



PM dispels doubts about election on Feb 8

PM Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Thursday said there should be no doubt about polls on February 8 as the election process had started with the candidates filing their nomination papers and the political parties busy in building narratives to attract voters. He said it was a constitutional requirement to hold elections which would be held on February 8 after which a new elected government would be formed. (Report on Page 8)



Governor Sindh inaugurates Ethiopian Tourism Desk at Karachi Feast

Muhammad Kamran Khan Tessori, the Governor of Sindh, and H. E. Jemal Beker Abdula, the Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan, opened the Ethiopian Tourism Desk on Friday. This grand occasion, set to culminate on December 24, 2023, was attended by a diverse audience, including Honorary Consul H. E. Ibrahim Tavab members of the diplomatic corps, government officials, the business community, media... (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Group photo

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar in a group photo with President, Directing Staff of National Defence University and graduating Civil Service officers of National Security Course-2024 on Friday.



Photo: PID

No bat symbol for PTI in elections 2024

PPA
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has lost their electoral symbol 'bat' as Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announced the reserved verdict on the party's intra-party elections. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) earlier reserved its verdict on pleas challenging the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) intra-party elections after hearing arguments from all the parties. Announcing the reserved verdict, a five-member bench of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), headed by Chief Election Commissioner, Sikandar Sultan Raja, declared the PTI's intra-party elections null and void. Following the ECP verdict, the newly elected PTI chairman Gohar Ali Khan who replaced Imran Khan earlier, will no longer remain as party's head. Earlier, the PTI founding member Akbar S Babar termed the intra-party polls as drama. In a video statement, he said that the PTI has put the party and the election symbol of 'bat' at stake. Prominent among those who filed the applications against the PTI intra-party polls were Akbar S. Babar, Raja Tahir Nawaz, and Naureen Farooq. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) then summoned Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Gohar Ali Khan, party's chief election commissioner Niazullah Niazi, Umar Ayub, Haleem Adil Sheikh, Yasmin Rashid, Ali Amin Gandapur and RO central secretariat Sardar Masroof in the intra-party polls case.



President, PM hold telephonic conversation; express concerns over inappropriate police treatment against Baloch protestors

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi and Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday held a telephonic conversation wherein they expressed concerns over the inappropriate police treatment with the Baloch protestors. Discussing the situation, both the president and the prime



minister viewed that the police should not have dealt with the protestors strictly, a President House press release said. During the conversation, the prime minister told the president that the detained protestors were being released on personal bonds. Meanwhile, Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar also called on Pres-

ident Alvi and discussed the overall situation in the province as well as police maltreatment against the Baloch protestors. The governor viewed that the police should show restraint towards the protestors. In the meeting, the two sides believed that the police should not have acted beyond their limits and powers. Both leaders emphasized

Solangi reiterates commitment to hold free, fair general elections in February next year



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Friday reiterated the commitment of the government with regard to the holding of free, fair and transparent general elections on February 8 next year. Ruling out any possibility of delay, he said the general elections would be held under the schedule, already given by the Election Commission of Paki-

stan. Talking to media persons, he said that Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja did enjoy the confidence of majority people and there was no question of his resignation. To a question, Solangi said he could not comment on internal issues of political parties as the caretaker government wanted to maintain cordial relations with all political forces. On a question about termination of service of some employees, he said that media channels initially gave feasibility reports to PEMRA which was also required at the time of issuance of licence. He said that under PEMRA Amendment Act 2023, the journalist job was protected. Murtaza Solangi assured that the government would take legal measures to protect the employment of journalists.

Tariq Mehmood appointed PIO

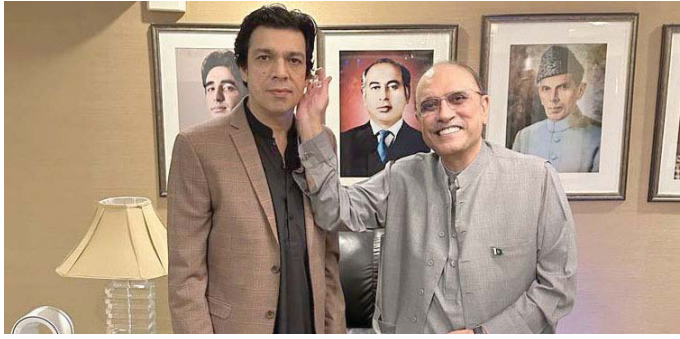
Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Tariq Mehmood, a BS-21 officer of the Information Group, has been posted as Executive Director General/ Principal Information Officer in Press Information Department, a notification issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on Friday said. Tariq Mehmood was presently working as Executive Director General of Information Service Academy. According to another notification, Mubashir Hassan, a BS-20 officer of the Information Group, presently posted as EDG/PIO PID, was directed to report to the Information Ministry.

