

# Independent

dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Karachi

Ph: 0300-3898091 Vol: 06. No. 37 Shaban 13, 1445 AH Saturday February 24, 2024 Pages 04 Price Rs. 12.00

## Murad Ali Shah nominated as CM Sindh CM, Awais PA Speaker, Naveed Dy Speaker

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Friday formally announced that Syed Murad Ali Shah will be the next Chief Minister Sindh while Syed Awais Shah and Naveed Durrani will be the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of Sindh Assembly.

Addressing PPP Sindh's Parliamentary party meeting here at Bilawal House, Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said the provincial government will have to show better performance and those educational institutions (Schools) destroyed during 2022 floods should be rehabilitated.

As far as performance is concerned, Sindh Govt should have to compete with Federal and other provincial governments, Bilawal maintained.

He said Agha Siraj Durrani performed well as Speaker Sindh Assembly and now we have decided to get our young members to lead the provincial legislature.

Bilawal said oath-taking of Sindh Assembly members will be held tomorrow (Saturday) and the process for the formation of the new elected government will be started.

He urged the nominated CM Murad Ali Shah to show better performance than the previous tenure and strict actions should be taken against corruption.

Bilawal Bhutto said Sindh Govt's competition would be with Federal as well as other provincial governments.

Water is a major issue and Syed Murad Ali Shah should have to take up this

matter with the federal government and the Indus River System Authority (IRSA) so that it could be resolved at the earliest, Bilawal added.

He said the genuine issues raised by the opposition in the Assembly as well as outside of the legislature should also be resolved by the newly formed provincial government.

He also congratulated all MPAs for their success in the provincial Assembly elections and said elected members performed well during their election campaigns.

The newly elected PPP members of Sindh Assembly including former CM Murad Ali Shah, Sayed Qaim Ali Shah, Faryal Talpur and others were attended the parliamentary party meeting.



LAHORE: A delegation of MQM including Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori, Syed Muustafa Kamal and Farooq Sattar meeting with President PML-Q Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain.

## Kartarpur Corridor symbol of peace, Sikh Yatrees always welcome in Pakistan: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday said the Kartarpur Corridor was a symbol of peace and Pakistan always welcomed Sikh Yatrees to visit their sacred places, extending them all possible facilities.

During his visit to Kartarpur Corridor in Narowal, the president said that Pakistan, through the corridor, had conveyed a message to the world, expressing its desire for peace.

He said such additional steps of inter-religion harmony would eventually promote peace and stability in the region.

"Sikhism has always taught peace and unity, bringing people together", President Alvi said adding Pakistan's initiatives for the convenience of Sikh pilgrims, were commendable.

On the occasion, Chief Executive Officer of the Project Management Unit briefed the president on the measures taken to facilitate Sikh pilgrims in Kartarpur Sahib.

President Alvi was informed about the Sikh religion and the history of Kartarpur Sahib.

Later, he visited various places in Kartarpur Sahib and appreciated the arrangements for pilgrims.

The president also visited the museum and anchorage (Langar Khana).



KARACHI: Senior Adviser to Federal Ombudsman Regional Office Karachi Syed Anwar Hyder having interaction with a woman during visit of Main Passport Office Saddar. Associate adviser Federal Ombudsman Karachi Riaz Ahmed Memon and Director Immigration and Passport South Zone Saeed Ahmed also seen at the occasion.

## Senior adviser to Federal Ombudsman visits Passport office

KARACHI (APP): Senior Adviser and in charge Federal Ombudsman Regional Office Karachi, Syed Anwar Hyder on Friday, directed the Immigration and Passport department to enhance staff strength and increase bank counters to further facilitate the citizens in acquiring a passport.

During his visit to the main Immigration and Passport office in Saddar Karachi along with associate adviser Riaz Ahmed Memon, he stressed on better measures to fast track the process of issuance of Passport particularly printing and lamination of the basic travel document.

He said that the visit to the regional passport office was carried out on the directives of Wafaqi

Mohtasib Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi. He said that a complete inspection of functional areas and facilities was conducted besides taking briefing from the officials.

The senior adviser, while talking to official media at the occasion, informed that several applicants complained that they were not receiving their passports on the given dates and they had to pay several visits to the office to receive their passport.

Citizens intending to go abroad especially students and workers were facing difficulties because of delays in issuance of passports that have mainly been caused due to issues with the availability of lamination paper.

## Newly elected Sindh MPAs to take oath today

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori has convened Assembly session on February 24 (Saturday) at Sindh Assembly Building during which newly elected Members of the Provincial Assembly will take oath.

The outgoing Speaker Sindh Assembly Agha Siraj Khan Durrani will preside the session and take oath from the elected MPAs.

After taking oath by the newly elected members of the provincial legislature, schedule for election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker will be announced.

Meanwhile, Pakistan People's Party has already nominated Sayed Murad Ali Shah for the slot of the Chief Minister Sindh.

## Governor Sindh meets with CM Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori met with the Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi and congratulated him on being elected as Chairman PCB.

The Governor Sindh lauded the performance of the CM on getting the public welfare projects for the people of Punjab completed in a record time frame.

The CM while talking with the Governor Sindh acknowledged that the whole team in the Punjab government worked day and night and strived to their utmost to serve the people of Punjab in short span of 13 months only.

## Unity vital to steer country out of challenges: Shehbaz

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz President Shehbaz Sharif said on Friday that forging unity was essential to steer country out of existing challenges. In a statement issued here, he said that collective efforts were direly needed for country's development and prosperity.

Shehbaz Sharif said that ensuring economic stability in the country was his top priority. He said that country could not tolerate instability, adding that continuous steps would be taken to strengthen the country and provide relief to people.



NAROWAL: President Dr. Arif Alvi being briefed about the Kartarpur Corridor.

## To ensure macroeconomic stability IMF hints at working with newly elected government of Pakistan

Says during the tenure of the interim government, authorities "maintained economic stability"

ISLAMABAD (INP): A day after the PTI said founder Imran Khan would write to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) urging it to call for an independent audit of the Feb 8 general elections, the Fund stated that it is looking forward to engaging with the new government on policies to ensure "macroeconomic stability and prosperity for all of Pakistan's citizens".

On Thursday, PTI's Senator Ali Zafar had told reporters that a letter would be sent from Imran to the international lender. He said the IMF, the European Union and other organisations had a charter that stated that good governance was needed for working in the country or giving a loan.

"The most important condition for good governance is democracy," he said, adding that the people's mandate was stolen "in the darkness of the night" during the Feb 8 polls.

He said that if elections were not free and fair, any organisation would avoid giving a "loan" to such a country. "Because that loan will further burden the people," he said. He said the PTI wanted an audit of the election results and that condition would be put in front of the IMF.

It should be mentioned that Pakistan averted default last summer thanks to a short-term IMF bailout, but the programme expires in April and a new government will have to negotiate a long-term arrangement to keep the economy stable.

During a press briefing held early on Friday, Julie Kozack, the head of the Communications Department at the IMF, was asked about whether Pakistan was on track to secure the third tranche of the stand-by agreement reached in June 2023.

She was also asked whether the IMF would entertain any letter by

Imran calling for investigations into election irregularities.

