatment

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday said that adoption of preventive measures against various diseases was prerequisite to ward off treatment which was expensive in Pakistan and such habits would also help reduce burden on the health system.

He expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) that called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr to present a report on the activities and accomplish-

ments of the organization, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release. The president stressed upon creating awareness among the masses about the significance of preventive measures against non-communicable diseases and heart diseases.

He also underscored the need about the role of media, local population, mosques and non government organizations to create such awareness, besides utilization of different latest platforms to spread

awareness messages. PANAH President Major General (ret'd) Masud Ur Rehman Kiari briefed the president about the role of the organization and public awareness campaigns including holding of walks, seminars, lectures and training sessions.

He said that they were creating awareness among the people about healthy activities and lifestyle. President Alvi appreciated PANAH for its contributions in the health sector.

CM Domki applauds services of Shahid Afridi in social sector

Independent Report QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has applauded the services of renowned cricketer and former skipper Shahid Khan Afridi for guidance of younger generation and social sector in the province.

The caretaker Chief Minister was speaking to Shahid Afridi who called on him here at the Chief Minister's secretariat here on Tuesday. During the course of meeting, the matters about promotion of sports and assistance of the poor people in social sectors

were discussed. Mir Ali Mardan Domki praised services of Shahid Afridi for the cause of sports especially cricket besides in social sector. He said that youth of the province are second to none in potential in sports and other public service.

He said that if the talented youth of the province are provided better opportunities and positive direction, they may perform very well in sports and other sectors. Shahid Afridi on the occasion expressed his resolve to expand circle of social services further in Balochistan.

ECP allows voter lists' modification till bye-polls schedule announcement

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) declared on Tuesday that electoral rolls would remain open for modifications until the announcement of the bye-election schedule.

An ECP spokesperson, in a statement, urged the individuals seeking to transfer their votes or desire correction in the voter list, to submit forms 21, 22, or 23 to the district election commissioner or registration officer in their particular area.

Begins issuing nomination papers Presidential elections mandatory within 30 days after general polls: ECP

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday said that it is mandatory to hold the presidential elections within 30 days after the general elections, citing Article 41(4) of the Constitution.

Following the conduct of the general elections 2024 and its preliminary results, the electoral watchdog has started preparations for the presidential elections and the first session of all assemblies under constitutional bindings.

"The election commission will issue the schedule of the presidential election and public notice on March 1," the ECP said in a statement. "According to the Constitution, one day will be given to submit the nomination papers."

The election commission further said that the nomination papers can be submitted to any presiding officer by 12pm on March 2. "All the presidential candi-

dates can get the nomination papers from the ECP secretariat in Islamabad or any provincial election commissioner," it noted.

The electoral watchdog also cited Articles 91 and 130 of the Constitution which stated that the National Assembly shall meet on the 21st day following the general elections. The ECP said all the assemblies will be formed by February 29, paving the way for the presidential election. The statement came a day after National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf summoned the maiden sitting of lower house of Parliament on Feb 29 as President Arif Alvi refused to summon the session on account of an 'incomplete house'.

APP adds: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday began issuing nomination papers to candidates for the presidential election. According to an ECP

spokesperson, the candidates can submit their nomination papers at the Election Commission Secretariat in Islamabad, as well as the offices of provincial election commissioners in Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa till 12 noon pm on March 2. The spokesperson said that the schedule and public notice for the presidential elections would be issued on March 1.

For any details, individuals could contact the ECP at telephone number 051-9219335, she added.

Quoting Article 41 (4) of the Constitution, the spokesperson emphasized that the presidential election must be conducted within 30 days of the general elections.

She added that according to Articles 91 and 130 of the Constitution, the first session of all assemblies was mandatory within 21 days of the general elections.



QUETTA: Renowned cricketer Shahid Afridi meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki at Quetta Airport.

Caretaker CM inaugurates newly built cabinet Hall in CM secretariat

Independent Report QUETTA: The Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki inaugurated the newly built cabinet hall in the Chief Minister's secretariat on Tuesday.

The Secretary Communications and Works (C&W) Qambar Dashti and other concerned high ups briefed the caretaker Chief Minister about the newly constructed building and cabinet hall.

Speaking on the occasion, caretaker Chief Minister said that CM secretariat is an important administrative office of the province.

The addition of new constructions in the CM secretariat would be helpful in performing administrative affairs, he maintained. The caretaker Chief Minister also inspected different sections of the cabinet hall and its building.

