

Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے اس کی تعلیمیں لیں اور اس سے ایمان لیا گیا کہ
ہم سے ماہانہ لکھنے کے لیے ایمان لیا گیا اور ان کا
رہنہ لکھنے کے لیے اور ان سے ابو ہریرہ
رضی اللہ عنہ سے کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ
وآلہ وسلم نے فرمایا جب اللہ تعالیٰ مخلوق کو پیدا کرے
پہلے تو اس کے لیے اسے پانچ چیزیں لکھا کرے
رحمت میرے حضور سے آگے نہ ہوئی ہے۔
(صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 7453)

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Mushaal Hussein Mullick commences International Women's Day celebrations

Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick has underscored the indispensable role women play in society through their significant contributions to the social, economic, and cultural spheres globally. (Details on Page 3)



Petrol price in Pakistan likely to jack up

The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has sent a summary to the federal government for increasing petrol to Rs3 per litre, citing sources. As per the details, the OGRA suggested increasing the prices of petroleum products from March 1. According to the proposal, the petrol price might jack up Rs3 per litre. The OGRA has also suggested an Rs1 per litre increase in the price of high-speed diesel. The regulatory body also suggested the federal government to jack up kerosene oil by Rs1 per litre.

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Appreciation

Chief of Army Staff Gen Syed Asim Munir met with ASP Syeda Shehrbano Naqvi who recently saved a woman from a violent mob in Lahore's Ichra Bazar.



Photo: ISPR

COAS lauds ASP Shehrbano for her selfless devotion to duty and professionalism

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Wednesday lauded Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Syeda Shehrbano Naqvi for her selfless devotion to duty and professionalism in diffusing a volatile situation. The fearless police officer, who called on the Army Chief at the General Headquarters, had extricated a woman from the difficult milieu of Ichra Bazaar in Lahore on February 26, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The COAS acknowledged the vital role Pakistani women are playing in all walks of life. "Since independence, the Pakistani women have distinguished themselves at home and abroad, by virtue of their talent, tenacity and commit-

ment," he said. The COAS highlighted that the women were an invaluable part of Pakistan's society and their respect was enshrined "in our religion as well as our social ethos". He also underscored the importance of social harmony and the need for nationwide consensus on curbing intolerance.

He emphasized upon the rule of law and advised against taking the law in one's hands when legal avenues were available for addressing concerns and grievances. Noting that arbitrary actions on the basis of heresy undermine the outlook of the society, the COAS underlined Islam's eternal message of kindness and benevolence. He appreciated the sacrifices rendered by the law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety and security of the citizens of the country.

Caretaker PM disapproves PTI's move of writing a letter to IMF

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday expressing his disapproval over Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership's latest political salvo of writing a letter to International Monetary Fund (IMF), termed it as 'highly irresponsible'. Appearing in a talk show of a private TV channel (SAMAA news), the prime minister said the letter was sent at time when the caretaker government had worked significantly for the economic revival with the relevant indicators showing positive trends, besides it achieved different financial targets.

The negotiations with the IMF were in the process for \$6 billion dollars agreement which was important for the econom-



ic health of the country, he said, adding moreover, different multilateral agreements were also dependent over it. He said that there were appropriate forums for the electoral disputes and the PTI's gesture of writing letter to IMF was unjustified and highly irresponsible. However, he maintained that in the tangible

terms, the letter would have no effects, but it would have political costs for the PTI that had a narrative in this regard. To a question, the caretaker prime minister said that he had appeared before the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in the Baloch missing persons' case to show that the interim set up was functioning under a

constitutional order. The courts' orders should be respected and he appeared before it to reiterate the same stance and set a precedent, he added. The prime minister further said that the court had been apprised about the number of missing people traced so far under its orders and the IHC judge appreciated efforts in this regard. Prime Minister Kakar also termed the number of missing persons as 'highly exaggerated'. To a query about terrorist incidents in Balochistan, he said that non state actors had been spreading violence in the society to achieve their designs and also misusing human rights platforms. "They wanted to create an echo chamber for themselves," he said, adding that such banned outfits often continued their violence spree and on the other hand, attempted to

get sympathies by using a section of society. The prime minister said neither the UN standards nor the international procedures accept mere allegations. If you had leveled allegations, you would have to provide data. There were general sweeping statements to malign state institutions, he said, adding that terrorist groups unleashed violence as a tool. The caretaker prime minister, to another question, said that various efforts were made in the past to engage with the families of missing persons; it was reiterated that commissions in this regard had been formed where they could take up these cases. There was an existing mechanism to address such grievances, he emphasised. He reiterated that use of violence as tool would have no acceptance and justification

