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Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

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Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan maintains:

Interim Govt ensured holding of peaceful elections, defended rights of province at every forum

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that the interim provincial government not only ensured holding of general elections in extraordinary circumstances of the province but also defended its rights at every forum.

He said provision of healthcare, education and other basic facilities to the people and above all establishment of law and order in the province was no less than a challenge.

The caretaker Chief Minister also said that the interim govern-

ment played key role for resolving the public issues besides executing pending development projects.

Mr. Domki was addressing the gathering of dinner reception hosted for the administrative secretaries and other high ups here on Friday.

The caretaker Chief Minister praised the cooperation of senior and hard working officers in resolving the public issues besides conducting the general elections in the province in peaceful manner.

He referred different projects completed in short span of time of caretaker set up.

He said that we

completed certain collective nature projects in short span of time which otherwise were pending in the province.

He said that we did our best to provide maximum relief to the people every possibly by improving service delivery system.

He stressed that we have to think better for the province and set our direction afresh.

The senior bureaucrat Dostain Jamalini on the occasion appreciated the performance of interim provincial government under leadership of the Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Domki.

Unity vital to steer country out of challenges: Shehbaz Sharif

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.

"PML-N would take the country out of crisis under the dynamic leadership of PML-N Quaid Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif", he maintained.

Murad Ali Shah nominated as Sindh CM

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 Awas Shah and Naveed Anthony 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.

Habibur Rehman posted as Special Secretary S&GAD

QUETTA: The Balochistan Civil Service (BCS) Officer of Grade-19, Habibur Rehman, awaiting posting order, has been posted as the Special Secretary Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD), Government of Balochistan.

This was announced in an official notification issued by the S&GAD here on Friday.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki photographed with Senior Officers, Secretaries of Provincial Government and Inspector General of Police after a dinner hosted in their honour

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



QUETTA: Director Audit Local Government Balochistan Syed Naseebullah presenting Audit Report to Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

15th Pakistan Pediatric Conference begins in Quetta: Provision of basic healthcare facilities at doorstep of people big challenge, says Governor

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that it is a big challenge for the government to provide basic healthcare facilities to the people at their doorstep mainly due to scattered population in the province.

The Governor regretfully pointed out that our innocent children are seen while working at different

JCP recommends Justice Afghan's elevation to SC, Justice Shahzad as LHC CJ

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) has recommended the elevation of Balochistan High Court (BHC) Chief Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan to the Supreme Court and appointment of Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad



QUETTA: Members of Pakistan Youth Ittehad holding protest demonstration against Israeli cruel and inhumane acts and express unity with the innocent people of Palestine, at Quetta press club.

BAP, NP & ANP obtain one reserved seat each: PML-N, PPP secure four each, JUI-F gets two reserved seats in Balochistan Assembly

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) secured four each reserved seats of women and minorities in Balochistan's provincial assembly.

Similarly, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-F (JUI-F) obtained three reserved seats while Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), National Party (NP) and ANP secured one each reserved seats for women in the provincial assembly.

According to the notification of the reserved seats in Balochistan Assembly issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan on Friday, the PML-N's Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, Hadia Nawaz and Rubaba Khan Buledi were elected as members of the provincial assembly on the seats reserved for women in Balochistan Assembly, on the basis of priority list provided by the respective

party. Similarly, the PPP's Ms. Ghazala Gola, Mina Majeed and Shahnaz Umriani were elected as the members of provincial assembly on the reserved seats for women while JUI-F's Ms. Shahida Rauf and Ms. Safia were also elected as the members of provincial assembly on the reserved seats for women.

Ms. Farah Azeem Shah of BAP, Ms. Umme Kulsom and ANP's Salma Bibi were also elected as the members of provincial assembly on the seats reserved for women in the provincial assembly.

While on the other hand, as far seats reserved for minorities, PML-N, PPP and JUI secured one seat each.

The PML-N's Patrick Sant Maseih, PPP's Sanjay Kumar and JUI's Ravi Pahuja were declared successful on the seats reserved for minorities in the provincial assembly. It may be mentioned

Punjab MPs 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. 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 Chairman comprising MPAs Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan, Syed Ali Haider Gilani, Saima Kanwal and Raheela Naeem. The Secretary also announced



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

According to the schedule, the nomination papers for the Speaker and Deputy Speaker may be submitted by 5 pm on Friday (today). The scrutiny of the nomination papers for the Speaker will be held at 5.10 pm while scrutiny of the Deputy Speaker's nomination papers will be at 5.20 pm. The election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker will be held on February 24, 2024 (Saturday) through secret ballot in the assembly chambers.

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. As many as

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

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

Dr. Amir Muhammad Jozgezi meets Zubair Jamali: Performance of LEAs lauded for provision of peaceful environment during elections

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Health, Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jozgezi has appreciated the



performance of law enforcement agencies for providing peaceful environment to the voters during general elections in the province. Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jozgezi was speaking to the caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Captain (Retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Jamali during a meeting on Friday. The caretaker Minister for Health on the occasion congratulated the caretaker Minister for Home and his whole team on peaceful holding of the elections in Balochistan.

Meanwhile, Mir Zubair Jamali apprised Dr. Jozgezi about different steps taken for public welfare.

During the course of meeting, different administrative matters and situation of law and order were also discussed.

Kiran Haider, Akhtar Bibi, Izbah Zehri and Aliya Kamran elected as MNAs on seats reserved for women

QUETTA: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) got two seats reserved for women in National Assembly from Balochistan. Similarly, Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) secured one seat each reserved for women in the National Assembly from the province, as per the notification is-

sued here by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday. According to the ECP's notification, PML-N's Ms. Kiran Haider and Akhtar Bibi were declared winner on the seats reserved for women in the National Assembly. Similarly, PPP's Izbah Zehri and JUI's Ms. Aliya Kamran were also elected as the members of National Assembly from Balochistan province.

Senators perturbed over PMDC's lopsided criteria for foreign medical graduates

ISLAMABAD (APP): The members of the Upper House of the Parliament on Friday expressed their resentment over the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC)'s lopsided criteria set pass house job license examination meted out for medical graduates of foreign universities.

Taking the floor on the matter of public importance during the fourth meeting of the 355th Senate session, Senator Taj Haider of Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarian (PPP) apprised the forum that none of the foreign universities' graduated MBBS students had passed the PMDC examination.