Asif Zardari, Faisal Vawda discuss 'country's political situation'

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari and former federal minister Faisal Vawda on Friday discussed the country's political situation ahead of general elections. According to details, the former PTI leader called on former president and discussed matters pertaining to the upcoming elections. Asif Zardari and Faisal Vawda also exchange views on Sindh's political landscape. The meeting came as political parties gear up for upcoming general elections, scheduled for February 8, 2024, with candidates submitting nomination papers. Earlier in the day, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) extended its deadline for filing nomination papers for the general elections by two days but asserted that the extension would not affect the



poll date. Last week, the commission issued the election schedule, putting an end to uncertainty surrounding the exercise. As per the original schedule, the process to file nomination papers for national and provincial assemblies seats commenced on Dec 20. The deadline for the filing of papers was set to expire at 4:30pm today. However, in a press release this morning, the electoral watch-

dog announced that nomination papers can now be filed till Dec 24 (Sunday). It said the decision was taken in response to requests from political parties and to facilitate the candidacy process. Returning officers will examine the nomination papers from Dec 25 to Dec 30, as specified in the schedule. The statement underscored that "all activities as listed in the election schedule released on Dec 15 will be held as planned".

PTI founder, Shah Mahmood Qureshi granted bails in cypher case



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Friday granted bails to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and his close aide Shah Mahmood Qureshi in the cypher case. The PTI top leaders' plea seeking bail was being heard by a three-member bench comprising acting chief justice Sardar Tariq Masood, Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah. The bails have been granted against a surety bond of Rs100,000.

Afghan nationals involved in terror activities in Pakistan: report

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The Counter Terrorism Report (CTR) report revealed the involvement of Afghan nationals in terror activities across Pakistan. According to CTR report, 92 arrested terrorists for their alleged involvement in terror incidents in two years were Afghan nationals whereas terrorists of Afghan origin carried out 50 terror attacks in 2023 across Pakistan. The report stated that Afghan terrorists were also involved in 19 terror attacks in 2022 and 14 extortion incidents were assisted by Afghan Nationals whereas 10 of them have been arrested. Earlier, the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of Sindh police foiled a terror bid by arresting two hardcore 'Afghan-trained' militants from Karachi. According to In-charge CTD Khurram Waris, the arrested terrorists were planning to attack the Karachi-Rohri train. The members of a banned outfit identified as Ashraf aka Achoo and Zeeshan Hameed were also planning to abduct a fruit dealer from interior Sindh and shift him to KP, the CTD

in charge said. Explosives were also confiscated from the arrested terrorists who got 'training from Afghanistan' about bomb-making. Further investigation from the terrorists was underway. Following the deadly attack that took place in Dera Ismail Khan and claimed by a terrorist group affiliated with the TTP, Pakistan delivered a strong demarche to the Afghan Interim Government calling for the investigation and strict action against the perpetrators. In this connection, the foreign secretary called in the Chargé d'Affaires (Cd'A) of the Afghan Interim Government (AIG) to deliver Pakistan's strong demarche in the context of Tuesday's deadly terrorist attack on Pakistan's security forces post in Daraban, Dera Ismail Khan. The attack, whose responsibility has been claimed by Tehreek-e-Jihad Pakistan, a terrorist group affiliated with the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), resulted in multiple casualties, including the martyrdom of 23 security personnel, a Foreign Office statement said.

Special prosecution team formed in two NAB references against PTI founder

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Following the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) references against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)

founder Imran Khan, a special prosecution team has been formed for Toshakhana and National Crime Agency (NCA) 190 million scandal. According to sources, the

five-member prosecution team will be headed by Sardar Mazhar Abbas whereas the other members include NAB prosecutor Irfan Ahmed, Sohail Arif, Barrister Owais Arshad and

Amjad Pervaiz. Sources said that the special prosecution team has initiated the proceedings on NAB reference in both cases. Earlier, the National Account-

ability Bureau (NAB) filed a reference with the Accountability Court against PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi pertaining to Toshakhana case.

Global peace can be rekindled by uniting people across all faiths: Mushaal

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, has emphasized that true global peace can be achieved through the unity of people from diverse faiths. Speaking at a Christmas cake-cutting ceremony arranged by the Nazriya Pakistan Council, she underscored the importance of fostering harmony and understanding among individuals of different religious backgrounds.