ECP appoints five presiding officers for presidential election

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Wednesday appointed five Presiding officers to conduct election to the office of President of Pakistan, in Islamabad and four provincial capitals. According to Spokesperson ECP, these officers will receive nomination papers from candidates and chair meetings of the Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) at Parliament House, Islamabad, and the Provincial Assembly of the respective province during the scheduled polling for the Presidential Election.

According to the notification, the Chief Justice of the Islamabad High Court will oversee the elections in the Senate and National Assembly in Islamabad. A Member of the Election Commission-I, Election

Continued on Page 8

PTI asks IMF to audit 30% seats from general election

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: A letter to International Monetary Fund (IMF), which according to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was written on directives of party founder Imran Khan, has surfaced, ARY News reported on Wednesday.

In the letter written to IMF Managing Director Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, the Imran Khan-led party noted that a government without "legitimate representation, when imposed upon a country, carries no moral authority to govern, and, in particular, to carry out taxation measures".

"In the last interaction held between Imran Khan and IMF representatives in 2023, PTI had agreed to support IMF's financing facility involving Pakistan on the condition and reassurance of a free and fair election in the country," stated the letter.

In the foregoing backdrop, the PTI said, it is noteworthy that the general elections conducted in Pakistan on February 8, 2024, on which public expenditure of about Rs50 billion (or US\$ 180 million) was incurred, were subjected to "widespread intervention and fraud in the counting of votes and



compilation of results".

"This intervention and fraud have been so brazen that the IMF's most important member countries including the US, Great Britain, and countries forming part of the European Union have called for a full and transparent investigation into the matter", the letter noted.

"In view of the policies and principles the IMF stands for, there should be no doubt that the abuse of power by a small number of holders of public office to impose their likes and dislikes on Pakistan's populace as aforesaid, and thus to ensure their continuing personal gain, would not be promoted or upheld by the IMF," it added.

The letter further stated that not only PTI, but several other political parties in Pakistan, have called for an independent probe into claims of intervention and electoral fraud in the country on and after February

8, 2024. "These calls have, however, gone unheeded for more than two weeks now suggesting that there is no fear of accountability or rule of law with respect to the subversion of the exercise by the people of Pakistan of their right to elect a government," it added.

Imran Khan, in the letter, called upon the IMF to give effect to the guidelines adopted by it with respect to good governance as well as conditionalities that must be satisfied prior to the grant of a finance facility that is to burden the people of Pakistan with further debt.

"An audit of at least thirty percent of the national and provincial assemblies' seats should be ensured, which can be accomplished in merely two weeks," it added.

"We do not call for the IMF to adopt the role of an investigative agency. There are at least two indigenous organisations in Pakistan namely the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) and PATTAN-Coalition 38 that have proposed comprehensive methodologies to conduct an audit of the General Elections 2024 which, with some modifications, could be implemented locally to the satisfaction of all stakeholders," it concluded.

Six terrorists gunned down in North Waziristan IBO: ISPR

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: At least six terrorists were gunned down during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) North Waziristan, ARY News reported on Wednesday, quoting the military's media wing.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in North Waziristan on reported presence of terrorists.

During the conduct of operation, intense fire exchange took place between own troops and the terrorists, as a result of which six terrorists were gunned down, while one soldier also got injured.

Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also

Continued on Page 8

PML-N, PPP to make appointments with mutual understanding

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) decided to make administrative appointments in Punjab with mutual understanding.

According to the sources, both parties agreed to form a joint committee for making decisions in the appointment of administrative officers of Punjab.

The PPP has already given names to the committee. The sources privy to the development said that the PML-N and PPP during their talks for government formation in centre, Punjab and Balochistan had decided to form the committee for the purpose.

Meanwhile, the preparations for the formation of the cabinet in Punjab have accelerated and many names are being considered in this regard.

