

# Independent

Member APNS &amp; CPNE

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk Quetta

Pfr: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vt XXV No 188, Shaban 16, 1445 AH Tuesday February 27, 2024 Pages 08, Price Rs.15

## Speaker convenes NA session on Feb 29 after President objects to summary

**President Alvi believed NA is incomplete sans allocation of reserved seats; PML-N led alliance says NA session must be called within 21 days**

ISLAMABAD (INP): The National Assembly Secretariat has convened the lower house of parliament's session on February 29 at 10am following President Arif Alvi's refusal.

In a statement on Monday, the secretariat said the NA session is bound to take place on the 21st day of the general elections under Article 91 of the Constitution. The president could have summoned the session on the 21st day but he did not, the secretariat officials said.

The NA secretariat said the president and speaker's notification is not required to summon the session on the 21st day of the polling. Earlier today, sources said that outgoing Speaker

Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has "decided" to convene the inaugural session of the new lower house of parliament on February 29 amid a looming constitutional crisis.

The development came moments after President Arif Alvi reportedly rejected a summary to summon the NA session, sources said, in which MNAs-elect will take oath. Alvi believed that the NA was incomplete sans the allocation of all the reserved seats to the political parties.

While the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has allocated reserved seats to political

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar inaugurating 7-days Anti-Polio campaign 2024 by administering drop to a child

## Over 2.655 million children to be vaccinated: Governor inaugurates anti-polio campaign in Balochistan

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar inaugurated the anti-polio campaign in the province here on Monday. The Governor administered the anti-polio drops to the children at a ceremony held at the Governor House on Monday morning.

Present on the occasion were the Director General Health, Dr. Farooq Ghulam Farooq, Coordinator Emergency Operation Center for polio eradication, Syed Zahid Shah, UNICEF representative Dr. Muhammad Humayun Amiri, Dr. Aftab Kakar, Dr. Jahanzaib Kakar of World Health Organization besides other concerned high ups. While addressing the inauguration of anti-polio campaign, the Governor said that the polio virus can cause physical disability to the children for lifetime.

Therefore, it is necessary for the parents to ensure vaccination of their children against polio disease, adding he stressed. The Governor exhorted the anti-polio teams to ensure hundred percent immunization of the children so that none of children may miss in any area during the campaign.



KARACHI: Syed Murad Ali Shah Speaker on the Assembly floor after being elected as Chief Minister of Sindh.

## Syed Murad Ali Shah elected as Chief Minister Sindh third time

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan People's Party Leader Syed Murad Ali Shah was re-elected as Sindh Chief Minister for consecutive third time during election held here in the provincial Assembly on Monday by securing 112 votes while MQM-Pakistan's Candidate, Ali Khurshedi got only 36 votes.

The Provincial Assembly session started at the scheduled time at about 2.00 pm with Speaker Syed Awaiz Qadir Shah in the chair.

The session started with recitation of Holy Quran followed by Naat-e-Rasool Maqbool (Peace Be Upon Him).

On completion of voting and counting process, Speaker Syed Awaiz Qadir Shah announced the result and declared Syed Murad Ali Shah as Leader of the House. The speaker also congratulated Syed Murad Ali Shah as Sindh Chief Minister for third consecutive term.

In the election process for Sindh Chief Minister slot, 9 MPs of Suni Ittehad Council (SIC) and one of the Jamaat-e-Islami abstained from voting.

Leaders of Treasury as well as Opposition benches also extended greetings to the newly elected chief minister after announcement of the election result.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki in a group photo with Caretaker Provincial Cabinet

## CJP summons SJC meeting on Feb 29

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa on Monday summoned a meeting of the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) on February 29 to consider the complaints of misconduct against former apex court judge Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi.

Mazhar Naqvi is probably the only judge who is facing proceedings of misconduct after his resignation.

Last week, an SC larger bench by a majority of 4 to 1 held that the proceedings, which had already been initiated by the SJC against a judge, shall not abate on his resignation or retirement. "It is the prerogative of the SJC to proceed with the matter accordingly," read the order.

In view of the SJC order, the proceedings of misconduct against Naqvi will be valid.

## Re-polling in 11 polling stations of PB-7 to be held on Feb 29

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The re-polling is scheduled to be held in 11 polling stations of PB-7, Ziarat cum Harnai on February 29.

According to the Provincial Election Commissioner Balochistan, Muhammad Farid Afridi, the polling would start at 08:00 AM and would remain continued till 05:00 PM without any break.

The PEC said that the necessary directives have been issued to the concerned Returning Officer to personally supervise the process of re-polling in 11 polling stations of the constituency.

## IHC issues notice to NAB against Toshakhana verdict

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued a notice to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in response to the plea filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder against his sentence in the Toshakhana reference.

Chief Justice IHC, Amir Farooq and Justice Mian Gul Hassan heard the plea on Monday. Defense Counsel, Barrister Ali Zafar, argued that some baseless and strange findings were observed during the trial.

"You will raise all these concerns during the arguments proceedings," CJ, IHC, responded.

The court issued notice to NAB against the plea of Bushra Bibi's sentence.



QUETTA: Alam Khan Kakar, Dr. Munir Baloch, Noor Khan Khilji, Sardar Khadim Wardag and Malik Naseebullah Batini meeting with PTI's Central General Secretary and nominated candidate for PM Umar Ayub regarding intra party elections

## Certain important achievements made during 6 months: Stability of economy was big challenge for interim Govt., says Jan Achakzai

**Caretaker Provincial Minister Information says we made utmost efforts to resolve problems of Balochistan during six months; hopes new govt. to carry good policies of interim govt.**

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has stated that certain important achievements were made by the interim government during six months of rule.

He said that the stability of economy, controlling inflation, bringing down value of US dollar, combating terrorism and smuggling and implementation of the policy of deportation of il-

legal immigrants were major challenges faced by the interim government, however, it tackled them and made successes in these fronts.

The caretaker Minister for Information was addressing press conference at the Civil Secretariat on Monday.

He said that while the interim government made certain achievements achieving milestone on different fronts, still it would

be a big challenge for the newly elected government to carry on the present policies.

He said that we made wholehearted efforts to resolve the problems being faced by the province during six months.

Jan Achakzai said that it was really big challenge to stabilize economy of the country, however, we were able to do so taking certain

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: Peoples Party (PPP) Co-Chairman, Asif Ali Zardari exchanging views with a delegation of Awami National Party (ANP) led by Zamarud Khan, Dawood Khan and Nawabzada Umar Farooq during meeting held in Islamabad.

## Balochistan MPA, Senators announce support for PPP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Newly elected Member of Balochistan Assembly from Awami National Party, Zamarud Khan, Senators Dawood Khan and Nawabzada Umar Farooq called on President Pakistan Peoples Parliamentarians (PPPP) Asif Ali Zardari.

They announced their support for Asif Ali Zardari in the Senate and Presidential

elections, said press release issued here by the party secretariat.

Zamarud Khan MPA also announced to support for PPP in forming the government in Balochistan. The ANP also announced to play a more dynamic role in government formation in Balochistan. Ali Madad Jattak and Mir Ali Hasan Brohi were also present on the occasion.

## "Visitors not to be allowed during session": Arrangements finalized for maiden session of newly formed BA on Feb 28

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The necessary arrangements have been finalized for the upcoming maiden session of the newly formed Balochistan Assembly to be held on February 28, 2024.

According to the sources of Balochistan's Assembly secretariat, the session of Provincial Assembly would be conducted at 03:00 PM on February 28.

The newly elected members of Provincial Assembly would take oath in

the maiden session.

The Provincial Assembly sources said that the passes have not been issued to the visitors for the session of assembly.

Moreover, there would be no permission to the live vans of the electronic media in the premises of Provincial Assembly.

However, the media representatives would be allowed to enter the assembly building for coverage on the accreditation cards issued by the Directorate General of Public Relations.

## Maryam Nawaz sworn in as first-ever female CM of Punjab

**Wins chief minister's election with 220 votes against SIC's Rana Aftab Ahmad; Governor Balighur Rehman administers oath to Maryam; Doors of CM's office opened for ruling, opposition members, says newly elected CM**

LAHORE (Online): The newly-elected first ever female Chief Minister of the Punjab Maryam Nawaz has taken the oath of her office at the Governor's House in Lahore today.

Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman administered the oath.

On this occasion, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Quid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, PML-N

assembly held in Lahore, Maryam Nawaz of Pakistan Muslim League-N was elected as the first ever woman Chief Minister of Punjab.

She secured two hundred twenty votes.

Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan announced the result of the voting process.

Sunni Ittehad Council had fielded Rana Aftab



President Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, members of Punjab Assembly, along with a large number of party leaders and workers were present. Earlier, during the session of the provincial assembly held in Lahore, Maryam Nawaz of Pakistan Muslim League-N was elected as the first ever woman Chief Minister of Punjab.

Continued on page 2

## Armed Forces commemorate fifth anniversary of Operation Swift Retort

### Independent Report

RAWALPINDI: The Armed Forces of Pakistan, along with the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) and Services Chiefs, commemorate the fifth anniversary of "Operation Swift Retort."

February 27, 2019, marked a significant event in our history, demonstrating the resolve of the people of Pakistan and the professionalism of the Armed Forces in response to unwarranted aggression from India, motivated by political considerations and electoral concerns. Despite desperate Indian attempts to favourably shape the information space, the events of that fateful day showcased absolute operational ascendancy of Pakistan's Armed Forces over the Indian side.

The steadfastness and competence of Pakistan's Armed Forces were acknowledged by military experts and analysts throughout the world, effectively debunking frivolous Indian claims which could not stand to factual scrutiny.

The strategic foresight to return the downed pilot in interest of peace, from a position of strength and after having dominated the opposing force decisively, is unanimously hailed, to this day, by the international community as a remarkable gesture of political maturity and superior statecraft.

As a state committed to peace, we shall continue to emphasize the importance of peaceful coexistence with our neighbours. Any aggression against the people of Pakistan, our sovereignty and territorial integrity, will however be responded immediately, with full might and without any hesitation. Every single time.



Pak Navy demonstrates successful shooting down of aerial target by Surface to Air Missile.

## Rain and snowfall hit different parts of Balochistan: PDMA and Met Dept issue alert to concerned authorities to take steps to avoid any untoward situation

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) and Met Department have issued alert to all concerned authorities to remain alert for taking necessary measures to avoid any untoward situation as the rain and snowfall hit different parts of the Balochistan province on Monday.

While the rain and snowfall started in mid-night Sunday and Monday, it remained continued on Monday.

In view of the rain and snowfall situation, the PDMA issued alert to different concerned departments and district administration to adopt necessary

precautionary measures.

Similarly, the PDMA has also asked the citizens and tourists to be careful in view of the weather conditions. According to PDMA, storm is expected in different hilly streams and nullahs located in some areas. It directed to the concerned authorities to ensure effective arrangements to tackle any untoward situation.

Meanwhile, according to the Met Department, rain-wind thunderstorm and snowfall over the mountains with gusty winds are likely in Chaghar, Noushki, Panjgur, Khاران, Gwadar, Awaran, Khuzdar, Kalat, Turbat, Washuk, Kech, Quetta.

## Decisive leadership, calculated response to oppressing forces helped liberate Nagorno-Karabakh: Mushahid

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman, Senate Standing Committee on Defence, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed on Monday said the decisive leadership and calculated response, upholding international laws, ensuring territorial sovereignty of a nation-state to the oppressing forces of Armenia enabled the Republic of Azerbaijan to liberate Nagorno-Karabakh.

Addressing a seminar titled, "Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing: A Crime against Humanity, the 32nd Anniversary of the Khojaly genocide", jointly organised by the MUSLIM Institute and the Azerbaijani Embassy, the Senate Defence Committee Chairman termed the Nagorno-Karabakh Genocide as a dark chapter of human history. In February 1992, Armenian forces reportedly seized the Azeri-populated town of Khojaly. Armenian militants started the massacre of civilians in Nagorno-Karabakh. In this massacre 613 innocent Azerbaijanis, including 106 women and 83 children, were massacred. Eight families were exterminated, four hundred and seventy-six people were permanently disabled and a total of 1275 people were taken hostage.

Senator Mushahid said there were double standards of the so-called international community when it came to

the ethnic cleansing or genocide of Muslims in any part of the world.

"In 1974, the then Türkiye Prime Minister Mustafa Bulent Ecevit sent forces to fight the occupant forces in the Northern Turkish Cyprus to halt a massacre and genocide whereas another example of such brave action is of Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev who said despite global two-faced politics and tactics fought against Armenian occupation and achieved its liberation. Pakistan was first to support the defence action and as per global laws by Türkiye in Northern Turkish Cyprus," the Senator said.

However, during the course of time Pakistan and Türkiye stood like a rock with President Aliyev on his stance on Nagorno-Karabakh, he said, adding, "The biggest lesson is that sometimes the leadership has to show decisive action."

Earlier a one-minute silence was observed to honour the martyrs of Khojaly genocide and later a brief documentary highlighting the history of Genocide in Nagorno-Karabakh by the Armenian occupant forces and unbridled violence and atrocities against the innocent Azerbaijanis and fateha (prayer) was also offered for Khojaly martyrs.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Jordan to Pakistan Dr Maen Khreasat, Ambassador of United Arab Emirates (UAE) take keen interest in a painting during painting exhibition of Suzan Alsaied title "Touch of the Love" at Pakistan National Council of the Arts in the Federal Capital.



MULTAN: Activists of Muslim League (PML-N) are distributing sweets among each other after Maryam Nawaz elected as Chief Minister Punjab during celebration demonstration, in Multan.

## PSL Islamabad United falter after Babar's dominating century

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: A dazzling century by Babar Azam took Peshawar Zalmi to a commanding total against Islamabad United on Monday, eventually leading to 8-run victory.

Babar ended the innings on 111 runs off 63 deliveries including 14 fours and two sixes. Saim Ayub tiched in with 38 runs of 21 balls. Peshawar finished with 201/5 in 20 overs.

For United, Shadab Khan starred with the ball with 2 wickets for 28 runs in four overs.

Islamabad United won

the toss and opted to field against Peshawar Zalmi in the 13th match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 9 at the Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore on Monday.

The Shadab Khan-led United have lost their last two games after winning their opening game in the ongoing edition.

Meanwhile, Babar Azam's Zalmi won two consecutive matches after losing their first two games.

Zalmi and United sit at the fourth and fifth position on the points table, respectively.

## Ambassador Hashmi visits Hong Kong, meets CE

**BEIJING**

(APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi visited Hong Kong and held a meeting with its Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu and discussed cooperation in culture and tourism.