Ms. Sabien Hussein Mullick (Focal Person to SAPM), Mian Javed (Chairman Nazriya Pakistan Council), Manzoor Maseh (Executive Member Nazriya Pakistan Council), Faisal Zahid Malik, Salahuddin (Former High Commissioner of Pakistan to United Kingdom), Ms. Nargis and

Mr. Khalid Suleri were among the attendees.

Mushaal highlighted the universal values of love, sacrifice and peace embedded in every religion. She said that during her meeting with Vatican pope she had emphasized fostering Multi-Faith Harmony as a key driver for enduring global peace.

Mushaal asserted that the resolution of global conflicts, including those in Kashmir and Palestine, lies in the propagation of the messages of love, peace, and harmony embedded in all religions. She stressed the need to stand in solidarity with people who were oppressed.

Mushaal underscored the unanimous condemnation from all segments of Pakistani society regarding the Jaranwala incident. She commended the measures taken by the Government in response to the situation. She



also praised the peace rallies organized by civil society, noting the substantial participation of ordinary citizens in these gatherings.

Mushaal voiced deep concern over the persecution of minorities in India carried out on daily basis. She attrib-

uted it to the influence of Hindutva-inspired policies within the Indian government. She also brought attention to the atrocities and human rights violations perpetrated by India in the illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Mushaal recognized the invaluable sacrifices made by the Christian community in the struggle for the creation of Pakistan. She also highlighted their dedication to supporting the Kashmir cause. Emphasizing the significance of December 25th, she noted that it marks a double celebration for Pakistan, the birthday of the nation's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and the joyous festivities of Christmas.

Mushaal took part in the Christmas festivities by cutting the ceremonial cake and extended Christmas wishes to everyone.

Everyone should be allowed to contest elections: Former PM Gilani



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister and Senator Syed Yousaf Raza Geelani has said that our position is that everyone should be allowed to contest the elections, the rest of the matters are in the court. He expressed these thoughts while talking to the media after submitting the nomination papers. On this occasion, former provincial minister Syed Ali Haider Gilani, Khwaja Rizwan Alam, Athangal, Nasheed Arif Gondal Rao Sajid Ali, Chaudhry Yasin, Nacem Khan, Khwaja. Noor Mustafa Advocate-AD Baluj, Syed Mootal Bukhari-Riyadh and other leaders were also present. Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani further said that I have the full support of the people of NA 148. And the people of the entire constituency have welcomed my return to my constituency, which makes me very happy.

He Said All Political Parties Should Get a Level Playing Field in the General Election

The permission to fight should be given, the rest of the matters are in the court. Earlier, when Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani entered the Commissioner's office, he was greeted with a warm welcome.

Nishtar Burn Center illegally promotes grade 5 plumber to grade 11



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The executive director of the burn center promoted the plumber who repairs faucets and pipes as a junior clerk in connivance with the additional MS.

Multan: A grade 5 plumber was illegally promoted to grade 11 in the burn unit managed by Nishtar Medical University.

Grade 5 plumber Muhammad Zaman Latif was illegally promoted to junior clerk with the connivance of Burn Unit Executive Director Dr. Naveed Akhtar and illegally appointed Grade 18 Additional MS Ahmed Ali Malik.

While the minimum typing speed for junior clerk set is 40 words per minute.

Junior Clerk Proficiency in shorthand as well as typing speed is an important part of a junior clerk's set.

Rana Abdul Rauf at Nishtar Burn Centre. Ali Hassan, Muhammad Yasir Officials named Muhammad Irfan and Mehran Umar while talking to the media said that we will go to the High Court for justice against this injustice and the caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab, Provincial Health Minister, Chief Secretary Punjab, Secretary Health Punjab and Medical Education, Vice Chancellor Nishtar Medical University, The Executive Pak Italian Director Burn Center will be made a party

Illumination

KARACHI: A stunning view of the Trinity Church illuminated with colourful lights during the celebrations of Christmas in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Lodhran Pilot Project's Elite Women's League concludes in Multan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The final match of the Elite Women's League under the Powered by Women Project under the auspices of Lodhran Pilot Project and with the support of Bestseller Foundation was held at Ground up Academy Open Trials Government Model School Gulgasht Multan in Multan. In this match played between Lodhran Strikers and Multan Avengers, Strikers won by 17 runs.

In the prize distribution ceremony, Mr. Ali Khan Tareen, Miss Asmavia Iqbal, Mr. Kamran Hussain, Dr. Abdul Saboor, Prof. Kalsoom Pracha, Dr. Maimona and others distributed trophies and awards. Samina Iqbal of Strikers scored 290 runs and received Scotty for the best batsman of the league. Fatema Muneer of Strikers team was declared the player of the match.



