

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk Hub

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 42, Shaban 18, 1445 AH Thursday February 29, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15



QUETTA: Newly elected members take oath during Balochistan Assembly session

Appears before IHC in compliance of court orders Making the entire state accused on enforced disappearances matter is not correct: PM Kakar

ISLAMABAD (Online): Care taker Prime Minister (PM) Anwar ul Haq Kakar has appeared in Islamabad High Court (IHC) in missing Baloch students case being summoned by the court.

Justice Mohsin Kiyani remarked we held several hearing in two years. Baloch students were lifted. Some are terrorists some joined TTP. Some people returned to their homes. The state agencies too have to work and they have to be accountable. This case has run then people have reached home due to efforts of institutions. The institutions are not exempted from or above law. If



people go missing then allegations are leveled against state of Pakistan. We had constituted committee comprising heads of intelligence institutions for this purpose.

Care taker PM Anwar ul Haq Kakar said while giving statement before the

appearances is not correct. Who is such stupid and foolish that he will conduct advocacy of enforced disappearances. The people were burnt alive on coastal highway 3 months earlier.

The case of enforced disappearances of Baloch students came up for hearing before Justice Mohsin Kiyani Wednesday.

Attorney General (AG) opened his arguments.

The court inquired if new people are too missing in addition to old list.

AG told 8 among 12 old persons were missing.

IHC directed Emman Mazari counter check it what he said about your list.

57 newly elected MPAs take oath in 1st session of 12th BA

Sardar Akhtar Mengal, Sadiq Sanjrani, Jam Kamal Khan and Mir Sarfraz Bugti, Mir Zafar Zehri didn't turn up for taking oath in maiden session of assembly

Independent Report
QUETTA: As many as 57 newly elected members of provincial assembly took oath of their membership in the first session of 12th assembly here on Wednesday.

The MPA-elect, Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai, appointed as the presiding officer for the first session by the Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar, administered oath to the members of assembly.

Those who took oath of the membership in first session were included: Nawab Sanaulah Zehri, Nawab Muhammad Aslam Raisani, Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch, Mir Asim Kurd, Mir Asadullah Baloch, Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, Ms. Farah Azeem Shah, Maulana Hidayatur Rehman Baloch, Mir

newly formed Balochistan Assembly in and around its premises.

The security was beefed up to avert any untoward incident during the session. The police and other law enforcers were deployed at different locations around the assembly's building.

No unauthorized person was allowed to enter the premises of the assembly's building.

The special passes were issued to the media persons to cover the maiden session of 12th assembly.

Earlier, fataha was offered for the departed souls of those died in different incidents during general elections.

Later, the chair adjourned the session till 03:00 PM today (Thursday) for election of Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

Extra-ordinary arrangements were made on occasion of the first session of

newly formed Balochistan Assembly in and around its premises.

The security was beefed up to avert any untoward incident during the session. The police and other law enforcers were deployed at different locations around the assembly's building.

No unauthorized person was allowed to enter the premises of the assembly's building.

The special passes were issued to the media persons to cover the maiden session of 12th assembly.

Earlier, the arrival of members of assembly was started at around 01:00 PM. The MPA-elect of Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), Ali Madad Jatak was the first among the MPAs to enter the premises of assembly building.

COAS underscores need for nationwide consensus on curbing intolerance

Lauds ASP Shehribano for her selfless devotion to duty and professionalism

RAWALPINDI (Online): Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir has lauded Lady Police Officer Syeda Shehribano Naqvi for diffusing a volatile situation and protecting a woman from a violent mob at Ichra Bazaar Lahore.

He was talking to Assistant Superintendent of Police Syeda Shehribano Naqvi who called on him in Rawalpindi today.

The Army Chief underscored the importance of social harmony and the need for nationwide consensus on curbing intolerance.

dressing concerns and grievances.

Syed Asim Munir underlined Islam's eternal message of kindness and benevolence as the arbitrary actions on the basis of heresy undermine outlook of the society.

Acknowledging the vital role being played by Pakistani women in all walks of life since independence, he said they have distinguished themselves at home and abroad, by virtue of their talent, tenacity and commitment.

The Army Chief said



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif addressing parliamentary party meeting

National Assembly's inaugural session scheduled today

ISLAMABAD (APP): The inaugural session of the National Assembly is set to take place on Thursday at 10 am at the Parliament House.

According to a notification issued by the National Assembly Secretariat, the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs requested the Prime Minister's approval to make arrangements for the inaugural session of the newly elected Lower House. Following legal counsel from the Ministry of Law and Justice, the Prime Minister granted his approval under clause (2) of Article 91 of the Constitution of the country.

Ayaz Sadiq to run for speaker election Shehbaz best choice for premiership in current circumstances: Nawaz

Says upcoming govt will have to provide relief to masses; You did not oppress me but people of Pakistan by imposing individuals 'who don't believe in logic'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif has expressed hope that Pakistan will come out of difficulties in the next two years by taking difficult decisions as his party is all set to form a coalition government in the Centre.

"I believe the next 1.5 or 2 years will be difficult but we have to stay united [during the difficult times] and face our opponents," he said while addressing the parliamentary party meeting on Wednesday.

"Pakistan will come out of the difficulties in the next 1.5 to 2 years," he added.

The three-time former premier said Pakistan is "badly injured" and the difficult decisions were the need of the hour to resolve the country's woes.

He said that the biggest problem in Pakistan is inflation.

He said the upcoming

government will have to provide relief to the masses by bringing down inflation, food prices and utility bills as well as stabilising local currency value against the US dollar. The PML-N supremo also heaped praise on his younger brother and party president Shehbaz Sharif, saying he dealt with immense challenges during his brief stint in power.

Nawaz said that he would not have completed his time in power had he been nominated to lead the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)-led government instead of his younger brother.

"In the current circumstances, Shehbaz Sharif is the best choice," he said while officially declaring him the candidate for the prime minister's slot.

Nawaz said party leader Sardar Ayaz Sadiq will contest the election for the National Assembly speaker.

PTI urges IMF to consider political instability in bailout talks

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has asked the International Monetary Fund to factor in the country's political stability in any further bailout talks, two people familiar with the matter said on Wednesday.

The PTI has sent a letter to the IMF detailing its position, two senior sources in the party said, adding more details would be made public in due course.

The IMF has yet to receive the letter, the lender

said in an email to Reuters.

Last week, the IMF declined to comment on the country's political situation after PTI founder's aides said they would urge the lender to call for an independent audit of Pakistan's disputed Feb 8 elections before engaging in further talks with Islamabad.

Sohail Ahmed of Karachi-based Topline securities said the letter was unlikely to have a major market impact.

"The IMF will do its own due diligence," he said.

Elections of Speaker BA, Deputy to be held today

Independent Report
QUETTA: The elections for slot of Speaker and Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly are scheduled to be held today (Thursday).

This was announced by the Presiding Officer for the first session of Balochistan Assembly, Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai while presiding over the session on Wednesday afternoon.

Zamarak Khan Achakzai announced that the elections for slot of Speaker and Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly would be conducted at 03:00 PM today.