I've had a very productive visit to Hong Kong. I'm very impressed by the positive strides Hong Kong has continued to make, says Khalil Hashmi in a recent interview with China Daily. I've seen a lot of progress all-around, positive progress.

He said both the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions have their own strengths, such as in financial services like banking and insurance, and in technology. It (Hong Kong) has plenty of experience in shipping and trading too.

The ambassador also met many other prominent figures in Hong Kong, including the city Commissioner for the Belt and Road Nicholas Ho Lik-chi, President of the Legislative Council Andrew Leung Kwan-yuen, and leaders at InvestHK, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce.

The ambassador also called on the president and senior management officials of Hong Kong Baptist University and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

## Maryam's victory to ensure economic-ideological stability: Attique

**RAWALPINDI**

(APP): President of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan on Monday congratulated Mohtarama Maryam Nawaz Sharif for being elected as the first female Chief Minister of Punjab.

In his congratulatory message, Sardar Attique said "This victory augurs full assurance for greater progress and prosperity of the people in Punjab and robust socio-political and ideological stability and strength of Pakistan."

The AJ&K former Prime Minister said that All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference will happily extend all cooperation to the newly elected Chief Minister and her administration in the Punjab in all politico-ideological spheres.

"Jammu and Kashmir people feel enhanced pride in the victory of Mohtarama Maryam Nawaz Sharif as Chief Minister in the historic ideological context and bonds of Punjab with Jammu and Kashmir state", he added.

## Poland, France, Germany and Ukraine join hands in organizing a commemorative event

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Embassies of countries comprising the Weimar Triangle (Poland, France, Germany) and Ukraine joined hands in organizing a commemorative event dedicated to the Solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

The gathering marked the second anniversary of an unprovoked Russian full-scale invasion against Ukraine.

The documentary "Culture vs. War" and exhibition "Generations of War," featuring works created by Ukrainian artists, were shown during the event which took place at the Poland's Embassy grounds.

Ambassadors of Poland - Maciej Pisarski, Ukraine - Markkian Chuchuk, France - Nicolas Galey, Germany - Alfred Grannas addressed the participants.

The ambassadors highlighted the bravery of resistance shown by the Ukrainian people against the Russian invaders throughout the course of the two-year conflict.

They also underlined the sacrifices made by Ukraine's Armed Forces in repelling Russian assault. The speakers also mentioned the devastation of homes, schools, hospitals, and other infrastructure, as well as the suffering of Ukrainians, including children.

Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine is an attack against the rules-based international order and its core elements, such as sovereignty and territorial integrity. It constitutes a dangerous precedent that cannot be left unanswered, as Ambassador Grannas stated.

Therefore, the world community of responsible and peace-loving nations must vehemently oppose and confront any infringement of international law.

As Ambassador Pisarski underlined, Ukraine cannot be forgotten, nor can the significance of the war be overlooked. Russia's strategy is to wear the defenders and those who help them down, to make them tired and to make the world forget so they can achieve their nefarious goals.

Therefore, it is imperative to sustain backing for Ukraine's endeavor to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity to determine its own course in the future. One of the priorities of the Weimar Triangle is to help Ukraine facing the Russian aggression as long as necessary.

Supporting Ukraine is an investment in ensuring the security of Ukraine, Europe, and the world. It is a shared responsibility of the entire global community to aid Ukraine in resisting the illegal Russian invasion.

He said that the terrorism was overcome due to the vision of Chief of Army Staff and hard work put in by the security forces.

Similarly, the interim government also took measures for bringing good governance and preventing corruption.

He said that corruption is a big issue in the province and there is dire need to work against it.

He expressed the hope that the newly government would carry the good policies of interim government in future, although, it would be a challenge for it to do.

The caretaker Minister added that the new government would continue fight against corruption.

Jan Achakzai also congratulated the newly elected members of assembly and expressed best wishes for them.

He on the occasion appreciated the security institutions and law enforcement agencies for making achievements in this regard.

He said that the terrorism was overcome due to the vision of Chief of Army Staff and hard work put in by the security forces.

Similarly, the interim government also took measures for bringing good governance and preventing corruption.

He said that corruption is a big issue in the province and there is dire need to work against it.

He expressed the hope that the newly government would carry the good policies of interim government in future, although, it would be a challenge for it to do.

The caretaker Minister added that the new government would continue fight against corruption.

Jan Achakzai also congratulated the newly elected members of assembly and expressed best wishes for them.

He on the occasion appreciated the security institutions and law enforcement agencies for making achievements in this regard.

He said that the terrorism was overcome due to the vision of Chief of Army Staff and hard work put in by the security forces.

Similarly, the interim government also took measures for bringing good governance and preventing corruption.

## Solangi says: 71,000 Out-Of-School Children brought back to schools in capital

**ISLAMABAD**

(APP): Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi Monday informed the Senate that around 71,000 Out-Of-School Children (OOSC), out of 81,000, had been brought back in educational institutes of the federal capital, with 86 per cent enrollment.

Responding to a motion regarding the increasing number of out-of-school children and its impact on the country's future, he said, that last year during an inter-ministerial conference, which is one of the biggest forums, provinces had been asked to play their active role in increasing enrollment of the OOSC in educational institutes.

According to Pakistan Education Statistics, working under the Ministry of Education, the data about providing education to schoolchildren by provinces is compiled annually, he added.

He said that despite confronting various challenges, on the economic and foreign policy front, the caretaker government under the leadership of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar took bold decisions, to stabilize the economy, avert a major crisis in the country's neighbourhood and demand global action against climate change.

The interim government also called for an end to the unimaginable violence orchestrated by Israel in Gaza and send relief goods to our Palestinian brothers and sisters, he added.

"As we complete our constitutional mandate and hand over to a new government, I would like to appreciate the hard work, dedication, and commitment of all my cabinet colleagues who worked tirelessly for the national cause," the foreign minister remarked.

He expressed gratitude to the officers of the Foreign Office who supported him and continued to lead by example both at home and abroad, showcasing the very best that Pakistan has to offer.

The outgoing interim foreign minister also wished the incoming government the very best as "it sets out to serve the people of Pakistan who long for political and economic stability, good governance, peace, and harmony."

## FM Jilani lauds "bold decisions" of interim govt as term nears conclusion

**ISLAMABAD**

(APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani on Monday lauding the "bold decisions" of the caretaker government on economic and foreign policy fronts thanked the colleagues and cabinet members for their tireless efforts to serve the national cause.

The foreign minister, in a series of posts on his X timeline, called it a "great honour" to serve Pakistan and its people.

He said that despite confronting various challenges, on the economic and foreign policy front, the caretaker government under the leadership of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar took bold decisions, to stabilize the economy, avert a major crisis in the country's neighbourhood and demand global action against climate change.

The interim government also called for an end to the unimaginable violence orchestrated by Israel in Gaza and send relief goods to our Palestinian brothers and sisters, he added.



LAHORE: Opposition Leader in Punjab Assembly, Rana Aftab talking to media persons, outside Punjab Assembly in Lahore.

## Maryam Nawaz sworn in as....

**Continued from page 1**

lected Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz has assured that the doors of CM office and her heart will remain opened for ruling and opposition members round the clock.

In her first speech on floor of the assembly as chief minister on Monday, she thanked Allah Almighty for giving her respect and congratulated the speaker and deputy speaker on assuming their respective offices.

"I hope that under your leadership, the House will hold democratic values high," she stressed.

Maryam Nawaz regretting the absence of the opposition members said she wished they were here. "Being democratic workers, we understand how important it is to compete in politics. We have also faced difficult times when every time was against us, and cruelty and brutality were inflicted on us. But thank God, we did not leave the field," she stressed.

She said she wished the opposition members were present to create commotion during her speech.

Maryam said, "I am a chief minister for everyone, including those who did not vote for me. The doors of my office and the doors of my heart are always open for the opposition."

She further thanked the members of the allied parties, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP), PML-Q and PML-Zia.

The newly elected chief minister also gave her five-year agenda and salient features of which were as under:

Focus on reforms for south Punjab

Expansion of Safe City project to 18 more cities in the first phase

Focus on reforms for south Punjab

Expansion of Safe City project to 18 more cities in the first phase

Focus on reforms for south Punjab

Expansion of Safe City project to 18 more cities in the first phase

Focus on reforms for south Punjab

Expansion of Safe City project to 18 more cities in the first phase

Introduction of more model police stations

Establishment of special desks for women in police stations

Initiatives for agricultural reforms

Provision of free livestock for small farmers and businesses

Introduction of electric cars and bikes initiative

Initiative for 100,000 houses under "Apna Ghar Apni Chah" plan

Establishment of more IT parks

Implementation of population scanning for diseases

Relief in utility bills

Launch of new housing schemes

Maryam Nawaz thanked the 125 million people of Punjab who voted her to the assembly and vowed to serve them indiscriminately. "My presence here is an acknowledgment of the services of a political worker who endures hardships," she remarked, adding that history had been created today, even if she was minused.

"This is an honour for every daughter of Pakistan, as the first woman chief minister of Pakistan is standing before them today. I pray that this continues after me," she added. "We have reached here after passing through a difficult phase"

The newly elected Punjab Chief Minister insisted that she did not have revenge against anybody in her heart, and said she thanked those who inflicted cruelty and vengeance upon her. "Despite the hardships, I think the opponents have done me a favour by passing me through the hardships for which there is no substitute."



QUETTA: People sitting around fire to warm themselves during cold weather after rain in Provincial capital.

## Ashrafi calls for action against harassers of woman in Arabic-inscribed Kurta

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Monday strongly condemned the harassment faced by a woman wearing a Kurta inscribed with Arabic script.

He, in a video message, said the incident, which took place in Lahore, had sparked outrage and brought significant attention to the issue of cultural and religious tolerance.

Ashrafi said the woman was reportedly subjected to verbal abuse and harassment by individuals who objected to the Arabic script on her attire. However, he said investigations revealed that the script had no sacred connotations and was merely decorative, a common feature in clothing worn in many Arabic-speaking countries.

Ashrafi emphasized that such acts of harassment not only violate the fundamental principles of Shariah but also tarnish the image of Pakistan and Islam globally. He called for swift and decisive action against the perpetrators, urging law enforcement authorities to ensure that those responsible are held accountable for their actions.

Furthermore, Ashrafi highlighted the importance of respecting individual choices and freedoms, including the right to dress according to one's cultural or personal preferences. He stressed that Islam promotes tolerance and respect for diversity, and any form of harassment or discrimination goes against its teachings.

Ashrafi said this incident had reignited discussions about the need for greater awareness and education regarding cultural

and religious diversity in Pakistan. He expressed solidarity with the woman and called for a more inclusive and tolerant society where individuals are free to express themselves without fear of persecution or harassment.

Ashrafi urged the government to take concrete steps to protect the rights and dignity of all citizens, regardless of their background as the outcome of this case will undoubtedly have far-reaching implications for the country's reputation and its efforts to promote a more inclusive and harmonious society.

He also praised Syeda Shahrano Naqvi, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Gulberg as a pivotal figure in defusing a potentially volatile situation surrounding the woman's attire adorned with Arabic script.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan is meeting with Governor Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah.

## Around 2,459 valid OEPs registered with BEOE: Official

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BEOE) has registered some 2,459 valid Overseas Employment Promoters (OEPs) to ensure protection of off shore employment seekers from scam and fake organisations minting money from innocent masses through hoax job opportunities.

The Bureau has provided employment to over a million emigrants since its inception in 1971 through duly registered OEPs whereas during the year 2015 highest number of Pakistanis 946,571 proceeded abroad for the purpose of job and during the year 2024 (till January), 650,110 Pakistanis proceeded abroad for the purpose of employment, an official of BEOE told APP here on Monday.

The official said that the Bureau was playing a vital role in reducing the pressure of joblessness at home, besides being a major means of earning foreign exchange in the shape of overseas workers' remittances.

The overseas job op-

portunities are thus, serving as the mainstay for the national economy, by providing much needed financial outlay for debt servicing, imports bill, alleviation of poverty, development projects and economic activities.

The Bureau, being a regulatory body, controls, regulates, facilitates and monitors the emigration process followed by the OEPs, in the private sector, besides direct employment, the mode adopted by the individuals, to seek foreign employment either through their own efforts or relatives and friends living abroad, he added.

He said the foremost task of BEOE encompassed collection, compilation and tabulation of emigration data of all those Pakistanis who proceed abroad for employment purpose.

In fact, the Bureau has been engaged in maintaining a comprehensive statistical record of all the migrant workers since 1971, which provides basis for planning and policy formulation by the Economic Division and other interested government departments.



ISLAMABAD: A traffic police warden removing wrongly parked vehicle with the help of fork lifter for smooth flow of traffic at Constitution Avenue, in the Federal Capital.

## AIOU to improve examination system via digitalization

ISLAMABAD (INP): Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood on Monday launched a new initiative to improve the examination system of the university. According to the AIOU, the aim of this initiative was to digitalize the process of creating question papers. This will help to prevent duplication, eliminate unfair means and save time. To implement the new system, a training workshop was organized for faculty members from the Faculty of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences and Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Sciences.

During the workshop, the faculty members were trained on the creation of an "item bank" of question papers. Items (question pa-

pers) for BS (ODL) programs will be created in the first phase, followed by the development of an item bank for Matriculation, FA, Associate Degree, Post Graduate Diploma Programs, Teachers Training Programs, MPhil and PhD programs in the second phase. Each course will have an item bank with 300 MCQs, 100 short questions and 50 long questions.

The examination department will be able to prepare the paper for any course in no time with the help of course coordinators, faculty members and experts. It is pertinent to mention here that the old pattern of papers did not have MCQs, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood instructed the examination department to include MCQs.

## 107th birth anniversary of Quadrat Shahab observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 107th birth anniversary of renowned Urdu writer and civil servant Quadrat Ullah Shahab was being observed on Monday. He was born in Gilgit on February 26, 1917 and was known for his autobiography, Shahab Nama. At the young age of 16, he won an international essay competition organized by the Readers Digest, London.

He graduated from Prince of Wales College, Jammu, and later from Government College Lahore. He was selected for Indian Civil Service in 1940 and later volunteered to serve in Bengal during the famine of 1943.

After moving to Pakistan, he worked as a Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce until becoming Chief Secretary of the newly formed state of Azad Kashmir in Muzaffarabad. He then became Deputy Commissioner of Jhang, Punjab.

He served as Punjab's Director of Industries, where he dealt primarily with settlement concerns involving migration. He was named Principal Secretary to then-Governor Ghulam Muhammad and served in this capacity under Iskander Ali Mirza and Ayub Khan's governments.