Senator Haider said it was a matter of public importance that the MBBS doctors graduated from foreign universities require a license from PMDC for house job for which the passing marks criterion set was 70 percent and no student managed to achieve it in the recent examination.

However, for students graduates from Pakistani universities and medical colleges the passing marks were 50%, he said, adding, "The matter should be sent to the Senate Committee on Health."

While commenting on the issue, Senator Humayun Mohmand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) apprised the House that the matter was discussed earlier around 3-4 times in the committee.

The forum had directed the then newly restructured PMDC along with its Academic Council to look into the matter.

"As chairman committee, I directed to send the matter to privilege committee, as it is unjust to discriminate the MBBS graduates of foreign universities where many private medical colleges in Pakistan have lower standard than the foreign universities, and its graduates have been permitted 50% passing marks," he said.

Senator Mohmand termed the issue as a violation of Article 25 of the Constitution that demanded to ensure equal opportunities to all at the same level.

He recommended that the PMDC should have a unified standard in this regard.

"During the farewell meeting of the Senate's Health Committee, the PMDC said their academic council has kept this issue on its next meeting agenda," he added.

Senator Sardar Muhammad Shafiq Tareen of Pashtoonkhw Milli Awami Party (PMAP) said the PMDC had turned a deaf ear to the recommendations of the Committee and the House should give ruling on this issue to resolve the matter.

Senator Prof. Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani of PTI said the issue of young doctors was a serious problem as there was globally 50% passing marks criteria while the PMDC had set a 70% benchmark that was not achieved by a single foreign graduate of the country which was regrettable.

She also raised the issue of massive increase in drugs prices.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary BISP Amer Ali Ahmed, along with DG NSER, Naveed Akbar, during the launch of Annual Reports of National Socio-Economic Registry, BISP Taleemi Wazaif (CCT Education), and BISP Nashonuma (CCT Health & Nutrition) for the FY 2022-23 at BISP Headquarters.

IUCN, COMSTech forge alliance to promote 'Green Agenda'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN-Pakistan) and COMSTech, the Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding here on Friday, focused on Conservation and Sustainable Development. Both organizations have united their efforts to craft a comprehensive conservation policy framework tailored specifically for the Least Developed Countries among the OIC member states, for building their capacity in the climate change and environmental aspects. Both the organizations will collaborate alongside academia to advance the green agenda, particularly within universities across OIC member states. They will continue to work together to upscale climate-resilient initiatives and share knowledge products, jointly observe days of environmental significance. Strengthening regional collaboration among OIC member states is also a priority, a news release said.

Coordinator General of COMSTech, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhry emphasized in his opening remarks the organization's commitment in fostering science and technology cooperation among OIC member states. He highlighted the importance of enhancing their capabilities through training in emerging fields, as well as implementing resolutions set forth by the OIC. Recognizing the urgency of conservation efforts and the significant focus within OIC member states on capacity building and climate change solutions, he underscored the pivotal role this new partnership would play in addressing this pressing challenge. Country Representative, IUCN Pakistan, Mahmood Akhtar Cheema viewed this as an auspicious opportunity to align conservation efforts between Pakistan and OIC member states.

AIOU launches spring plantation campaign

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has launched spring plantation campaign of Year 2024.

Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood inaugurated the campaign by planting apricots in the lawn adjacent to the new ICT building.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood said that planting was the most important need and Allama Iqbal Open University was trying to play its full role every year.

He said that the gardeners of the university had maintained this tradition for which they deserve congratulations. Deans, principal officers and faculty members have planted Japanese fruit, pear, peach, plum, apricot, sweet and citrus trees. Director Follow-up and Coordination, Prof. Dr. Syed Amir Shah, while briefing the Vice Chancellor on the planting campaign, said that as a result of the hard work of gardeners, AIOU secured first position in all three categories of flower exhibition in Rose and Jasmine Garden organized by the Islamabad.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Education, Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi, cutting ribbon to inaugurate the ceremony of Islamabad Model School (I-V) E-7 sector in Federal Capital.

BISP launches annual reports for FY 2022-23 on key initiatives

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has launched its Annual Reports for the fiscal year 2022-23, highlighting the progress and achievements in key initiatives such as the National Socio-Economic Registry, BISP Taleemi Wazaif, and BISP Nashonuma.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary of BISP, Amer Ali Ahmed expressed his gratitude to the officials for their continued support and collaboration.

He emphasized BISP's commitment to transparency and its primary focus on providing additional support to the most deserving families across the country, said a news release.

The Secretary BISP informed the development partners that the financial support to 9.3 Million households has been increased to Rs.10500 quarterly.

Highlighting the significance of transparency, Amer Ali Ahmed underscored the authenticity and reliability of BISP's database, attributing it to the program's success. He also announced the expansion of payment mechanism through collaboration from two to six banks, aimed at ensuring efficient utilization of resources, with an estimated saving of Rs. 2 billion to be redirected towards core initiatives. Moreover, Amer Ali Ahmed outlined BISP's plans, particularly the expansion of Mobile Registration Vehicles, with 25 vans already deployed in remote areas of Sindh and Balochistan.

PML-N accuses PTI rivals of deliberate controversy in Islamabad election results

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz's (PML-N) MNA-elect, Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, on Friday said that the results of three Islamabad constituencies were intentionally made controversial by rival Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) candidates.

Talking to media outside the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), he said the three victorious MNAs-elect from PML-N possess Form 45 and are prepared to furnish these forms at any appropriate forum. Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said that the suspension of the success notification for PML-N's MNAs-elect from Islamabad resulted from the continuous false actions of PTI's unsuccessful candidates in Islamabad.

According to the law, he said election complaints are exclusively handled by the Election Tribunal, not the High Court. Neither the High Court nor the Election Commission serve as trial courts for election-related issues, he added.

He said once tribunals are established, all election complaints are directed to them; other courts do not proceed with such cases. He said PTI leaders falsely claimed in the High Court that tribunals had not been set up.

Non Sharia Nikah PTI founder, Bushra file appeal plea against court decision

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI founder and his wife Bushra Bibi have filed appeal in District and Sessions court Islamabad against the decision in Non-Sharia nikah case. Bushra Bibi has filed appeal plea in District and Sessions Court Islamabad through her lawyers Usman Gill, Khalid Yousuf and Suleman Safdar. Federation and Khawar Manika have been made respondents in appeal plea. The petition said the decision announced by civil judge Qudrat Ullah on January 02 runs contrary to the facts.