Tech-based vision a must to transform Gwadar into energy hub: Experts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The experts at a policy dialogue have said that Gwadar may be made an energy hub, but it is only possible through a technology-based development, vision and a community-centric social development approach.

The policy dialogue titled: 'Gwadar as an Energy Hub of Pakistan: Pathways for Sustainable Development', was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) under its Network for Clean Energy Transition (NCET) here.

In his opening remarks, SDPI Executive Director, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri said the discourse on a unique subject like Gwadar as an energy hub was pertinent and crucial at a time when the new government is about to take office.

He further said the development of Gwadar as a port and a modern city has co-benefits that need to be identified. "Due to COVID-19 and unavoidable geopolitical circumstances, Gwadar has not been made functional at its

full scale. It is still dependent on electricity imported from Iran whereas to make export zone functional will require more energy," he maintained.

Since, the global community has demanded to make three-fold increase in renewable energy (RE) share by 2030 at the COP-28, Pakistan is looking for renewable energy support from China as an excellent candidate for solar and offshore wind energy potential, he said.

Gwadar has the potential to become mix of all traditional and renewable energy generation projects, Dr Suleri said, adding that working on this end holistically, particularly its consumption aspects, an efficient utilization and best use of infrastructure should be worked out through discourse.

Naghman Chaudhry, the former advisor and Strategic Analyst, said that keeping in view the recent developments in the Indian Ocean Region and global geopolitical landscape, it is important for the country to embrace a change of mindset.



QUETTA: Caretaker Health Minister Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jozzai inquiring about a patient at Sheikh Muhammad Zayed bin Al-Nahyan Hospital.

Two Holy Mosques- places of worship not arenas for politicking: Ashrafi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Tuesday urged the intending Hajj pilgrims to follow the codal formalities of Saudi Arabia in letter and spirit during the sacred journey.

Talking to the media, he emphasized that the Two Holy Mosques were the places of worship and

not arenas for political expression or displays of nationalism.

"Raising slogans, flags, or engaging in any other irrelevant activity is not allowed at the Two Mosques," he proclaimed.

Ashrafi said that situated in Makkah and Madina - the heart of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Two Holy Mosques were revered by millions of Muslims as the holiest sites.

Operation Swift Retort showcases Pakistan's military strength, commitment to peace

ISLAMABAD (APP): The memory of the humiliating defeat suffered by the Hindutva led India and its air force at the hands of the Pakistan Air Force remains vivid in the minds of the Indian bigtry rulers, even as five years have passed since the incident took place on February 27, 2019.

A report released by the Kashmir Media Service on the occasion highlighted that on February 27, 2019, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, influenced by the Hindutva ideology, initiated a cowardly attack in Balakot. Within 24 hours, Pakistan Air Force executed 'Operation Swift Retort', compelling Modi to face defeat.

'Operation Swift Retort' was launched as a befitting response to the misadventures of the fascist Modi regime, whose air force violated Pakistan's

airspace on the night of February 26, 2019, targeting Balakot.

The myth of India's conventional military superiority was shattered by the Pakistan Air Force, which downed two Indian Air Force aircraft in a dogfight and captured an Indian pilot, Abhinandan, alive. Pakistan's victory in the brief air combat continues to haunt India.

The confusion caused by 'Operation Swift Retort' led to the Indian Air Force mistakenly shooting down its helicopter, resulting in casualties, including the pilot. This incident sent a clear message to India - "Don't mess with Pakistan."

The operation thwarted India's aspirations to establish itself as a dominant military force in the region while showcasing the firm resolve, capacity, and capability of the

Pakistan Air Force in countering India's aggressive intentions.

On February 26, 2019, the Indian Air Force conducted an aerial strike near Balakot, targeting a religious seminary that India claimed was a militant camp, alleging the killing of more than 300 terrorists. However, Pakistan and several international observers refuted the claim, citing no casualties and missed targets by the bombs. Moreover, the Indian government failed to provide substantial evidence of the Balakot strikes.

The Indian opposition, particularly the Congress, has raised doubts about the Balakot surgical strikes proclaimed by the BJP government. Rahul Gandhi and Navjot Singh Sidhu demanded validation and an accurate count of the casualties resulting from the strike.