According to him, the nomination papers can be submitted by the candidates with the Secretary Provincial Assembly for Speaker and Deputy Speakership by 12:00 noon today.

The elections of Speaker and Deputy Speaker of assembly would be conducted through secret ballot.



He further emphasized upon the rule of law and advised against taking law in one's hands when legal avenues are available for ad-

women are an invaluable part of Pakistan's society and their respect is enshrined in our religion as well as our social ethos.

Leaves of all staff of Govt departments cancelled: Work continues on providing relief to rain & flood affected people on emergent basis: CS

Shakeel Qadir Khan says government can't think even to leave rain and flood affected people in isolation during critical time

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan has stated that work is continued on an emergent basis to provide relief to the rain and flood affected people in the province besides their rehabilitation.

He said that the government can't think even to leave the rain and flood affected people in isolation during critical time.

He directed to all commissioners to cancel leaves of all staff of provincial government departments in view of the urgency of rain and flood.

The Chief Secretary was chairing a high level meeting on the situation of rain and flood in different areas of the province besides the losses caused, here on Wednesday.

The Chief Secretary was briefed about the situation and arrangements made in the rain and flood

hit areas of the province.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Secretary said that there are chances of rains all over the province in coming days.

He said that he has directed to all commissioners to get ready to tackle any untoward situation during the rains and floods.

In addition to this, the commissioners have also been directed to store the non-food items in their respective areas, he maintained.

He mentioned that ration has been distributed among some 600 families in the rain and flood hit areas of the province.

While on the other hand, the affected families are also being shifted to the safer places, he maintained.

Referring situation in Gwadar, the Chief Secretary said that the constant rains have affected the buildings in the port city.

He held steps should be taken for reconstruction of destroyed homes.

Domki greets MPAs on taking oath

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has extended congratulations to the newly elected members of provincial assembly on taking oath of the membership and expressed best wishes to them.

In a felicitation statement issued here on Wednesday, the caretaker Chief Minister said that another democratic process has been completed after the newly elected members of assembly took oath.

He expressed the hope that newly elected parliamentarians would use their capabilities for the legislation to be based on public interest besides for doing services for public welfare.

Shahbaz Sharif expresses concern over Gawadar situation

LAHORE (Online): Nominated Prime Minister (PM) Shahbaz Sharif has expressed grave concern over situation in Gawadar besides directing PML-N Balochistan workers to extend help immediately to affected persons. He further said our sympathies are with affectees and we stand by them in this critical hour.

He held steps should be taken for reconstruction of destroyed homes.



QUETTA: A delegation led by acting Vice Chancellor University of Balochistan Dr. Zainab Bibi meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Newly elected MPAs vow to work for solution of problems of masses

Independent Report
QUETTA: The newly elected members of provincial assembly have pledged to work for solution of the issues being faced by the province and its people.

While speaking to the media persons at entrance of the provincial assembly before the maiden session, the MPAs-elect including Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, Zamarak Khan Achakzai, Rehmat Baloch, Asadullah Baloch, Abdul Khaliq Achakzai, Maulana Hidayatur Rehman Baloch, Malik Naeem Bazai and others were thankful to the people who elected them.

They said that the people have voted them to

power and therefore, they would do their best to resolve the issues being faced by their people.

They said that the people have lot of expectations from them, so they would try to come up to their expectations to their best.

They said that Balochistan is a backward province and it would be our utmost endeavour to do something for our province.

Zamarak Khan Achakzai said that unemployment and poverty are major issues in the province, and we would make endeavours to resolve these issues.



PESHAWAR: Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) are taking oath during the first session of the Provincial Assembly, at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly in Peshawar

116 members take oath of KP Assembly amid uproar

PESHAWAR (APP): Newly elected 116 members of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Wednesday took oath amid uproar and anti party slogans by members.

The proceeding of the house was chaired by Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Mushtaq Ghani with recitation from the holy Quran.

Before taking the oath, the newly elected members of the provincial assembly chanted slogans against each other and threw shoes and pitchers on opposition benches.

The Speaker took no-

tice of the slogans of PTI workers in the house and directed them to remain silent.

The house offered Fataha for father of Ali Amin Gandapur and other martyrs of security forces.

Special arrangements including multimedia screens were installed inside and outside of the assembly hall for special guests and party members.

The internet service was closed in the assembly premises due to security reasons.

Despite strict security measures, workers of political parties managed to enter the assembly hall.

Six terrorist killed in N Waziristan IBO: ISPR

Independent Report
RAWALPINDI: Security forces conducted an intelligence based operation (IBO) in North Waziristan District, on reported presence of terrorists.

According to ISPR, during the conduct of operation, intense fire exchange took place between troops and the terrorists, as a result of which six terrorists were killed, while one soldier also got injured.

Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities including target killing as well as extortion & abduction of innocent civilians.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding relief activities and rehabilitation of rain and flood affectees of the province

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Democracy damaged

The legal controversies surrounding the elections refuse to abate. Another row has broken out over who has the lawful authority to summon the first sitting of the newly elected National Assembly.

President Arif Alvi has refused to exercise the prerogative till all reserved seats have been assigned, but NA Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has called a session on Thursday anyway to satisfy the constitutional deadline. It is unclear, however, whether the latter has any authority to do so, which may throw the legality and legitimacy of Thursday's proceedings into question and trigger another court battle.

It appears that this fresh controversy could have been avoided had the ECP by now decided whether the Sunni Ittehad Council, which the majority of PTI-backed independents have joined, deserves its quota of reserved seats or not. The ECP was supposed to decide the matter in an open hearing yesterday but adjourned the proceedings again, leaving the matter hanging.

The issue at hand is not a unique case, and several past precedents have been cited that seem to support the SIC's claim to its share of reserved seats for women and minorities. In any case, the power to decide the matter rests with the ECP. Why, then, is it allowing the controversy to linger?

From its complicity in the failure to hold timely elections for the KP and Punjab assemblies to its role in delaying the general elections over a controversy-ridden census, from its failure to ensure a free, fair and inclusive environment for electioneering to its flouting of myriad rules and laws governing the electoral process on election day and thereafter — the charge-sheet against the ECP has not stopped growing. Have the country's laws not been trampled upon enough? Does the foundation of the 16th National Assembly also need to be laid on a violation of constitutional process?

Hawks in charge

Mahir Ali

Last Sunday, Aaron Bushnell, a 25-year-old senior airman in the US Air Force, set up a video stream and, outside the Israeli embassy in Washington, poured an inflammable liquid over himself and self-ignited, yelling "free Palestine".

In a video posted on social media shortly before, he had declared that he would "no longer be complicit in genocide", adding: "I am about to engage in an extreme act of protest but compared to what people have been experiencing in Palestine at the hands of their colonisers, it's not extreme at all. This is what our ruling class has decided will be normal."

His last Facebook post says: "Many of us like to ask ourselves, 'What would I do if I was alive during slavery? Or the Jim Crow South? Or apartheid? What would I do if my country was committing genocide?' The answer is, you're doing it. Right now."