According to sources, Rana Sanaullah would be made the chief minister advisor on Home. In the first phase, Rana Sanaullah will swear in as the advisor and later he would also contest the by-election from Sheikhpura or Lahore.

The PML-N sources said that provincial ministers and advisors are likely to be taken from various divisions and districts of Punjab.

The sources privy to the development claimed that Marriyum Aurangzeb, Malik Ahmad Khan, Rana Iqbal, Khawaja Salman Rafiq, and Khawaja Imran Nazir are also being considered for the Punjab cabinet.

Besides, the names of Faisal Khokhar, Yawar Zaman, Bilal Yasin, Mujtaba Shujaur Rehman, Zakia Shah Nawaz, Uzma Bukhari, Hina Pervaiz Butt are also under consideration.

Independent assembly members joined PML-N unconditionally: Shehbaz

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz President Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that independent elected members of assemblies had joined the PML-N without any condition. Addressing the PML-N's Parliamentary Party meeting at the Parliament House, Shehbaz, who is also PML-N's nominee for prime ministership, said that with the addition of independents, his party's representation in the National Assembly had increased to 104 members.

He said that Raja Khuram Nawaz, who won as an independent candidate from Islamabad was now part of the PML-N. Similarly, Barrister Aqeel Malik and Waseem Qadir, who contested NA election as independents from Rawalpindi and



Lahore respectively, had also joined the PML-N. Shehbaz Sharif recalled the problems faced by the party over the past few years.

He also highlighted the accomplishments of the PML-N governments under Nawaz's leadership, pointing out motorway projects and elimination of power power loadshedding throughout the country. He said the country today needed sacrifices and hard work to get out of the crises. The PML-N president criticized the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for alleging that the February 8 general elections were 'rigged'.

Chief Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan says Azad Kashmir High Court doing proud job of delivering justice



Bureau Report

MIRPUR: Chief Justice of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan has said that the High Judiciary of Azad Kashmir is doing a proud job to deliver justice and can never compromise to uphold the rule of law.

The services of Prof. Ilyas Ayub are commendable. He expressed these views while addressing the annual prize distribution cere-

mony of Akab School for Blind Children as a special guest. Azad Kashmir Government ex Minister Chaudhry Tariq Farooq, Bar President Mirpur Chaudhry Shakeel Zaman Advocate, Commissioner Mirpur Chaudhry Shaukat Ali, President Chamber of Commerce Syed Sabir Hussain Shah, Seven Star CEO Chaudhry Rizwan Anwar, Chairman District Council Raja Naveed Akhtar Goga, Eminent British businessman Chaudhry Rasib

Hussain, Chaudhry Mehmood Advocate, and former Justice Sheikh Masood Advocate and large number of representatives of the city. Chief Justice of Azad Kashmir Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan said that for me today is a great and memorable evening which I will never forget.

He said that I wish to spend all my time with these children whenever I get free time from work. Addressing the children of Akab School he said that

there is no lack in you, if Allah has deprived you of one sense in return, Allah has blessed you with countless additional qualities.

The Chief Justice mentioned the services of the principal of the school, Prof. Ilyas Ayub, regarding the education and training of blind children, said that Ilyas Ayub is a role model for the state. There is no substitute for services. I am with you and I pay tribute to you.

The Chief Justice of Azad

Kashmir mentioned the quota of government jobs for blind people and said that he will see it from the eyes of the law, Chief Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan said.

He said that the children of Akab School are rare diamonds. Addressing the ceremony, the principal of the school, Prof. Ilyas Ayub, said that I myself am blind and as such, I have a good understanding of the problems of blind children.

He added that if the quota of

jobs for special people in government institutions is implemented, then these special people will also be able to be counted among the dignified people of the society. Professor Ilyas Ayub suggested that every member of the legislative assembly gives a job to one special person in a year, 48 special people will be employed in one year and two hundred and forty special people will be employed in five years.

Chief Justice Azad Kashmir

Raja Saeed Akram Khan and other honored guests presented shields to the school children for receiving various awards, while Prof. Ilyas Ayub thanked Chief Justice Azad Kashmir Raja Saeed Akram Khan for participating in the event and encouraging the children.

Presented by SHIELD, the children of Akab School for Blind Children enthralled the audience by presenting a song and Kalam Iqbal at the event.