In her response, Kozack said: "On January 11, the IMF Executive Board approved the first review of the Stand-By Arrangement, with Pakistan that brought total disbursements under the Stand-By Arrangement to \$1.9 billion. The Stand-By Arrangement is supporting the authority's efforts to stabilise the economy and to, of course, with a strong focus on protecting the most vulnerable."

She said that during the tenure of the interim government, the authorities had "maintained economic stability".

"This has been done through strict adherence to fiscal targets while also protecting the social safety net. It has been done by maintaining a tight monetary policy stance to control inflation and to continue to build up foreign exchange reserves," she said.



## Opposition parties unite in Sindh to protest against 'election fraud'

PTI, GDA, JI, JUI-F, MQM-H to protest outside Sindh Assembly today

KARACHI (Agencies): In a joint press conference held in Karachi on Friday, the Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA), along with Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Jamaat-e-Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Haqiqi (MQM-H) announced plans to stage a protest outside the Sindh Assembly on Saturday.

The announcement was made by key leaders including JDA Chief Coordinator Sadrudin Shah Rashidi, JUI-F Sindh chief Maulana Rashid Soomro, JI Karachi chief Hafiz Naemur Rehman, and PTI Sindh President Haleem Adil Shaikh.

During the press conference, Rashidi asserted, "Our protest is against the bogus election because notes were used instead of votes." He emphasised that the peaceful struggle would persist until the return of the public mandate, noting the coalition's determination to challenge what they perceive as electoral malpractice.

Dr Saifdar Ali Abbasi highlighted their rejection of the election results, citing successful sit-ins in Jamshoro and Moro as evidence of public discontent. He reiterated their commitment to peaceful means, stating, "We will protest against elections as per our legal and constitutional right." He added, "Our struggle is peaceful, not a stone has been hurled anywhere. We will protest against elections as per our legal and constitutional right. We are seeking new elections." Responding to questions, JI's Hafiz Naem declared solidarity with the GDA, confirming their decision not to take oath alongside PTI members. He criticised the "distribution" of seats between the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P).

PTI's Haleem Adil Shaikh echoed these sentiments, accusing the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) of complicity in "mandate theft." He stressed incidents of rigging and asserted PTI's legitimate claim to 22 National Assembly seats in Sindh.

JUI-F's Rashid Soomro warned against obstructing the planned protest, holding the administration accountable for any resulting consequences.



Caretaker Federal Minister for Education, Professional Training Madad Ali Sindh, addressing during the Inauguration ceremony of Islamabad Model School (I-V) E-6 sector in Federal Capital.

## Pakistan declares Israeli actions in Gaza against int'l laws, human rights

Law Minister calls Israeli occupation of West Bank, East Jerusalem illegal; Pakistan supports two-state solution; Terms Israel policies as apartheid at UN court; Israeli settlement policy making ending its prolonged occupation more difficult

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan on Friday joined over 50 countries in advancing its argument in the historic proceedings being conducted by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague to rule on the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by Israel.

The case was triggered by a request from the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on December 30, 2022, when a majority of members voted to seek the court's opinion on the legal consequences of the

continuing Israeli occupation of Palestine. Arab countries, Russia, and China voted in favour of the move, while Israel, the US, Germany, and 24 others voted against it.

The ruling would take several weeks and would not be binding, but many observers believe that if the ICJ declares the occupation illegal, that would certainly put pressure on Tel Aviv.

The proceedings kicked off on February 19 and would continue until February 26.

## Punjab MPAs take oath in inaugural session of assembly

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Assembly Speaker Muhammad Sibtain Khan administered oath to the newly-elected members of the Punjab Assembly (PA) during the 42nd session at the assembly chambers here on Friday.



The speaker chaired the session and felicitated the 315 members provincial assembly (MPAs) on taking oath of their duties. He expressed the hope that they will discharge their duties to the aspirations of the masses.

Earlier, the PA session started two hours behind its scheduled time of 10 am. Punjab Assembly Secretary Amer Habib, on the directions of the Chair, announced the Panel of Chairmen comprising MPAs Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan, Syed Ali Haider Gilani, Saima Kanwal and Raheela Naem.

The Secretary also announced the announced a schedule of the election to the office of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker PA.

## Mayor Karachi for ample arrangements at graveyards on the holy night "Shab-e-Barat"

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab Friday directed concerned officers that citizens should not have any difficulty in visiting graveyards to offer Fateha at the graves of their relatives on the occasion of the holy night Shab-e-Barat.

He said this on the occasion of an emergency visit to the city along with the Municipal Commissioner KMC S.M Afzal Zaidi and others.

He said that cleaning, lighting, and water should be

provided inside the cemeteries and in the outer part of the graveyards. There should be no sewerage or filth inside the graveyards and all the municipal staff should be present in the cemeteries on Shab-e-Barat, he said.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab during this visit went to Essa Nagri graveyard in East District, Sakhi Hassan Graveyard in Central District, and Muhammad Shah Graveyard in North Karachi and reviewed the arrangements being made for Shab-e-Barat.



KARACHI: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs Dr. Syed Junaid Ali Shah inaugurating trophy during of 18th Sindh games ceremony at National Coaching center, in Provincial Capital.

## City security arrangements reviewed

KARACHI (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Riffat Mukhtar Raja chaired an important meeting at the Central Police Office Karachi regarding the current law and order situation, particularly in Karachi.

The meeting was attended by Additional IGP Karachi, as well as DIGPs of Headquarters, Welfare, Administration, Zonal DIGPs, District SSPs of Karachi, in addition to AIGPs of Administration, Finance, and other police officers.

Detailed briefings were given during the meeting regarding the current condition of the decoration, arrangement, and maintenance of various police stations in Karachi.

Discussions were also held during the meeting regarding the current law and order situation in Karachi, specifically focusing on the security measures and operational directives for the first session of the Sindh Assembly scheduled for February 24th. The briefing provided during the meeting encompassed the overall law and order situation and establishment of security at the zonal, district, and police station levels, as well as police actions and regulations regarding protests during the Sindh Assembly session.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**What next for PTI?**

The incoming government has been carved up. With the major offices apportioned between the PML-N and PPP, the political hyenas will also be thrown a few bones.

One of them wants a few ministries; the other whatever morsel the new government can still spare. The incoming minority government will need as many lawmakers as it can afford by its side. Within days, this new political alliance will take control. On the other hand, the opposition, led by the PTI, has yet to find its feet. Since far exceeding expectations in the Feb 8 elections, it has not seemed too sure about what to do with its numbers. Though its government in KP is secure, it had also made claims on both Islamabad and Punjab. It has yet to show how it ever planned on forming the governments there after the ECP's results put it well short of a simple majority in both assemblies.

The PTI could go on making a 'moral' claim on the two assemblies, but that is not how executive power is secured. In the interim, its only option was to secure enough votes for its candidates from other parties. It chose not to. Further, though it merged with the Sunni Ittehad Council, that hardly improved its prospects. It is good for the party that, barring a handful, it managed to keep most of its elected lawmakers, and the merger will prevent any further defections; however, it seems unlikely it will get a share of reserved seats despite this move.

Therefore, barring a very significant revision in the ECP's announced results, the party seems destined to sit on the opposition benches. Is it prepared to do so? It needs strong leaders to guide the party in the assemblies and organise an effective opposition. Most of its old guard is gone, and its leader is in jail.