Bushnell died seven hours after US Secret Service agents doused his flames. This tragedy might have been avoided if he had deemed anti-war activism more effective than martyrdom. Mainstream American media outlets seem reluctant to point out the parallel with Norman Morrison who, almost six decades ago, self-immolated outside the Pentagon.

He was immortalised by the late British poet Adrian Mitchell, who noted (in part): "He did it in Washington where everyone could see/ because/ people were being set on fire/ in the dark corners of Vietnam where nobody could see... He simply burned away his clothes/ his passport, his pink-tinted skin/ put on a new skin of flame/ and became/ Vietnamese."

of flame' turned him into a Palestinian in Gaza, where infants who survive the incendiary Israeli onslaught are dying of starvation. To Joe Biden, the unfolding genocide is merely 'over the top'. He faced a potential reckoning yesterday in the Democratic Party primary in Michigan, where influential Democrats — from Arab and Muslim legislators to a variety of trade unions and progressives, including some Jews — have been demanding that the administration distance itself from Israel.

But even in the unlikely event that the 'uncommitted' votes trump the Biden partisans, it is unlikely that the self-proclaimed Zionist in the White House will shift his stance — which routinely involves mildly berating the Netanyahu regime for its indiscriminate slaughter while steadily supplying the weapons of mass slaughter and destruction.

There are obviously some differences with the other proxy war the US is engaged in — the one in Ukraine, against Russia, which had been brewing for years before Vladimir Putin's brutal invasion two years ago — albeit one in which the civilian death toll, deplorable at any level, is considerably lower than what Israel has managed to achieve in just five months.

If anyone assumed that Ukraine would have automatically empathised with the Palestinians, they would have been wrong. The appeal of Israel's ethno-nationalist proclivities and its genocidal tendencies is strong, particularly among neo-Nazis whose pivotal role in Ukraine's military and civilian establishment over the past 30 years tends to be underplayed by those who seek to portray Kyiv as a democratic bulwark against

authoritarianism.

Putin, mind you, isn't just an authoritarian. His murderous tendencies have been evident since long before the West decided he was no longer a viable partner for Nato and its ilk. His regime's brutality in Chechnya could be ignored as a part of the spurious 'war on terror', but the US had its eyes on Georgia and Ukraine as Nato recruits, after expanding the Cold War military alliance to Russia's periphery — in violation of verbal promises that Mikhail Gorbachev naively trusted.

Nonetheless, there was no immediate provocation that pushed Putin into a war of attrition two years ago. His immediate goals — capturing Kyiv, for instance — proved elusive. Every arm of government has been deeply corrupted in the past three decades, and Moscow's military strength fell short of the Kremlin's expectations, thankfully. The robust resistance that Ukrainian forces put up restricted Russian advances. But last year's much ballyhooed counteroffensive was a flop. Despite the CIA being entangled in Ukraine's security structure for 30 years, and particularly profoundly since the troubling events of 2014, Russia lately appears to have gained the upper hand. Halting the spiral would require compromise on both sides, but diplomacy is not a part of the picture at this point.

Waiting for Putin to kick the bucket, or for his regime to fold by other means, is not a viable strategy. But arming Kyiv in the expectation that Russia will eventually halt its 'special military operation' is equally delusional. If Israel and Hamas can negotiate, there's no reason why Moscow and Kyiv cannot — except for the American hawks standing in the way.

Paper cuts deep

Shahzad Sharjeel

Pakistan, Palestine, and South Africa have much in common. The Indian subcontinent's division, which gave birth to Pakistan, was not meant to occur until a year later. Why our 'freedom' was advanced by a year is a subject for another piece. We could be the precedent that paved the way for the creation of Israel in 1948.

All three countries constantly face existential threats. In South Africa's case, it was the sagacity of Madiba, as Nelson Mandela is lovingly referred to by his countrymen, that prevented the country from sliding into chaos. Throughout their existence, it is mainly the US-led Western 'support' that props up Pakistan and Israel to the detriment of the Palestinians in the latter's case.

The biases of Pakistan Studies notwithstanding, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, an icon of the Freedom Movement, had his start in South Africa. Jinnah and Gandhi were lawyers and both wore peculiar spectacles; the similarity comes to a halt there. Nelson Mandela and Gandhi both spent considerable time in colonialists' jails. Pakistan and Israel are the only two countries founded and, dare one say, floundering on ideology.

Among their legacies, important public figures leave behind papers and personal effects. We are not referring to the parchment made of wooden pulp per se or heirlooms valued for material reasons. Today, the Cambridge system generation's first encounter with 'papers' comes with the prefix 'past'. In the 1980s, the Matric brigade blamed every flunked subject, some-

times an entire academic year, on A.U. Khan's 'Guess Papers' for miserably failing to live up to the promise in the title.

My first encounter with a more serious side to papers, which usually constitute unpublished musings and private missives, concerned Muhammad Ali Jinnah's papers. A very bushy-browed and nattily attired Zawwar Zaidi was their editor. Yes, the same person who, as an octogenarian, was thrown out of his official residence as the powers that be had decided to jettison all the gravitas associated with the founder, including, of course, the editor of his papers. Dr Zaidi had given up his lifelong career at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, to edit the Jinnah Papers. Ironically, SOAS retained his office for as long as he lived.

Universities, libraries, think tanks, museums, and private trusts the world over vie with each other to attain and share the contents of famous personalities' papers with the public. Most authors and public figures entrust their papers to these entities way before their careers plateau. Governments allow generous tax breaks in return. Franklin Roosevelt caused a rethink in the Internal Revenue Service as he claimed a tax break running into millions of dollars in return for the rights to his papers to a university. Since then, the amount for tax breaks has been capped. The role of the printed word and papers in the lives of public officeholders is again a topic for another day; in our part of the world, it is unfortunately restricted to cheque books and controlling newspaper.

Primarily driven by poverty and illiteracy, research, writing, and

reading have not caught the nation's fantasy. Publications that are considered commercial successes and boast of running the 20th edition have sold only 10,000 copies, as each print run is only 500 copies. Some publishers now run editions of 300 copies only.

In the age of AI and digitisation, when hardly anyone puts the proverbial pen to paper, researchers and biographers have their work cut out for them. From Benazir Bhutto's BlackBerry to Imran Khan's smartphones, not even the state sleuths could find them, let alone lesser mortals like gumshoe hacks. One must, however, give the devil its due, for we would not have the likes of the Panama Papers if it were not for technological advancement. As one former prime minister can attest, paper cuts can be deep.

Going back to the trio of the subcontinent, Palestine, and South Africa, of late, Makaziwe Mandela, Madiba's daughter, has been trying to auction off his personal effects to construct a memorial park near his burial site. A South African court initially issued an injunction against it, but later, the high court in Pretoria allowed it. If the auction goes ahead, the next best thing would be for a wealthy individual or a foundation to buy and gift the great man's effects to the people of Palestine. South Africa is the only country to have shown the courage to take Israel to the International Court of Justice over genocide in Gaza. The Palestinians can return Madiba's effects to the South Africans as a gesture of gratitude. This will merge Mandela's legacy and the Palestinians' indomitable spirit forever.