## Citizens to get civic facilities by Excise deptt at Fatima Jinnah Park

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Excise Department is providing civic facilities to residents of the federal capital to get their vehicle registration as well as access of various essential services at Fatima Jinnah Park (Bolan Gate) here on Monday, under the ICT doorstep initiative.

On the directives of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, the excise staff will be stationed at the park's parking lot from 3.00 to 5.00 pm, and the citizens hailing from nearby areas of Fatima Jinnah Park Bolan Gate F-9 can get civic facilities through a dedicated van, ICT Spokesman Dr Abdullah Tabassum said. He said that whether you need a fuel permit for domestic or commercial use, or looking to register your motor vehicle seamlessly, the on-ground service will ensure a swift and straightforward process. This initiative aims to streamline processes and provide ease to the public regarding vehicle registration, transfer, and token tax procedures, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadove addressing during a seminar on Commemorating 32rd Anniversary of Khojaly Genocide, at National Library, in the Federal Capital, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Ambassador of Turkey to Pakistan Dr Mehmet Pacaci and present on the occasion.

## Custodian of Roza-e-Rasool (SAWW) lauds American-Pak contribution, charity works

ISLAMABAD (APP): The custodian of Roza-e-Rasool (PBUH), has appreciated the charitable work of American-Pakistani philanthropist and entrepreneur, Tanweer Ahmed.

Sheikh Nuri Muhammad Ali, the custodian of the keys of Roza-e-Rasool (PBUH), praised the work of Tanweer Ahmed during his public engagements in Pakistan which lasted for a week.

The tour of the key holder of Roza-e-Rasool (PBUH) was organised by Tanweer Ahmed so that the Custodian (Sheikh Nuri M Ali), could speak to Pakistanis directly and share ideas with them.

Appreciating the efforts of Tanweer Ahmed for the promotion of IT educa-

tion and quality health in Pakistan, the Custodian of the keys of Roza-e-Rasool (PBUH), said that Tanweer Ahmed was a role model for others in charity works.

Sheikh Nuri M Ali also delivered a lecture at Pakistan's premium IT institution, Islamabad's National University of Science & Technology (NUST).

It is to be mentioned here that recently, Tanweer Ahmed donated \$9 million to NUST's IT Tower to help students from poor backgrounds for gaining access to quality education through scholarships.

Meanwhile, Governor Sindh Muhammad Kamran Tessori held a meeting with Sheikh Nuri Muhammad Ali, the custodian of the keys of Roza-e-Rasool

(PBUH) at Governor House and thanked him for his role in helping Pakistan.

A special ceremony was also held in honour of Sheikh Nuri Muhammad Ahmad Ali, at Eidgah shrine in Rawalpindi.

Sheikh Nuri Muhammad, during his engagements, prayed for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan and the Muslim Ummah.

The Minister for Religious Affairs also held a meeting with Sheikh Nuri Muhammad Ali.

The minister said, it is part of our faith that Roza-e-Rasool (PBUH), is the holiest place on the earth.

He said the people of Pakistan are deeply attached to holy places in Saudi Arabia.

## IHC allows PTI founder to meet lawyers in privacy

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Monday issued a directive to the authorities at Adiala Jail, instructing them to permit the defense counsel of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder to have a private meeting with him, in accordance with the jail manual. Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan heard the petition of the PTI founder, seeking permission for privacy during the meeting with the lawyers.

Defense Counsel Shere Afzal Marwat argued during the hearing that two individuals remained present during the meeting with the PTI founder, and the jail administration did not permit talking alone with the PTI founder.

He added that the jail administration also did not allow newly elected PTI members and political assistants to meet the PTI founder. Defense Counsel urged the court to issue directives to the jail administration, permitting the PTI founder to meet his political assistants.



Officers warmly welcome Mr. Syed Tariq Mahmood-ul-Hassan, the newly appointed Managing Director of Pakistan Bait-ul-Maal, upon his arrival at the PBM Head office Islamabad

## DC directs ACs to intensify action against kite-flying

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad on Monday directed all Assistant Commissioners (ACs) to intensify actions against kite-flying in their jurisdictions for the safety of the public.

In a proactive move to safeguard citizens, the Deputy Commissioner called to initiate a robust campaign against kite-flying.

Meanwhile, the Assistant Commissioner City, accompanied by Abpara police, executed a targeted operation against kite-flying enthusiasts. Ten individuals involved in the illicit trade of kites were apprehended, with a cache of dangerous materials, including metal ropes, seized.

Similarly, in the Industrial Area, four offenders were promptly detained and handed over to law enforcement authorities.

The crackdown comes in response to the imposition of Section 144, a measure aimed at curbing the alarming trend of kite-related incidents. Under this directive, strict measures have been mandated, empowering authorities to swiftly detain and prosecute both participants and vendors involved in the dangerous activity.

Expressing grave concern, the Deputy Commissioner sought public support, emphasizing the inherent risks posed by kite-flying, including the potential loss of life and damage to the infrastructure.



ISLAMABAD: A view of dancing fountain with colorful lighting along Faisal Avenue in the Federal Capital.

## PTI leader responsible for destroying innocent young minds: Latif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-N senior leader Mian Javed Latif on Monday said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders are responsible for fostering negative trends among the youth and destroying their innocent minds through irrational politicking.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that PTI misled the entire country, especially the youth by telling lies and sowed hatred in their minds.

The PML-N leader stressed the promotion of patience, tolerance, knowledge and awareness among the nation, especially the youth.

He said PTI leaders were involved in attacking national institutions, adding, that his party leadership opposed the politics of revenge and expressed the commitment to initiate a

grand dialogue among leaders of various political parties.

He underscored the need for political unity, especially in light of the upcoming inaugural session of National Assembly, where the election of prime minister, speaker and deputy speaker will take place.

Replying to a question, he made it clear that the upcoming federal government led by his party would have to make difficult decisions, adding that, keeping in view the current economic situation, Pakistan will have to approach the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"All PTI and other elected lawmakers of political parties should play a positive role in the National Assembly and should take the country out of current crises," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Interfaith Harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi talking with the media persons after the attend Mubarak Ahmad Sani case hearing in Supreme Court, in the Federal Capital.

## USAID's conference to empower women, minorities

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a ground-breaking effort to empower women and minorities, the Mission Director of USAID in Pakistan, Kate Somvongsiri, inaugurated a four-day conference "Breaking Barriers Through Diversity and Inclusivity (BBTDI)".

The event aims to unite women professionals, academics, scientists, and community leaders from the U.S. and Pakistan to address pressing challenges like climate resilience, sustainable water management, and incorporating local wisdom into actionable strategies.

The event hosted by the National Rural Support Program (NRSP), with the support of USAID and All Pakistan Women Universities Consortium (APWUC).

The conference emphasizes the crucial role of women in sustainable development. It brings together representatives from various institutions, dem-

onstrating the power of global engagement.

President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi, highlighted the unique opportunity for knowledge exchange and cooperation between scholars and researchers of two countries.

United States Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome affirmed the U.S. commitment to supporting Pakistan's diversity initiatives, focusing on education, healthcare, and economic development.

The conference aligns with the U.S. Government's dedication to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) and USAID's development vision, emphasizing the significance of International Women's Day.

The participants will engage in keynote speeches, workshops, and networking opportunities to share insights, build partnerships, and contribute to creating a more sustainable and inclusive future.



ISLAMABAD: A lady health worker administers polio drops to a child at Shrine of Hazrat Bari Imam during a door-to-door vaccination campaign, in the Federal Capital.

## Expert advises Islooites to increase water intake, stay away from green areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Medical experts on Monday asked the pollen allergy patients of the federal capital to take all necessary preventive measures including increased water intake and staying away from green areas as pollen count rises in March posing a threat to people with allergies.

Talking to a Private news channel, Allergy specialist Dr. Umar Saeed said that with the onset of spring, people living in capital city can suffer from pollen allergy, however Asthma and other allergic patients should immediately start taking timely precautions to reduce exposure to pollen.

People should wear a face mask that completely covers their mouth and nose, keep windows and door closed, especially at dawn and dusk to avoid letting pollen in and avoid going out during this time, he suggested.

The pollen allergy season usually begins from March, he said, adding, the increase in pollen levels can

be dangerous for respiratory, asthma, diabetic and high blood pressure patients. He said people should get flu vaccines, use masks, wash hands frequently and keep a distance from flu patients. Replying to a question, he said pollen is in low concentration from 10am to around 5pm and in high concentration from 5am to 10am and again from around 5pm to midnight.

The citizens sensitive to the pollen allergy must stay indoors before 10am and after 5pm during the pollen season and if they have to go outdoors they must wear face mask, he added.

Citizens should also take a balanced diet, plenty of water and sleep for six to eight hours daily. They should visit their physicians as soon they find any symptoms, he mentioned.

To another query, he replied that after returning home from outside, the residents should also change their dress and have a shower to ensure that the pollen on the body are washed away.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

Tuesday February 27, 2024

## Spirit of '74

For three days in 1974, starting Feb 22, Lahore witnessed an epochal meeting of 38 Muslim nations as it hosted the Second Islamic Summit Conference. Those were heady days, coming only a few months after the October 1973 war, when the Arabs had reversed some of the ignominious losses of the 1967 conflict. Moreover, the Arabs had flaunted their 'oil weapon', targeted at all states that openly supported Israel, and perhaps for the first time in the postcolonial period, there was a feeling that the world of Islam had agency of its own.

Giants of the Muslim world attended the moot. This included the summit's host and architect Zulfikar Ali Bhutto along with other leaders, including Anwar Sadat of Egypt, Muammar Qadhafi of Libya, Faisal of Saudi Arabia and Palestinian icon Yasser Arafat. The credit for the success of the 1974 summit goes to Bhutto. Though he may have had many shortcomings, Bhutto — a democratically elected leader — was a committed internationalist and had the vision to make Pakistan a leader in the Muslim world. Our reputation today, both within the Muslim world and in the larger international community, is far from the dizzying heights reached in 1974. One lesson that can be drawn is that a leader elected by the people and aware of their aspirations is alone qualified to guide the nation on the world stage. Another of the summit's successes was Pakistan's recognition of Bangladesh, which closed the blood-stained chapter of the separation of East Pakistan, as Mujibur Rahman embraced Bhutto in Lahore.

Yet, 50 years after that momentous meeting, many of the issues that plagued the Muslim world remain. For example, Palestine's children still cry out for an end to their slaughter. Moreover, the people of Kashmir remain unable to choose their own destiny, thanks to Indian intransigence. Elsewhere, the stateless Rohingyas live in foetid refugee camps, victims of Myanmar's ruling junta, while hundreds of millions of other Muslims the world over face disease, illiteracy and hunger, even as some of their richer brothers in faith live lives of unimaginable luxury. Sadly, in far too many Muslim states, strongmen are disconnected from the desires of their people. Perhaps the spirit of '74 needs to be channelled to guide the Muslim world through these rough waters. Particularly, through unity and pursuing a minimum common agenda, the community of Muslim states can attempt to address multiple problems, and pursue the noble goals enunciated at the Lahore Summit. Education, with particular focus on science and technology, is required to improve the lot of Muslim populations. Furthermore, democracy within the Muslim world — developed through organic processes and not 'imported' from others — is needed to bring qualitative improvements to the lives of nearly 2bn people.

By Malik Zaem

The history of aggression of India towards the residents living in Indian Occupied

Kashmir is long and distressful. Violation of Human Rights and UN resolutions on Kashmir have proven India as rouge state. The atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir (IIOJK) have further increased after the removal of Article 370, abolishing its special status. Curbs on press freedom and citizenship amendment acts are heinous tactics to change the demography of Kashmir, making the BJP lead narrative of normalcy in IIOJK a mere hypocrisy and fabrication. International Organizations and watchdogs should adhere to Indian oppression in the valley and force India to amend its acts under UN resolutions, which grant the right of self-determination to the indigenous people of Kashmir.

On Tuesday, February 19, 2024, Kashmiris throughout the region staged a protest along a busy thoroughfare in the city to denounce Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to occupied Jammu and

Kashmir. They also wanted it to be known that token gestures made in the name of development would not be enough to appease their oppressed fellow Kashmiris. The protest took place on the busy thoroughfare in bad weather, organized by Pasban-i-Hurriyat Jammu Kashmir (PHJK), a group of post-1989 migrants from Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

As they marched, the demonstrators holding banners chanted slogans like "Go Modi Go Back" and "Killer Killer, Modi Killer," alleging that the Indian prime minister was frantically attempting to establish his extremist party's government in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. They also claimed that a number of illegal and arbitrary measures, such as the issuance of illegal domicile certificates to Indian citizens and their state-sponsored rehabilitation, were taken in order to accomplish this heinous goal. The building of a network of roads, tunnels, and railroad tracks was one of the steps that India had been taking one after the other to solidify the military control of Jammu and Kashmir.

In addition to seizing

more than 54,000 acres of land in the occupied region, the Indian state eliminated a 1971-instituted requirement requiring Indian occupying forces to obtain a special certificate in order to seize land in Kashmir. This occurred after Kashmir's nominal autonomy was abolished in 2019. In addition, the Indian BJP leadership has changed a number of laws and rules to permit the establishment of long-term buildings for military personnel and their families on Indian military encampments and in areas, the Indian military has classified as "desired" or "strategic."

Published in September 2023, an impartial report by Kashmir Media Services exposed the manner in which the fascist government led by the BJP is utilizing unlawful means to change the demographics of Indian-occupied Kashmir. The study claims that Indian troops have been harassing and humiliating Kashmiris, and that since the Modi-led Hindutva government of India abolished the occupied territory's special status on August 5, 2019, the situation has gotten worse. It stated that Kashmiri students were

forced to endure the brunt of the military blockade due to the repeal of Article 370. For months, Kashmiri youngsters had been forced to stay in their homes since the IIOJK was virtually cut off from the outside world, with phone and internet connections cut off and occupation troops enforcing a severe curfew.

According to the report, the Modi regime's assault on education had reached unfathomable proportions in IIOJK, where it had outlawed hundreds of schools managed by the Falah-e-Aam Trust in order to keep Kashmiri youth away from decent education. Moreover, the RSS mindset is reflected in the new Education Policy in the region. Hindu devotional songs like the "Surya Namaskar" are mandated in schools for Muslim students in Kashmir as part of the government's effort to Hinduize the educational system. The report urged the international community to take notice of the suffering of students in IIOJK by supporting the resolution of the Kashmir dispute in line with pertinent UN resolutions, even though it pointed out that India had taken

away every right of the Kashmiri people, including the right to education.