In which they were given a cash prize of 15,000 along with a trophy, while the runner-up team Ajvengers was given a cash prize of 50,000 along with a trophy and the winning team got the champion trophy and a prize of 100,000.

Mr. Ali Khan Tareen, President Lodhran Pilot Project, while expressing his views, said that the purpose of Elite Women's League goes beyond winning and losing to provide healthy entertainment to girls and ensure peace and stability in the society within them.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Abdul Saboor, Chief Executive Officer, Lodhran Pilot Project said

That both teams performed very well. It was not only cricket but the main objective of this project is to provide more and more safe spaces for our women, which cricket is a great tool which not only provided a big plate to women so that they can be called women players.

Miss Asmavia Iqbal, Selector Women, PCB while

speaking said that South Punjab Lodhran Pilot Project has done valuable work for the promotion and development of women cricket.

Speaking during the Elite Women's League, Professor Dr. Kalsoom Paracha said that the event of the final match of the Elite Women's League is a great example of the power of creating a safe environment in sports for women. We should strongly support such activities so that every woman feels empowered and safe in her pursuit of greatness.

Mr. Kamran Hussain-Head Coach Women, Multan Region while speaking said that Powered by Women project is a unique first of its kind project whose main objective is to empower women in South Punjab by not only providing them with an effective platform. In the Elite Women's League, women practically feel that they have a safe playing field.

Aftab Ahmed submits nomination papers in Attock district for assembly election

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: As in other parts of the country, the process of obtaining and receiving election nomination paper is going on in Attock district which will be held till December 24, NA 49 Attock I and NA 50 Attock II, PP I Attock, PP II, Papers are being collected in the offices of District Returning Officers and Assistant Returning Officers in PP III, PP IV and Provincial Constituency PP V. Today, Sheikh Aftab Ahmed of NA 49 Attock I submitted the papers as PML-N. Former member of the National Assembly and Federal Minister Sheikh Aftab Ahmed while talking to the media outside the ARO office said that power has never belonged to anyone. There is a stain on the foot of the party. I am bound by every order of the top leadership.

Senior management course chief briefs on progress of Faisalabad division after Jaranwala tragedy



Abdul Majeed

FAISALABAD: Officers participating in the 34th senior management course under training at the National Institute of Management, Lahore, met Commissioner Silvat Saeed at the Commissioner's office. Briefing the local government, land revenue, agriculture department about the crops and the record cotton cultivation of the Ordinance. While giving a briefing about the implementation of the price control mechanism, he said that in the last two months, 12 thousand 115 wholesalers have been fined one and a half million rupees., 36 cases, 38 shops were sealed. The situation of price control in the division is quite good. The commissioner gave details about the steps taken by the divisional district and police administration after the Jaranwala tragedy and 100% rehabilitation of the victims. He said that At present, work on 467 schemes of public welfare is going on in the division and 67% of the work has been completed. He informed about the future plans and said that the work on the repair and rehabilitation of Faisalabad Bypass Road is going on fast. Allied Hospital.

PPP announces march to commemorate Benazir Bhutto's death anniversary

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: The Pakistan People's Party Azad Kashmir has made preparations to celebrate the sixteenth death anniversary of the first female former Prime Minister of Pakistan and party leader Ms. Benazir Bhutto on December 27th with great devotion and respect in the entire Azad Kashmir like the four provinces. Committees were formed for arrangements and a torch

bearer rally was announced, while party president Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin, speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar, former senior advisor Chaudhry Riaz, secretary general Faisal Rathore led by party president Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin from across Azad Kashmir at the shrines of martyrs.

In order to participate in the grand gathering in large numbers, convoys will leave on December 25 and 26. Yesterday, a meeting

of all the organizations of Muzaffarabad Division was held under the chairmanship of Divisional President Jahangir Khan Mughal at the People's Secretariat Chhatar. Assembly candidate Vice President Candidate Sardar Mubarak Haider, Central Deputy Information Secretary Assembly Constituency Seven Shaukat Javed Mir Central Vice President of Women's Department Ms. Shagufta Noreen Kazmi, Councilor Khurram Naqvi Raja Azhar Khan, Sardar Danish

and other officials participated in the meeting. It was decided that on December 27th, after the Fajr prayer, martyred Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the leader of the people party the daughter of the East, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, the martyred mother of democracy, Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, Mir Murtaza Bhutto, martyred, Mir Shahnawaz Bhutto, martyred, including the martyrs of democracy, martyrs of Kashmir, martyrs of Pakistan forces, martyrs of



terrorism.

Hands were raised for special prayers for the success and work of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, chairman of the Unity and Unity of the Muslim Ummah, for the security of Pakistan, Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, and the independence of Palestine.