Work in progress

ISLAMABAD: Motorists on their way on newly constructed overhead bridge sector E-11 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

Parliamentary Leader of Pakistan People's Party in Punjab Assembly again demand for making Saraiki Province

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Syed Ali Haider Gilani, the parliamentary leader of Pakistan People's Party in the Punjab Assembly, once again called for the establishment of Saraiki Province at the forum of the Punjab Assembly has demanded and has demanded from the speaker that a committee should be established immediately for the establishment of Saraiki province in which all parties are represented. In his first address in the Punjab Assembly, Syed Ali Haider Gilani said that In the previous House also, he made one for the establishment of Saraiki Province.

The resolution was approved, but it was not implemented. This time, the people of Saraiki Wasaib have given more mandate to the Pakistan People's Party and given 21% more votes. Again raising the voice of their rights in this house because Punjab is a big province and it is not possible to solve the problems of the people of such a big province, therefore, for the establishment of the province, it is necessary to establish a competent committee of the Punjab Assembly consisting of all the parliamentary parties to establish the province. It can be made possible.

Syed Ali Haider Geelani in his first address MsHe congratulated Maryam Nawaz Sharif on becoming the first woman Chief Minister of Punjab and said that Pakistan People's Party also got this honor that our party made Ms. Benazir Bhutto the first woman Prime Minister, our party made the first Speaker of the National Assembly and the woman Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. These women successfully made their journey Resolved Syed Ali Haider Gilani also congratulated the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Assembly on assuming the duties

Faisalabad traffic police stage walk against kite flying in city center



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: On the direction of Chief Traffic Officer Maqsood Ahmed, City Traffic Police Faisalabad organized a walk against kite flying in which Pakistan Mini Mazda Association, Anjuman Tajran, Saylani Welfare and well-known personalities of the city participated. The aim of the walk is to discourage blood sports like kite flying with metal killer strings. The participants of the walk reached Ghanta Ghar from Kachari Bazar via TO office and were led by DSP Circle City Muhammad Khalid Aleem while on the other hand DSP Circle People's Colony by Malik Muhammad Javed.

Faisalabad to hold second job fair to boost vocational skills of women

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Job Fair and Expo aims to build linkages between Academia and Industry so that students can have continuous training while studying and they can apply their experience without wasting time. Chairman Higher Education Commission Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed expressed these thoughts while participating in the second job fair of Government College Women University online. Industry exists in the city to gain practical experience. Prof. Dr. Zal Huma Nazli said that all these responsibilities are imposed on us as a women's university in the education, training and practical life of the students. It has been organized so that in the future all these degree-seeking students will not face any difficulty and they can perform their duties in the best way.

Dr. Iqar Ahmed Khan Vice-Chancellor University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Afzal Vice-Chancellor Baba Gurnanak University, Prof. Dr. Falahia Zahra Kazmi Vice-Chancellor Home Economics University Lahore, Dr. Mazhar Hayat, Dr. Rana Tanveer Qasim Dr. Nimra Deputy Commissioner FBR, CP O Faisalabad Ali Zia, Waqas Kashif Bajwa Chief Manager SBP and others said that

The discussion of gender division should end. Women are making their mark in science and technology as well as the chief executives of the world's trillion dollar companies. Women also have to fulfill their duties as half of the society, all men and women are equal on merit.

Extracurricular activities prepare students for practical life. It is the age of artificial intelligence and we all have to light our part. And said that we have to change the mindset for which the role of teachers is very important. There is a need to work on ethics and said that the information of social intelligence is necessary to be a decision-making force.

Pakistan Army has made country's defense invincible on 27 February: Sardar Attique

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD/RAWALPINDI: President All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that the Pakistan Army has made the country's defense invincible.

He paid tribute to the courage and bravery of the Shaheen's Pakistan Air Force. The Shaheens of the Air force destroyed 2 Indian aircraft and destroyed the pride of India.

He expressed these thoughts while talking to the Muslim conference delegation and met him in Mujahid Manzil.

He said 27th February 2019 is the day in history when the Shaheens of the Pakistan Air Force responded to the enemy and told the world that we



are always ready to defend the Kingdom of Allah.

By giving a historical surprise,

Indian pride was crushed. Pakistan destroyed two Indian aircraft and captured pilot Wing Commander

Abhinandan alive.