Recently, the Indian government has approved the construction of more than 40 prefabricated homes for paramilitary personnel stationed in the Kashmir valley. Furthermore, New Delhi has agreed to modernize the infrastructure in existing private lounges and hotels in order to keep paramilitary men comfortable during the hard winters. This step suggests that Kashmir may remain in a state of lockdown throughout the winter, paving the way for more human rights violations.

According to reports, the Indian government under Narendra Modi is disseminating blatant falsehoods about peace and normalcy in an effort to mislead the world about the true circumstances in illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, as revealed in the most recent All Parties Hurriyat Conference. The Modi government, according to leaders of the APHC, is attempting to twist the truth and manipulate the facts to fit its false narrative over Kashmir. They continued by saying that the harsh

laws and arbitrary detentions, including of human rights activists, contradict the claims made by the Modi government. This proves that peace in occupied Kashmir will not materialize unless Kashmiris are accorded their inalienable right to self-determination.

The fact that the conflict in Kashmir continues is without a doubt its worst aspect. The Indian army has killed around 70,000 individuals in the last 31 years, both directly and indirectly. Numerous women have been sexually assaulted, tortured, raped, and forced to disappear. The battle rages on even when Kashmir is removed from the headlines. Media and government in India tend to call this region's absence from the news "normalcy." The rhetoric used by the government to promote "development" and "normalcy" is becoming more and more dystopian. With the moral cover of "development" and "normalcy" providing newfound legal validity, the insignia of violence on Kashmiri bodies is carried out with increasing impunity. UNSC, ICC and ICJ should ponder and act in a way to force India to amend its acts.

## Not an elitist festival

Dr Naazir Mahmood

Despite all the criticism for being an 'elite' show for 'burger' families, the Karachi Literature Festival (KLF) organized by the Oxford University Press (OUP) remains a fest for those interested in topics much beyond literature.

The KLF encompasses fields ranging from economy and education to gender and human rights. The 15<sup>th</sup> KLF was even more significant as it invited a sharp critic of Israeli atrocities — a British citizen of Palestinian origin Selma Dabbagh. She exposed the hypocrisy with which most of the West — including the EU, UK, and US — has been blatantly supporting the Zionist regime; more on her later.

From February 16 to 18, the KLF featured 200 activists, analysts, communicators, development professionals, doctors, educationists, finance wizards, experts from abroad, gender trainers, historians, human resource managers, and of course literacy personalities.

Since 2018, Arshad Saeed Khan has been leading the OUP team, and with

Raheela Baqai and Muniza Ali, the KLF has expanded its accomplishments and outreach. This year, in the opening ceremony nobody expected the German and US diplomats to mention the besieged strip under relentless bombardment — and they did not.

But it was a pleasant surprise when the consul general of France talked about human rights violations the world over, especially the killings of thousands of innocent people in recent months.

Keynote speeches by Arif Hasan and Selma Dabbagh stole the show. Arif Hasan is a renowned activist and architect who needs no introduction, thanks to his immense contribution to teaching, planning, and research that he has presented in dozens of books and hundreds of articles and essays.

His keynote at the opening ceremony revolved around the theme of sustainability which he elaborated on in his peculiar style by exposing the exploitative nature of the global economy that the neoliberal narrative has expounded. He reminded the audience that at times, civil society organizations

(CSOs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) in developing countries end up promoting the same agenda, and such organizations are a relatively new phenomenon.

Selma Dabbagh's speech was a real tour de force of the event. As a British-Falesteeni lawyer and writer, she has been a prominent voice for the rights of the Falesteeni and a strong critic of the West for its support to such war crimes. After the 2008 war, her novel 'Out of It' attracted wide attention and received a nomination for a Guardian Book of the Year award in 2011.

In her address at the KLF, Selma called the ongoing violence in ME an exceptional series of atrocities that has no parallel in history. She added that over a period of five months, thousands of innocent children, senior citizens, and women have become victims of a planned and systematic campaign of extermination while the world keeps watching.

The KLF also organized specific sessions to remember the legends that we lost recently. The session on Ahmad Salim and Babar Ayaz discussed the

contributions of the two writers who promoted enlightenment in society in their way. While Ahmad Salim compiled and wrote over 100 books, Babar Ayaz focused more on journalism and public relations.

Both were activists too with a communication style of their own. They defended human rights and espoused fairness in society. Among other panellists, Nausheen Ahmad, a prominent barrister, was exceptionally good in paying her rich tributes to Babar Ayaz.

Featuring various book launches, the KLF had an exclusive session with one of the most promising novelists of Urdu in recent years, Rafaqat Hayat. He is no more a new name in Urdu fiction as his first novel appeared nearly 30 years ago. Now he has penned a new novel — 'Rolaak' — spanning over 650 pages that chronicles the journey of a vagabond from a small but historical city in Sindh. The protagonist of 'Rolaak' is a young man Qadir Bukhsh who faces numerous challenges in his life, which later become major obstacles due to his father. The novel is worth reading and is likely to become a major hit with

the lovers of Urdu fiction.

One of the most interesting sessions was on the political economy of Pakistan titled 'The evolving federation' which featured Asad Umar, Faisal Siddiqui, Kaiser Bengali, and Shabbar Zaidi. Amber Shamsi as the moderator was at her best. Shabbar Zaidi was all praise for the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment that has changed the dynamics of the Pakistani political economy in the past 14 years.

Asad was more interested in devolution from the provinces to the districts in Pakistan. Kaiser Bengali elaborated on the Seventh National Finance Commission (NFC) Award of 2010 and shared with the audience his experiences while being a member of the NFC team. Faisal Siddiqui differentiated between the de jure and de facto rulers in Pakistan who have been involved in a consistent power struggle in the country.

The late IA Rehman and Irfan Husain were the focus of another session. Ghazi Salahuddin, Jaffar Ahmad, and Zohra Yousof discussed the life and times of the two personalities who feature in the books 'A Life Lived with Passion' and

'A Lifetime of Dissent: A Memoir'. Both Irfan and Rehman were public intellectuals who devoted their energies and time to the cause of an active citizenry in Pakistan. Both hated religious extremism; they used their pen to highlight the violations of human rights in the country and protested against social injustices in society.

The evolution of citizenship is the main thrust of the book that dissects the legal and political dimensions of Pakistani society as it has evolved in the past nearly eight decades. It is not a normal history book that you find in college libraries across Pakistan, rather it is a treatise that challenges the narrative imposed on our students from schools and colleges to universities.

With this rich tapestry of sessions and speakers who would call the KLF an 'elitist' affair? The participation of women, youth and even the elderly from various segments of society was a commendable feature of the KLF. Congratulations to the KLF team for enriching our lives through their grand efforts. -- Courtesy TheNews

## Beyond environmental policy

Umar Farooq

The time has come for Pakistan to redefine its relationship with the environment — not as a passive recipient of international aid, but as an active steward of its own natural legacy.

Pakistan's environmental predicament is a poignant illustration of the disparity between a nation's contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions and the severity of its climate-related challenges. Despite accounting for less than one per cent of global GHG emissions, Pakistan is significantly impacted by climate change. The country has been experiencing an alarming increase in environmental disasters, such as flash floods, extended drought periods, and intense heatwaves. According to a World Bank report, the recent climate-induced disasters in Pakistan, including a heatwave and devastating floods, caused over 1,700 deaths, displaced more than eight million people, and resulted in more than \$30 billion in damages and economic losses.

The combined risks of extreme climate-related events, environmental degradation, and air pollution could reduce Pakistan's GDP by 18pc to 20pc by 2050. These occurrences highlight Pakistan's vulnerability to climate extremes and indicate the urgency for comprehensive strategies to adapt to and mitigate these effects. The reliance on international climate aid, often limited to small grants for seminars and PR campaigns, does not help much. International donors pledged over \$9bn to assist Pakistan in recovering from devastating floods last year, but unfortunately the funds never materialised.

The example of the Amazon rainforest's contribution to its own rainfall is a striking illustration of the

significant role local ecosystems play in their own environmental health. Despite its global significance, the Amazon primarily sustains its climate through its own biological processes, a concept that can be applied to Pakistan's environmental situation. The focus on seeking international climate aid and support, while beneficial, may have only a limited impact on Pakistan's environmental restoration. Pakistan's environmental habits, like the Amazon's, is significantly influenced by its own conservation and sustainability practices and we need to address environmental challenges through internal efforts.

Addressing Pakistan's environmental challenges necessitates a fundamental shift from the prevailing mindset and policy framework. The need of the hour is not just an environmental policy, but a comprehensive land use policy. This policy should be multidimensional, encompassing agriculture, nature conservation and restoration, industrial practices, and housing strategies.

The agriculture strategy in Pakistan's proposed land use policy must confront existing practices that have degraded natural capital. The agriculture sector with its distributional consequences is responsible for more than 50pc of GHG emissions. Traditional agricultural methods have led to extensive land degradation, water scarcity, and a decrease in biodiversity. The latest figure indicates that the per capita availability of water in Pakistan has declined to 1,017 cubic metres per person in 2021, significantly below the threshold for water scarcity, while rent-seeking farmers-turned-industrialists heavily lobbying for sugarcane cultivation in the south have made it worse. This has not only contributed to environmental degradation but also made sugarcane a critical part of the

consumption basket, despite its intensive water usage and ecological impact. To counteract this, a shift to sustainable agricultural practices is imperative. Practices like efficient water use, organic farming, and crop diversification can rehabilitate the land, conserve water, and enhance biodiversity.

Similarly, nature conservation and restoration, is crucial. Past neglect and overexploitation of natural habitats by unsustainable timber extraction have led to a significant loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the country. Forests span merely 5.7pc of Pakistan's total land, with the remaining forested areas facing rapid decline. The pressures of commercial logging and the increased demand for resources such as fuel, fodder, building supplies, resin, and charcoal by the growing population have severely impacted forest ecosystems. A strategic focus on restoring and conserving natural habitats — forests, wetlands, and grasslands — is vital. Another billion-tree tsunami is badly needed.

This is a country which is already beyond water scarcity level, unfortunately ruled by an elite that has had a never-ending affair with subsidised golf courses, which require millions of gallons of water every day. For housing, the strategy should prioritise sustainable urban planning, which includes vertical expansion, efficient land use, sustainable urban transport systems and the integration of green spaces within urban areas. As Pakistan stands at a critical environmental crossroads, the path ahead is clear: a profound shift in policy and mindset is essential. Embracing a comprehensive land use policy that holistically addresses agriculture, conservation, industry, and housing is not just a choice, but an imperative for a sustainable future. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Pack of lies

Zarrar Khuhro

When Hamas and its allies attacked Israel on Oct 7, the assault made headlines. Its aftermath — Israel's genocidal campaign against the entire Palestinian people — continues till today.

However, it quickly dawned on the beleaguered right-wing government of Benjamin Netanyahu that the attack was a godsend because (a) a government at war could ignore its political problems, and (b) it provided an opportunity to implement the Final Solution to the Palestinian issue.

But first, a degree of consent had to be manufactured — you can't eradicate an entire people out of the blue — and the Palestinians had to be depicted as mindless barbarians shedding Jewish blood. So, headlines about 40 beheaded babies — a lie repeated by the US president — dominated international media along with tales of sexual assaults by Hamas fighters.

But, as with almost all Zionist claims, it soon became clear that there was little to no proof backing these accusations. Indeed, had Western media bothered to carry out some due diligence, it would have become apparent that the claims were not supported by evidence. Take the New York Times, which ran a piece claiming to have verified video evidence regarding the alleged rape of an Israeli woman named Gal Abudsh. However, Gal's own parents and sister came out to deny the claim, after which it emerged that NYT's 'video evidence' only verified the woman's identity, and not the alleged rape.

The article also quoted ZAKA, the same Israeli group that spread the false story about beheaded babies. Interestingly, ZAKA's own co-

founder Meshi Zahav was accused of "horrendous acts of sexual abuse of men, women and children", following which he took his own life. The NYT also launched a series of podcasts based on the same article, which was pulled after it became clear that the information it relied on was inaccurate.

However, the claims are repeated to this day, most recently by Hillary Clinton who continues to justify Israel's murderous actions as "self-defence". Social media was another vector for misinformation, with prominent Israelis posting a video in which they claim a Hamas fighter is heard singing out female captives for rape. Once translated, it became clear that the fighter is saying "No, no, she is a female captive, leave her ... go back to your place."

Similar accusations were made by pro-Israeli Moroccan journalist Mahdi Baladi about freed Israeli hostage Maya Regev. Baladi falsely claimed that Regev's medical reports stated she was raped by multiple men, a claim that was not verified by the hospital where she was treated or by her family.

More recently, activist Sandra Irfah claimed on a French TV channel CNEWS that a 13-year-old hostage was raped and needed an abortion while another hostage had 67 different sperm samples in her. Later, she retracted these false claims in a tweet by saying that she was "under the influence of emotion". She didn't bother to specify what she was apologising for and the TV channel has continued to repeat this lie.

But now, evidence has finally emerged of systematic sexual harassment and rape in Palestine, except this evidence will not be discussed on Western media because the perpetra-

tors are Israeli and the victims Palestinian.

UN experts have said that there have been numerous cases where "Palestinian women and girls in detention have also been subjected to multiple forms of sexual assault, such as being stripped naked and searched by male Israeli army officers. At least two female Palestinian detainees were reportedly raped while others were reportedly threatened with rape and sexual violence". Photographs of women in "degrading circumstances" have also been posted online by Israeli soldiers.

Lama Khater, a Palestinian mother of five, who was released by Israel in November, says that in her first interrogation she was threatened with rape and the murder of her family. She and other female prisoners were sexually harassed and not even provided access to sanitary pads.

Palestinian activist Ahd Tamimi, was also subjected to sexualised remarks during her detention but perhaps her high profile status saved her from greater indignities. The Israeli certainly didn't hold back because of her age because that has never been a barrier; in 2021 a Palestinian NGO reported the rape of a 15-year-old boy by Israeli security forces to the US State Department. Israel reacted by declaring the NGO a terrorist organisation and sealing its offices.