'India using rape of women as a weapon of war to suppress Kashmiris' struggle'

ISLAMABAD (APP): All Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir have expressed deep regret that despite the passage of over three decades, victims of Kunan-Poshpura mass rape have not been provided justice.

According to Kashmir Media Service, Indian troops had gang-raped around 100 women of all ages from eight to eighty on the night of February 23, 1991 during a siege and search operation in Kunan-Poshpura area of Kupwara district. APHC leader Muhammad Yousaf Naqash in a statement in Srinagar said the Kunan-Poshpura incident serves as a vivid example of India's unhesitant actions. He added that from the outset, India's policymakers and implementers had employed every inhumane measure as a tool of war, aiming to convey to Kashmiris that India could disrespect their self-worth, honour and values through any form of aggression.

Hurriyat leaders Fayaz Hussain Jafari and Syed Sibt-e-Shabbir Qummi in their separate statements in Srinagar said India is using the rape of women as a weapon of war to suppress the Kashmiris' struggle for the right to self-determination and the tragic incident of Kanan-Pushpura is its clear example.

They said a long time has passed but none of the involved Indian troops have been punished till date and many of the victimized women have left the world without justice. The Indian troops in the occupied territory have humiliated thousands of Kashmiri women, many Kashmiri women have been locked up in jails for years, thousands of Kashmiri women have become widows due to the massacre of innocent people but despite all this, India could not lower their morale, they added.

Meanwhile, the spokesman of Islamic Tanzeem-e-Azadi Jammu and Kashmir in a statement in Srinagar said that the Indian forces' open threats to imprison and detain the people of occupied Kashmir, including the Hurriyat leadership cannot change the reality of Kashmir dispute.

He also expressed serious concern over the continued detention of the party Chairman Abdul Samad Inqilabi and reiterated the pledge to never accept India's forced occupation of their motherland and to resist its military aggression at any cost.



ISLAMABAD: A view of smoke rising in garbage dump on green belt along Islamabad Expressway, as needs to attention for concern authority, in the Federal Capital.

Political stability key to address economic challenges: Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Leader Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan stressed the importance of political stability in addressing economic challenges in Pakistan. Talking to a private news channel, he acknowledged the significant challenges the country faces and assured that his party is prepared to handle them responsibly.

Khan was of the view that certain political forces were deliberately promoting polarization among the masses. He strongly criticized such tactics, labeling them as a conspiracy against the nation's politics, institutions, economy, and judiciary.

The PML-N leader emphasized the significance of constructive dialogue engaging with political parties for the better future of the country, saying that meaningful and productive discussions are need of the hour to find solutions rather than engaging in unfruitful discussions.

Khan highlighted his commitment to political stability, responsible governance, and the need for constructive dialogue to address country's challenges.

Provision of land by CDA for IIU Case: SC directs CDA, Intl company to resolve the matter jointly within month

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has directed CDA and International Company EN Point to jointly resolve the matter regarding provision of land by CDA for International IT University (IIU) in Islamabad within a month.

The court remarked an agreement of lease against Rs 483.960 million was reached between international company and CDA in connection with 41.2 acres land on Kurri Road Islamabad. The respective company made payment of Rs 170 million and the remaining was to be paid by it. The said land will not be used for some purpose other than university. This order has been issued by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa while presiding over a three members bench of SC on Friday.

It has been further said in the order CDA board should hold its meeting and decide the matter in consultation with the applicant. In the event of execution of agreement again, CDA will give possession to company subject to payment of additional amount.

Justice Musarrat Hilali inquired this is the same land where IT university was being constructed.

IESSI hosts free medical camp for ICTI's brick kiln community

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the occasion of the International Day of Social Justice, the Islamabad Employees Social Security Institution (IESSI) with the collaboration of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Pakistan and the Labour Department ICT organized a free medical camp for the brick kiln community here on Friday. According to the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory Administration, Dr Abdullah Tabasum, the camp was held under the supervision of Commissioner IESSI, which was participated by various dignitaries and medical personnel.

The event was graced by the Country Director ILO Geir Thomas Tonstol. The Director General Chief Commissioner Office and the Director of Labour & Industries also participated in the camp.

Screenings for Hepatitis B and C, Diabetes, Cholesterol, and HbA1c levels, among other tests were conducted in the camp. Additionally, attendees benefited from eye and breast cancer screenings and received valuable awareness on diabetes, hypertension, child nutrition development, and the use of sugar and gluten-free products.

Commissioner (IESSI) Social Security, Rabia Aurangzeb, expressed satisfaction with the event's outcome.

Int'l Conference on 'Role of Media in Enhancing the Global Connectivity through BRI' held

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speakers at a one-day international conference on "Role of Media in Enhancing Global Connectivity through the Belt and Road Initiative" held here explored the impact of media on increasing global awareness about the current challenges and paving the way for more interconnected and mutually beneficial relationships for future generations.

The conference was jointly organized by China Media Group (Islamabad Studio), Islamabad Office, Ms. Jianing Du, presented a speech on "China-Pakistan Media Cooperation to Support the Development of the CPEC: Taking the CMG's Communication Practice in Pakistan."

She introduced the work of the China Media Group when it was created, and its work conducts regular programs and video production. She discussed how to promote and strengthen media cooperation between China and Pakistan.

Distinguished Research Fellow at the Institute for a Community with Shared Future (ICSF), Communication University of China (CUC), Beijing, China, Dr. Wanchu Zhong gave a speech on Initiatives Taken to Achieve Global Community Building within the Greater Eurasian Region.

She highlighted the cross-continental cooperation framework and the infrastructural developmental project and recommended regional cooperation in resolving global challenges such as climate change.

Former Federal Secretary of Information, Mr. Ashfaq Gondal, presented a speech on analyzing the geopolitical impact of the Belt and Road Initiative on the participating countries and the broader international community.

He highlighted China's role in pursuing good neighborhood policy and peaceful development with neighbors and the entire world.

He discussed the overall progress of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and how China-Pakistan is making positive contributions to peace, progress, and development.

Managing Director, Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), Asim Khichi, presented a speech on "Pakistan's Media Role in Regional Connectivity through CPEC."