Perhaps the party really had not expected to be handed such a large mandate — this may explain the disarray within its ranks since the results. Perhaps it never intended to form the government, knowing well the difficult conditions in which it would be taking over; consider that neither did the PML-N and PPP seem too enthusiastic about their decision, till they were 'convinced' by higher powers. However, even the opposition needs coherent strategies if it wants to assert itself strongly. Even with the number of seats the PTI officially has, it remains in a good position to make things quite difficult for the PML-N, especially when the PPP's support for the government is subject to terms and conditions. Will it be able to capitalise, though? The opposition's success will hinge on a leadership that is reasonable and able to talk to other parties. Will the PTI be able to overcome itself?

**Seeking IMF's help; PTI's Misguided Move**

By Qamar Bashir

Former Press Secretary to the President; Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC



The decision by the former PTI chairman to petition the IMF for an electoral audit of disputed election results struck many, including myself and various opinion leaders, as a startling and misguided move. This request, especially coming from a party with a strong legal cadre, seemed out of place given the IMF's well-defined mandate. The IMF focuses on international monetary stability and economic support, dealing with financial assistance, economic stability, and growth through policy reforms.

It does not involve itself in a nation's electoral matters or judicial grievances, which are sovereign issues. The appeal to the IMF for electoral scrutiny not only deviates from its established role but also risks diminishing our standing by misunderstanding the scope of international institutions.

The decision by PTI's leadership to seek IMF intervention in electoral matters might reflect a profound mistrust in national institutions. This disillusionment could stem from various grievances: the establishment's overt antagonism, the Elec-

tion Commission's invalidation of PTI's internal elections and subsequent stripping of its election symbol, which critically weakened the party's standing. Additionally, the overwhelming legal challenges faced by the PTI chairman, with over 200 cases lodged against him, and a perceived judicial ineffectiveness, where court orders seem disregarded and the only recourse for arrested and humiliated PTI members appears to be public disavowal of their allegiance, further exacerbate this trust deficit.

The erosion of trust in the judiciary was compounded when the Supreme Court confirmed the Election Commission's decision to strip PTI of its election symbol. This sentiment deepened with a landmark ruling that invalidated Imran Khan's marriage to Bushra Bibi, a decision unprecedented in the context of Islamic jurisprudence. Successive convictions of Imran Khan in high-profile cases, such as the Cypher, Toshakhana, and the legality of his marriage, further alienated PTI supporters, especially as numerous other legal challenges loom on the horizon.

The disillusionment with the country's institutions extended to the pre-election phase, where PTI faced considerable obstacles in organizing public gatherings. When these events did proceed, media coverage was often suppressed. The shift to digital campaigning saw further challenges, with internet and mobile services being disrupted or throttled. This not only targeted PTI but also impacted businesses, trade, and the broader populace, exacerbating the already compromised reputation of the nation.

Some may argue that involving an international entity like the IMF could introduce transparency and impartiality into the audit process, addressing the trust deficit with domestic institutions. This approach might not only ensure fairer electoral practices but also spotlight alleged irregularities on a global stage, fostering international advocacy for democratic integrity in Pakistan. Conversely, this strategy might displease even some PTI supporters who favor internal resolution of issues, fearing it could fragment the party's unity.

They contend that despite the flaws of national institutions, struggles should remain within the constitutional and legal boundaries, advocating for a domestic, democratic push for reform without foreign intervention or influence on sovereign matters. Critics argue that while such actions might not directly harm the establishment, judiciary, or government officials who would continue to receive

their salaries, the real brunt of economic fallout from a halted IMF negotiation, prompted by PTI's request, would be borne by the common people. This could exacerbate unemployment and inflation, already at record highs, pushing millions more into poverty. They suggest learning from past experiences, like the repercussions of alleged foreign involvement in regime change, which cost PTI its government and led to legal troubles for its members. Instead of risking further isolation and legal action by engaging with international bodies like the IMF in domestic political disputes, they advocate for a more cautious approach that avoids giving the government and establishment reasons to target PTI and its leadership.

Critics might argue that soliciting foreign intervention in political and electoral issues could be perceived as undermining national sovereignty, potentially fueling nationalist and anti-PTI sentiment. Such a move risks politically isolating the PTI both within Pakistan and on the international stage, as it could be viewed as an excessive measure or a misuse of international institutions for domestic political conflicts.

This strategy could arm opponents with grounds to accuse PTI of treason, leading to possible le-

gal actions against its leaders, a ban on the party, and the nullification of its electoral achievements in 2024. Furthermore, there's concern that this approach could prompt a coordinated media and civil society backlash against PTI, labeling the act as unpatriotic and anti-state.

Prime time TV shows might be pressured to denounce PTI's actions, while ad campaigns across traditional and social media could further condemn the party.

Engagement of civil society groups to criticize PTI could lead to a significant loss of the political capital the party gained following its strong performance in the 2024 elections, especially if media outlets that had previously shifted their support towards PTI due to perceived election rigging and the treatment of its members reverse their stance. Media analysts might critique PTI for its tendency to repeat past mistakes without considering the broader implications for national sovereignty and dignity. Despite PTI's professed commitment to upholding the country's honor, its actions, perceived as impulsive, often put its narrative and principles at risk.

This pattern of behavior, as observed by commentators, suggests a cycle where lessons from previous setbacks are not fully absorbed or integrated into future strategies, challenging the party's ability to maintain its narrative consistency and political credibility. Now that the arrow has been fired, and damage has been done, the PTI should adopt a comprehensive and sustained strategy to damage control. They should give positive spin to this blunder by framing PTI's decision to internationalize the issue of electoral integrity in Pakistan to the party's commitment to transparency and fair play, highlighting how this unprecedented step could pave the way for more accountable electoral processes.

The narrative could focus on the need for impartial oversight in the face of domestic challenges and frame the move as a proactive approach to safeguarding democracy. This spin would portray PTI as a forward-thinking party willing to explore all avenues to ensure the sanctity of the electoral process, thus aligning its actions with global best practices for democratic governance. Open dialogue, transparency in their actions, and a unified front from leadership at all levels will be crucial in navigating criticism and reinforcing the party's commitment to strengthening Pakistan's democratic processes.

**Commerce News**

**Punjab Governor says: Caretaker Punjab govt taken commendable steps for the welfare of the people**

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Minister, Ibrahim Hasan Murad paid a farewell call on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, the provincial minister briefed the Governor Punjab in detail about the measures taken to improve the performance of the departments of Local Government, Transport, Livestock and Mines as the caretaker provincial minister.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the caretaker Punjab government has taken commendable steps for the welfare of the people under the leadership of caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi, in a short period of time. He said that the government formation phase has started, it is hoped that the newly elected government will bring more improvement and stability in the country. He further said that political stability is indispensable for economic stability in the country. He said that all political parties should play a positive role for the development and

prosperity of the country and the nation while keeping their personal interest aside.

Caretaker Provincial Minister Ibrahim Hasan Murad said that he did not take privileges as a Caretaker Provincial Minister. He said and added that he and the Caretaker Cabinet tried hard to serve the people in a short period of time and bring improvements in the system.

He said that as a provincial minister, he made various reforms in his respective departments, which increased the revenue of the departments.