The historic success of Operation Soft Retort is Pakistan's crowning glory and India will never forget February 27. Sardar Attique said February 27 has become an unforgettable day in the history of Pakistan Air Force. Shaheens of Pakistan Air Force also destroyed two enemy fighter planes on the same day.

The memorial of 27th February will always be a reminder that the people and the forces of Pakistan are always ready for the defense of the country.

This monument is the shining star of the morale of our armed forces and people. The Pakistani army not only defended the borders but also protected Abhinandan from the wrath of the local population according to international laws.

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

PPA

ISLAMABAD/BARCELONA: Pakistan's largest telecommunications and integrated ICT services 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 CEO, PTCL & Ufone 4G, Hatem Bamatraf, and Karen Teo, VP Android Partnerships APAC, Google during Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2024 in Barcelona, Spain.

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.

Designed for optimum convenience and seamless control, the new Android TV Set-top Box will offer the ultimate entertainment experience.

With pre-installed apps like YouTube and Netflix, users will be able to have an immersive big-screen experience with their favourite entertainment content.

Users will be able to smoothly navigate between TV and other compatible Android apps to make the most of their leisure time.

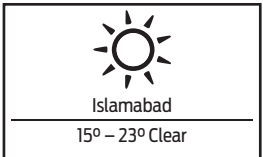
Commenting on the development, President and Group CEO, PTCL & Ufone 4G, Hatem Bamatraf said,

"I am thrilled by the launch of this innovative Shog TV Box powered by Android TV in Pakistan in collaboration with Google. It feels like we're bringing back an exciting gift from the MWC for our customers. For the past couple of years, PTCL Group has steadfastly focused on enhancing the quality of content and entertainment options for our valued customers. I hope that with a transformative blend of television and Android apps, the new Shog TV box powered by Android TV will be a paradigm shift in entertainment for our customers."

Also sharing her thoughts, Karen Teo, VP Android Partnerships APAC, Google said, "I'd like to congratulate

the PTCL Group on the launch of Shog TV Box, which will provide customers in Pakistan with access to the TV apps ecosystem and elevate their TV viewing and entertainment experience. Google is happy to be partnering with PTCL Group to continue driving innovation and growth of the Android TV platform in Pakistan."

The new Shog TV set-top box powered by Android TV will continue to offer more than two hundred television channels with a diverse array of Full HD channels. The new Set-top box bolsters PTCL Group's continued focus on providing high-quality news and entertainment content in Pakistan



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:16 am
Zohr	12:21 pm
Asr	4:23 pm
Maghrib	6:03 pm
Isha	7:26 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 & 4451122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
CAA	9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8	9266316
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

Youth across Pakistan joins Transform Pakistan Campaign to Demand iTFA Regulation

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA) proudly announces the nationwide collaboration of youth groups under the banner of the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign, aimed at advocating for the regulation of industrially produced Trans-Fatty Acids (iTFA). This movement signifies a crucial step toward ensuring a healthier and safer dietary landscape for all Pakistanis.

"Launched last year, the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign has gained momentum as PYCA engages with youth groups across diverse regions, fostering awareness about the adverse health effects of iTFAs," shared Huma Jehangir, Program Implementation lead at PYCA. "From Karachi to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, young leaders are now equipped with knowledge and advocacy skills, actively leading the campaign in their localities."

In Karachi, a dynamic youth group at the University of Karachi is conducting research to analyze the iTFA content in the most consumed foods within the university premises. "Our initiative not only sheds light on the immediate environment but also contributes valuable insights to the broader discourse on regulating trans fats," said Parkash Meghwar in the press statement by PYCA.

Simultaneously, the student group from NIFSAT, University of Agriculture Faisalabad, is making strides by rallying parents, school administrations, and engaging with the Punjab Food Authority (PFA). "Our collaboration ensures that communities actively voice their support for regulation, emphasizing the fundamental right to a healthier food environment," shared Nagina Mehboob while talking about the work that she and her young fellows were undertaking in Faisalabad.

Mushaal Hussein Mullick commences International Women's Day celebrations

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick has underscored the indispensable role women play in society through their significant contributions to the social, economic, and cultural spheres globally. She was addressing the "Women Day Celebration" organized by Pak Gulf Construction Pvt Ltd. in connection with International Women's Day which is observed on 8th March every year. The event honored the achievements and resilience of women worldwide and served as a platform to reflect on the progress made towards gender equality in Pakistan and the challenges that still lie ahead.