He highlighted the media's great role in facilitating dialogue and understanding between China and Pakistan, as well as the diplomatic efforts that the member states should make for the whole BRI.

Thus, by enabling the quick exchange of information, the media establishes a hospitable environment in which neighboring countries combine their efforts to resolve challenges.

"The role of Pakistani media in the current CPEC is as important as it once was."

As we create the next phase of this transformational plan, the media should take strong leadership to inform, engage, and empower the population," he emphasized.

Earlier in his opening remarks, Rector/Pro-Rector Foundation University, Islamabad, Brig. ® Dr. Abdul Ghafour, highlighted the role of Chinese media in promoting positivity, maturity, and constructive reality.

He highlighted the establishment of a regional media connectivity center to conduct various joint projects, including conferences, training, and exchange learning programs, to achieve shared aspirations.

Tariq appointed MD, PBM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Syed Tariq Mehmood ul Hassan has been appointed as the Managing Director of Pakistan Bait ul Mal (PBM) for two-year term.

According to a notification signed by Cap (Retd) Malik Shahbaz Waheed, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Tariq Mehmood ul Hassan will serve the PBM on an honorary basis with immediate effect.

70 newly elected MNAs completed registration process at NA

ISLAMABAD (APP): After successfully making their way to the Lower House of the Parliament, so far 70 newly elected members (MNAs) have completed their registration process at the Secretariat.

The process of registration of the newly elected MNAs was continued in the facilitation center established in the National Assembly Secretariat, the Spokesperson of the National Assembly said in a news release.

He said the Facilitation Center had been established in Committee Room No. 2 of the National Assembly.



Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani presiding over a meeting of the Senate Finance Committee at Parliament House, Islamabad.

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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 Election 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 Cyber, 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 legal 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.

War and peace



Zubeida Mustafa

In his well-researched and comprehensively documented book *Pakistan's Wars: An Alternative History*, Dr Tariq Rahman pleads the case for peace. The author's words are most convincing as they are preceded by a detailed account of the horrors of war that Pakistan has experienced time and again. But will the powers that be, and who have led us into conflict a number of times, take heed? Be that as it may, the fact is that the country stands on the brink of disaster. Those of us who wield the pen should feel morally obliged to reaffirm Dr Rahman's plea and spread it far and wide.

Dr Rahman quotes Rutger Bregman, a Dutch historian, as saying, "human beings are cooperative and kind by nature as were our hunter-gatherer ancestors. However, our leaders (kings, generals, and politicians) can build upon their suspicions of the out-group to motivate them to wage war". Dr Rahman gives numerous examples from world history and from our own accounts of our wars in East Pakistan and with India when individual military personnel on both sides "transcended hatred and vengeance" to show mercy to the "enemy". He believes that even in war, soldiers are somewhat reluctant to shoot to kill. But he concedes that it would be "naive and romantic" to believe that wars can be abolished, just because some men in uniform are capable of humane conduct on some rare occasions. He realises that the state "cre-

ates a war machine with such tremendous investment and propaganda ... that it is not possible that ... a suggestion for such a radical change of direction towards peace would even be heard".

Yet he hopes that some perceptive readers, including policymakers, will realise that the decisions which have precipitated wars have been inordinately risky — akin to gambling. He feels that his book would have served a purpose if policymakers exercise caution when deciding issues that put the very existence of the country at risk.

Well said, Dr Rahman. Here it would be pertinent to remind the readers about the preamble of Unesco's charter, "Wars begin in the minds of men. And it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be built". Pakistan is not doing amply what Unesco exhorts us to do. Of the hundreds of universities in the country, only a handful — the National Defence University, NUST and the Azad Kashmir University in Muzaffarabad — have a peace studies programme.

In some international relations departments, a paper on conflict resolution is included. However, outside of academia, the Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies has earned a good reputation by making a notable contribution towards promoting knowledge of peace and conflict resolution. Since it uses dialogue as a tool for this purpose it invites leaders of diverse opinion for an exchange of views and disseminates its proceedings widely.

Given the harm that has already been done, these efforts need to be enhanced. Our national ethos glorifies force and violence. As such, our mindset refuses to accept tolerance or compromise and reconciliation in our dealings with people of diverse opinion. The gun culture is ram-

nant. Our national poet Allama Iqbal holds the shaheen (falcon) in high esteem because it is a predatory bird that sustains its aggressive spirit by attacking, turning around and turning around and attacking again, as the poet describes. Our school textbooks glorify our war heroes. Those who propagate peace are hardly ever mentioned.

It is important that this emphasis on war as the only means of resolving disputes and playing up the need for creating a security state for national defence should in fact, be played down. It is time the Foreign Office were given a free hand to formulate a foreign policy that would allow peaceful negotiations to resolve disputes.

We certainly have had some brilliant diplomats who were doves and tried to find peaceful solutions to the disputes that have plagued us. If they failed it was because their efforts were thwarted by our own hawks. Monuments glorifying weapons, be they swords or submarines, or those signifying the Chaghi nuclear tests should be eschewed. Mercifully, sense has prevailed in some cases and the most lethal of these have been removed. Similarly, the move to celebrate the country's 1998 nuclear tests every year on what is termed as Youm-i-Takbeer (May 28) has been softened, with official backing perceived as being given to some hard-line religious parties who observe the day with all the fanfare they can muster.

The power brokers must understand that the nature of war has changed as non-state actors are involved in every war that is being waged in the world today. These actors do not even observe the international laws of war. Hence the need to promote the spirit of peace to neutralise the war mongering that has become the wont of today. -- Courtesy Dawn

Taming Irsa



Naeem Memon

In a significant move, President Arif Alvi has refused to approve a contentious summary that seeks to restructure the Indus River System Authority (Irsa) Act 1992. The proposal restricts the water regulator's decision-making powers, reduces provincial representation and empowers a non-member chairman in terms of technical, administrative and financial autonomy. Hitherto, the post of the authority's chairperson is assumed by one of the members on a rotational basis. In its present construct, Irsa is a federal structure comprising representatives from the provinces and the centre. Every year, a member heads the body as envisaged in the Irsa Act 1992, and matters of conflict are resolved through a voting process.