According to the instructions of the party leadership to conduct the campaign of the party's nominated candidates in the general elections, the strategy was taken into special consideration and the Bhutto reference filed twelve years ago by former President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari in the

Supreme Court of Pakistan. Tribute to Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Qazi Faiz Isa for bringing judicial reforms and calling PSF convention as the most important timely political decision at Press Club Rawalpindi on December 25th by party central leader Chaudhry Riaz.

Governor Sindh inaugurates Ethiopian Tourism Desk at Karachi Feast

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: H. E. Muhammad Kamran Khan Tessori, the Governor of Sindh, and H. E. Jemal Beker Abdula, the Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan, opened the Ethiopian Tourism Desk on Friday.

This grand occasion, set to culminate on December 24, 2023, was attended by a diverse audience, including Honorary Consul H. E. Ibrahim Tawab members of the diplomatic corps, government officials, the business community, media, and representatives from civil society.

The pavilion, giving a captivating display of Ethiopia's multifaceted culture, rich heritage, and unparalleled tourism offerings, was a testament to the enduring bond between Ethiopia and Pakistan.

Governor Tessori, addressing the media, emphasized the longstanding relations between the two nations,



rooted in shared history, values, culture, and religion.

He commended Ambassador Abdula for his tireless efforts in fortifying the bilateral relations, noting the impactful presence of the Ethiopian Embassy

in Pakistan despite being established just a year ago.

Moreover, the Governor expressed gratitude to the Government of Ethiopia for launching Ethiopian Airlines in Karachi which played a critical role

in connecting Pakistan with the whole African continent.

The Governor expressed commitment to elevating the relations between the two countries to new heights.

Ambassador Abdula, in his address, highlighted how the Ethiopian Embassy had effectively brought Africa closer to Pakistan through the commencement of Ethiopian Airlines operations in Karachi.

Describing Ethiopia as a land of breathtaking beauty, abundant natural resources, picturesque landscapes, lakes, mountains, and over 16 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, he urged the people of Karachi to savor Ethiopian taste through Ethiopian coffee by visiting the tourism desk.

The Ambassador underscored that this experience would serve as a bridge connecting them with their ancestral roots, emphasizing Ethiopia as the land of King Nejjashi and Bilal Habeshi.

ICMA, PITB sign MOU for professional training of IT professionals



PPA

ISLAMABAD: The MOU signing ceremony between the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants ICMA & Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) was held on Thursday, 21st December 2023 at the PITB Office.

ICMA is a professional accounting body that regulates the profession of accountancy and excels in delivering high-standard education, professional training, and research & development activities that are aimed at improving business efficiency.

ICMA through its Corporate Training, Job Placement, R&D facility, and Advisory Boards will support PITB in getting the professional skills needed to understand the modern ways of doing business. ICMA has all the resources to provide Corporate Training and Professional Certifications to PITB.

Under this MOU both organizations will leverage their strengths through the dissemination of corporate training, and collaborative research initiatives, and facilitate seamless HR processes, including job placement services. The collaboration is poised to bring about positive changes in the corporate landscape, empowering professionals with cutting-edge skills and fostering an environment of continuous learning and growth.

Addressed

ISLAMABAD: Dean of Honorary Consul's Corps KP and Honorary Consul of the Republic of Tunisia, KPK Ammad Rasheed Senior Vice Chairman, PAEI addressing the 3rd Pakistan International Property Expo closing ceremony at presidency Islamabad. President of Pakistan was graced the event as a Chief Guest.



PRCS organizes National Road Safety Conference to address growing traffic challenges in Pakistan

PNP

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), in collaboration with the International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and with the support of the Italian Red Cross, successfully organized the National Road Safety Conference 2023 at the PRCS National Headquarters in Islamabad.

The event brought together distinguished guests, including PRCS leadership and management, Chairmen and Secretaries of PRCS Provincial branches, Head of Delegations from IFRC, ICRC, and National Societies, officers from Islamabad Traffic Police, National Highway & Motorway Police, PRCS staff, volunteers, and



students from various private and government educational institutions in Islamabad.

Chairman PRCS, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, addressed the assembly, recognizing that despite Pakistan's abundant beauty and resilience, the country has grappled with significant road accidents and traffic challenges for years. Pakistan faces one of the highest rates of road accidents globally, resulting in the tragic loss of thousands of lives annually.

Piwi Ophoff, Head of Country Delegation, IFRC in Pakistan said, "The IFRC is supporting PRCS in the implementation of road safety project to strengthen safer road behaviors and first aid knowledge among the general public."