The latest UN report confirms what Palestinians have been alleging for years, that Israel uses sexual abuse and humiliation as a tool to subjugate Palestinians; this dates to the Nakba, and former Israeli soldiers are on record, talking about how they raped Palestinian women and girls. Truly, when it comes to Israel, every accusation is a confession. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Interim CM appreciates institutions for conducting free, fair elections in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The caretaker Chief Minister Syed Arshad Hussain Shah on Monday appreciated all institutions for conducting free, fair and peaceful elections in the province. Addressing a press conference regarding the performance of his government, he said that when he assumed charge of the chief minister's office, there was no money in the provincial kitty even for the payment of salaries to the government employees. He said that in a very short period, the interim government managed funds and now there are 100 billion rupees in the empty treasury, adding that the Prime Minister of Pakistan Anwar ul Haq Kakar showed great compassion due to which the provincial

government has left a surplus budget of 62 billion. He said that the caretaker government did not take any loans, but rather managed to get an additional 20 billion rupees from the federal government in the form of the NFC award. Arshad Hussain further mentioned that Rs 20 billion was received under the head of net hydel profit instead of 12 billion rupees. The government gave admissions to as many as 33,000 students across the province, while development projects worth 190 billion rupees were approved by ECNEC. The CM said that the government also managed to get the due rights of the province on

gas under Article 158 of the Constitution. Similarly, industrial zones were established in various districts for industrial development in the province, he said and claimed that an investment of RS 50 billion was expected from these industrial zones besides generating employment opportunities for 70,000 people in the province. The CM said that the establishment of two medical colleges in the province was approved while an agreement was signed with Google to train 20,000 KP youth at its own expense. Similarly, an agreement with the British Council was in the final stages to provide scholarships to 10,000 students.



KARACHI: Corps Commander Karachi, Lieutenant General Babar Ifkhar distributes Trophy and Awards to the best candidates during the 31st passing out Parade ceremony held at Rangers Training Center and School in Karachi.

## CIMPA School at LUMS Fostering a global community for mathematical excellence

**Independent Report** LAHORE: The Department of Mathematics at LUMS has been designated as the Emerging Regional Centre of Excellence (ERCE) for its significant contributions to the promotion of mathematics

26 to March 8, 2024. The Centre International de Mathématiques Pures et Appliquées (CIMPA), established in France in 1978, is dedicated to fostering mathematical research in developing nations. LUMS' initiative aims to equip participants



in the region. This recognition has been conferred by the Commission of Developing Countries of the European Mathematical Sciences, acknowledging LUMS as a leading institution in fostering mathematical education and research in the region. Leveraging its international standing, the Department of Mathematics is hosting the prestigious CIMPA Research School on Algebra and Algebraic Geometry for Applications, scheduled from February

with modern algebraic and geometric methods and their real-world applications. The CIMPA School features renowned mathematicians from all over the world who share their expertise as speakers. The distinguished lineup includes Dr. Thomas Kahle from Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg, Germany; Ms. Sara Saeedi Madani from Amirkabir University of Technology and IPM, Iran; Dr. Carlos Amendola from Technical University of Berlin.

## Economic stability vital for country's development: Rana

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz leader Rana Sana Ullah Khan has said that ensuring political stability in the country is necessary as it will lead towards economic stability. Talking to media outside Punjab Assembly here on Monday, he said that it was unfortunate that country was facing political instability as a result of politics of hatred which had been promoted during last four years. PML-N leader said that progress and

prosperity of country was linked with economic stability. He said that ensuring economic stability was the biggest challenge for PML-N and its leadership and he hoped that Maryam Nawaz after being elected as Punjab Chief Minister would play her role in this regard. To another question Rana Sana Ullah said that election tribunals were the appropriate forum to approach if anyone has grievances related to results of elections.

## ANF recovers 109 kg drugs in 11 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 11 operations across the country managed to recover 109 kg drugs and arrested 12 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that 1 kg Ice was recovered from a passenger going to Qatar at Islamabad Airport. 663 grams and 352

grams Ice were recovered from the possession of two passengers traveling to Qatar on two different flights from Lahore Airport. 592 grams heroin was recovered from the possession of a Doha-bound passenger while 84 kg opium was recovered near M-2 Motorway Lahore. 15 kg heroin was recovered near Swabi Interchange.

## Notorious criminal allegedly killed by his own accomplices

BUREWALA (APP): A notorious outlaw who killed a trader a few days back was allegedly shot dead by his accomplices during an exchange of firing between police and the criminals, in the limits of Model Police Station Burewala.

According to police sources, On February 15, the alleged outlaw named Shehzad alias Kaba Butt had killed a known trader Malik Muhammad Akram on refusal to pay extortion money. The outlaws had escaped towards Sindh province.

A police party arrested him from Sindh. When the police team was taking him to a particular site for recovery of arms, the accomplices of the outlaw attacked the police party. The police team also retaliated.

## ATC acquits 21 TLP activists in terrorism case

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday acquitted 21 activists of the Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) in a case registered under terrorism charges, creating disturbance and damaging state properties.

The court held that the prosecution had failed to prove the charges against the accused.

Judge Muhammad Naveed Iqbal conducted the trial and announced the decision after hearing detailed arguments of the defence counsel and prosecution. The Baghbanpura police had registered the case against the TLP activists in 2021. They were accused of creating disturbances and damaging state properties.

## Anti-Polio Campaign begins in AJK

MIRPUR-AJK (APP): A five-day polio-eradication campaign kicked off in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Monday, aiming to vaccinate over 7.10 lakh children under the age of five with polio drops and vitamin A supplements.

According to the AJK State Health Services Department, the campaign would cover all 10 districts of the liberated territory, with a special focus on the high-risk areas and the hard-to-reach populations. The department has deployed over 5000 workers, including 3859 mobile teams, 432 fixed centers.



KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister, Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar presided over a farwell cabinet meeting held at CM House in Karachi.

## CM Mohsin Naqvi inaugurates new road

**Independent Report** LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi with the provincial cabinet visited Mazar Bibi Pak Daman late Sunday night and inaugurated the new 25-foot wide road linking Mazar Bibi Pak Daman with the Empress Road. The CM inspected the road which links Mazar Bibi Pak Daman directly with the Empress Road and appreciated its high quality construction work. He also inspected the new parking place for the facilitation of pilgrims near the Empress Road.

Mohsin Naqvi stated that the pilgrims would be

provided a lot of facilitation with the new route going towards Mazar Bibi Pak Daman, adding that the traffic congestion issue would also be resolved in this area. He paid a visit to Mazar Bibi Pak Daman and prayed for prosperity, stability, integrity and peace of the country. Provincial ministers Dr Javed Akram, Mansoor Qadir, Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, Bilal Afzal, Adviser Wahab Riaz, Chief Secretary, Chairman P&D, IG Police, Secretaries of Communication & Works, Auqaf, Commissioner, CCPO, deputy commissioner and officials concerned were also present.

## FIA arrests three suspects for illegal money transfers

PESHAWAR (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Commercial Banking Circle during a crackdown on the illegal currency market on Monday arrested three persons for their involvement in hawala/hundi transactions and recovered illegal money from their possession.

On the directives of Director Peshawar Zone Nasir Tanoli, the crackdown was initiated and arrested individuals identified as Najibullah, Muhammad Irfan Banat, and Saleh Hussain. The arrested suspects were taken into custody in the Chowk Yadgar area of Peshawar and Boner. The FIA, during the raids, recovered both local and foreign currencies from them.

## Ban imposes on mobile use in KP schools

PESHAWAR (APP): The Elementary and Secondary Education Department in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has decided to impose a ban on mobile use in public sector schools to save the precious time of students. According to a notification issued here on Monday the students and staff will submit their mobiles to the school's staff.

The school heads will contact the parents by landline phone during any emergency. School staff will only be able to use mobile during recess or free periods.

Permission will be necessary from relevant school heads to make photography or videos.

## Profile of newly elected Sindh CM Syed Murad

KARACHI (APP): Newly elected Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, belongs to a political family of Sindh's Jamshoro district. He was born on November 8, 1962 at Karachi. His father Syed Abdullah Shah was also served as Chief Minister of Sindh province from October 21, 1993 to November 6, 1996, during the Pakistan Peoples Party's government.

Shah, however, unlike many political families, concentrated on his studies and professional life before entering politics in 2002. Murad A Shah completed his matriculation from Saint Patrick's High School Karachi and intermediate from DJ Sindh Government Science College. He did his B.E in civil technology from the NED University of Engineering and

Technology, Karachi in 1986. He moved to the United States for higher studies and gained an M.Sc in civil/structural engineering from Stanford University of California. He did his M.Sc in economic systems from the same university in 1993 before returning to Pakistan. Shah joined the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), as a junior engineer in 1998 and then moved to the Port Qasim Authority as an executive engineer. He was the provincial minister for irrigation and finance in the government of Syed Qaim Ali Shah before he was elevated to the chief minister's office. Shah, who was elected from PS-80 Jamshoro in July 25 general elections, where he was previously elected as chief minister of Sindh.



LAHORE: Opposition leaders in Punjab Assembly are chant slogans as they are holding protest demonstration against alleged rigging in General Election 2024, at Punjab Assembly in Lahore.

## Rain, snowfall spell likely to prevail till Friday in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The provincial meteorological office on Monday predicted that a new spell of rain and snowfall in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was likely to persist from today to Friday next.

The office informed that intermittent and heavy rains with snowfall in upper parts and hilly areas were likely to occur till Friday, next. These weatherly conditions will cause a mercury drop in upper parts and also add to chilly conditions in plain areas. The rainfall and snowfall were likely to occur during evening hours in the upper parts. The weather

remained cloudy since early morning in the provincial metropolis, the Met office said, adding that light rain was expected on Monday and likely to prevail during the current week. On the other hand, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has informed the district administrations regarding arranging preemptive measures to deal with any situation. DG PDMA, Muhammad Qaisar Khan has also asked the general public to remain at a distance from electricity wires, dilapidated structures, signboards.

## Liquor supplier arrested, 312 bottles recovered

RAWALPINDI (APP): District police have arrested a man accused of supplying supplies in the Wah Cantt area, here on Monday. According to a police spokesman the accused identified as Yusuf, was involved in liquor supply. The police team arrested the accused and recovered 312 bottles of liquor. The vehicle used by the accused has also been taken into possession by the police. SP Pothohar Nasir Nawaz lauded the police operation.

## PHC seeks details of cases against Senator Shibli Faraz in three days

PESHAWAR (APP): A two-member bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising Justice S M Attiq Shah and Justice Waqar Ahmed on Monday sought details of cases from NAB, government and anti-corruption department against PTI leader Senator Shibli Faraz. The court ordered the Deputy Attorney General that a detailed report of cases must be submitted within three days and adjourned the hearing till March 5. Earlier, the counsel of the Senator Shibli Faraz, Muhammad Inam

Yousafzai Advocate, requested the court to seek details of the cases against him.

The court said that on the last hearing, it ordered that the matter should be referred to the concerned court.

The petitioner's lawyer responded that they did not know the number of FIRs were registered against Shibli Faraz.

The DAG told the court that there was no case against Shibli Faraz by the federal government and NAB had not issued any notice.



KARACHI: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh President, Haleem Adil Sheikh addresses to media persons during press conference, at KPC.

## KP PSC tentatively selects 85 candidates for BPS 17

**Independent Report** PESHAWAR: As a consequence of competitive written examination, psychological test and viva voce, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Service Commission (PSC) has tentatively selected 85 candidates for appointment as PMS Officer in BPS-17.

The selectees include Ms Aziza, Muhammad Umair, Ms Minahil Gohar, Muhammad Hamza Mutahir, Muhammad Arif, Syed Ali Wajahat Ayub, Riaz Ahmad, Tabish Ali Khan, Junaid Zakir, Ms Yameen Sana, Ms Faryal Shuaib, Farhad Ullah, Mujaib Wasim Durani, Zeeshan Iqbal, Muhammad Usama, Ms Fatima Khaliq, Ms Nida Shams, Muhammad Bilal, Danial Khan, Yasir Israr, Sajid Ali Khan, Taimoor Ul Hassan, Nasir Kamal, Ms Ammara Arif Baloch, Asad Zahoor, Syed Ahmad Jamal Shah, Ms Sara Saeed, Ms Anmol Anwar, Adil Shehzad, Mujahid Khan, Mr Rizwan Ullah, Muhammad Sumair Khan, Izzarullah, Sardar Behram, Ms Adan Zahid, Ms Muniza, Ms Aimen Wali Khan, Hamza Ayaz, Kamran Ali Shah, Muhammad Asad Khan, Muhammad Ikhlas Saleem, Ms Arooba Ifthikhar, Shan E Azam, Noman Waheed, Shujaat Ali Khan, Ms Rabia Afridi, Ms Tooba Sana, Ms Hajra Rehman, Asad Ullah, Ahmad Arsalan Khalil, Ms Uswa Jamila, Junaid Jamsheed, Sadiq Ullah.

## Relatives of two kidnapped wiring Electricians take out a protest rally in protest

**By Adeel Ahmed** SHIKARPUR: The relatives of two kidnapped wiring Electricians and citizens took out a Rally in protest against the kidnapping of their beloveds from Mirani Park to Shikarpur Press Club Shikarpur.

The kidnappers had shared the video of two kidnapped wiring Electricians Abdul Rafiq Samejo and Javed Shaikh on Social Media (Face Book) in which the kidnapped could be seen as tightened with iron chain and locked and the kidnappers are brutally torturing upon them while demanding for paying of ransom money of 03 million from each.

The kidnapped Abdul Rafiq Samejo and Javed Shaikh begging for their safe recovery by paying the ransom money otherwise they would be gunned down.



LARKANA: District and Session Judge Syed Sharafuddin Shah visiting Book stalls after inaugurating 3rd Law Books Festival 2024 at District Court, organized by District Bar Association.

## Symposium on 'Silent Spring' fosters dialogue on urbanization, climate impacts

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Institute of Rural Management (IRM), in collaboration with the National Cleaner Production Center (NCPC) and the Department of Environmental Sciences at Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi, hosted a Symposium titled 'Silent Spring: A Nexus between Urbanization, Climate Change, and Loss of Nature'.

The event convened a diverse audience, including government officials, academics, professionals, students, and community members, all eager to explore the implications of urbanization and climate change on the dwindling splendor of springs, particularly in major cities like Islamabad. Esteemed panelists, such as Dr. Roomi S. Hayat (CEO, IRM & Chairperson IUCN-PNC), Mr. Irshad Ramay

(Coordinator, NCPC), Mr. Fawad Hayat (DGM & Head of Climate Change, NDRMF), Dr. Imran Saqib Khalid (Director Governance and Policy & Program Lead Australia-Pakistan Water Security Initiative, WWF Pakistan), and Dr. Khalid Waleed (Climate Lead, SDPI), engaged in insightful discussions, shedding light on the urgent need for policy development, waste management strategies.



FAISALABAD: A lady health worker is administering Polio drops to a child during 7 days Anti Polio Campaign in the city.

## IT Minister forecasts bright future as Pakistan's IT exports surge

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications, Dr. Umar Saif on Monday said that IT exports have seen a steady increase over the past five months, with a notable 13% surge observed in the last 30 days.