Under the postulated new arrangement, the chairperson will be bolstered by the creation of an 'independent experts committee', whereas the present Irsa has an inclusive advisory committee, with representation from the irrigation and agriculture departments in all provinces and Wapda. The bureaucrat head will also enjoy extraordinary powers, which include review and settlement of the grievances of a distressed province after consulting his handpicked experts. This would essentially render Irsa members and the advisory committee ineffective and completely subordinated by the chairperson and selected wizards.

The process of amendment is being carried out in sheer violation of the Constitution, as the modus operandi of the proposed Irsa Amendment Act is in contravention of Articles 154 and 155. Article 154 (1) empowers the Council of Common Interests to formulate and regulate policies on subjects contained in the Federal Legislative List Part II. Item 6 on the list is "all regulatory authorities established under a federal law". Article 155 brings water-related matters under the jurisdiction of the CCI. It reads: "if the interests of a province, the federal capital or any of the inhabitants thereof, in water from any natural source of supply [or reservoir] have been or are likely to be affected". Hence, Irsa is constitutionally under the domain of CCI. The two articles amply explain that the federal cabinet has no jurisdiction over Irsa-related matters. With such unambiguous constitutional provisions, the submission of a proposal to amend the 1992 Act is tantamount to violating constitutional stipulations.

Thus, the Irsa chairperson bypassed the CCI and submitted the draft to the water resources ministry. It seems the chair took this decision without consulting members who become direct stakeholders of any such legislative undertaking by the authority. In unusual haste, the water resources ministry forwarded the proposal to the Law and Justice Division the next working day, which ostensibly worked at the speed of light to return the vetted draft to the ministry in a day. Such unprecedented promptness to push this amendment renders the level of desperation among its advocates. Perhaps they want the ordinance promulgated before the caretaker

government's tenure expires.

Some cabinet members vehemently opposed the amendment, and prior to their protests, Irsa's member from Sindh also made his disapproval of the proposed amendment clear through a letter addressed to the chairman. The Sindh government took exception to the said summary and the provincial minister of irrigation reportedly sent a strongly worded missive to the caretaker prime minister, going as far as to equate the proposed amendment with an attack on the sanctity of the Water Apportionment Accord, 1991. But all sane voices were brushed aside and the Irsa Amendment Act was sent for the president's stamp of approval. Although President Alvi has returned the draft law unsigned, it is feared that the caretaker government will make another attempt to have this ordinance cleared before an elected government takes charge.

Moreover, with a federal government bureaucrat as chairperson, Irsa will become a centralised entity, its daily operational matters will be controlled by the state government and the chief will not be accountable to Irsa members as decisions will be taken in consultation with an experts committee that lacks any provincial representation. The very structure is against the spirit of federation and contradicts the genesis of Irsa.

Amid nerve-wracking prescriptions for the reversal of the 18th Amendment and curtailing provincial shares in the NFC award, an attempt to centralise Irsa is bound to stoke a new wave of disharmony. In a polarised political ambience, such ill-conceived experiments do not augur well for the federation. -- Courtesy Dawn

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.

The caretaker provincial minister said that an online system of birth and death certificates has been developed in collaboration with NADRA and PITB, which is in the final stages. He said that this system would facilitate the people in getting birth and death certificates. People would get birth and death certificates at their door steps, he added.



LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Health Professor Dr. Javed Akram and Vice Chancellor King Edward Medical University Professor Dr. Mehmood Ayaz addressing a Press conference.

ANF recovers 331 kg drugs in 10 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Lahore Airport. 255 kg opium was recovered from the Galikank Mustang area and 29 kg hashish was recovered from two suspects arrested from M-1 Motorway Islamabad. In the 8th operation, 22 kg of hashish was recovered near the Lakpas Toll Plaza Mustang area and an accused was arrested during the operation. Seven kg of hashish was recovered from two suspects rounded up near Sher Shah Toll Plaza Multan. In the 10th operation, one kg of hashish was recovered from three suspects held near Mohalla Usmania Gilgit. The spokesman said that separate cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.

Mohsin Naqvi extended an invited to the Governor Sindh to watch a PSL match. Farooq Sattar and Mustafa Kamal were also present on the occasion.

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. "InshaAllah, Pakistan will attain its destination of progress, prosperity and the future of our country is very bright," he added.

Mohsin Naqvi extended an invited to the Governor Sindh to watch a PSL match. Farooq Sattar and Mustafa Kamal were also present on the occasion.

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 the 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

Laure Abdul Basit Khan, the conference emphasized the need to expedite measures for providing quick and efficient justice to complainants regarding insurance companies. Abdul Basit Khan highlighted that the Federal Ombudsman for Insurance is ensuring relief within 60 days by addressing complaints from the business community and other complainants. Special efforts are being made to raise public awareness in this regard, he added.

Dr. Khawar Jameel and Abdul Basit Khan revealed that 5736 complaints were registered with the Federal Ombudsman for Insurance in the last year.

2 bodies found in Hawke's Bay area

KARACHI (APP): Two unidentified bodies of young men were found from a drainage canal located in Musharraf Colony, an area of Hawke's Bay, Karachi, private news channel reported on Friday.

According to details, police after receiving reports rushed to the site to evacuate the bodies and motorcycle from the drainage. As per the initial reports, it was an accident that held due to high speed. However, the police managed to recover the bodies and motorbike from the drainage.

Later, the Rescue team reached the spot to shift the bodies to nearby hospital for autopsy.



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 Saad Ahmed also seen at the occasion.



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

Mayor Karachi attaches great hopes with Murad 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. It is the commitment of PPP and Asif Ali Zardari that all the promises made in our manifesto will be fulfilled, wherever people reside, we will continue working for them.

Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad, Mayor's representative for political affairs Karamullah Waqasi, Deputy Parliamentary Leader of People's Party in City Council Dil Muhammad, Juman Darwan and other elected public representatives of People's Party from Central District were also present on this occasion.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that work is being done on the sewerage project in this area of the

Central district at a cost of about Rs 370 million, pipelines of 36 and 42 inches in diameter are being laid at a distance of about one kilometer from Teen Hatti to Liaquatabad Dakkhana. On completion of the project, all the sewage which was earlier taken via Altaf Ali Barelvi Road to Treatment Plant-I will now directly reach Treatment Plant S-II through Lyari River. This will also remove the complaint of sewage overflow in the area and this project will be completed in one year. The population of this area will get better drainage facilities and the sewage system in the area will have the requirement till 2050, he added.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that we are working in Liaquatabad without discrimination, as every day the road of this main street of Liaquatabad.