Commerce News

Unlocking 5G potential: Huawei's Li Peng highlights commercialization of 5.5G

ISLAMABAD (APP): At the 5G beyond Growth Summit hosted by Huawei at MWC Barcelona 2024, Li Peng, Huawei's Corporate Senior Vice President and President of ICT Sales & Service, discussed the path to business success in 5G and the potential of 5.5G commercialization.

The advent of 5G networks has emerged as a powerful catalyst for innovation in the global mobile industry. "5G is on the right path to business success," said Li. 5G began commercialization in 2019, and over the past five years, it has already gained 1.5 billion 5G users around the world. It took nine years for 4G to make this happen said a news release received here on Wednesday.

Currently, 20% of global mobile subscribers are using 5G. These users generate 30% of all mobile traffic and contribute to 40% of mobile service revenue.

Li explained, "5.5G is entering commercial use in 2024, and as 5.5G, AI, and cloud converge, carriers can unlock the potential of new applications and capabilities."

He went on to say that carriers around the world should focus on high-quality networking, multi-dimensional monetization,

emerging services, and generative AI to grasp these opportunities.

Mobile users have proven willing to purchase experience upgrades for their mobile packages if their networks are high enough quality. The traffic generated by these users is, therefore, expected to significantly increase, allowing carriers to maximize the value of traffic. This has led to more and more carriers proposing strategic goals that include the construction of high-quality 5G networks.

Operators can provide tailored solutions with new differentiated services leveraging 5G and edge to diverse industries and enterprises. Tailoring solutions to meet the specific needs of diverse industries and enterprises will help align costs with revenues. Some carriers in the Middle East, for example, have already deployed Massive MIMO networks, and the optimal experience delivered by these networks has made the 5G FWA rollout a success. Currently, 5G FWA has connected nearly 3 million households, making it a powerful engine of revenue growth for carriers. More than 20% of global 5G carriers have already adopted speed-tiered pricing models.



ISLAMABAD: Meeting with Provincial Government Balochistan, 28-02-24, regarding conduct of Agricultural Census 2024 under the chair of Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, (SI) Member (SS/RM).

Gondal chairs meeting to engage the stakeholders in planning of 7th Agricultural Census

Independent Report
QUETTA: A meeting chaired by Member (Support Services / IT), Mr. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal was held at PBS Provincial Office Quetta to engage the stakeholders in planning of 7th Agricultural Census.

The 7th Agricultural Census will be conducted in the country after 13 years of the 6th Agricultural Census conducted in 2010. 927 SMS Gateway has been activated for 7th Agricultural Census.

Balochistan has 6223 rural Mouzas/Villages. 1321 (22%) Mouzas/

villages in Balochistan will be covered in 7th Agricultural Census.

Total 933 supervisors and enumerators have been provided by the Balochistan government for enumeration and supervision of the field operation. Total 34 Census Support Centres at each district have been established throughout the province. To enumerate the big holdings (NCH), Process Re-engineering plan has been devised. "Three in One" approach to implement the "Integrated Digital Count" strategy for 7th Agricultural

Census of Pakistan in 2024. The field operation will be conducted in September-October 2024. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), considering international best practices under the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) guidelines, has decided to integrate Agricultural, Livestock, and Agricultural Machinery Censuses, to cover three in one as 7th Agricultural Census. Information that will be collected through Agricultural Census will be utilized for evidence-based policy making therefore,

efficient and effective management of human and financial resources are crucial for 7th Agricultural Census. PBS has established 157 Agricultural Census Support Centers for seamless execution and management of field operations throughout the country. Provincial Stakeholders Viz. Board of Revenue, Agriculture (Extension), Livestock, Balochistan Bureau of Statistics, Crop Reporting Services, Education departments will support for Field Operation, Supervision and Monitoring. Budget of Rs. 650 million is estimated for 7th Agricultural Census.

Reservoir filling of SK hydropower project begins

ISLAMABAD (APP): The reservoir filling of the Suki Kinari Hydropower Project started successfully on Wednesday, marking the completion of another significant milestone and laying a solid foundation for the scheduled power generation target of the Project.

According to the press statement issued here on Wednesday, the project has mainly been invested by China Gezhouba Group Overseas Investment Company, belonging to China Energy Engineering Corporation (CEEC).

The important moment of reservoir filling was witnessed by owners of S K Project Company, engineers, personnel, and other construction participants. The Dam of the Project is an asphalt

concrete core-wall rockfill dam with a crest elevation of 2,239.5 meters, a maximum height of 54.5 meters, a crest width of 10 meters, a length of 258 meters, and a total backfill volume of about 1.9 million cubic meters, the statement added.

During construction, S K Project Company efficiently coordinated all construction participants, optimized the design schemes, accelerated the construction period, and achieved the dam capping target on May 2023 as scheduled. After capping, S K Project Company led the relating parties in the commissioning of M&E work, reservoir area slope support and other related work, and finally starts the reservoir filling as scheduled with several months' efforts.

PTCL Group announces Shog TV Box Powered by Android TV at Mobile World Congress

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD / BARCELONA: Pakistan's largest telecommunications and integrated ICT services

CEO, PTCL & Ufone 4G, Hatem Bamtraf, and Karen Teo, VP Android Partnerships APAC, Google during Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2024 in Barcelona, Spain.



provider. PTCL Group, is set to launch in Pakistan a cutting-edge Shog TV Set-top Box powered by Android TV, to transform the TV viewing experience for its customers. It was announced by the President and Group

The Android TV Set-top Box will feature multiple Google apps, including the Play Store, in addition to a sleek User Interface (UI) and captivating graphics to provide a transformative user experience.



Miracle Salt Collective Inc. USA delegation led by President Mr. Ahmed Khan called on President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh & Chairman Capital Office Mr. Karim Aziz Malik at FPCCI Capital Office. Ch Naseer Chairman Building Association is also present on this occasion.

Mobilink Bank's "Change to Sustain" program drives sustainability with Rs.2.5bln

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: Mobilink Bank, a leader in digital financial services, launched its sustainability program, "Change to Sustain," signaling a step forward in its journey towards operational transformation and promoting environmental stewardship within the banking sector. Fueling this initiative is the strategic allocation of PKR 2.5 billion towards renewable energy financing. Embedded with its sustainability strategy, fifteen (15) Mobilink Bank branches are slated to undergo solarization, harnessing solar energy and reducing carbon emissions. Across all 109 nationwide branches, the Bank will also spearhead a large-scale tree plantation drive, contributing to preserving local ecosystems and biodiversity. These initiatives underscore Mobilink Bank's dedication to driving positive environmental impact while reinforcing its position as a responsible leader in the industry. VEON is a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and digital services to nearly 160 million customers in six dynamic markets that are home to 7% of world's population. The "Change to Sustain" initiative is a concerted effort to drive sustainability practices by integrating Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles into the Bank's operations. The initiative strives to promote green business practices, advocate for climate action, raise awareness about sustainability issues, empower women-led climate resilience solutions.

Jamal Shah visits Urdu Science Board, reviews literary activities

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Syed Jamal Shah paid a visit to the Urdu Science Board (USB) here on Wednesday. Director of Urdu Science Board Zia Ullah Khan Toru with other officials welcomed the minister.