**NAROWAL: President Dr Arif Alvi visiting different sections of the Kartarpur Corridor.**

**Federal Ombudsman for Insurance organizes national conference**

LAHORE (APP): The Federal Ombudsman for Insurance organized a two-day 4th annual national conference at its regional office, focusing on reviewing the department's performance over the previous and current years.

The conference also included a briefing on the redressal of public complaints related to insurance companies. The event was attended by all regional heads of the

department, advisors, consultants, and CEOs of insurance companies, says a press release issued here on Friday.

Chaired by the Federal Ombudsman for Insurance Dr. Khawar Jameel and hosted by Regional Advisor in-charge Lahore Abdul Basit Khan, the conference emphasized the need to expedite measures for providing quick and efficient justice to complainants regarding insurance companies.

**DIG for ensuring foolproof security on Shab-e-Barat**

LARKANA (APP): DIG Larkana Aftab Nasir has put the Larkana police range on high alert while directing all the SSPs to ensure safe security on the night of Shab-e-Barat.

The police spokesman informed here on Friday that the SSPs had been directed to deploy policemen at all the mosques, imambargahs, shrines and graveyards. He added that the DIG had emphasized taking strict action against aerial firing and the sale as well as the use of fireworks.

**PDC celebrates white coat ceremony**

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: Peshawar Dental College (PDC) hosted its prestigious White Coat Ceremony, a significant event attended by esteemed figures in the medical field, dedicated faculty members, enthusiastic students, and proud parents.

The event featured key personalities, including CEO Dr. Iftikhar Husam, Prof. Dr. Hafeez ur Rahman, Dean, PMC, Prof. Dr. Saeed Anwar Executive Director, Prof. Dr. Mohammad Aman Khan, Principal, PMC, and Prof. Dr. Shamim Akhtar, Principal, PDC. Dr. Saba Siraj skillfully managed the proceedings as the stage secretary. Addressing the

audience, Prof. Dr. Hafeez ur Rahman extended heartfelt congratulations to the students, commending their achievement in gaining admission to the esteemed dental profession. He emphasized the importance of cultivating a positive attitude of gratitude, professional competence, ethical values, and a profound love for learning while maintaining respect for teachers.

Prof. Dr. Shamim Akhtar highlighted PDC's commitment to providing state-of-the-art facilities and attitudinal training to produce well-mannered doctors. The ceremony also witnessed Dr. Nashia Mottahir administering the oath to the budding dentists.



**LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Minister, Ibrahim Hasan Murad paid a farewell call on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.**



**LAHORE: Speaker Punjab Assembly Sardar Muhammad Sibtain Khan talking with media persons during first session of Punjab Assembly in the Provincial Capital.**

**ANF recovers 331 kg drugs in 10 operations**

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan while conducting 10 operations across the country managed to recover over 331 kg of drugs and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He informed that 10.5 kg heroin was recovered from a parcel being sent to the UK at Cargo Office Islamabad while an accused was also arrested.

Courier Office. 68 Ice-filled capsules were recovered from a passenger going to Qatar at Islamabad Airport. 1.8 kg hashish was recovered from a Doha-bound passenger, arrested at Peshawar Airport. 330 grams of cocaine was recovered from a parcel sent from Nigeria at Lahore Airport. 255 kg opium was recovered from the Galikank Mustang area and 29 kg hashish was recovered from two suspects arrested from M-Sri Lanka at the Lahore

**World Bank delegation visits GCU**

LAHORE (APP): A delegation from the World Bank, led by Senior Economist Ms. Inga Afanasieva and Education Specialist Ms. Tashmina Rahman, visited the GC University Lahore along with the Higher Education Development Project (HEDP) team led by Project Director Dr. Mahmood Ul Hassan Butt.

The delegation engaged in discussions with Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Adnan Ahmad and university officials, including Prof. Dr. Hamid Mukhtar, Director of the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC), Dr. Fouzia Shahin, Director of Academic Planning & External Linkages (AP&EL). The World Bank and HEDP teams were briefed about the operations of GCU's administrative and academic departments, the implementation of the revised Undergraduate Education Policy (UEP), including student internship support mechanisms, and the role of HEDP in promoting academic reforms.

**Call for showcasing KP's historical significance through digital media**

PESHAWAR (APP): Carrying a primitive history, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a unique province that witnessed the oldest civilizations including Ghandhara requiring proper projection on digital media to attract foreign investment imperative for rural development. Being a gateway to the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa having about 3,000 years old history carried a unique geographical location, archaeological heritage and primitive history that saw an onslaught of invaders who marched to India through historic Khyber

Pass. Bakhtzada Khan, senior research officer, archeology department told APP on Friday that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa carried one of the richest histories in the subcontinent where followers of almost all religions had come and stayed for the accomplishment of their political, trade and business objectives. Resultantly, different religions including Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Christianity gained roots for many years in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa before Islam. He said the discovery

of human remains in Soan Valley in Pakistani Punjab province as evidence of the stones and bones' tools dating from around (2 million to 90,000 years before present) of the Early Paleolithic period had signified that people were living here. "Sangaro cave's excavations at village Mian Khan in Mardan district conducted by renowned archeologists Ahmad Hasan Dhani and Farid Khan in 1963 had revealed the presence of people's remains in the Middle Paleolithic period (9,000 to 27,000 years before present) in KP." These people were living in stones-made

caves, who fulfilled their food's needs mostly from hunting of birds and animals.

The discoveries of primitive rocks, bones and hunting tools dating back of Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age (10,000 to 8,600 years before present) during excavations at Khanpur in Haripur district and Sangaro Cave signified presence of humans' life in Swat and Dir where every stone speaks about their life style, culture, livelihood and civilizations, he informed. It was found that people started making clay and stones made pots, crockery and others related

utensils for kitchen during Neolithic period or commonly known as new stone-age dating back some 8,000 years before as evident from excavations of historic Mehar Gharh in Balochistan of the Indus Civilization, Rehman Dheri DI Khan and Sheri Khan Tarkai Swabi. These strong evidence had magnified that people were living in the stone and mud houses in those primordial era.

The graves of Aryans invaders were also discovered at Aligram Swat, Sangota Chitral and Timergara Dir Lower dating back of the Dark Ages period of around 2,000BC.

## Commerce Minister's visit to Saudia strengthens bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): The caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce and Industries, Dr. Gohar Ejaz led a delegation to Saudi Arabia from February 21-22 to strengthen the bilateral relationship between the two countries and to explore new opportunities for collaboration and economic growth.

According to a press statement issued by the Ministry of Commerce here Friday, the delegation members included Punjab Investment Minister, S.M. Tanveer and other senior officials from the Ministries of Commerce, Interior, Board of Investment, and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry.

During the visit, the Minister held bilateral

meetings with the Minister of Interior, Prince Abdul Aziz bin Saud bin Naif bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, the Minister of Commerce, Dr. Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, and the Minister of Investment, Eng. Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih.