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 befitting 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, he said adding that the Ombudsman secretariat will recommend the government to find out a permanent solution and ensure issuance of passport on time to save citizens from hardship. Syed Anwar Hyder said that Immigration and Passport Department South Zone was issuing more than 500,000 passports annually from Karachi.

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.

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. Ifthikhar Husain, 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. Nashiha Mottahir administering the oath to the budding dentists. During the ceremony, Dr. Moshayyada Durani, Dr. Laleena, Dr. Mah Noor Fatima, Dr. Gulsanga Shams and Dr. Ayesha Tahir shared their experiences and memories with the audience. The White Coat Ceremony not only marked a significant milestone in the academic journey of the students but also underscored PDC's dedication to nurturing skilled and compassionate professionals in the field of dentistry.



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

Financial assistance of Rs 2.4 mln provided to family of late doctor

LAHORE (APP): In a historic move, Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Professor Dr. Javid Akram has issued a cheque of Rs 2.4 million to the family of the late Dr. Nasim Banu, a postgraduate doctor who tragically passed away while on duty at King Edward Medical University. Speaking at a press conference held at the University on Friday, the

minister expressed gratitude to Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Syed Mohsin Naqvi, Health Secretary Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Mahmood Ayaz, and all relevant officers for their relentless efforts in ensuring financial support for the bereaved family. "This assistance marks a significant milestone in the medical profession," he stated.



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

ICU, EOC agree to jointly work for polio eradication

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamiya College University (ICU) Peshawar on Friday agreed to jointly fight for the elimination of poliovirus from the province and to save children from permanent disability due to this disease. In this regard, a delegation of EOC under the leadership of Special Secretary Health for Polio Prevention and Coordinator EOC Abdul Basit met Vice Chancellor

Islamia College University Professor Dr. Gul Majid Khan. The meeting was attended by Deputy Coordinator EOC Mohammad Zeeshan Khan, Team Leader of World Health Organization (WHO) Provincial Dr Sarfaraz Faridi, Media Officer of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Shadab Younis and SBC Officer Yasir Farrukh and other officials of EOC also participated in the meeting. Special Secretary Health Abdul Basit while expressing his views,



MUZAFFRABAD: Chairman Accountability Bureau (AB) Mushtaq Ahmed Janja planting new trees during Tree Plantation Campaign at a park.

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

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. "The semi-nomadic Aryans entered KP from the Afghanistan side and settled along rivers Swat, Gomal, Kurram, and Kabul before migrating to India. The Gandhara civilization gained roots in the province after Persians conquered it in 6th century BC and made it one of the provinces of the Achaemenid Empire." He said reading and writing in Swat, Dir, Mardan, Charsadda, Peshawar and Malakand, famous for Gandhara civilization, started as evidence of the inscriptions mostly made on stones by Iranians.

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 robust bilateral relationship between the two countries and to explore new opportunities for collaboration and economic growth.

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

accompanying 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).



SIALKOT: A group photo graph 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.

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.

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.

According to statistics from the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC), the total value of yarn imports and exports in 2023 was \$ 19.68 billion, a decrease of 2.9% year-on-year. Among them, exports were \$ 13.7 billion, down 8.6% year-on-year; imports were \$ 5.98 billion, up 13.2% year-on-year, and imports were 2.043 million tons, up 32.6% year-on-year.

Among the imported yarns from the globe, cotton yarn is the most important category, accounting for 70% of the yarn imports and 24%.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): 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 Collectiv 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



LAHORE: People busy purchasing used clothes at Landa Bazaar.

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.

This year's findings build on those trends, signaling that mobile phone usage will continue to gain momentum and further propel people to seek ways to upskill, enhance their careers, and access new revenue streams that only mobile connectivity allows.

A stand-out finding this year was that amidst a challenging economy and high inflationary environment, mobiles are being widely used as a tool to manage rising costs of living.

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.

People are turning to their mobile devices to compare prices (70%) or find the best deal (65%), accessing the numerous financial management and budgeting tools, calculators, or apps that can help manage their finances during difficult times.

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).

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-compliant) offering for its subscribers.

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. Looking ahead, our goal is to further enrich this initiative by introducing additional products tailored to meet the diverse needs of our valued customers, especially those who need protection and support the most."



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

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.

Factory owners fined for pollution

FAISALABAD (APP): The Environment Protection Department has imposed a fine of Rs700,000 on the owners of six factories and brick kilns on the charges of polluting the environment.

Kitchen items' prices witnesses nominal increase of 0.04%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The prices of essential kitchen items increased as the weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.04 per cent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on February 15.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 30.68 per cent.

USAID empowers female engineers in energy sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant milestone for gender equity in Pakistan's energy sector, USAID celebrated the successful completion of the Power System and Distribution Network Planning (PSDNP) Training Program for women engineers.

"By equipping these women engineers with specialized training, we not only open new career avenues for talented individuals but also enhance team engagement, motivation, and decision-making within companies."



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying second-hand clothes to attract customers at Khanna Pul.

Chief Commissioner stresses to educate public about tax system, laws

MULTAN (APP): Chief Commissioner Regional Tax Office (RTO) Multan Sajjad Tasleem Azam on Friday stressed on educating public on complicated tax system, simplification of tax laws and procedures to rebuild trust through awareness pleading that it would reflect on country's revenue generation in a positive way.

He said that the factories were burning prohibited materials in their boilers while the kiln houses were operating without zigzag technology.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor busy sprinkling water on Oranges to keep them fresh at Khanna Pul.