During a meeting chaired by Minister Syed Jamal Shah, Director Ziaullah Khan Toru briefed about the board's objectives, performance, literary activities and future plans.

Zia Ullah Khan Toru said under the guidance of the federal minister, secretary and director general National Language Promotion Department took steps to enhance the institution's position and address challenges.

Addressing the gathering, Jamal Shah stressed the importance of promoting children's folk literature in national languages. Commending the Urdu Science Board's achievements, he underscored the necessity of furthering the

publication of quality books. He expressed the need to encourage the younger generation to contribute to literature in their native languages.

Jamal Shah remarked that national academic and literary organizations were pillars and adornments of society. As a part of the visit, the minister explored the library and Urdu Science Kitab Ghar.

Later on, he planted a sapling on the board's lawn, symbolizing a commitment to growth and sustainability.



LAHORE: Director Urdu Science Board Lahore Ziaullah Khan giving a briefing to caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah.

Maryam Nawaz gives task of one month for cleanliness in the province

LAHORE (Online): Newly elected Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Maryam Nawaz has directed district administration and the respective institutions to ensure cleanliness across the province.

She presided over a meeting related to "Suthra Punjab" in CM secretariat Lahore Wednesday.

CM Maryam Nawaz while giving task of cleaning rubbish and waste material in Punjab within month said time

of one month is given and then I will see where it was implemented and where it was not implemented.

Maryam Nawaz while issuing directive to district administration and respective institutions said people should get rid of broken streets, filthy water standing on roads and overflowing gutter.

She travelled from Jati Umra to office like a common citizen. On her directives traffic was not stopped on her way.

LHC dismisses contempt of court plea against RO filed by PTI backed candidate

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has dismissed contempt of court petition filed by PTI backed candidate Suleman Akram Raja against Returning Officer (RO) of NA-128.

Justice Baqar Ali Najafi announced reserved judgment regarding petition of Suleman Akram Raja.

The court while announcing reserved judgment dismissed

Suleman Akram Raja petition declaring it non-maintainable.

It is pertinent to mention here LHC had reserved judgment on contempt of court plea of Suleman Akram Raja on February 21 after hearing arguments.

The petitioner had said that RO had not given notice on the occasion of preparation of form 48 despite assurance.

Multan Sultans arrive in Karachi for PSL 9 matches

KARACHI (APP): Multan Sultans have touched down in Karachi to resume their campaign in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) Season Nine.

The team, Multan Sultans franchise, has arrived in Karachi to play their remaining matches of HBL PSL 9.

Their upcoming clash is scheduled against Karachi Kings on March 3. Multan Sultans made their journey from Lahore to Karachi via a commercial flight.

Durrani says: JUIF to boycott election of KP CM, assembly Speaker, Dy Speaker

PESHAWAR (APP): JUIF leader and former opposition leader in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Akram Durrani on Wednesday said that his party members would not take part in the election of speaker and deputy speaker of the provincial assembly and the chief minister.

Addressing a news conference here after taking an oath of the house, he said the party would sit in the opposition in National and provincial assemblies, adding that JUIF would not be part of any strategy of the PMLN and PPP.

Criticizing the situation during the oath-

taking in the assembly here, he said that for the first time in the province, there was an unprecedented situation. Despite political and ideological differences in the past, there was respect for others which was not seen on the first day of the assembly proceeding.

"Today, the assembly was presenting the picture of a bus stand or a market," he deplored.

He said the house was disrespected as much so that no one could even think of coming to assembly. Durrani predicted more chaos and unrest in the province in the coming day.

Governor condoles with family of martyred Ejaz Khan

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali on Wednesday went to the house of martyred Superintendent Police, Ejaz Khan in Sherpao and expressed condolence to his family members.

Governor offered fateha and prayed to rest the departed soul in eternal abode with peace.

He said that the nation is proud of the sacrifices offered by KP police for the defense and sovereignty of the motherland.

He added that sacrifices offered by police would not go in vain and always be remembered.

Later, he visited the Umerzai, district of Charsadda and met with family members of a renowned religious scholar, late M o u l a n a Subhanullah.

He prayed to rest the departed soul in peace and grant courage to family members to bear the irreparable loss with patience.

UAJK, P&D Department forge MoU for strategic policy research

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): The University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) and the Planning and Development (P&D) Department of the Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (GoAJK) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote evidence-based research and offering crucial insights for policymakers.

The said collaboration was formalized through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) here on Wednesday.

The MoU was signed at the City Campus which

in the presence of dignitaries, including Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi and Additional Chief Secretary (Development) GoAJK, Midhat Shehzad, alongside other distinguished officials from both the government and UAJK.

Representing their respective institutions, Secretary of Planning and Development, Mr. Amir Latif Awan and Director of the Office of Research, Innovation, and Commercialization (ORIC), UAJK, Dr. Rauf Ahmed Janjua formally executed the signing of the MoU.



CHARSADA: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali offering Fateha on the sad demise of martyred SP Ejaz Khan during his visit to Mardan.

Azma highlights Punjab govt's welfare plans

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Azma Bukhari said on Wednesday Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's politics would die down with the performance of Maryam Nawaz's government.

Speaking to the media, she said the new Punjab government was set to announce various development projects for

public convenience. She said CM Maryam Nawaz held meetings shortly after taking the oath of her office, focusing on improved healthcare facilities, the clean Punjab programme, and much more.

The PML-N leader highlighted that village cleanliness project, with a deadline set by the chief minister is currently under way.

PTI to accept election results, avoid levelling baseless allegations

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader, Chaudhry Abid Sher Ali has said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) should accept election results instead of levelling baseless allegations of rigging and raising hue and cry over non-issues.

Interacting with a private news channel on Wednesday, he said that keeping in the prevailing situation of the country, all political parties needed to join hands setting aside political differences for making collective efforts to drag the country out of confronting crises.

Abid Sher Ali said that the PTI and other stakeholders should find the best way for the betterment of the country as they had challenged victories of PML-N candidates based on alleged rigging during the general elections 2024. PTI does not want to prove anything but only to pressurize institutions for the decision according to their wishes, he added.

He added that sacrifices offered by police would not go in vain and always be remembered.

Later, he visited the Umerzai, district of Charsadda and met with family members of a renowned religious scholar, late M o u l a n a Subhanullah.

He prayed to rest the departed soul in peace and grant courage to family members to bear the irreparable loss with patience.

International News

'Urgent' for G7 to seize Russian profits for Ukraine: Yellen

SAO PAULO: US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said Tuesday it was urgent for G7 nations to jointly seize profits from frozen Russian assets and redirect them to Ukraine, as the group prepared to meet on the issue.

Calls have been mounting in the United States and Europe to set up a fund for Ukraine using billions of dollars in bank accounts, investments and other assets frozen by the West over Russia's 2022 invasion.

"It is necessary and urgent for our coalition to find a way to unlock the value of these immobilized assets to support Ukraine's continued resistance and long-term reconstruction,"

Yellen told journalists in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where she will attend a meeting of G20 finance ministers Wednesday and Thursday.