PRCS Member Managing Body and Treasurer Dr. Irshad Mehmood emphasized the importance of upholding traffic rules and urged everyone to play their role in raising public aware-

ness about road safety measures.

Secretary General PRCS, Muhammad Abaidullah Khan, highlighted PRCS's Road Safety Project in his opening remarks, outlining the essential training and awareness provided in 25 schools and activities in collaboration with the traffic police department in Islamabad.

In conclusion, Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, along with the members of PRCS Managing Body and Heads of National Societies, distributed shields among the officers of ITP and NHMP who collaborated with PRCS under the Road Safety Project. Shields were also distributed among the representatives of private and government schools.

ISSI holds Round Table "COP28: An Analytical View"

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change (CSCCC), organized a roundtable discussion on "COP28: An Analytical View." The keynote Speaker at the event was Mr. Asif Hyder Shah, Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination. Other panelists at the event included: Ms. Aisha Khan, Executive Director, CSCCC; Dr. Imran Saqib Khalid, Director, Governance & Policy WWF, Pakistan; Dr. Shafiqat Munir, Head, of Resilient Development Program, SDPI; Dr. Ilhan Niaz, Professor, QAU; Mr. Ahsan Tehsin, World Bank; Mr. Nadeem Ahmad, Climate & Energy Attache at Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, and Ms. Fiza, Fatima Jinnah University, Rawalpindi.

In her opening remarks, Dr. Neelum Nigar, Director of CSP, highlighted the significance of key decisions made during COP28. She underscored the necessity for a comprehensive analysis of the outcomes and their impact on stake-

holders, providing valuable insights for policymakers.

In his welcome address, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood noted that COP28 has undeniably set the stage for discussions on a crucial subject with far-reaching consequences. The decision to operationalize the Loss and Damage Fund on the conference's first day marked a historic moment, especially for the developing world. Another significant decision involved increasing the role of nuclear energy and reducing fossil fuel usage in the energy mix.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Khan highlighted that COP28 marked the first Global Stock Take (GST) post the 2015 Paris Agreement, focusing on advancing the global agenda. Recognizing the time-consuming nature of resolutions on climate change issues, COP28 witnessed crucial decisions, particularly regarding climate finance.

In his keynote address, Mr. Shah underscored the substantial progress achieved during COP28, culminating in a host of positive outcomes and increased transparency in climate finance.

Mr. Asif Shah emphasized that GST

talks were about means of implementation and transition towards renewable energy. Further, Pakistan needs to diversify its energy mix.

Concluding his address, Mr. Shah acknowledged the competitive landscape for accessing the Green Climate Fund, highlighting the imperative for Pakistan to enhance its capacity to secure international funding.

Dr. Khalid emphasized that climate change represents a global security issue, underlining the persistent challenge of escalating GHG emissions since the initial COP where global emissions first took center stage. He stressed the imperative for COPs to prioritize transparency in negotiations, recognizing the potential for vested interests to dilute the core issues.

Dr. Munir highlighted two key developments at COP28, focusing on the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund and a commitment to reduce the use of fossil fuels in the future.

In his remarks, Dr. Niaz emphasized that the Global North has yet to assume its primary responsibilities and a critical examination is needed to determine the driving forces behind climate disrup-



tions.

In his remarks, Mr. Ahmad highlighted that the Paris Agreement marked a shift in responsibility for all countries to address GHG emissions, adopting a bottom-up approach. The culmination of this approach was evident in the first GST at COP28. During COP28,

Pakistan signed 8 declarations as part of global leadership initiatives.

Mr. Tehsin highlighted the momentous occasion of COP28, attributing its significance to the UAE consensus. He underscored the urgency of initiating the flow of finances from the Global North to the Global South.

Ms. Fiza, a youth delegate at COP28, highlighted the significant achievement of including youth delegates in the Pakistan delegation.

The event was concluded with a vote of thanks by Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman of the Board of Governors ISSI.

CTG provides clean energy by Karot and Wind Farm Projects

PPA

On Dec 18, 2023, China Three Gorges South Asia Investment Ltd (CSAIL), organized a seminar on "Development Experience of Hydro, Wind Farm and Solar Power Projects and Unveiling of CSAIL ESG Report 2023" in collaboration with Pakistan-China Institute (PCI).