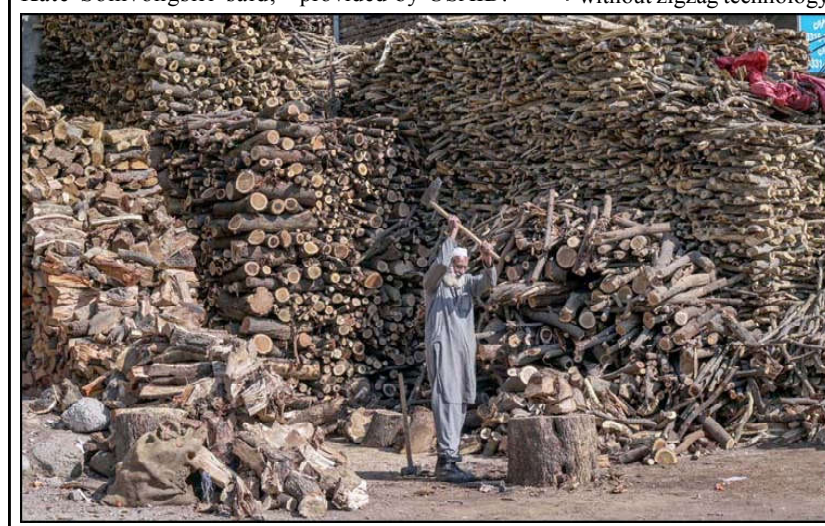
Next government to focus on promoting ease of doing business: Qaiser Sheikh

ISLAMABAD (APP): Newly elected Member National Assembly of PML-N and former Chairperson, NA Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Friday said that next government would focus on promoting ease of doing business.

He said that next government would try to bring further reforms in Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to broaden the tax net and improve tax culture. Addressing the key issues of business community, he said new government would also focus on enhancing its role in the economic development of this country.

Rupee loses 4 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Rupee on Friday lost 4 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 279.36 against the previous day's closing of Rs 279.32.



ISLAMABAD: A worker busy in cutting woods into piece at Lethrar Road.

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 hydro-power 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 invested 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 combined 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. Launched in 2013, the CPEC is a corridor linking Gwadar port with Kashji in Northwest China's Xinjiang region, highlighting energy, transportation, and industrial cooperation. In its first phase, the CPEC added more than 8,000 MW of power-generating capacity to the Pakistani national grid. More than 800 kilometers of highways were built, while more than 800 kilometers of fiber-optic cable were laid.



PESHAWAR: Activists of Markazi Muslim League (PMML) are holding protest demonstration against supreme court ruling, at Peshawar press club.



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

PTI founder, Bushra could not be indicted in 190m 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 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.

PML-N fields Malik, Zaheer for PA speaker, deputy speaker posts

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has fielded Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan and Zaheer Iqbal Channar for the posts of speaker and deputy speaker of the Punjab Assembly. The party has already nominated Maryam Nawaz as the chief minister Punjab. The Punjab Assembly will meet on Saturday to elect the speaker and deputy speaker to the House during the 42nd session at the assembly chambers. Incumbent Speaker Muhammad Sibtain Khan

has convened the PA session at 4 p.m. on Saturday (tomorrow) in the assembly chambers and he'll chair the session. The PML-N is the majority party in the PA, and its nominees—Malik Muhammad Ahmed and Zaheer Channar—have submitted their nomination papers for their election as the speaker and deputy speakers. On the other hand, Sunni Ittehad Council nominees, Malik Ahmad Khan Bhachar and Moeen-ud-Din Riaz Qureshi have also submitted their nomination papers for the speaker.



QUETTA: Members of Jhalawan Awami Penal (JAP) are holding protest demonstration against alleged rigging in General Election 2024, at Quetta press club.

AJK PM urges UN to resolve long-pending Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to occupied Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq has urged the United Nations to take measures for settlement of the long-pending Kashmir dispute for permanent peace in the region. According to Kashmir Media Service, Anwar-ul-Haq in a statement issued in Muzaffarabad said that the world highest forum should take tangible measures to implement its resolutions on Kashmir so that the people of Jammu and Kashmir could decide their political future in a proper manner. Reacting to Indian

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to occupied Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq has urged the United Nations to take measures for settlement of the long-pending Kashmir dispute for permanent peace in the region. He also urged the United Nations to take effective notice of India's expansionist designs in the region. Referring to the disputed nature of the Kashmir dispute, the AJK Prime Minister said, "India cannot change the status of the disputed territory unilaterally. He said that India's August 5th move was the worst example of fascism."

ECP allocates Punjab's reserved NA women seats

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has unveiled the allotment of 20 reserved seats for women in the National Assembly from Punjab, with the majority going to the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N). The ECP spokesperson mentioned that the commission is currently reviewing the issue concerning the allocation of reserved seats for the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC).

Tharabi Lake contract: Court sends Imran Riaz to jail on judicial remand

LAHORE (APP): A local court on Friday sent anchorperson Imran Riaz Khan to jail on judicial remand in a case of acquiring the Tharabi Lake contract at reduced prices. Earlier, the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab officials produced the anchorperson before Judicial Magistrate Imran Abid, in district courts, and requested a 14-day physical remand for investigations. However, Imran Riaz's counsel argued that the case was registered in violation of the law, adding that no evidence was available to prove the charges. The court, after hearing detailed arguments of parties, reserved its judgement on the remand plea for a short while. Later, the court, announcing the reserved verdict, turned down the plea for physical remand and sent the anchorperson to jail on judicial remand.

Country to make progress: Dar

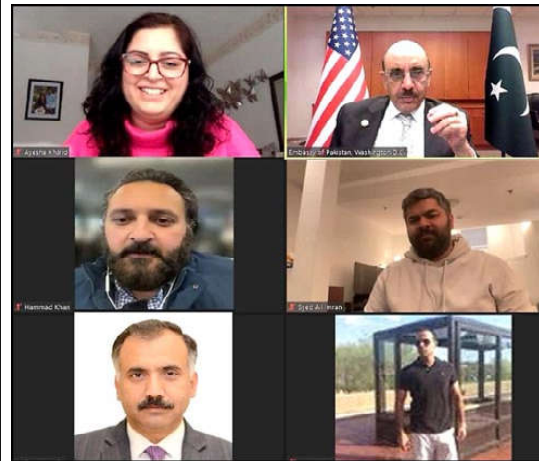
LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz Senator Ishaq Dar said on Friday that he was not sure that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder had written any letter to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or not. Talking to the media here, Dar said he had heard this on the media and if the PTI founder had written any letter to the IMF it was highly condemnable. Ishaq Dar said: "If any one does such thing and prefers personal political interest over the country's economic interest it is not only regrettable but also strongly condemnable action." He said with the grace of Allah, The Almighty, the country would make progress.