In an interview with a private news channel, he expressed confidence in the trajectory of the IT sector, suggesting that if this momentum continues, the country may soon achieve its target of reaching \$10 billion in IT exports.

Acknowledging the vital role of the IT industry in the national economy, Dr. Saif emphasized the importance of providing ample incentives, facilities

and rewards to support its growth.

Over the past five months, various initiatives have been implemented to boost IT exports and facilitate industry growth, he added.

One crucial aspect highlighted by Dr. Saif was the necessity for quality education and skill development among the youth to compete effectively in the global market. To address this, significant investments have been made in skills training, with new courses introduced in universities, backed by approximately 5 billion rupees in funding.

Dr. Saif revealed that over 75,000 IT students graduate annually from universities across the country. Plans were under way to test and



SIALKOT: Imran Bawani, GM/CEO CMA, CGM Pakistan addressing to exporters at Chamber of commerce.

## German SMEs need to explore Pakistan for JVs, investment: President ICCI

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that Pakistan offers good opportunities to foreign investors and German Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) should explore Pakistan for JVs and investment.

He was talking to a German delegation led by Matthew De Shaw, Country Head Pakistan of the German Association of Small and Medium Size Businesses (BVMW) which visited the ICCI to discuss collaboration between the SMEs of Germany and Pakistan to achieve win-win results for both countries. President, German-Pakistan Chamber of Commerce, Pervez Akhtar also accompanied the delegation.

Addressing the delegation, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that Germany was a very important country for Pakistan and we want to

further strengthen business and investment relations between the two countries. He said that Pakistan and Germany should focus on improving bilateral trade as the current trade volume between them is not up to the desired level.

He said that ICCI would like to work with BVMW to promote direct connectivity between the SMEs of both countries. He said that Pakistan's population was young while the population of Europe and Germany was aging. Germany needs skilled manpower to continue its economic journey.

The ICCI President said that Pakistan can export nurses and other trained manpower to Europe and Germany. He said that Pakistan was producing thousands of IT graduates every year. German IT companies should open their offices in Pakistan and take advantage of this huge human capital.

## Easypaisa partners with Bank Alfalah for International Remittances

ISLAMABAD (APP): Bank Alfalah and easypaisa announced a partnership on Monday to facilitate their customers nationwide in conveniently collecting international remittances into their mobile wallets.

The users will now be able to seamlessly collect international remittances in their mobile wallets and also utilize their funds in a wide range of financial services, including inter-bank fund transfer, savings, mobile top-ups and various other use cases available on the easypaisa App.

This innovative solution will also enable customers, who send remittances through Bank Alfalah's sending partners,

to receive funds directly into their easypaisa accounts, 24/7, said a press release.

Commenting on the partnership, Kashif Ahmed, Acting CEO, Telenor Microfinance Bank & easypaisa said that this partnership would enhance international remittance services, adding that the collaboration was aligned with the commitment to providing millions of Pakistanis with convenient and accessible digital financial solutions.

By enabling customers to collect international remittances in their easypaisa wallets, we aimed to empower them with greater control over their funds.



LAHORE: Vendors selling laptop at roadside setup in the Provincial Capital.

## SNGPL cuts off another 169 meters on gas theft

LAHORE (APP): The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), during its ongoing crackdown against gas pilferers, disconnected another 169 connections besides imposing Rs 2.8 million fine in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad.

According to a spokesman of the SNGPL, in Lahore, the regional team disconnected 17 connections on illegal use of gas while another 06 on use of compressor while in Rawalpindi, the team disconnected 7 connections on illegal use of gas while another 4 on use of compressor and amount of Rs 0.31 million against gas theft cases.

In Multan 17 connections were disconnected, in Peshawar and Karak 74 meters were disabled and an amount of Rs 2.34 million against gas theft cases. The team also lodged 3 FIRs against gas pilfers.

## Rupee gains 16 paisa against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Rupee on Monday gained 16 paisa against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 279.20 against the previous day's closing of Rs 279.36.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279.4 and Rs 282.3, respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 23 paisa to close at Rs 302.31 against the last day's closing of Rs 302.54, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs185, whereas a decrease of 08 paisa was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 353.87 compared to the last closing of Rs 353.95.



ABU DHABI: Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Pakistan's Envoy to UAE and Dr. Abdelouhhab Zaid Prof., General Secretary, Khalifa International Award for Date Palm and Agricultural Innovation, signed the MOU signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Abu Dhabi. The signing ceremony was witnessed by H.E. Sheikh Nahyan Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence of the UAE.

## Govt. takes multiple steps to reduce losses in SOEs: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaz Solangi informed the Senate on Monday that the government had taken multiple steps to reduce losses in State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs).

Winding up the debate on a motion moved by Senator Mushtaq Ahmed regarding the performance of SOEs, which according to a World Bank report is worse in Asia, he said further reforms, including the restructuring of the loss-making institutions would be decided by the newly elected government and the Parliament.

The minister said "There is consensus on the need to end losses in State-Owned Enterprises

(SOEs); however, there are differing opinions. Some believe that privatization is the sole solution, while others argue for professional management to enhance their efficiency."

He said "The final decision on this matter will be made by the elected government and the parliament," adding that more than 200 institutions were currently experiencing losses, including those in the power, communication sectors, and Pakistan Railways.

According to a report from the Ministry of Finance, he said, these institutions had incurred losses amounting to Rs730 billion. However, profitable institutions earned an overall income of Rs570 billion, he added.

He informed the House that the net loss was approximately Rs160 billion, with sectors such as power, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), National Highway Authority (NHA), Railways and Steel Mills contributing to these losses. He highlighted that losses incurred by the NHA alone were close to Rs170 billion.

A policy regarding SOEs was approved in September 2023 to assess their performance, with the Ministry of Finance establishing a Central Monitoring Unit for this purpose. Furthermore, amendments have been made to laws for reforms in various institutions, including NHA, the Minister informed the Senate.

## Rupee & Yuan to join UAE payment system to boost multilateral trade

BEIJING (APP): UAE-based cross-border payment system BUNA, is set to expand to include currencies from Pakistan, China, India, and several African and European countries by 2024-25.

The system is already connected to 108 live banks across 14 countries, with an additional 105-plus banks set to onboard the platform. Currently, six currencies including four from the Arab region, namely UAE dirham, Saudi riyal, Egyptian pound, and Jordanian dinar, as well as the US dollar and European single currency euro, are part of the platform, processing real-time funds transfer cost-effectively.

"The inclusion of rupee in the payment system will improve the efficiency of cross-border currency transactions in Pakistani banks and help deepen Pakistan's international economic, trade and investment cooperation, Ren Haiping,

Deputy Head of Department of Strategic Research, China Center for International Economic Exchanges (CCIEE), told China Economic Net.

"The vital significance of financial infrastructure in curbing systemic financial risks and improving financial market stability is self-evident, thus BUNA could help improve Pakistan's financial market infrastructure and promote local development of cross-border currency business. In addition, this will help attract more foreign companies to make full use of BUNA to deepen cooperation with Pakistan to promote the improvement of Pakistan's economic situation."

Last year, Pakistan used RMB to pay for crude oil from Russia for the first time, which could be described as a profound impact on Pakistan's economic development and the global economic.

## Business plan competition begins at NTUF

FAISALABAD (APP): An All-Pakistan Business Plan Competition (APBPC) commenced at National Textile University Faisalabad (NTUF) here on Monday.

Dr Sajjad Ahmad Baig, Dean Faculty of Faisalabad Business School (FBS), inaugurated the competition, which will continue for two days. He stressed the need for creative business ideas, entrepreneurial spirit and innovation which were imperative to complete with the rest of the world in rapidly evolving technological landscape.

He said that in this era of cutting-edge technology, the ability to translate ideas into action and embrace innovation were paramount for success. The contest would foster crucial skills besides encouraging young minds to think critically, solve problems creatively and contribute to shaping future of business.

He said that the two-day competition would serve as a platform.



ISLAMABAD: People are busy buying traditional handmade items during a festival at a shopping mall in the Federal Capital.

## Telenor Pakistan, EFU Life enhance customer protection with innovative insurance bundles

ISLAMABAD (APP): Telenor Pakistan and EFU Life have entered into a strategic partnership to introduce innovative life and health insurance solutions to the Telenor customer base.

As the first initiative, both entities have designed unique GSM mobile bundles for Telenor users. Telenor subscribers can activate these bundles through My Telenor App, EasyPaisa, and other retail channels, said a news release issued here on Monday.

This collaboration marks a significant milestone in enhancing customer protection and financial inclusion in Pakistan.

The 'Monthly Ultimate Offer' priced at Rs. 1600 per month offers 200 GB data, unlimited on-net and 1200 off-net minutes and impressive insurance cover against natural and accidental cases. This includes coverage up to Rs. 75,000 in case of health benefit and up to Rs. 250,000 in case of loss of life. The insurance coverage is valid for 30 days from the activation of the mobile bundle. The offer requires no additional insurance premium, and claims can be filed directly with EFU Life. The partnership between Telenor Pakistan and EFU Life aims to address the evolving needs

of customers by offering innovative and easily accessible insurance solutions. By integrating insurance coverage directly into Telenor Pakistan's GSM mobile bundles, customers will now have access to enhanced protection, providing them with peace of mind and financial security.

This collaboration is a testament to our commitment to innovation and customer-centricity," said Ahsan Maykan, VP Consumer Marketing and Digital Platform, at Telenor Pakistan. "By partnering with EFU Life, we are bridging an untapped gap and providing our valued customers.

## Pakistan, UAE sign MoU for promotion of date palm cultivation

ABU DHABI (APP): Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding here aimed at boosting agricultural innovation and research related to the development and promotion of various aspects of date palm cultivation and the allied industry.

Ambassador of Pakistan to UAE Faisal Niaz Tirmizi and General Secretary of Khalifa International Award for Date Palm and Agricultural Innovation Dr. Abdelouhhab Zaid Prof. signed the document.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence of the UAE Sheikh Nahyan Mubarak Al Nahyan, according to Pakistan's embassy in UAE.

The MoU will help in promoting cooperation and

sharing of expertise between the two sides. It will also provide an opportunity for Pakistani farmers to increase the cultivation of date palm including through innovative ideas.

Being one of the pioneers, the UAE will provide technological support to Pakistan to increase date palm cultivation as Pakistan's rich topography presents immense potential in this sector. Under this MoU, the first Pakistan International Date Palm Festival 2024 will also be organized.

Pakistan and the UAE enjoy a fraternal relationship and are engaged in a range of mutually beneficial collaborative projects including in the realm of political, economic, agricultural, cultural, energy, and defence cooperation.



HYDERABAD: Children purchasing jujube from vendor at fruits market.

## PSX stays bullish, gains 490 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Monday, gaining 490.11 points, a positive change of 0.78 percent, closing at 63,305.93 points against 62,815.82 points the previous trading day.

A total of 452,868,834 shares valuing Rs 16,491 billion were traded during the day as compared to 377,974,404 shares valuing Rs16.011 billion the last day.

Some 345 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 207 of them recorded gains and 114 sustained losses,

whereas the share prices of 24 remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 54,064,451 shares at Rs 4.44 per share, Kohinoor Spinning with 53,374,000 shares at Rs 4.57 per share, and WorldCall Limited with 22,971,314 shares at Rs 1.31 per share.

Pakistan Tobacco Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 35.00 per share price, closing at Rs 1,080.00, whereas the runner-up was Sazzar Engineering Limited with a Rs 24.61 rise in its per share price to Rs 352.72.



FAISALABAD: A farmer spreading rice crop on the ground for drying purpose.

## WB-funded projects to help overcome emerging challenges: Dr Sajjad

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Acting President Dr Sajjad Arshad said that World Bank (WB) funded projects could help overcome the emerging challenges besides attracting maximum Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). He was addressing an awareness session about "Pilot / Demonstration Resource Efficiency & Cleaner Production Investment in Key Industrial Sectors" organized by the Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC) in FCCI. He said that 21 percent decline in FDI was witnessed which was an alarming situation. "Hence we must avail WB-funded

projects to deal with the issue of technology upgradation in addition to containing the fast increasing environment related threats," he added.

He said that the Small Industrial Estate (SIE) was playing its role in the overall development of Faisalabad but its condition was very pathetic. He urged upon the Regional Director PSIC to focus on these issues and provide a congenial environment to the industries operating in this Industrial Estate.

He appreciated the WB-funded projects launched through the PSIC and said that the concerned sectors must avail from this subsidized loan facility as it would help in attracting FDI.

## LCCI congratulates Maryam Nawaz, lauds her vision on economy

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Monday congratulated Maryam Nawaz for becoming the first-ever woman Chief Minister of Punjab and welcomed her pledge to make Punjab and economic hub.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt said here that it is a historic moment and the

business community pins high hopes on the Punjab Chief Minister and is optimistic that she would live up to the expectations of people of Punjab and would record matchless achievement in its economy.

"Five year agenda including making Punjab an economic hub, establishment of more IT parks, plan to give relief to the masses, cheaper solar panels, collaboration with Rescue 1122 for motorway ambulance service.

## Understanding on prisoners, truce as Gaza talks resume

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan on Sunday said talks have reached a tentative understanding to secure the release of prisoners held by Hamas in exchange for a temporary ceasefire in Gaza. Last week witnessed hectic diplomatic activity as multinational talks were held in Paris and Doha with Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani planning to visit the French capital in a couple of days.

The talks are a "continuation of what was discussed in Paris" and "will be followed by meetings in Cairo," Al-Qahera News, which is linked to Egyptian state intelligence services, reported earlier.

In negotiations, Hamas has demanded a ceasefire and Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, which Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has dismissed as "delusional" as he vows to press further into the territory.

"The representatives of Israel, the United States, Egypt and Qatar met in Paris and came to an understanding among the four of them about what the basic contours of a hostage deal for temporary ceasefire would look like," Mr Sullivan told CNN.

However, the intense diplomacy has little effect on the ground as the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said on Sunday that at least 29,692 people have been killed in the Palestinian territory during Israeli strikes. The toll includes 86 fatalities in the past 24 hours, while 69,879 people have been injured since the conflict began on October 7. Qatar and Egypt serve as intermediaries between Hamas and Israel.

The US media reported that Hamas was briefed on the Paris talks on Sunday and it has not yet agreed to the deal.

Mr Sullivan said "there will have to be indirect discussions by Qatar and Egypt with Hamas because ultimately they will have to agree to release the hostages".

His comments follow an Israeli official's statement to CNN that Tel Aviv will send a delegation to Qatar to continue talks on the release of prisoners and a pause in military operations in Gaza.