Mustafa Hyder Said, Executive Director PCI, welcomed attendees to the seminar and commended CSAIL for its transparent and sustainable energy production approach. He lauded the Karot Hydropower Project as a unique endeavour with international stakeholders' participation, solidifying Karot's status as

a clean energy powerhouse. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman of the Senate Defence Committee & PCI, delivered a keynote address highlighting the CPEC as a pivotal developmental and diplomatic undertaking in the 21st century. Emphasizing China's substantial investment of US\$ 1 trillion in over 3,000 projects through the BRI over the past decade, Senator Sayed noted its transformative impact, lifting over 240 million people out of poverty. He highlighted the Chinese contribution in addressing the energy crisis in the country and other infrastructure projects under CPEC, saying that China has so far made a \$26 billion investment and created over 3,000 jobs.

Wang Minsheng, CEO of CSAIL, announced CSAIL's

commitment to becoming a world-class clean energy group and a leading investor in renewable energy projects along the One Belt One Road initiative. He said that the CSAIL ESG Report 2023 provides a comprehensive overview of the developmental milestones achieved by the company in Hydro, Wind Farm, and Solar Power Projects across the South Asian region, with a specific focus on Pakistan. The report delves into the company's commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles, showcasing its sustainable practices and the positive impact of its projects on the local communities and environment.

He informed that the company has successfully completed the construction, operation,

and acquisition of hydropower, wind power, and solar power projects in Pakistan, Egypt, and Jordan, adding over 1,400 MW of clean energy capacity to the region. The current portfolio of CSAIL projects in countries along the Belt and Road Initiative has a cumulative capacity of over 3,000 MW with an investment of around \$7 billion. CSAIL also focuses on social responsibility, providing employment opportunities, skills training, education, healthcare, and infrastructure development to over 100,000 people in project areas. With a commitment to diversity and inclusion, 70% of the workforce and 40% of senior management are local staff. Governance performance was enhanced through adherence to ethical, transparent, and

accountable practices, including the implementation of a comprehensive ESG policy framework and the establishment of an ESG committee. The CSAIL's ESG Report 2023, reflecting achievements and challenges, demonstrates the company's dedication to ESG excellence and contribution to global sustainable development efforts.

NA Zuberi, Sr. Advisor CSAIL, delivered a very comprehensive presentation on the development experience of CSAIL's Karot HPP and Wind Farm under CPEC. He provided a comprehensive overview of the Karot Hydro Power Project, detailing its key features, updates, and the substantial support it receives from the Government of Pakistan. Emphasizing the project's commitment to community

welfare, he outlined the innovative Community Investment Plan and Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives. The presentation also highlighted the project's recognition through corporate awards, underscoring its excellence. Shifting focus to the China Three Gorges Wind Power Projects, he highlighted their distinctive features, key milestones, and impactful Corporate Social Responsibility activities, showcasing a holistic commitment to sustainability. The presentation showcased a remarkable dedication to advancing renewable energy solutions, community development, and corporate responsibility, setting a commendable standard for the industry.

Shah Jahan Mirza, Managing Director PPIB, expressed heart-

felt commendation for the CSAIL for its steadfast commitment to green energy initiatives. In acknowledging CSAIL's dedication to environmentally sustainable practices, Mirza highlighted the pivotal role the organization plays in fostering a cleaner and more sustainable energy landscape. He emphasized the significance of such commitment in addressing the global challenges of climate change and underscored the importance of collaborative efforts in promoting green energy solutions. Mirza's praise reflects the recognition of CSAIL's valuable contributions to advancing environmentally conscious practices within the energy sector, positioning them as a noteworthy leader in the pursuit of a greener and more sustainable future.

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Table with 2 columns: Current, Prev. Close, Day's High, Day's Low, Index Value, Change, Percentage, Time.

Table with 2 columns: Index Value, Change, Percentage, Time.

Table with 2 columns: Index Value, Change, Percentage, Time.

Table with 2 columns: Index Value, Change, Percentage, Time.

Open Market Forex Rates

Table with 3 columns: Currency, Buying, Selling.

High electricity costs fanning poverty in country: Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President of Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum...

"The consumption of electricity in the public and industrial sectors is continuously decreasing but regardless of consumption, the government has to pay capacity payments to power producers...

Speaking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that if electricity rates are not reduced...

affected.

He said that the most important electricity sector has become a national issue due to incompetence, corruption, and failed experiments.

The losses in this sector run to trillions of rupees but are not reformed as required while the policy of continuous rate hikes is ruining the economy.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that Pakistan has not been able to compete with its rival countries in the international market because the electricity in these countries is very cheap compared to Pakistan.

The foreign customers of Pakistani companies are not ready to bear the burden of our dysfunctional power sector.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the local industry does not have to compete in the export market, but after inflation of up to 40 percent, the people are not left with money



to buy anything except food, so the industrial sector is also affected.

He informed that due to the decline in local demand, the industrial sector has been forced

to reduce its production, which has also drastically reduced the consumption of electricity and gas...