Majlis Fikr-o-Danish calls for forming empowered & trusted Provincial HEC

Independent Report QUETTA: The Quetta Majlis Fikr-o-Danish (think tank) has underlined the need to form an empowered and trustworthy Provincial Higher Education Commission (HEC) for complete overhauling and cleansing of the public sector universities in the province. In a statement issued here on Friday, it was regretfully pointed out that the deteriorated situation of the public sector universities and higher institutions of the research has turned more serious due to the negligence and carelessness of the previous governments. As a result of which, the materialization of dream of creation of useful and constructive environment is seen nearly impossible. Due to the situation, the mother educational institution of the province i.e., University of Balochistan is heading towards closure while the overall situation of higher technical educational institution i.e., Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUITEMS) has also become worst. While on the other hand, the only women university (SBKWU) has also become hub of male interference and political and wisdom weakness. It was also stated that there's a question of survival of the institutions in case of the non-payment of salaries of the employees. It was stressed that there is also dire need to stop wastage and plundering of the resources for building scientific narrative besides promoting research and creativity.

Masood lauds contributions of Pak diaspora in US

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan has said Pakistani professionals are not only making their mark in their respective fields but are also proving themselves as the most abiding link between Pakistan and the United States. He made these remarks during an e-meeting with the leadership of NUSTIAN-US which is a network of around 1200 US-based alumni of National University of Sciences and Technology. He said we are proud of the contributions of our diaspora in the United States as well as in the country of their origin. The Ambassador said the Embassy is actively engaged in connecting professional organizations of Pakistani Americans who are serving the country in various walks of life.



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

UoG's Art and Film making competition wraps up with glitzy ceremony

Independent Report QUETTA: The Art and Film Making competition concluded with a grand finale over two eventful days at the Gwadar University. The event showcased an array of creativity and talent from budding artists and filmmakers. The closing ceremony was held at the main seminar Hall of the University. The event was attended by esteemed personalities including Moulana Hidayath Ur Rehman, Worthy Vice-Chancellor of Gwadar University Prof Abdul Razaq Sabir, Deputy Commissioner Gwadar Aurang Zaib Badini, Principal GDA Raja Imtiaz Hussain, Registrar University Dolat Khan, Dean Faculty of Social Science Prof Dr. Jan Muhammad, Competition Judges, guests, Senior Faculty members and students. More than a hundred participants participated in the competition. The two-day event was attended by a large number of people who witnessed fierce competition in various categories ranging from painting and sketches to short film production. During the closing ceremony, the Vice-Chancellor of the university Prof Dr. Abdul Razaq Sabir commended the participants for their exceptional talent and dedication to the arts. He emphasized the importance of such events in fostering creativity and innovation among the youth, urging the participants to continue pursuing their artistic endeavors. The Vice-Chancellor appreciated the efforts of the organizers of the event. He also congratulated the winners of the inter-university level competition which was organized by NAB Balochistan last year. The chief guest of the event, newly elected MPA Gwadar Maulana Hidayath Ur Rehman said that Gwadar should be recognized not only because of CPEC but also because of our talented youth. Humans can reach the sky with their hard work and abilities. The region needs talented people and universities are the only institutions that produce talented people. Deputy Commissioner Gwadar, Aurang Zaib Badini, also graced the occasion with his presence, lauding the efforts of the university in organizing such a vibrant and inclusive competition. He highlighted the significance of art and filmmaking in cultural expression and community development.

All possible facilities to be ensured for Hujjaj intending hajj 2024: Aneeq

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. Replying to a question, he said in a bid to improve the Hajj pilgrimage experience for travelers in 2024, the federal government has also unveiled a comprehensive update to the Hajj package, adding that, first time in history government has introduced a shorter 20 to 25-day Hajj program in which we will provide pilgrims with a more concise.

Five injured in Darazinda motorbike blast

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Five people were injured in an explosion that occurred in the main Bazaar of Tehsil Darazinda on Friday. According to a Rescue 1122 spokesman, the explosive device, planted on a motorbike parked near a local hotel in the Bazaar exploded due to which five people got injured. The medical teams of Rescue 1122 immediately reached the site and shifted the injured people to the hospital. Two of the injured persons are in critical condition.



QUETTA: Chief Executive Officer of BRSP Tahir Rasheed meeting with Vice Chancellor BUITEMS Prof. Dr. Khalid Hafeez.

Free treatment of heart patient kids starts at SMBZAN ICQ

Independent Report QUETTA: The free treatment of heart patient children has been started at the Sheikh Muhammad Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (SMBZAN) Institute of Cardiology Quetta (ICQ) here. According to an official handout issued here on Friday, the free treatment of the children suffering from heart diseases has been started in collaboration with the National Institute of Cardiology and Vascular Diseases (NICVD). The treatment of patients would remain continued from March 9-10. The Head of Pediatric Cardiology, NICVD, Dr Abdul Sattar Sheikh would provide services at the OPD. Moreover, the expert doctors of NICVD would also perform the operations, angioplasty and other complicated procedures of the heart patient children.

DEO distributes appointment orders among 16 relatives of employees in Lasbela

QUETTA (APP): District Education Officer (DEO) Lasbela Muhammad Anwar Jamali on Friday distributed appointment orders among 16 relatives of employees who had died in Education Department Lasbela. The Ceremony was attended by District Officer Education (Male) Lasbela Haji Naveed Ahmed Hashmi, GTA Lasbela Chairman Abdul Wahid Soomro, Ahmed Khan Ronjho and others organized by DEO of Lasbela. On this occasion, District Officer Education (Male) Lasbela Haji Naveed Ahmed Hashmi, Chairman of GTA Lasbela Abdul Wahid Soomro spoke and congratulated the candidates recruited on the quota.

DC Duki reviews steps of annual admission drive in govt schools

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Duki Captain (Rtd) Fayyaz Ali on Friday chaired a meeting of the District Education Group to review measures of Annual admission drive in government schools in the area. The meeting was attended by District Education Officer (DEO) Naseebullah Nasir, Education Manager Ubaid Khan Tareen, DDOE Thal Faqirullah Tareen, Senior Clerk Mujibur Rahman Tareen, CPD Officer Muhammad Aslam and others. It was decided in the meeting that action will be taken against the absent officers of District Education Group and the Annual enrolment campaign would be vigorously pursued so that more and more children could be equipped with the jewel of education. The meeting said that the target of 1384 of children would be achieved during the drive saying that he would cooperate with the district administration and Education Department to get the target of campaign for interest.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary Health Abdullah Khan presiding over a meeting regarding Physiotherapy department.