"There is a strong international-law, economic and moral case for moving forward. This would be a decisive response to Russia's unprecedented threat to global stability. It would make clear that Russia cannot win by prolonging the war and would incentivize it to come to the table to negotiate a just peace with Ukraine."

Yellen urged joint action by the Group of Seven—Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain and the United States, plus the European Union—after evaluating the risks, which include triggering fi-

nanial instability.

"The G7 should work together to explore a number of approaches: seizing the assets themselves, using them as collateral to borrow from global markets," she said.

G7 officials say the group is due to meet on the sidelines of the Sao Paulo gathering to discuss support for Ukraine, as its grueling fight against Russia enters its third year.

Ukraine has warned it desperately needs more military and financial assistance, as a fresh \$60 billion US package remains stalled in Congress. That has cast a spotlight on the estimated \$397 billion in Russian assets frozen by the West, ranging from central bank assets to yachts.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky speaks to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman during a visit to Riyadh.

US strikes Houthi unmanned vessels, anti-ship missiles, drone

WASHINGTON (INP): US forces struck three unmanned vessels and two cruise missiles inside Yemen and an attack drone over the Red Sea on Monday that posed threat to ships in the area, the military said.

Yemen's Houthis have been targeting shipping for months and their attacks have persisted despite repeated US and British strikes aimed at degrading their ability to threaten a vital global trade route. In Monday's attack, US Central Command (CENTCOM) destroyed "three unmanned surface vessels, two mobile anti-ship cruise missiles, and a one-way attack unmanned aerial vehicle," it said on social media.

"The (vessels) and

(missile) weapons were prepared to launch towards... the Red Sea," CENTCOM said, adding that the drone was already airborne. Those strikes, made between the hours of 4:45 pm and 11:45 pm Sanaa time (1345 GMT to 2045 GMT), were done "in self-defense", it said.

"CENTCOM determined that they presented an imminent threat to merchant vessels and to the US Navy ships in the region." Over the weekend, US and British forces carried out strikes against 18 Houthi targets across eight locations in Yemen, including weapons storage facilities, attack drones, air defense systems, radars and a helicopter, according to a joint statement.



U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen speaks during a press conference to highlight her key priorities for the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meetings, in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

US won't send troops to 'fight in Ukraine'

WASHINGTON: The White House said on Tuesday that the United States would not send troops to fight in Ukraine.

President Joe Biden "has been clear that the US will not send troops to fight in Ukraine," National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said in a statement. The statement came after the French president suggested that Western troops could be sent to Ukraine.

State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller, asked whether the United States could send troops for other purposes such as training, said the Biden administration opposed any deployment to Ukraine.

"We're not sending boots on the ground in Ukraine. The president's been very clear," Miller told reporters.

Meanwhile, President Biden warned top congressional leaders of the dire cost of failing to help Ukraine, as high-stakes talks at the White House ended without a deal.

Biden called the rare Oval Office meeting to persuade Republican House speaker Mike Johnson to unblock vital aid for Kyiv, and avoid a government shutdown at home. The leaders said they were optimistic they could keep the government's lights on, but on Ukraine they remained deadlocked, with Johnson insisting on the need for more border reforms first.

Hamas holds up US airman as 'immortal' after Gaza protest

JERUSALEM: Hamas on Tuesday said a US airman who died after setting himself on fire outside the Israeli embassy in Washington would "remain immortal" for his shocking anti-war protest.

Footage of the self-immolation was widely shared online, and the group said it was "an expression of the growing state of anger among the American people" over the Israeli aggression in Gaza. The airman "will remain immortal in the memory of our Palestinian people and the free people of the world."

Thousands of artists ask Venice Biennale to exclude Israel

ROME: Almost 9,000 people, including artists, curators and museum directors, have signed an online appeal calling for Israel to be excluded from this year's Venice Biennale art fair and accusing the country of genocide in Gaza.

Israel has been facing mounting international criticism, including in the arts world, over its military offensive in the Palestinian enclave. "Any official representation of Israel on the international cultural stage is an endorsement of its policies and of the genocide in Gaza," said the online statement by the Art Not Genocide Alliance (ANGA) collective.

ANGA said the Venice Biennale had previously banned South Africa over its apartheid policy of white minority rule, and excluded Russia after its 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Italian Culture Minis-

ter Gennaro Sangiuliano said the appeal was an "unacceptable, as well as shameful... diktat of those who believe they are the custodians of truth, and with arrogance and hatred, think they can threaten freedom of thought and creative expression."

He said in a statement that Israel "not only has the right to express its art, but also the duty to bear witness to its people."

The Venice Biennale press office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Signatories of the appeal include Palestine Museum US director Faisal Saleh, activist US photographer Nan Goldin and British visual artist Jesse Darling, who won last year's Turner Prize.

Dubbed the "Olympics of the art world", the Biennale is one of the main events in the international arts calendar.

Macron breaks taboo on Western troops in Ukraine

PARIS/KYIV: French President Emmanuel Macron has smashed a major taboo by floating the possibility of sending Western troops to Ukraine, raising the stakes in a showdown with a nuclear-armed Russia. Hosting a conference of Euro-peak leaders on Monday night, the French leader refused to rule out the dispatch of Western troops to Ukraine as Russia's invasion stretches into its third year and Kyiv's military campaign appears to be faltering. "We will do whatever it takes to ensure that Russia cannot win this war," Macron added. A European military source, who asked not to be named, said that European allies had been studying the plan for several weeks and the United States supported the idea.

The Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate's (CADD) new 280-page manual gives a detailed overview of Russian military strategy and tactics, and tries to predict how the country would conduct itself in future conflicts. The CADD promoted the

manual in a post on X (formerly Twitter) on Monday, asking, "Do you know your enemy?"

The primary focus is on Moscow's ground forces, which would be pitted against the US Army in a hypothetical direct war.

The document, known as ATP 7-100.1 and released last week, is part of a series that the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) has been developing for years. Previous

US Army calls Russia 'the enemy'

MOSCOW (Online): The US Army has branded Moscow the "enemy" while promoting a newly-published manual on the Russian military on social media.

The Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate's (CADD) new 280-page manual gives a detailed overview of Russian military strategy and tactics, and tries to predict how the country would conduct itself in future conflicts. The CADD promoted the

publications provided similar studies of the militaries of other potential near-peer and peer opponents: North Korea, China, and Iran. The materials are not classified and intended for professional US and allied military officers.

With Russia currently involved in the Ukraine conflict, US military researchers stressed that they are still examining data gathered there and would revise their instructions accordingly.

With Russia currently involved in the Ukraine conflict, US military researchers stressed that they are still examining data gathered there and would revise their instructions accordingly.

Pak Army leading front front in efforts: Rescue operation continues in rain affected Gwadar city & Jiwani, says Jan Achakzai

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has stated that the rescue operation is continued in the rain affected Gwadar city, Jiwani and adjoining areas and the Pak Army is leading from the front in the rescue efforts.

In an official statement issued here on Wednesday, the Pak Army, Pak Navy, Levies force, NDMA, PDMA, GDA and local administration are extending cooperation in the rescue and relief activities.

He said that the rain water is being pumped out from the populous areas.