The Special Assistant to the Prime Minister stressed the importance of empowering women for the establishment of inclusive and equitable societies. She emphasized the imperative of invest-

ing in women's education, healthcare, and overall well-being.

Mushaal said that the people, particularly women, in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) were enduring the worst human rights violations inflicted by the Indian Occupation forces. She emphasized that amidst oppression, women in IIOJK had assumed prominent roles in the Kashmiri freedom struggle.

Mushaal underscored the resilience and determination of Kashmiri women, suggesting that in the face of adversities, women globally could draw inspiration from their unwavering spirit.

Mushaal Hussein Mullick urged all to pledge their support for women's empowerment across all areas of life. Appreciating the organizers, the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister said that the event served as a testament to our commitment towards empowering women and advancing their rights. Focal Person to SAPM Sabien Hussein Mullick also



attended the event and along with SAPM distributed appreciation certificates and shields among the organizers of the event.

Hardwork

RAWALPINDI: Feb28- Workers of WAPDA busy in repairing high voltage wires on a pole alongside double road, IN FRONT OF Pindi Cricket Stadium, in the city.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Mobilink Bank's 'Change to Sustain' program drives sustainability with Rs 2.5b

PPA

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.

"At Mobilink Bank, we see the winds of change as an opportunity to drive positive transformation. The 'Change to Sustain' initiative reflects our efforts to align the Bank with ESG principles for a future where progress and sustainability go hand in hand," shared Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary, Chief Operating Officer (COO)

Mobilink Bank. "Every action we take is driven by a deep commitment to minimizing our environmental footprint, empowering unbanked individuals, catalyzing positive social change and supporting the advancement of small businesses nationwide. Recognizing the pivotal role of microfinance institutions in realizing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, we are steadfast in

harnessing our capabilities and resources to foster eco-friendly financing for individuals and small-scale businesses, with a particular focus on those led by women. We believe that supporting small businesses and female entrepreneurs can yield enduring benefits for both the environment and society at large," he added.

Mobilink Bank spearheads green financing by actively supporting individuals, particularly women, to address climate challenges while seamlessly incorporating sustainability into its operations. Through impactful initiatives like "Change to Sustain" and the Women Inspirational Network (WIN) program, the Bank empowers its borrowers with the necessary tools and resources to adapt and build resilience against climate change. The Bank also offers accessible green financing solutions, including solar financing, to ensure that sustainability is attainable for all.

NIMA BoA meets in Islamabad-highlights progress made on maritime affairs



PPA

ISLAMABAD: On 28th Feb, 9th BoA meeting of National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) was held at its Head Office, Islamabad. Chairman NIMA BoA, Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah, the former CNS chaired the meeting, while the board members were in attendance, (in person & online).

Vice Admiral Ahmed Saeed, President NIMA welcomed the participants and shed light on NIMA's contribution in undertaking research activities and creating awareness on Maritime Affairs. Moreover, a snapshot of major research activities and future undertakings was also presented in the meeting by the Director Islamabad.

Board Members gave pertinent input on the various agenda items. Detailed discussions on policy matters related to the fishing sector, ports & harbors, shipping, ship recycling industry, maritime tourism, climate change, maritime pollution, biodiversity, and sustainable use of ocean resources were held.

In his closing remarks, the chair appreciated the valuable input and suggestions provided by the eminent participants. He applauded the efforts of the NIMA team / researchers on the progress made by the institution.

Sheherazaad unveils 'Qasr', produced by Grammy Winner Arooj Aftab

PNP

LAHORE: Following her critically acclaimed debut single "Mashoor" for Erased Tapes late last year, American composer and vocalist Sheherazaad unveils her forthcoming LP, "Qasr," produced by visionary artist and Grammy winner Arooj Aftab. This five-track collection, set to captivate audiences worldwide on March 1st on Erased Tapes, marks a significant milestone in Sheherazaad's musical journey.



Seeking to reclaim her lost connection, Sheherazaad dedicated herself to studying Arabic, Hindi, and Urdu. This exploration culminated in her 2020 self-released project, "Khwaabistan," which caught the attention of producer Arooj Aftab. Their long-distance collaboration during the pandemic resulted in "Qasr," a groundbreaking sonic exploration featuring international musicians like Basma Edrees (Egypt), Gilbert Mansour (Lebanon), and Firas Zreik (Palestine).