Axios, a US media outlet, mentioned that the delegation would have a "limited mandate" and that the talks would be "technical".

Responding to a question about Israeli premier's post-war Gaza plan, Mr Sullivan expressed concerns, saying, "From what I've seen in the reporting, I have some concerns."

On Thursday, Mr Netanyahu presented a document to his cabinet, seeking open-ended control over security and civilian affairs in the Gaza Strip.



Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh convenes a cabinet meeting in Ramallah, West Bank

## Bus crash kills 9 ANC supporters after electoral rally

**Monitoring Desk**  
DURBAN: At least nine supporters of South Africa's ruling ANC were killed in a bus crash as they were travelling home after attending a key electoral rally, police said on Sunday.

Road and traffic authorities said about 70 people were aboard the vehicle when it lost control and rolled over near the eastern town of Paulpietersburg. Eight people were killed in the impact. A ninth died later in hospital, police said. Dozens were injured, several critically, authorities said.

The victims were among the tens of thousands of people that crowded into a football stadium in Durban on Saturday for the launch of the African National Congress's election manifesto.

Many were bussed in from across South Africa by the party, a common political practice in the country.

The accident happened early on Sunday morning when the bus was taking some supporters back to the northeastern province of Mpumalanga, authorities said. "It is a true tragedy that there be such a loss of lives after such a memorable day," the ANC said. It sent its condolences to the families of those killed.

## Ukraine downs nine Russian drones, three missiles, air force says

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW (INP): Russia launched 14 attack drones and a barrage of missiles at Ukraine overnight, with air defence systems destroying nine drones as well as three guided missiles over the Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk regions, Ukraine's air force said on Monday.

Russia also launched two S-300 missiles from anti-aircraft missile systems and one air-to-surface Kh-31P missile, the air force said on the Telegram messaging app. It was not clear what happened to the missiles and drones that were not downed.

## Lukashenko wants to extend his rule to 36 years

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, who has held power since 1994, said on Sunday he intended to seek re-election next year, which could extend his rule to 36 years. He was speaking on the day Belarus, a neighbour and ally of Russia, held parliamentary elections deemed as a sham by the opposition and the West.

"Tell them I will run in the (2025) election," Lukashenko said, according to a social media channel run by his team.

## Indonesia's largest party eyes probe into alleged election irregularities

**JAKARTA (Internews):** The biggest party in Indonesia's parliament is seeking a legislative investigation into alleged violations around this month's presidential election and plans also to file a case with a top court, a senior party official said on Monday.

The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP) backed Ganjar Pranowo for the presidency, who finished a distant third behind Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto, the clear winner of the Feb. 14 election according to unofficial vote tallies and an ongoing preliminary count by the poll body.

"We found there was abuse of power, ranging from legal aspects to the use of state facilities,"



South Korean doctors march to the Presidential Office to protest against the government's medical policy in Seoul, South Korea.

## WTO meeting seeks modest outcomes, with global trade at 'critical juncture'

**Monitoring Desk**  
ABU DHABI: Trade ministers from around the world gathered in Abu Dhabi on Monday for a World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting that aims to set new global commerce rules, but its ambitious chief Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and delegates sought to curb expectations.

The almost 30-year-old global watchdog, whose rules underpin 75 per cent of global commerce, tries to strike deals by consensus, but such efforts are becoming more difficult amid signs that the global economy is fragmenting into separate blocs.

"Let's not pretend that any of this will be easy," Okonjo-Iweala said in her opening speech, describing the atmosphere as "tougher" than the WTO's last 2022 meeting, citing wars, tensions and elections and signs that trade growth will undershoot the organisation's own estimate.

She called on ministers to "roll up their sleeves" and complete negotiations, but seemed to rule out any deal in Abu Dhabi on reforming the body's mothballed appeals court.

"We are not there yet," she said.

Thani Al Zeyoudi, conference chair and UAE's foreign trade minister said in an opening address: "The multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core is at a critical juncture; it is confronting many challenges."

"The WTO remains a powerful force in countering the current unilateralism, protectionism, and discrimination."

## Palestinian Prime Minister Shtayyeh resigns

**RAMALLAH (Internews):** Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh said on Monday he was resigning to allow for the formation of a broad consensus among Palestinians about political arrangements following Israel's war against the Islamist group Hamas in Gaza. The move comes amid growing U.S. pressure on President Mahmoud Abbas to shake up the Palestinian Authority as international efforts have intensified to stop the fighting in Gaza and begin work on a political structure to govern the enclave after the war.

His resignation must still be accepted by Abbas, who may ask him to stay on as caretaker until a permanent replacement is appointed. In a statement to cabinet, Shtayyeh, an academic economist who took office in 2019, said the next stage would need to take account of the emerging reality in Gaza, which has been laid waste by nearly five months of heavy fighting.

## Farmers vow to secure agrarian reforms from Modi govt

**Monitoring Desk**  
SHAMBHU: Farmers in East Punjab state demanding higher prices for their crops from the national government are relying on young students to ensure the agitation's momentum does not fizzle out.

Eighteen-year-old Simranjeet Singh Mathada is one of thousands of college students who have been waking up at 3am for almost two weeks to help cook meals at community kitchens, fill tankers with potable water and load tractor trailers with supplies before heading to the protest site some 200km from the capital, New Delhi.

"The protests are now about safeguarding the country's agrarian economy and farmers of Punjab are determined to bring this reform at all costs," said Mathada.

Protester demands are centred around guaranteed floor prices which will allow Mathada's parents and millions of other farmers to sell their produce at fixed rates.

Even as negotiations between farmer unions and government have been underway, protests have sometimes turned violent. On several occasions, scores of farmers have suffered injuries trying to force their way through concrete blocks and barbed wires installed by police to prevent them from marching on the capital.

Some police officials were also injured in these sporadic clashes.

"Our determination to bring about the change helps face the police every day," said Mathada, who is studying for a degree in Arts.

## Austrian 'extremist' released after months held in Afghanistan

**Monitoring Desk**  
DOHA: An Austrian far-right extremist who visited Afghanistan reportedly to prove it was a safe country was released on Sunday after nine months in detention there.

Herbert Fritz, 84, who according to Austrian media has close links to the far-right extremist scene, arrived in the Qatari capital Doha after being freed by Taliban authorities.

Fritz was arrested in May after defying Austria's long-standing warning against travel to Afghanistan, which in 2021 returned to the rule of the Taliban. "I think it was bad luck but I want to visit again," he told reporters on arrival in Doha, when asked about his ordeal.



A man holds a tire during a protest of European farmers over price pressures, taxes and green regulation, on the day of an EU Agriculture Ministers meeting in Brussels, Belgium.

## Australian pilot, two passengers released from brief kidnap in Papua New Guinea

**SYDNEY (Internews):** An Australian helicopter pilot and two local workers were released unharmed in Papua New Guinea on Monday within hours of being kidnapped at gunpoint in the remote highlands, police said, following negotiations with security forces.

The three had landed at a remote telecoms site near Mount Sisa in the province of Hela when an armed group took them away, David Manning, the police commissioner of Papua New Guinea, said in a statement.

But they were released safe and unharmed after large numbers of security personnel responded and negotiated with the group through local leaders, he added in a subsequent statement, without further describing the leaders.

Security forces were tracking the perpetrators and police would use deadly force if they tried to resist arrest, Manning added.

"Our country has had enough of these domestic terrorists who are undermining the safety and security of our communities, and they have no place walking free," he said. Police had previously been cleared to use lethal force against the kidnappers.

## Chaotic' US Congress faces whirlwind of shutdown, impeachment, border fights

**WASHINGTON (Internews):** The US Congress lurches into a new week of political chaos on Monday, as lawmakers struggle to avoid a partial government shutdown in just five days, while pushing for an election-year trial of President Joe Biden's top border official.

The Republican-controlled House of Representatives is also grasping for a way forward on vital US aid to Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan, and plans to hear closed-door testimony from Biden's son, Hunter Biden, in an impeachment probe that has failed so far to turn up evidence of wrongdoing by the president.

Congress has been characterized by Republican brinkmanship and muddled priorities over the past year, more so since Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump undermined a bipartisan border deal in the Senate and now wants aid to U.S. allies extended as loans.

Almost two months have passed since Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson and Democratic Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer agreed on a \$1.59 trillion discretionary spending level for the fiscal year that began on Oct. 1.

## US airman dead after setting himself on fire outside Israeli embassy in protest over Gaza conflict

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: A US airman has died after setting himself on fire outside the Israeli embassy in Washington on the weekend in protest over the assault in Gaza, the Air Force said on Monday.

The shocking act was an escalation of recent protests across the United States against Israel's actions in Gaza.

Emergency responders on Sunday had rushed to the scene in response to a "call for person on fire outside the Israeli Embassy," the capital city's fire department.

The unnamed man had filmed himself shouting "Free Palestine" as he lit himself on fire, according to footage shared on social media.

He was transported to hospital with "critical life-threatening injuries," the fire department said, and an Air Force spokeswoman said Monday morning he had died on Sunday night.

A spokesperson for the Israeli embassy said no staff were injured.

In the video, the man wearing military fatigues and declaring he will "not be complicit in genocide" before dousing himself in liquid, lighting himself on fire and yelling "Free Palestine!" until he collapses.

The video was reportedly first shared in a livestream on the social platform Twitch.

With the death toll in Gaza nearing 30,000, according to the health ministry in the Palestinian enclave, international pressure has been increasing on the United States to rein in ally Israel and call for a ceasefire.

## Brazil's Bolsonaro calls mass protest amid legal firestorm

**Monitoring Desk**  
SAO PAULO: Brazil's ex-president Jair Bolsonaro takes his legal woes to the street on Sunday, calling for a mass protest from supporters amid accusations he plotted a coup to stay in power.

The 68-year-old former army officer has urged his backers to attend a "peaceful rally in defence of the democratic rule of law" in the economic capital Sao Paulo which organisers hope will draw at least 500,000 people.

Bolsonaro has had his passport seized by police as he and his inner circle face scrutiny over plans to try to remain in power after he lost 2022 elections to President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

The far-right former president Bolsonaro has denied the accusations and he refused to answer questions during a half-hour interrogation on Thursday at federal police headquarters in Brasilia. "No one attempted a coup in Brazil. That is the great truth," Bolsonaro told radio station CBN Recife.

A week after Lula took office on Jan 1, 2023, thousands of Bolsonaro supporters stormed the presidential palace, Congress and Supreme Court, urging the military to intervene to overturn what they called a stolen election.

Bolsonaro, who was in the United States at the time, denies responsibility, and has even suggested the protesters were not really his supporters. However, investigators allege months of anti-democratic maneuvers by Bolsonaro, from a plan to discredit Brazil's electronic voting system with a "disinformation" campaign ahead of the elections to "legitimise a military intervention" if he lost.

## Economy another victim of war in impoverished Sudan

**Monitoring Desk**  
PORT SUUDAN: Before the Sudanese army and paramilitary fighters turned their guns on each other last year, Ahmed used to sell one of Sudan's main exports: gum arabic, a vital ingredient for global industry.

Now he's out of business, and his story encapsulates the broader economic collapse of Sudan during 10 months of war. Since combat between two rival generals began on April 15, Ahmed has been at the fighters' mercy.

"When the war began, I had a stock of gum arabic in a warehouse south of Khartoum that was intended for export," Ahmed said, asking to use only his first name for fear of retaliation.

"To get it out I had to pay huge sums to the Rapid Support Forces," the paramilitaries commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Daglo who are at war with the Sudanese Armed Forces led by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

"I had to pay multiple times in areas under their control, before my cargo got to areas controlled by the government," Ahmed said. But the government — loyal to the army — "then demanded 1 pay taxes" on the product, an emulsifying agent used in everything from soft drinks to chewing gum.

When the trucks finally made it to Port Sudan for export on the Red Sea, "authorities again asked for new taxes, and I had to pay storage fees six times more than before the war", Ahmed said.

His gum arabic — like many other Sudanese products — never made it onto a ship. According to Sudan's port authorities, international trade fell 23 per cent last year.

The finance ministry, which didn't set a national budget for 2023 or 2024 and has foregone quarterly reports, recently raised the exchange rate for imports and exports from 650 Sudanese pounds to 950.

## Farmers protesting in Brussels, Madrid, press ministers to act

**BRUSSELS/MADRID (Internews):** Farmers set fire to piles of tyres in Brussels on Monday in a protest to demand action on cheap supermarket prices and free trade deals, as agricultural ministers from across the EU met to discuss the crisis in the sector.

Riot police fired water cannon at protesters throwing bottles and eggs, while about 900 tractors jammed parts of Brussels, a short distance from the cordoned off area where ministers were meeting.

Farmers have been protesting for weeks across Europe to demand action from policymakers on an array of pressures they say the sector is under - from cheap supermarket prices, to undercut local producers, to strenuous EU environmental rules. Another protest took place on Monday in Madrid, where farmers from across Spain blew whistles, rang cowbells and beat drums, urging the EU to cut red tape and drop some changes to its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It's impossible to stand these rules, they want us to work on the field during the day and deal with paperwork at night - we're sick of the bureaucracy," said Roberto Rodriguez, who grows cereal and beetroot in the central province of Avila.

"The new CAP is ruining our lives," said Juan Pedro Laguna, 46, who grows olives, cereal and vegetables near Madrid. "We want to produce like we've always done, but they don't want us to produce." Agriculture ministers were set to debate a new set of EU proposals to ease the pressure on farmers, including a reduction in farm inspections and the possibility to exempt small farms from some environmental standards. German Agriculture Minister Cem Ozdemir said the EU needed to ensure farmers could earn good money if they opted for biodiversity and green measures and talked of existing EU farm policy.



Indian farmers hold shields at the protest site near Shambhu barrier, a border between East Punjab and Haryana states.

## Ukraine war: Indians 'duped' by agents into fighting for Russia

**CHENNAI (Online):** At least a dozen Indians have been duped by agents into fighting for Russian forces in the country's war with Ukraine with reports saying one of them was killed in a missile strike.

Hemal Ashwinbhai from Gujarat state died in a missile attack last week, The Hindu newspaper reported over the weekend.

Hemal's father had told the BBC on 23 February that he spoke to his son three days ago. He said that he was posted 20-22km (12-13 miles) inside Ukraine's border and called him every few days when he got access to the mobile network.

The distraught families of the remaining men have now appealed to the federal government to get them back home.

The duped men, aged between 22 and 31 and hired as "helpers in the military establishment in Russia," were allegedly sent to the battlefield under the pretext of "training," according to their families.