Millions will be unemployed due to reduced production of industries making goods for the local and foreign markets...

Mian Zahid Hussain said that textile exports have decreased by 6.50 percent in the first five months of this year...

Gajjer Ka Halwa

LAHORE: A large number of the people are buying traditional "Gajjer Ka Halwa" and other sweet items from a shop at Androon Lahore...



Photo: Online

Police to provide secure environment to business community in the Capital



PNP

ISLAMABAD: Shehzad Akbar, ASP Rural along with Malik Rasheed, SHO Korla visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and assured that measures would be taken to provide a secure environment to the business community in the ICT area.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry thanked ASP Rural and his team for making better security arrangements during the Islamabad Taste food festival...

a peaceful environment is a key requirement to promote business and investment activities and stressed that Islamabad Police should take ICCI on board to further improve the security situation in the Capital.

Shehzad Akbar, ASP Rural said that the business community is playing a key role in the economic development of the country, and providing them a safe environment is the important priority of police.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Pakistan lauded the crackdown of Rural Zone police

against criminals as the incidents of snatching motorbikes and mobile phones in the rural areas were on the rise.

Zubair A. Malik former President ICCI and FPCCI highlighted the need for close cooperation between the Islamabad Police and the business community to make the Capital a crime-free city.

Saif ur Rehman Khan Convener ICCI Police Committee, Ajmal Baloch President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajiran, Malik Jalil Ahmed Awan, Maqsood Tabish, Faizan Shehzad, and others also highlighted various issues that needed the close attention of ASP Rural for redress.

Eighteen announces groundbreaking accord with ECHO for state-of-the-art petrol station



PPA

ISLAMABAD: Eighteen is thrilled to announce a significant development within its community—the establishment of a new fuel station site. This housing society has signed an agreement with ECHO...

This new agreement aligns with Eighteen's commitment to enhancing the convenience and accessibility of essential services for its residents and the surrounding community.

The agreement was signed by Tarek Handy, CEO EIGHTEEN, and Mehar Muhammad Asif, Chairman Echo Oil Private Limited...

Positioned strategically within the Eighteen vicinity, it aims to provide unparalleled accessibility without compromising on environmental considerations, ensuring safety, efficiency and a seamless experience for all patrons.

Majid Al Futtaim expands its investment in Pakistan to Rs14b



PPA

ISLAMABAD: Majid Al Futtaim, which owns the exclusive Carrefour in Pakistan, announced the inauguration of two new Carrefour supermarkets in Lahore...

With this expansion, Majid Al Futtaim's current investment in Pakistan is set to grow to 14-billion Rupees, bringing the total number of stores in the country to 13.

Strategically located in DHA Phase 7 (Sector T) and DHA Phase 11 (DHA-Rah-

bar, Block 2M), the stores are redefining the shopping experience for customers in their respective areas...

During the inauguration, Umer Lodhi, Country Manager of Carrefour Pakistan at Majid Al Futtaim – Retail, stated: "We are thrilled to announce the opening of two new Carrefour supermarkets in Lahore, reaffirming our dedication to delivering exceptional shopping experiences while supporting local businesses."

Pathways to Development Conference' at LUMS Inspires Dialogue on Inequalities and Social Justice

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The second 'Pathways to Development Conference', held at LUMS from December 18 to 20, saw prominent academics, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers from within Pakistan, the Pakistani diaspora, as well as others working on Pakistan and the region gathered at LUMS to discuss issues vital to inequalities and social justice in the country.

Mr. Shahid Hussain, Rector, LUMS, along with Dr. Ali Cheema, Vice Chancellor, LUMS, officially opened the conference. They expressed pride in LUMS and its partners for leading the discourse on economic and social development through a conference that is a testament to Pakistan's research ecosystem.

Keynote speaker Dr. Stefan Dercon, of the Institute of Development Studies at University of Sussex (IDS), the Consortium for Development Policy Research (CDPR), the International Growth Centre (IGC), and the Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan (CERP). Experts from across various disciplines presented their most recent research on growth and development over 20 riveting sessions.



Professor of Economic Policy, University of Oxford, emphasized the significance of macroeconomic stability, outward orientation, elite bargain, and stable governance in fostering Pakistan's growth.

western University, USA); Dr. Alexander Lee (Rochester University, USA); Dr. Farah Said (CNM Department of Economics, LUMS); and others. Dr. Ishrat Husain, Former Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, Dr. Sadiq Ahmed (Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh), and Dr. Rakesh Mohan (Centre for Social and Economic Progress, India) came together to analyse the comparative growth trajectories of Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh.