In this regard, there is shortage of machinery and as such the concerned authorities have been asked to provide suction machinery and motor pumps, he added.

Jan Achakzai said that the NDMA has also provided necessary machines to the Pak Army jawans.

In addition to this, the jawans are busy in providing food, ration and medi-

cines in the affected areas. The teams of doctors and engineers have been formed to take part in the relief and rehabilitation activities.

The caretaker Minister also said that rescue operation is being conducted under an effective strategy while remaining in contact of all concerned institutions.

He said that the situation is improving gradually as a result of effective rescue operation.

He was optimistic that the situation would be controlled within two and three days.

He mentioned that two out of six link roads have been restored which otherwise were suspended from Gwadar city.

While around 300 people have been shifted to the safer places, Jan Achakzai maintained.

He said that Gwadar has not been declared as calamity hit as yet. However, the damages are being assessed there, but no loss of life has been reported so far, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf inaugurating Yadgar-e-Dastoor and Bagh-e-Dastoor in front of Parliament House.

Prevent Israel from unleashing ground offensive on Rafah, Pakistan urges UNSC

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has called for preventing Israel's planned offensive on Rafah, saying it will further intensify the suffering of the Gaza Palestinians and risks widening the conflict.

"Israel's planned offensive in Rafah must be stopped," Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistani to the UN, told the UN Security Council on Tuesday, while underscoring the threat of famine.

The Pakistani envoy also warned against the imminent threat of famine in the war-ravaged Gaza Strip, pointing out Israel's ongoing 5-month genocidal military campaign in Gaza has killed 30,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and displaced the entire 2.3 million population of Gaza, with half a million people facing starvation. Compounding the already dire situation, he said Israeli forces not only leveled Gaza's cities, they have also brazenly destroyed agricultural land and Gaza's fishing fleet.

Earlier, three United Nations humanitarian officials warned that there is a high risk of conflict-induced famine in the Gaza Strip if the war does not stop soon. "If nothing is done, we fear widespread famine in Gaza is almost inevitable, and the conflict, which since October has claimed the lives of almost 30,000

people and injured more than 70,000, according to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, with many more victims," said Ramesh Rajasingham, director of the coordination division in the U.N. humanitarian office. Rajasingham said at least 576,000 people in Gaza — 25% of the population — are one step away from famine, and practically the entire population is relying on insufficient humanitarian food assistance to survive. "Unfortunately, as grim as the picture we see today, there is every possibility for further deterioration," he said. "Gaza is seeing the worst level of child malnutrition anywhere in the world," said Carl Skau, the World Food Programme's deputy executive director. "One child in every six under the age of 2 is acutely malnourished."

Maurizio Martina, assistant director-general of the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization, explained how the entire food supply chain has been impacted by the war. Farmers have been forced by Israel to evacuate their land or fled shelling that has destroyed crops; cattle and poultry are dying from hunger or killed in bombings; fishing is prohibited; and ground water is contaminated. In his statement, Ambassador Jadoon, said, "Israel's indiscriminate killing of civilians; its destruction of civilian objects indispensable for human survival.

Programme's deputy executive director. "One child in every six under the age of 2 is acutely malnourished."

Maurizio Martina, assistant director-general of the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization, explained how the entire food supply chain has been impacted by the war. Farmers have been forced by Israel to evacuate their land or fled shelling that has destroyed crops; cattle and poultry are dying from hunger or killed in bombings; fishing is prohibited; and ground water is contaminated. In his statement, Ambassador Jadoon, said, "Israel's indiscriminate killing of civilians; its destruction of civilian objects indispensable for human survival.

He reiterated that adhering to the directives and laws of the Saudi Arabian government was imperative for all visitors and pilgrims, as otherwise they might land into trouble. Ashrafi highlighted efforts by PUC, International

Committee formed for persuading political parties to vote Zardari

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has formed a four-member committee for persuading different political parties to vote for the party's presidential candidate, Asif Ali Zardari.

According to the notification issued here by the Chairman's Secretariat by his Political Secretary Jameel Soomro, the committee is comprised of senior leaders including Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, Raja Parwez Sharaf, Syed Khurshid Shah, and Syed Naveed Qamar.

At the inception of hearing of petition Barrister Jahangir Jadoon counsel for Nawaz Sharif said report of RO has not been provided so far. He cannot give arguments without reading RO report.

Babar Awan counsel for successful candidate Gustasp Khan said RO report has been received by all. Gustasp Khan won the election with the lead of 25000.

Fatwa by PUC, Dar-ul-Ifta Pakistan Political activities prohibited at Makkah, Madina holy sites

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC) and Dar-ul-Ifta Pakistan on Wednesday jointly issued a religious decree (Fatwa) strictly prohibiting political activism, sloganeering, and hoisting of banners or flags, in any form, at the holy sites of Makkah and Madina.

The Fatwa was announced by PUC Chairman and Dar-ul-Ifta Pakistan President Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi along with prominent religious leaders, during a press conference.

Emphasizing the sanctity of holy sites, Ashrafi urged the intending Hajj pilgrims to spend their time there in worshipping and praying to the Almighty instead of indulging in petty political activities.

Expressing concern over attempts by some individuals to display banners and flags at the holy sites, he stressed that such actions were unacceptable and could lead to disturbance of peace in the holy precincts.

He reiterated that adhering to the directives and laws of the Saudi Arabian government was imperative for all visitors and pilgrims, as otherwise they might land into trouble. Ashrafi highlighted efforts by PUC, International

Tazeem-e-Harman-e-Sharifin Council, and Hajj Organizers Association of Pakistan to organize educational sessions for pilgrims across the country. They were also striving to involve representatives from the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah in the training sessions, he added.

He appreciated that all the arrangements made under the Government Hajj Scheme were in accordance with the Saudi instructions, while the private Hajj groups were also following suit. The cooperation of the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, and the Saudi Embassy in Pakistan was also appreciable, he added.

On the other hand, residents of the city continue to face difficulties as not only low-lying but other areas of the city too

were flooded till last reports came in. Rainwater could not be drained out from the areas like Mulaband and Faqir Colony.

Rainstorms have brought routine life to a halt as several homes have been destroyed while boats anchored at the port have also been broken.

Roads and streets have been submerged and according to reports, at least seven were damaged while the downpour left many people out of their shelters and disrupted the power transmission system.

Clips showed the coastal town inundated. Locals called upon the authorities concerned to step up relief efforts. The PDMA authorities too rushed to cope with the situation.

To cope with new challenges Governor calls for preparing comprehensive strategy with guidance & support of experts

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that comprehensive strategy can be prepared with thoughtful guidance and support of the experts to cope with new challenges of present and future era.

The Governor said that the world is changing at a fast pace, and if some sectors are about to become extinct on one hand, then some new sectors are also emerging on the other hand.

He was speaking to Vice Chancellor, Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS), Professor Dr. Khalid Hafeez who called on him here at the Governor House on Wednesday.

The Governor said that we can move forward towards light of knowledge and consciousness coming out from the darkness of ignorance at the mass level by benefiting from educational and research material available on the internet especially the ever new inventions.