He also met Saudi Finance Minister, Mohammed Al-Jadaan and held a meeting with the Secretary General of the Muslim World League, Dr. Mohammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, the statement said adding that Prince Mansour bin Muhammad bin Saad Al-Saud, hosted a dinner in honour of the Minister and his delegation at his residence in Dirriyah, Riyadh. During his bilateral engagements with the Ministers of Commerce and Investment, Dr. Gohar Ejaz was also

accompanied by members of the private sector delegation including Arif Habib (Arif Habib Group), Fawad Mukhtar (Fatima Fertilizers), Muhammad Ali Tabba (Lucky Group), Raza Jaffar (Global Sustainability Network), Shahid Soorty (Soorty Enterprises), Bashir Jan Muhammad (Dalda Foods Ltd.), Asim Siddiqui (Pakistan Intermodal Limited), Shahbaz Malik (Hilton Pharma), and Anwar Ghani (Ghani Glass).

Saudi Commerce Minister, Dr. Majid Al-Kassabi underscored the importance of strengthening business and trade relations between the two countries and appreciated the efforts of Dr. Ejaz for bringing an important business delegation to Riyadh.



**SIALKOT: A group photo of H. E. Mr. Tapas Adhikari (Ambassador of Nepal) to Pakistan and President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik with exporters at Chamber of Commerce.**

## Ambassador says: Nepal keen to promote trade ties with Pakistan

SIALKOT (APP): Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan Tapas Adhikari has urged the Sialkot exporters to come forward and explore the untapped international trade markets of Nepal to promote the bilateral trade between both countries.

He stated this while addressing a meeting of Sialkot exporters held at Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) here on Friday. President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry Abdul Ghafoor Malik,

SCCI's Vice President (VP) Amer Majeed Sheikh and Sialkot business community were also present on this occasion.

Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan Tapas Adhikari pledged full support to ensure the easy access of Pakistan business community to international trade markets of Nepal.

The Ambassador appreciated the role of Sialkot in the Economic Development of the Country. He said that undoubtedly Sialkot is the

hub of manufacturing surgical goods, sports goods and different kind of items. He shared that on March 7-11, 2024 a Nepal Chamber Expo 2024 is going to be held in Nepal, and suggested that the business community of Sialkot should participate in that for B2B meetings.

Moreover, he also shared that on April 27, 2024 Nepal Investment Summit is planned in Nepal which will prove to be a great opportunity for investors from Pakistan.

## Pakistan's cotton yarn exports to China surged by 46.7% in 2023

BEIJING (APP): In 2023, China's import of cotton yarn from Pakistan reached a record high of \$ 695,622,837, marking a significant surge of 46.7% during the year 2023, data from China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Textile and Apparel (CCCT) showed.

Recently, the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) released a report stating that due to the decline in production capacity has affected the demand for intermediates, China Economic Net (CEN) reported.

As per CCCT, due to

the large price difference between domestic and foreign cotton yarns after the second quarter, the importers' order intentions continued to rise, resulting in the recent arrival of imported yarns, which pushed up the imports.

Among them, India, Pakistan and Uzbekistan increased their exports of cotton yarn to China by 243.2%, 351.1% and 867.1% respectively last December.

And for the whole year, cotton yarn from Pakistan accounts for 15.8% of China's cotton yarn imports.

## Malik Sohail says: Govt to regularize salt trade, develop branding mechanism to sell item in Intl market

ISLAMABAD: The special focus being given by the government of Pakistan to regularize salt trade and develop a branding mechanism to sell the commodity in international market at

Meilander, VP Operation and Martyn Element. The meeting was attended by a large number of people from mineral and mining and other sector of Pakistan prominently Dr. Afshan Malik, Adviser to President FPCCI, Mr.



competitive price will definitely give a new impetus to the industry, this was stated by Malik Sohail, Chairman Coordination of FPCCI on behalf of President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh in a meeting with President and Chairman of Board of Directors of Miracle Salt Collective Inc. USA who visited FPCCI Capital Office, Islamabad along with CEO of the company Mr. Robert Harrison and Mr. Tad Ballantyne, Vice President Global Financing, Mr. Jaffery

Arham Ikram Convener FPCCI Standing Committee, Mr. Mr. Shokuat Masood, Mr. Johar Ali raki former Vice President FPCCI, Mr. Ahmed Khan President IIA, Mr. Shakeel Munir, Zahid Maqbool Former President ICCI, M. Arif But, Farukh Alvi, Syed Arieque Ahmed Gilani, Ghulam Nasir, Abdul Wahab Bezinjo and other. While highlighting the pivotal role of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI).



**LAHORE: Vendors arranging and displaying strawberry to attract the customers.**

## Unlocking Pakistan's digital future: Insights from Telenor Asia's Digital lives decoded study

ISLAMABAD (APP): Telenor Asia unveiled the findings of its second-year study of "Digital Lives Decoded," shedding light on the pivotal role of mobile devices in shaping daily life in Pakistan.

The study identified several key drivers behind mobile use, including forging healthy social connections, opening new opportunities, ensuring online safety, fostering skill development, and

promoting environmental consciousness, said a news release issued here on Friday. The first Digital Lives Decoded study in 2022 came at a time when Pakistan was emerging from a global pandemic and the pace of digital adoption accelerated. Building upon the foundation laid by its predecessor, Digital Lives Decoded 2023 offers a comprehensive analysis of mobile usage and its impact on key facets of daily life.

## Call to solve issues of SME sector

FAISALABAD (APP): The SME sector is the growth engine of the national economy and problems of this sector it must be resolved on top priority basis, said Dr Sajjad Arshad, Acting President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI).

He along with Vice President Hajji Muhammad Aslam Bhalli, Mian Muhammad Tayyab and Hajji Muhammad Abid visited the Small Industrial Estate (SIE) on the special request of Mr. Sanaullah Niazi, Convener FCCI Standing Committee on SIE Nalka Kohala. Dr Sajjad appreciated the efforts of Mr. Sanaullah Niazi to resolve the long pending issues which were hampering the smooth functioning of the SIE. He said that the FCCI would take measures to resolve the issues. In this connection, a comprehensive feedback system has been introduced to remain in touch with departments concerned till the final disposal of the issues.

## Jazz, EFU life introduce Takaful to broaden financial inclusion

ISLAMABAD (APP): Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator has collaborated with EFU Life Assurance Ltd., the nation's premier insurance company to introduce the industry's first Takaful (Shariah-complaint) offering for its subscribers.

Through this collaboration, Jazz subscribers can opt for low-cost Takaful products with unique benefits including a health wallet, cancer protection, and

coverage for female major medical illnesses, said a news release issued here on Friday. In addition, the customer's entire family will be able to utilize virtual healthcare benefits. Sharing his thoughts on the development, Kazim Mujtaba, Chief Commercial Officer at Jazz, said, "We are excited to partner with EFU Life to include a full suite of industry's first Shariah-complaint products within a single program.

## Gold rates decrease by Rs 1,200 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of per tola 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 1,200 and was sold at Rs 214,100 on Friday compared to its sale at Rs 215,300 on the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs 1,029 to Rs 183,556 from Rs 184,585 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs 168,260 from Rs 169,203, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

# International News

## Pompeo says:

## West must return to imposing cost on Iran's 'malign activity' to restore Mideast stability

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: Taking away Iran's ability to create instability in the Middle East was the driving force behind the 2020 Abraham Accords, and US policy needs to move back toward imposing a cost on Tehran's malign actions, former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Thursday.