## Solangi informs Senate HEC not abolished Pakistan Studies from degree programs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaz Solangi informed the Senate on Monday that Higher Education Commission (HEC) had neither decided nor given any suggestion to the universities to eliminate any particular course of study, including the Pakistan Studies from their degree programmes.

Responding to a motion moved by Mushtaq Ahmed regarding the abolition of the subject of Pakistan Affairs by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) from the syllabus at the graduation level, he said, "As per the concerned min-

istry and HEC, no decision or proposal has been issued to abolish the subject of Pakistan Affairs or any other course from the syllabus at the graduation level."

He further elaborated that all undergraduate policies recommended by the HEC encompassed the minimum standards required for such programmes, adding universities were operating autonomously within the framework of their respective laws.

He said a course on Pakistan ideology and the constitution had been introduced for all undergraduate degree programmes.

The minister said this

course was a blend of Pakistan Studies and the constitution.

He said the HEC was also holding consultations with the concerned stakeholders to prepare a two-credit-hour compulsory course for all undergraduate degree programmes.

Senators Walid Iqbal, Prof. Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani, Fawzia Arshad, Sania Nishtar, Syed Waqar Mehdi and Ali Zafar collectively called for the immediate reinstatement of the Pakistan Studies subject. They proposed incorporating the recently introduced subject on the Ideology and Constitution of Pakistan as an additional chapter within the curriculum.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Blind Cricket team called on the President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## President lauds blind cricket team for bringing fame to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The members of the Pakistan Blind Cricket team on Monday called on President Dr. Arif Alvi here wherein he lauded them for bringing laurels to Pakistan besides highlighting globally the capabilities of differently-abled persons.

In the meeting held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the president said that through their participation in tournaments, the team also inspired other blind cricketers.

He said that during the recent years, blind cricket got special attention and recognition in Pakistan. The

active role of the Pakistan Blind Cricket Board in promoting and holding contests is welcoming, he added.

Calling for the encouragement of the blind cricket team, the president also called for acknowledgement of the cricketers' impressive role to highlight the team's efforts and achievements.

The team management briefed the president about the team's performance.

The team members thanked President Alvi and First Lady Samina Alvi for their encouragement.

First Lady Samina Alvi was also present in the meeting.

## Mushaal urges world to take notice of rising incidents of custodial rape by Indian forces

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick urged the international community and human rights organizations to take notice of the rising tendency of custodial rape and using rape as a weapon of war by inhuman and brutal Indian forces.

Mushaal, who is also the wife of unlawfully incarcerated senior Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik, said that the brutal occupation forces

had been using sexual abuse of women in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) as a weapon of war for over last seven decades but the international community and world powers observed criminal silence in this regard.

She said that the notorious Indian law enforcers involved in the heinous crimes, were given a license to carry out all inhuman, immoral and unlawful acts to silence the dissenting voices in the occupied

valley.

Mushaal pointed out that the dirty and ugly face of India was exposed by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which revealed that India had recorded 275 cases of custodial rape between 2017 and 2022, adding that these incidents, documented across various states, involve perpetrators from law enforcement, armed forces and other custodial facilities, reflecting a misuse of power under the guise of state protection.



QUETTA: Heavy machinery busy in removing snow from road during the heavy snowfall of winter season, which more decreases the temperature below in minus degree Celsius, at Lakhpass area of Balochistan.

## US Envoy says: Women empowerment crucial for promoting peace and stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): The US Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Blome, highlighted on Monday the crucial role women play in promoting peace and stability, said that their inclusion is vital not only for economic benefits but also for societal progress.

Speaking at the Breaking Barriers Through Diversity and Inclusivity Conference, Ambassador Blome said that empowering women is not just about gender but also a matter of human rights and economic necessity.

He pointed out that societies investing in empowering women experience better education, health, and economic outcomes. "When women are

given equal opportunities, communities thrive, economies prosper, and nations progress," he added.

Studies have shown that when women are involved in peace processes, resulting agreements are more durable and sustainable. Their unique perspectives and experiences bring a different dimension to conflict resolution, fostering inclusivity and long-lasting solutions, he added.

He expressed delight in seeing representatives from fourteen U.S. minority-serving institutions and the All-Pakistan Women Universities Consortium at the event.

He said diversity is the cornerstone of progress and

innovation, and President Biden has underscored that in America, "Diversity is our strength; the promise of America is that it is big enough for everyone to succeed." "It is through diversity that we gain access to a multitude of perspectives, ideas, and talents, propelling us forward into a brighter and more inclusive future," he added.

The ambassador said, "Today, we celebrate diversity in all its forms, including Regional, Cultural, Linguistic, Ethnic, Age, Religious belief, Gender, and others." He said, "In particular, we focus on the essential role of women in society and the importance of advancing women's inclusion."

## Suspect involved in Libyan boat accident was sentenced to 20 years in prison

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Judge Central-I Gujranwala Mohammad Naem Shaikh, upon completion of the trial in Libyan boat accident case, sentenced accused Shahzad Elahi to 20 years imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 14 lac.

According to the details, accused Shahzad Elahi had received Rs. 23 lac for sending the nephew of the complainant to Italy, however the victim named Ahsan Iqbal died in a Libyan boat accident.

The most heartbreaking incident in which more than 300 Pakistanis died, and more than 100 of them were from Gujranwala alone.

The Federal Investiga-

tion Agency (FIA) in Gujranwala taking action against human traffickers, had arrested 814 people, including 93 of those who were suspects in the tragedy.

The human traffickers first used the border routes of Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey for their illicit trade.

From those countries, they made their victims to get to Turkey and onwards to Greece.

Youths aspiring to migrate to Europe were enticed by traffickers who collected between Rs 2.5 to Rs 3 million per person. The traffickers told the youths that they would take them first to Libya by air from where they would travel to Italy by boat.

## Dr Ismail Mirwani appointed as Additional Director MSD

ISLAMABAD (APP): The senior doctor of health management cadre, Dr. Muhammad Ismail Mirwani has been appointed as the Additional Director Medical Store Department (MSD) Quetta.

According to an official notification issued here on Monday, Dr. Ismail Mirwani has replaced Dr. Shoaib Akram as Additional Director MSD, who was transferred as Director Provincial Health Department.

Dr. Ismail Mirwani has long experience of serving on different posts in the Health Department.

He has also experience working with different international organizations engaged in healthcare sector.



LAHORE: Newly-elected Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz gives congratulatory hug to her father Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif after taking oath at Governor House.

## Senate passes seven private members' bills, refers four to committees

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate on Monday passed seven bills and witnessed the introduction of four private members' bills which were referred to the relevant committees for further consideration.

PTI Senator Seemee Ezedi moved the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2023 and the Easements (Amendment) Bill, 2023 as reported by the Standing Committees. Both bill were passed by the House.

The House passed four other bills including the Injured Persons (Medical Aid) (Amendment) Bill, 2023; the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2023; the Federal Institute of Management Sciences Bill, 2023 and the Pakistan Institute of Engineering and

Technology Bill, 2023. These bills were moved by PTI Senator Prof. Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani; JI Senator Mushtaq Ahmed, Independent Senator Naseeb Ullah Bazai and PTI Senator Fida Muhammad. The bill introduced in the House included the Equal Scales of Salary and Allowances Bill, 2024; the Wapda University Islamabad Bill, 2023; the Universal Health Coverage Bill, 2024 and the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2024. MQMP Senator Khalida Ateeb moved the Equal Scales of Salary and Allowances Bill, 2024 which aimed to ensure uniform and equal scales of salary, allowances and compensation in the autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies, statutory bodies, corporations, companies, authorities and other organizations or entities under the administrative control, directly or indirectly, or having share the capitals, of the Ministries and Divisions of the Federal Government and ancillary matters to end discriminatory.

## PPP regrets President's linking NA session with reserved seats

ISLAMABAD (INP): PPP leader and former federal minister Sherry Rehman has said that President Arif Alvi was again violating the law by not convening the session of the National Assembly despite the requisition summary sent to him earlier.

Talking to media here on Monday, Sherry Rehman said Arif Alvi was the president of Pakistan and not of a political party.

She said PPP was a political and democratic party which always discouraged politics of division and hate.

Sherry said session of National Assembly will be held automatically after 21 days as per the Article

91(2) of the Constitution if President Alvi did not convene the session. The Constitution did not link the National Assembly session with any pending issue, she elaborated.

Sherry remarked Arif Alvi's tenure has already been marred by controversies. "As he was about to leave the presidency, he is safeguarding the interests of PTI and not of his presidential oath," the PPP leader added.

The former minister accused Arif Alvi of always trying to create a constitutional crisis. "He should avoid indulging in any unconstitutional issue before his exit from presidency," she added.

## Professor Rahim posted as Controller Exam UoG

QUETTA: Professor Dr. Rahim Bakhsh Mehar has been posted as the Controller Examinations, University of Gwadar.

According to an official handout issued here on Monday, Professor Dr. Rahim Bakhsh Mehar has assumed the office of Controller Examinations on Monday.

The Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar had made the appointment of Professor Dr. Rahim Bakhsh as the Controller Examinations University of Gwadar.

Dr. Mehar had been serving as Chairperson of the Balochi department in University of Balochistan.

## Jamali satisfied with steps taken by PDMA, administration during rain and snowfall

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Home and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Mir Muhammad Zubair Khan Jamali has expressed satisfaction over the measures taken by the PDMA and district administration during the rain and snowfall in different parts of the Balochistan province.

According to an official handout issued here on Monday, the caretaker Provincial Minister said that the operation is continued to remove snow from the highways and roads in different snow hit areas of the province.

He commended that the district administration has made exemplary measures for help and guidance of the people in the snow and rain hit areas of the

province.

The Minister said that excellent measures taken by PDMA and administration would help build their positive image.

He said that the PDMA's emergency number can be called in case of any emergency.

He exhorted the PDMA staff and administration to continue to perform in the same manner serving the masses.

According to an official handout issued here on Monday, the caretaker Provincial Minister said that the operation is continued to remove snow from the highways and roads in different snow hit areas of the province.

He commended that the district administration has made exemplary measures for help and guidance of the people in the snow and rain hit areas of the

## 1st Pakistani Astronaut wins scholarship for space exploration

ISLAMABAD (APP): Founder, CEO and President of BLINC, "I will undergo rigorous training as a scientist Astronaut, designed to prepare me for future private orbital missions around the Earth and beyond, as they become available, at the advent of commercialization of space, which makes the final frontier Accessible to All," said Namira Salim who will also be trained for Extra Vehicular Activity (EVA or spacewalks) and survival in Lunar and Martian gravity.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Borderless Labs Inc (BLINC) has awarded First Pakistani Astronaut, Namira Salim with a scholarship to train as an orbital scientist Astronaut, to further her path in space exploration. "By partnering with Borderless Labs Inc. (BLINC), Namira Salim will be embarking on an ambitious journey and will train at esteemed US institutions, including the International Institute of Astronautical Sciences (IIAS)," said Mac Malkawi,

ISLAMABAD (APP): The District and Sessions Court of Islamabad has acquitted Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, including Asad Umar, Ali Nawaz Awan and Raja Khuram Nawaz in the long march vandalism case. Judicial Magistrate Shaista Kundi acquitted the former members of PTI, Ali Nawaz Awan and Raja Khuram Nawaz appeared before the court on Monday, whereas Asad Umar did not appear.

## Asad Umar, Ali Nawaz, Raja Khuram acquitted in long march vandalism

ISLAMABAD (APP): The District and Sessions Court of Islamabad has acquitted Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, including Asad Umar, Ali Nawaz Awan and Raja Khuram Nawaz in the long march vandalism case. Judicial Magistrate Shaista Kundi acquitted the former members of PTI, Ali Nawaz Awan and Raja Khuram Nawaz appeared before the court on Monday, whereas Asad Umar did not appear.



QUETTA: Vehicles passing through accumulated water after rain in Provincial capital.

## SHC issues arrest warrants of 4 accused in Murtaza Bhutto murder case

KARACHI (INP): The Sindh High Court (SHC) on Monday issued bailable arrest warrants of four accused in Murtaza Bhutto murder case.

The high court hearing appeals against acquittal of police officers in Murtaza Bhutto murder case.

Four murder accused Ghulam Mustafa, Gulzar Ahmed, Zafar Ahmed and Asghar Memon were absent in the case hearing. The court also rejected the plea of a former police officer Wajid Durrani seeking ex-

emption from the court hearing.

A brother of former police chief of Karachi, late Shahid Hayat, approached the court for pursuing the appeal. The court granted request of Shahid Hayat's brother. The lawyers informed the court that four police officers nominated as accused in the case have expired. Lawyers told the court that Shahid Hayat, Shabbir Ahmed Qaimkhan, Agha Muhammad Jameel and Masood Sharif have died.

## 6 held with drug, stolen vehicle

QUETTA (APP): Police took action against thieves, drug dealers, and absconders arrested 6 alleged accused and recovered stolen vehicles and drugs from their possession from different areas of the Brewery area of Quetta on Monday.

According to police sources, on special directives of Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Quetta Abdul Hai Aamir Baloch, and SSP Operation Quetta Muhammad Javad Tariq, SP Sadar Division Asif Khan, DSP Sadar Circle Abdul Rab Kakar, SHO Brewery Haji Abdul Hai Grani led police team and conducted raid at place and apprehended alleged accused namely Abdul Latif, Muhammad Dawood and Muhammad Aslam after recovering stolen vehicle from their possession.

About 1030 grams of hashish was also recovered from the possession of drug dealer Adil Waris in a second raid in the area by the police.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Local Government Sheikh Mehmoodul Hassan Mandokhail meeting with Caretaker Health Minister Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jozgazi.

## Admin engaged to make polio drive success in Pishin: DC

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pishin Captain @ Juma Dad Khan Mandukhel said that the district administration was seriously engaged in using all its capabilities to make the polio campaign a success and efforts were being made to achieve the goal of administering polio drops in the district.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting to review the arrangements for the successful implementation of the ongoing polio campaign in the district.

Polio representatives including District Health Commissioner Dr. Muhammad Naseem Katkezi, World Health Organization Area Coordinator Dr. Muhammad Naem, Deputy Health Commissioner Dr.

Aurangzeb Zirkoon, District Support Officer Syed Kaleemullah Agha participated in the meeting.

Addressing the participants of the meeting, the DC said that with the help of the polio vaccine, effective measures have been taken to protect all children under the age of five years from getting infected with polio.

The ongoing measures against polio will continue until the complete elimination of this infectious disease from the country, he said.

He said that the role of the health department, polio workers, parents, scholars, political and tribal elders including all schools of thought was very important in order to jointly ensure the eradication of this deadly disease.