He said that the science and technology has become essential part of the human life in the 21st century without which it is nearly impossible to lead successful life.

The Governor said that today the human being has entered the artificial intelligence and robotic science.

He said that the nations which can't meet modern requirements in the ever changing world, they would suffer certain hardships in near future.

Flights operation suspended as heavy rains deluge Gwadar

GWADAR (INP): The flights' operation at Gwadar International Airport was stopped on Wednesday after persistent heavy rains, lashing different parts of Balochistan since Tuesday, flooded the airport as well as other parts of the port city.

According to the spokesman for the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), the water level reached six inches at the apron and other parts of the airport, which necessitated the closure of the flights' operation.

The spokesman further said that all airlines had been informed about the decision.

On the other hand, residents of the city continue to face difficulties as not only low-lying but other areas of the city too



QUETTA: Activists of Pashtunkhwa National Awami Party (PKNAP) are holding protest demonstration against alleged rigging in General Election 2024, outside Balochistan Assembly.

ECP rejects Nawaz plea for re-election in NA-15

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has dismissed PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif's petition seeking nullification of election and re-election in NA-15 Manshehra.

ECP announced decision of election petition filed by Nawaz Sharif in regard to NA-15 Manshehra. Nawaz Sharif was defeated in this constituency.

The ECP has directed Nawaz Sharif to resort to Election Tribunal (ET) besides ordering RO to compile the final result within three days.

Nawaz Sharif had demanded nullification of election in NA-15 and re-polling in the constituency. Jahangir Jadoon counsel for Nawaz Sharif requested in ECP that election was illegal, unconstitutional and against the election rules.

Member Election Commission (EC) Babar

Hassan Bharwana inquired are you wanting to say that election in entire country was illegal, unconstitutional and rigging stricken.

Counsel for Nawaz Sharif said I am talking ONLY about NA-15.

Later the EC reserved judgment on the application.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja heard the election petition filed by Nawaz Sharif in respect of NA-15.

At the inception of hearing of petition Barrister Jahangir Jadoon counsel for Nawaz Sharif said report of RO has not been provided so far. He cannot give arguments without reading RO report.

Babar Awan counsel for successful candidate Gustasp Khan said RO report has been received by all. Gustasp Khan won the election with the lead of 25000.



HUB: Relatives of victim are blocked road as they are holding protest demonstration against his killing and demanding justice for him, at Eastern Bypass in Hub.

Solangi says: Radio Pakistan Academy becomes functional again

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Wednesday that Pakistan Broadcasting Academy (PBA) which was a unique training institution for radio programmes had become functional again.

The financial difficulties rendered the academy non-functional, he said while addressing the inauguration ceremony.

Thanking Director General Radio Pakistan and other concerned officials for relaunching Pakistan Broadcasting Academy, the minister said that it was a pleasure to see this academy functioning again today.

He said he learned several languages including Saraiki, Punjabi and especially English with the help of radio.

Today's youth were lucky as modern facilities like internet were not available in the past, Solangi re-

marked. "Today radio is providing information to its listeners with modern technology," he said, adding it had become a pedagogy, giving the youth access to training and education.

The minister said that Pakistan Broadcasting Academy was in tune with the modern requirements by engaging the youth of remote areas of Pakistan in its training programs via Zoom.

Thanks to modern technology, one could be part of a radio programme from any part of the world, he said.

The participation of youth from all over Pakistan in the first training program of Radio Pakistan Academy was encouraging, he stated. The minister said that Radio Pakistan staff would also be trained through this academy.

Solangi said that the media had adapted to new revolutions, especially the concept of artificial intelligence.

Court summons PTI founder in female judge threatening case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The court of Judicial Magistrate and Civil Judge Mureed Abbas on Wednesday summoned the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in the case of threatening a female judge.

The court accepted the PTI's petition, seeking a production order for the PTI founder to appear before the court.

The court issued directives to the Superintendent of Adiala Jail to produce the PTI founder on the next date of hearing. Subsequently, the case was adjourned till April 3.

HEC, DAAD sign MoU for Afghan refugees under EFFAL initiative

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has partnered with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) through a MoU signed on Wednesday for HEC's scholarship programme "Empower Future Female Afghan Leaders - EFFAL Pakistan track initiative."

The MoU, signed by Aaysha Ikram, Director General (Scholarships) HEC and Muhammad Khaskeia, Head of DAAD Government Scholarship Programmes, MENA Region, has two components.

It includes 150 scholarships for Afghan refugees for two-year Master's studies in HEC-recognised universities in Pakistan and 50 need-based scholarships for socio-economic marginalized areas of Pakistan.

The signing ceremony was graced by Ambassador of Germany in Pakistan, Alfred Grammas, Chairman of HEC, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, a delegation from DAAD, representatives from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and senior HEC officials.

Secretary Health directs DHOs to ensure medical aid to food affected people

QUETTA (APP): Secretary Health Balochistan Abdullah Khan has directed the District Health Officers (DHOs) of Gwadar and Kech to ensure medical aid to the flood-affected people.

The secretary has ordered the DHOs of Gwadar and Kech to send the medical teams, medicines, and equipment to flood-affected areas to provide medical aid to the people in flood-affected areas, Media Coordinator of the Health Department Dr. Wasim Baig said.

Abdullah Khan said that to prevent serious diseases such as diarrhoea and dysentery caused by contaminated water, water purification tablets (Aquatabs) are being immediately dispatched to various flood-affected areas.

He instructed that to convene a meeting of the emergency response committees of the flood-affected districts and informed the relevant authorities immediately about the need for medicines and other medical supplies.

Qureshi moves IHC against his conviction

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Wednesday approached the Islamabad High Court (IHC) against his conviction in the cipher case.

Qureshi, in his petition, claimed that the charge of conspiracy or treason could not be proved against him under section-ix of the Official Secrets Act as the protection of the document was the responsibility of Principal Secretary to the PM.

He said that the top court had already granted him post arrest bail in the said case.

CIA arrest his old friend in Amir Tipu murder case

LAHORE (Online): CIA team has arrested one Ahsan Shah in Amir Balaj Tipu murder case.

Ahsan Shah is said to be the old friend of Amir Balaj. Ahsan Shah was arrested for performing reiki in respect of Amir Balaj.

Ahsan Shah was not present in Pakistan at the time of murder and he had performed reiki of the accused from Saudi Arabia.

Ahsan Shah had told that Amir Balaj has to go to attend a marriage function at that time.

CIA arrest his old friend in Amir Tipu murder case

LAHORE (Online): CIA team has arrested one Ahsan Shah in Amir Balaj Tipu murder case.

Ahsan Shah is said to be the old friend of Amir Balaj. Ahsan Shah was arrested for performing reiki in respect of Amir Balaj.

Ahsan Shah was not present in Pakistan at the time of murder and he had performed reiki of the accused from Saudi Arabia.

Ahsan Shah had told that Amir Balaj has to go to attend a marriage function at that time.



QUETTA: Director General BFA Muhammad Naem Bazai and Representatives of Nutrition International in a group photo with participants of training workshop organized by Balochistan Food Authority and Nutrition International.