The accords were agreements signed by the UAE and Bahrain to normalize relations with Israel, brokered by then-US President Donald Trump. Sudan and Morocco also later agreed to establish ties with Israel.

Pompeo told the Future Investment Initiative Priority forum in Miami

that the process of formulation to signing the accords happened due to a "central thesis" held by all involved that Tehran was the "malign actor" in the region.

"You should know, I'm hopelessly biased as they're still trying to kill me. If you see me walking around with a security team, it's not because I enjoy it but because I still need it," he said. "I think that's telling. You can see (Iran's) hand in what happened in Gaza. They supported, funded and essentially facilitated the capacity for Hamas to carry out the barbaric attacks (on Israel) which took place on Oct. 7.

"Today, without the Iranian support you'd still

have shipping through the Red Sea, instead of transit having to move some other way because you've got missiles being launched into (the area) with relatively good accuracy. "Nearly all the instability that takes place in the Middle East is as a direct result of that regime in Iran. The United States had the lead in deterring them and we've lost that."

Pompeo praised Saudi Aramco for stabilizing oil markets following an attack claimed by the Iran-backed Houthis on its facilities in Abqaiq-Khuras in eastern Saudi Arabia, but pinpointed that attack as the beginning of the end of the US and the West being able to deter Tehran.



**Palestinian men check whatever is left of the homes in a building hit by overnight Israeli air strikes in Rafah refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip.**

## UN agency for Palestinian refugees at 'breaking point': chief

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: New York: The UN agency for Palestinian refugees warned Thursday it has reached a critical juncture as it struggles to cope with the war in Gaza. "It is with profound regret that I must now inform you that UNRWA has reached a breaking point," chief Philippe Lazzarini said, as donors freeze funding. Israel exerts pressure to dismantle the agency and humanitarian needs soar.

The occupied territories, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. Several countries including the United States, Britain, Germany and Japan have suspended funding to UNRWA in response to Israeli allegations that some of its staff participated in the October 7 attack on Israel. In an interview published over the weekend, Lazzarini said \$438 billion has been frozen the equivalent of more than half of expected funding for 2024. He said Israel was waging a concerted effort to destroy UNRWA. The UN fired the employees accused by Israel and has begun an internal probe of UNRWA. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has also tasked an independent panel with assessing whether UNRWA acts neutrally in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"The Agency's ability to fulfill the mandate given through General Assembly resolution 302 is now seriously threatened," he said in a letter to the assembly.

That is the resolution under which the agency was founded in 1949, following the creation of Israel. UNRWA employs some 30,000 people working in

whelming majority," he told the Security Council.

China is aware that the United States has tabled its own draft resolution. China hopes that the United States will show a responsible attitude, respond positively to the international call and respect the established consensus among Security Council members, said Zhang.

"We need to point out that the essence of any action of this council is to achieve an immediate cease-fire.

Any message sent out via our action must be clear, unequivocal, unambiguous, and unmistakable, rather than prevaricate or beat about the bush," he said.

"At this point, the Council needs to demonstrate a strong resolve rather than negotiating skills only." The military offensive into Rafah must cease immediately, he said, according to XINHUA.

## EU imposes new sanctions on Russia

MOSCOW (Online): The European Union has adopted its 13th package of sanctions against Russia, the European Council said in a press release on Friday.

The measures targeting 106 individuals and 88 entities were introduced ahead of the second anniversary of the start of Russia's military operation against Ukraine, the document noted.

The new sanctions primarily target the military and defense sectors, along with associated individuals, as well as members of the judiciary.

The measures against the listed persons and entities

## Top German adviser in China for high-level talks

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: A top adviser to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is in China for talks focusing on the conflict in Ukraine and on bilateral ties.

Foreign and security policy adviser Jens Plötner told China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Beijing that the talks would also be an opportunity to discuss the war in the Middle East, and the tensions in North Korea.

According to Plötner, the German government attaches "great importance" to its relationship with China and plans to further develop economic relations.

## Sweden has around 62,000 persons linked to criminal gangs, police say

**Monitoring Desk**  
STOCKHOLM (Internews): About 62,000 persons are active in, or have connections to, criminal networks in Sweden, the police said on Friday, where the authorities have struggled for years to contain violence linked to organised crime. Deadly shootings have more than tripled over the past decade in this Nordic nation of 10 million people.

## Ukraine, Denmark finalize long-term security agreement

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelensky and Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen signed a 10-year agreement on security cooperation between Ukraine and Denmark on Feb. 23 in Lviv, Deputy Head of the Presidential Office Ihor Zhovkva said.

The U.K., Germany, and France have earlier signed similar deals to help Ukraine repel Russia's aggression based on a pledge made by the Group of Seven (G7) last July.

Denmark is the first non-G7 country to finalize the deal. Copenhagen announced already on Feb. 22 that it is signing the treaty with Kyiv. The deal, concluded on the eve of the second anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion, allocates 1.8 billion euros (\$1.95 billion) in Danish support for Ukraine in 2024.

## Sweden has around 62,000 persons linked to criminal gangs, police say

**Monitoring Desk**  
STOCKHOLM (Internews): About 62,000 persons are active in, or have connections to, criminal networks in Sweden, the police said on Friday, where the authorities have struggled for years to contain violence linked to organised crime. Deadly shootings have more than tripled over the past decade in this Nordic nation of 10 million people.



**Police move a makeshift barricade at the site of a protest as farmers march towards New Delhi to push for better crop prices promised to them in 2021, at Shambhu Barrier, the border between Punjab and Haryana states, India.**

## Von der Leyen: EU plans to unlock €137 billion for Poland

**Monitoring Desk**  
Warsaw: The European Union is to release €137 billion of withheld funds from Poland due to rule of law concerns, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on Friday.

Next week, the commission "will come forward with two decisions on European funds that are currently blocked for Poland," von der Leyen said at a press briefing in Warsaw. "These decisions will free up €137 billion for Poland."

Concerns about judicial reforms under Poland's previous nationalist government prompted the commission to withhold money from the EU budget that would normally have been spent in Poland.

But in October, the nationalist Law and Justice Party (PiS) was ousted by a centrist coalition led by former European Council President Donald Tusk, who has sought to undo the changes PiS made and restore Poland's EU funding.

# CPEC projects underway in Pakistan to help local economy

BEIJING (APP): A number of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects are making renewed progress as the CPEC, a flagship project under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), enters its next phase, helping the country to alleviate energy shortages and empowering its economic growth.

"Entering 2024, CPEC projects have achieved new progress," the Global Times reported.

"The Karot hydropower project, a 720 megawatt (MW) hydropower plant developed on the Jhelum River in Pakistan and the first ever large-scale hydropower project under the BRI, has generated a total of 3.1 billion kilowatt hours of electricity in 2023," China Three Gorges Corporation, which in-

vested in and is leading construction of the project, announced on its website.

In December, two China-donated projects, including a seawater desalination plant and the upgrade of the Pak-China Friendship Hospital, were inaugurated in the Gwadar district of southwestern Balochistan province.

The desalination plant will provide 5,000 tons per day of potable water to help address a severe drinking water shortage, while the Pak-China Friendship Hospital has boosted its capacity to 150 beds from the original 50.