HYDERABAD: Workers of GDA, PTI, JUI(F), JI and Awami Tehreek hold a protest rally against alleged rigging in general election 2024 and observe Black Day against torture and arrest of the workers of Sindhyani Tehreek and JUI (F) during a rally in Karachi.

Commissioner Makran visits different rain hit areas in Kech district

Independent Report QUETTA: The Commissioner Makran Division visited different areas affected due to rains in Kech district on Tuesday.

Also accompanied with him were the Deputy Director of PDMA, Rehan Dashti and officers of different other departments. The Commissioner Makran visited Nasirabad, Nodaz and Tagramabad and

other areas. He also monitored the repair and rehabilitation of affected roads and bridges.

Later, he visited Nahaing bridge located on the Nahaing river. The Commissioner on the occasion directed to concerned high ups to repair the approach of Nahaing bridge immediately and thus restore traffic there.

Provincial Selection Board meets; recommends promotion of Govt officers

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Selection Board met with Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan in the chair here on Tuesday.

The meeting took up the cases of promotion of officers of different provincial government departments.

During the course of meeting, it was recommended to promote officers of BSS and BCS of Services and General Administration Department serving in Grade 20.

It was recommended to promote Grade 20 officers in Grade 21.

The meeting also considered cases of promotion of different grades of Agriculture, Colleges and Higher Education, Schools, Forests, Food, Irrigation, Communication and Works, Sports, Science and Information Technology and other departments. It was recommended to promote officers of Grade 19 in Grade 20, Grade 18 in Grade 19 and officers of Grade 17 in Grade 18.

Ahsan Iqbal says: Pakistan wins war against terrorism with support of entire nation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday said that Pakistan has won a big war against terrorism with support of Pakistan armed forces, law enforcement agencies, security and other civil institutions.

Addressing at the International Peace Conference, the former minister said that economic development could not be achieved without peace and stability in this region.

He added that lasting peace could only be established by promoting tolerance and harmony among each others.

He said, we will have to endorse partnership and mutual respect in politics to put the country on path of speedy progress and prosperity.

Ahsan Iqbal said that attitude of hatred lead to extremism, adding that ending backwardness, intolerance and lawlessness, was essential for peace in the country.



QUETTA: Brig. Adnan Ahmed of Anti Narcotics meeting with acting Vice Chancellor University of Balochistan Prof. Dr. Zainab

All set to hold 'Sibi Mela' from March 6-8

QUETTA (APP): District Administration had finalized all the arrangements to organize a three-day annual historical and cultural festival of Sibi from March 6 to 8 to put the local culture at display, in addition to rare and exotic species of animals.

A high-level meeting was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Sibi Dr Khudai Rahim reviewed the preparations and arrangements of Sibi Mela 2024, said a news release.

In the meeting, Additional Deputy Commissioner General Ali Asghar Magsi, SSP Inayatullah Bangulzai, District Education Officer Abdul Waasy Kakar, Chief Officer Municipal Committee Muhibullah Baloch, Executive Engineer PHE Shahzad Farrukh Baloch, Deputy Director Livestock Dr Farooq Luni and head all others departments partici-

pated. Addressing the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Sibi Dr Khudai Rahim said that the annual traditional and historical Sibi Mela 2024 will be held with great zeal.

He directed the officers of all relevant departments, especially the Department of Livestock, Department of Agriculture and Education to complete the preparations for the celebrations of the Sibi Mela and make sure that there was no disturbance in the preparations for the festival.

He said that this time the musical program will be held in the stadium instead of the Jirga Hall so that the public do not face any problem.

A large number of people not only from all over the province but also from other parts of the country would participate in it, he added.

PPP to join Punjab cabinet in 2nd phase

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) is poised to join the Punjab provincial cabinet in its second phase, according to sources close to the development. This move comes after negotiations between the PPP and the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (N) (PML-N).

The sources indicate that the PPP is likely to receive three ministries in the provincial cabinet, which will be offered after the Punjab budget is finalized. Negotiations are currently underway between the two parties to finalize the specific ministries and potential candidates.

7 killed in accident

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least seven passengers were killed and several badly injured in a traffic accident in Khoi Bagra, area of Rawalpindi on Tuesday. The rescue officials said that the passenger bus fell into a deep trench due to overspeeding, a private news channel reported. Seven people died on the spot while several passengers including men and women sustained injuries. The rescue team and the locals shifted the dead bodies and injured to the hospital.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting of Provincial Selection Board.