"Qasr" is a powerful and evocative work that defies categorization. It is a testament to Sheherazaad's artistic journey and her unwavering pursuit of self-discovery. Featuring five tracks; Mashoor, Dhund Lo Mujhe, Koshish, Khatam, and Lehja, the album invites listeners to explore their own identities and forge their own unique paths.

Mars BPO named to the top 100 list of Pakistan's highest export remittance list



PPA

ISLAMABAD:- Mars BPO, a trailblazer in the BPO landscape founded by Shoab Akram, celebrates this significant milestone with the Annual Dinner and Award Ceremony, held graciously in Islamabad. The spectacular event recognizes the excellence of Mars BPO's top leadership, employees, and remarkable growth.

Gathering momentum and prestige with each passing year since its establishment in 2013, Mars BPO has become a leading name in the country, known for exceptional achievements, world-class offices, and notable standing. Mars BPO has a team of over 2000 dedicated professionals who have been instrumental in the company's success over the past decade.

All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association to the Feds: give time till 20 March to submit biometric/life

Aurangzeb Tanuli Secretary General All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association and other officials appealed to the Governor State Bank of Pakistan and the Federal Secretary for Finance Islamabad to remove the condition of submitting the biometric / life certificate in banks before March 10. It will not be possible to submit biometric/life certificates of pensioners in time before March 10. If the decision is not revised immediately, pensioners will lose their rights around Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr.

He said this during an emergency meeting of All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Associ-



ation. Chairman Aslam Adil Butt presided over the meeting. The leaders of All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association said in their position that they request to consider the circular issued by State Bank of Pakistan for pensioners on 1st February 2024. In which the pensioners have been instructed to get their biome-

tric/life certificate done before March 10, otherwise their account will be deactivated and pension will not come. During the meeting it was unanimously decided to request the Governor State Bank of Pakistan that 10 days is too short. For this please give time till 20 March at least. So that the workload does not increase on banks

and pensioners who live in remote villages. They can also submit biometric/life certificates etc. On this occasion Aurangzeb Tanuli Secretary General All Pakistan Railways Pensioners Association along with other colleagues issued a statement on the decision of Governor State Bank of Pakistan and Federal Secretary for Finance Islamabad. Requested a review and said that railway pensioners will be greatly affected by this decision and will also lose their monthly pension. Ramadan Mubarak and Eid-ul-Fitr are near. It is very important to take quick action in this regard. The problem can be solved immediately.

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Proven Neutrality of Pak Army - I

In democratic societies, the foundation of legitimacy lies in free and fair elections, which echo the collective will of the populace. Preserving the integrity of the electoral system is essential to upholding democratic ideals and preserving societal harmony. Across many nations, the military assumes a crucial role in ensuring the sanctity of elections, offering security, logistical support, and expertise to enable citizens to cast their votes without fear or interference.

ency, accountability, and public trust in the electoral process.

Moreover, the military safeguards electoral institutions, such as election commissions and polling stations, from external threats or interference, preserving their impartiality and transparency. In nations transitioning to democracy or undergoing post-conflict reconstruction, the military aids in the shift to civilian rule, bolstering democratic institutions through security, reconciliation, and adherence to the rule of law.

During electoral periods, the primary duty of the military is to uphold security and stability, fostering a safe environment for voters, candidates, and election officials. This encompasses securing polling stations, safeguarding ballot boxes, and deploying personnel to regions prone to violence or intimidation. Through deterring threats and thwarting disruptions, the military fosters trust in the electoral process, allowing citizens to participate freely. Additionally, the military provides vital logistical aid to election authorities, including transportation, communication infrastructure, and distribution of materials, particularly in remote or inaccessible areas. Leveraging its organizational prowess and coordination skills, the military helps surmount logistical hurdles and minimize delays or disturbances.