"At the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant, the K2 and K3 units that both use Hualong One, China's third-generation nuclear power reactor with full intellectual property rights, are churning out a com-

bined 20 billion kilowatt hours each year, satisfying the production and residential electricity use of two million people while saving energy equivalent to 6.24 million tons of standard coal," the Global Times learned from China National Nuclear Corporation.

In July last year, Unit 5 (C-5) of the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant broke ground, marking the 7th nuclear reactor exported from China to Pakistan.

"Pakistan is on the right side of history by standing with China as the game changer. CPEC's second phase will unveil record development and economic uplift in the country," said Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Defense.



KARACHI: Activists of Jamaat-e-Islami hold a banner during protest against Israel attack on Ghaza outside a mosque, in the Provincial Capital.

## Sindh governor commends Punjab CM for completing projects in record time

LAHORE (INP): Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori met with Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi in Lahore and congratulated him on being elected as Chairman Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Friday.

The Sindh governor appreciated the performance of Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi for completing the projects for the welfare of the people of Punjab in record time.

Talking on the occasion Mohsin Naqvi said that the whole team worked day and night in Punjab and they tried their best to serve the public in 13 months.

Insha Allah, Pakistan will progress and the future of the country is bright, Mohsen Naqvi said.

Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi invited Governor Sindh to watch the match of Pakistan Super League (PSL). Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) leaders Farooq Sattar and Mustafa Kamal were also present on this occasion.

## Sherry condemns PTI founder's letter to IMF

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice President of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Senator Sherry Rehman on Friday strongly condemned the letter of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In a statement here, Sherry Rehman said that confirmation of former PTI chairman's letter to IMF was regrettable. Senator Rehman alleged Imran Khan regime as the record borrower government but Khan did not bother about poverty and inflation while taking loans.

"Inviting the IMF to intervene in the country's internal affairs is not anti-nationalism," she queried. She said that IMF has nothing to do with the general elections, adding that the PTI leadership did not yet learned from its mistakes.

## PTI founder, Bushra could not be indicted in 190mln pounds scam

RAWALPINDI (Online): Judge Nasir Javed Rana of Special Accountability Court of Islamabad has adjourned hearing of Al-Qadir Trust case based on 190 million pounds financial scandal against PTI founder and his wife Bushra Begum till February 27 without proceedings.

Due to it both the accused persons could not be indicted.

Both of the accused were present in the court along with their lawyers Usman Gull and Zahir Abbas.

Deputy Prosecutor General (DPG) NAB Sardar Muzaffar Abbasi also appeared along with his team.

Former chairman PTI embraced Bushra Bibi in the court room as soon as they came face to face as both of them met each other after two and half weeks in the court. Both the accused were to be indicted. However the lawyers of the accused filed application in the court for providing them copies of the reference.

Upon it the court fixed February 27 for indictment. The PTI founder came on rostrum and said he has to consult dentist for check up.

The court remarked doctor is available there in jail too. You can approach him for check up.

Former chairman PTI said 7 months have passed and I have not approached doctor even once during this period. Lest jail doctor should extract my teeth because I have to get check up my teeth in the age of 70.

The court directed give the application and we will issue appropriate order.

## Rangers arrest suspect involved in street crimes

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Rangers Sindh and the police collaborated in a successful operation that led to the apprehension of a suspect allegedly involved in street crimes and robberies in Afridi Colony area of SITE Town.

Bashir Ahmed, the apprehended individual, was reportedly engaged in robbing citizens when the law enforcement agencies, comprising Rangers and police personnel, swiftly intervened and arrested him at the scene, according to spokesman for Rangers on Friday.

Following his arrest, authorities seized weapons, ammunition, a motorcycle, and a mobile phone believed to be associated with his criminal activities.

## Over 10 huts burnt to ashes

SUKKUR (INP): More than 10 huts were burnt to ashes along with households here late Thursday night. However, the residents managed to save their lives.

According to details, fire initiated due to candle engulfed a hut of Bagri community near Bus Terminal area of Sukkur.

The fire spread rapidly and engulfed the surrounding huts of the shanty village within no time.

More than 10 huts were burnt to ashes along with households, grain and other valuables before the local people brought blaze under control on self-help basis. However, the residents managed to save their lives by jumping out of the huts.

## One Youngster gunned down

SHIKARPUR: One well-known person of Garhiyaseen Khalid Hussain Jeho was gunned down in Garhiyaseen city in the limit of Garhiyaseen police station on Friday evening.

According to initial reports reached here that some group of armed men opened fires upon one social activist of Garhiyaseen Khalid Hussain Jeho near Dada Qasim Shah Graveyard on road.

As a result of firing, the youngster Khalid Hussain Jeho became seriously injured who was shifted to Shikarpur Hospital in precarious condition where he succumbed to his grave injuries.

## Dry weather forecast for city

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department on Friday predicted dry weather and gusty winds in most parts of the Sindh province including Karachi during the next 24 hours.

Mainly, dry weather is likely to prevail in the province.

## Minister says: All possible facilities to be ensured for Hujjaj intending hajj 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed Friday said that all possible facilities will be provided to Pakistani pilgrims during this year's hajj where special training programs were also being conducted at the district level through camps managed by the religious affairs ministry.

In an exclusive interview with PTV news channel, he said that under the supervision of the Pakistan Hajj mission special catering companies were being arranged to feed pilgrims under a government scheme and will ensure quality and safety standards at every step.

Minister said that this year Pakistan Hajj mission is offering simplified transportation services to Pakistani pilgrims with standard buses ensuring round-the-clock, adding that, the transport department will fully dedicate themselves to the sacred duty.

A comprehensive transportation guidelines had also been issued at each building, he added.

The caretaker government had introduced several new services for the pilgrims to help them perform the rituals with comfort and ease, he mentioned.

Monitoring Cell has been put in place to closely monitor and address any potential issues of the private Pilgrims, he said, adding, furthermore, various other specialized units, such as a Wheelchair Desk have been established to cater to the specific needs of different groups of pilgrims.



NAROWAL: President Dr Arif Alvi being briefed about Kartarpur Corridor at Zero Line/International Border.

## SC dismisses petition seeking enforcement of Islamic presidential system

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has dismissed petition seeking enforcement of Islamic presidential system in the country.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa heard the petition Friday.

The petitioner said they want enforcement of Islamic presidential system in the country/

The CJP Qazi Faez Isa remarked "we too want Islamic order in the country. Parliamentary system is in place in Pakistan. Read the constitution of Pakistan. The color of book of constitution too is green."

Mention is made about Islamic order in the constitution of Pakistan. The constitution starts with the name of Almighty Allah. The holy Quran is mentioned in the constitution. As per article 227 no law can be enacted against Quran and Sunnah. Do you have any difference over these things. Do you want to become president in presidential system. Why do you want presidential system to delegate all powers to one person. What you are reading is not constitution of Pakistan.

The petitioner replied court should give him time to study constitution of Pakistan.

## SFA, revenue department team pays surprise visit to milk shops

HYDERABAD (APP): On the directives of Deputy Commissioner, Tariq Qureshi and Director General Sindh Food Authority Agha Fakhr Hussain, the team of Sindh Food Authority Hyderabad and the team of Revenue Department Friday conducted surprise visit to milk shop.

According to the details, Assistant Commissioner Latifabad Faraz Ahmad Siddiqui and Deputy Director Sindh Food Authority Fida Hussain Khoso and Assistant Commissioner Faraz Ahmad Siddiqui said that the purpose of such inspections is to ensure that consumers are provided with essential commodities according to hygiene norms and to take legal action against adulterers.

On this occasion, apart from other officers, the mobile testing lab was also present with him.

During the visit, he checked the quality of milk from different dairies and food and drink at hotels. Deputy Director Fida Hussain Khoso and Assistant Commissioner Faraz Ahmad Siddiqui said that the purpose of such inspections is to ensure that consumers are provided with essential commodities according to hygiene norms and to take legal action against adulterers.



HYDERABAD: View of damages after gas cylinder blast in a house, near Gul Centre in Hyderabad.

## Sindh govt committed to provide quality education: officials

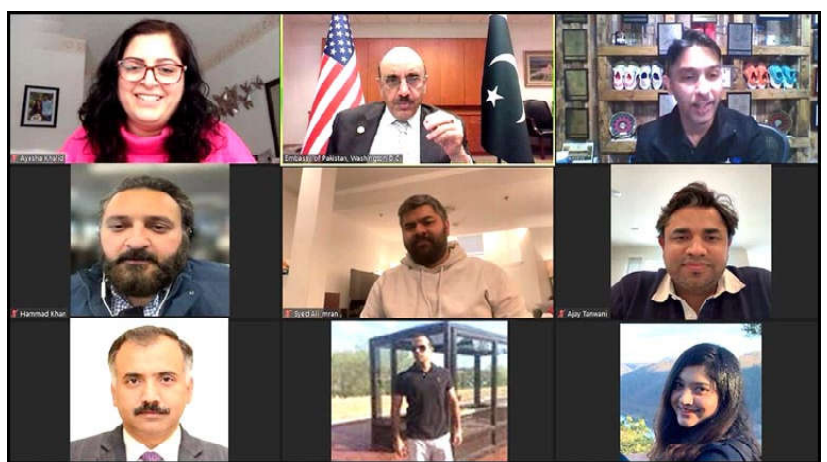
LARKANA (APP): Sindh government is committed to provide quality education and necessary facilities to the children and for this, all necessary measures are being taken to achieve the objectives. These views were expressed by Director Primary Schools Education Region Larkana Gulshir Soomro and DEO Larkana Anees Rehman Jalbani while addressing award distribution among the school children held here.

They said that children are the architects of our country's future. Government School children received awards for tree plantation after winning positions and monthly test.

Award ceremony was held at the Government Boys Primary School New District Jail Colony, Larkana.

Speaking on the occasion, the educationist said, it is the duty of the society and parents to enroll their children in the nearest public schools and identify the problems so that the concerned authorities could resolve the issues on priority basis.

Among others, Deputy DAO Pir Muhammad Shah, Deputy DAO Muhammad Mashuq Sonal, Assistant Education Officers Abdul Fatah Dahar, Shamshad Ali Mirani, Qazi Qamaruddin, Zahid Hussain Soomro, Government Girls High School Jail Colony Madam Najam Nisa Abbasi, School Headmaster Muzaffar Ali Lahori and students also participated in large numbers.



UNITES STATES: Ambassador Masood Khan e-meeting with Dr. Muniba Agboatwala Founder & Chairperson of HOPE Pakistan and its Director Ambreen Siddiqui.

## Mayor Karachi attaches great hopes with Murad Ali Shah as CM

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Friday said the Sindh Assembly Member will take oath on February 24, and a Jiyala will be the Chief Minister of Sindh and we will continue to serve without prejudice.

He said this while addressing the foundation stone laying ceremony of the sewerage system rehabilitation project from Teen Hatti to Dakkhana Liaquatabad.

He said that the way the people of Sindh have expressed their confidence in the Pakistan People's Party, every one of our workers will fulfil this confidence. He said that if the leadership of the PPP is working, then it will be seen, Insha Allah, the next three and a half years will be better for this city. He said that we are working in every town and every district of Karachi under the leadership of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. He said that there are sewage problems in Liaquatabad which are going to be solved and will complete all such projects.

## Commissioner inaugurates 7 day anti-polio campaign

HYDERABAD (APP): Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Division Syed Mohammad Sajjad Haider, along with Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Zahid Hussain Rind, inaugurated the seven-day national anti-polio campaign by giving polio drops to children in Taluka Sakrand here on Friday.

Speaking on the occasion, the commissioner said that all resources will be utilized to make and administer the polio vaccine to all children up to five years of age.

During the upcoming seven-day national anti-polio campaign, cooperate with the polio teams that come door to door and make sure to give your children polio drops, he added.

On this occasion, District Health Officer Dr Alah Bux Rajper informed the commissioner about the arrangements made to make the anti-polio campaign a success.



KARACHI: Players arriving to attend inauguration ceremony of 18th Sindh games at National Coaching center, in Provincial Capital.

## DG KDA for identifying vacant flats, shops to offer in next auction

KARACHI (APP): Director General, Karachi Development Authority (KDA) Naveed Anwar on Friday issued instructions to Director KDA Public Housing Nasir Khan to identify vacant KDA flats and shops located in Surjani Town to offer them in the auction on March 7.

Naveed Anwar said this while presiding over the meeting of KDA Board of Public Housing Project.

On this occasion, detailed deliberations were made on the auction of KDA lands next month.

The DG KDA said that the priority was to make KDA a stronger institution again for the development of Karachi city and provision of better housing facilities to the citizens. KDA's contributions to provide new and affordable residential facilities to the middle class were commendable, he noted. He also directed the officials concerned to take measures for providing awareness to the public through advertisements in various newspapers.

An awareness campaign would be launched through social media so that more and more citizens could participate in the auction, he said. Senior Director Land Raza Qaimkhani, Director Land Mohammad Shahid, Director Public Housing Nasir Khan, Project Director Public Housing Syed Iftikhar.



KARACHI: President Sindh High Court Barr Association Rehan A. Malik speaks during a ceremony on the eve of International Mother Language Day, at a local hotel, in the Provincial Capital.

## Shahbaz Sharif should form broad-based govt after consultations: Mian Zahid

KARACHI (INP): Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain has said that PML-N's President Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif should form a broad-based government after consultations.

Interacting with business community on Friday, he said that after forming the government, the PM should direct immediate negotiation for a new loan from the IMF to save the country from bankruptcy.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that various international and local institutions and experts were sounding the alarm about Pakistan, while some unsuccessful and frustrated political elements within the country were also engaged in efforts to damage the country, which was condemnable.

The burden of local and foreign debt on Pakistan was continuously increasing, he said adding that the only short-term way to pay these debts was by taking new loans to repay old ones.

The business leader said that borrowing has become necessary as domestic production, exports, remittances, and investment etc. cannot solve the problem of a shortage of funds.

He said that it was important for Pakistan to remain under the supervision of the IMF due to increasing debts, but the results of this will be more inflation, unemployment, a decline in public services, and cuts in development projects. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the economic situation has made the lives of people difficult, while another IMF deal will add to the miseries of the masses.



LARKANA: Members of Primary Teachers Association (PTA) are holding protest demonstration against killing of Hidayatullah Luhar and demanding justice for him, at Larkana press club.