In the face of emergencies like natural disasters, civil unrest, or terrorist threats, the military stands ready to offer swift crisis management support, ensuring the continuity of democratic governance by evacuating polling stations, securing critical infrastructure, or coordinating relief efforts. Often serving as impartial observers and mediators, military personnel monitor electoral proceedings to ensure adherence to laws and regulations. Their presence promotes transpar-

Ultimately, the military's involvement in elections is rooted in a commitment to constitutionalism, rule of law, and civilian oversight. Military personnel are bound by duty to respect the constitution and uphold the electoral process as a reflection of popular will, thus reinforcing their role as custodians of democratic principles and institutions.

In the ongoing struggle for power and influence, elements opposed to the state often view the military as a primary adversary. Motivated by ideological fervor, political agendas, or grievances against the state, these elements employ various tactics aimed at undermining the authority, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the armed forces. Understanding these tactics is vital for devising effective counterstrategies to uphold national security and protect the servicemen and women.

Such elements frequently resort to propaganda and disinformation to sow doubt, dissent, and division within both military ranks and the civilian population. Using channels like social media, extremist websites, and covert networks, they

spread false narratives, conspiracy theories, and unfounded allegations to weaken trust in military leadership, diminish morale, and incite unrest.

Violent tactics, such as terrorist attacks and insurgency, are common methods employed by these elements to directly challenge and destabilize the military. These attacks may target military installations, personnel, or civilians associated with the armed forces, aiming to cause casualties, damage infrastructure, and undermine public confidence in the government's ability to provide security.

Psychological warfare is another key component of their strategy, with tactics including threats, intimidation, coercion, and propaganda aimed at instilling fear, confusion, and compliance among military personnel and civilians.

In today's digital age, cyber warfare and information operations have become potent tools for these entities, allowing them to disrupt military operations, compromise sensitive information, and wage psychological campaigns against the military.

Furthermore, they exploit socio-economic grievances, political disenfranchisement, and extremism to recruit and radicalize individuals, offering them a sense of belonging and empowerment through participation in violent or subversive activities.

Subversion and infiltration tactics involve covert efforts to penetrate military ranks, institutions, and supply chains to gather intelligence, sabotage operations, and sow discord from within.

In Pakistan, recent elections were

conducted fairly and securely with the support of the Pakistani Army. However, it has become a tradition in the country to reject election results in case of defeat. Certain political parties and anti-state elements resort to unfair means and immediately blame the army for rigging, continuing this trend in the recent elections.

In a recent development, Rawalpindi Commissioner Liaquat Ali Chatta made shocking revelations during a press conference at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium. He admitted to perpetrating injustices in Rawalpindi Division during the elections, stating that they manipulated the outcomes by ensuring losing candidates secured leads of 50,000 to 70,000 votes. Chatta declared, "I take full responsibility for election rigging in Rawalpindi Division and voluntarily surrender myself to the police, resigning from my post. I deserve the death penalty at Rawalpindi's Kachhari Chowk." He implicated the Election Commission of Pakistan, Chief Election Commissioner, and Chief Justice of Pakistan in the rigging, insisting they too should resign. Commissioner Liaquat Ali Chatta acknowledged the harm done to the country, declaring his resignation from both his post and service.

Expressing the pressure he faced from social media and overseas Pakistanis, he revealed a suicide attempt after Fajr prayer. However, he decided to disclose the truth publicly to unburden himself, rather than succumb to an inglorious death. He voiced his anguish over political figures seeking ministerial positions while betraying the nation's interests. Notably, Chatta absolved the Pakistan Army of involvement in the irregularities, instead implicating the Chief Justice, Election Commission, and Chief Election Commissioner.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

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

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 Pakistan 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, will have 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 groundwater is contaminated.

In his statement, Ambassador Jadoon, said, "Israel's indiscriminate killing of civilians; its destruction of civilian objects indispensable for human survival; and the use of starvation as a weapon of war are gross violations of international humanitarian law, including 'plausibly' the Genocide Convention."



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

Uncovering and understanding Hemophilia in Pakistan

Hemophilia, a rare genetic disease that affects the blood's ability to clot, remains a misunderstood and unknown condition in Pakistan. The disease that remains hidden in the shadows, presents significant challenges to those living with it, highlighting the critical need for increased awareness, treatment facilities and support systems within the country.

Prevalence of Hemophilia varies globally. However, it is estimated that 1 in 5,000 to 1 in 10,000 males worldwide is born with hemophilia. In Pakistan, there are 18,000 patients with hemophilia by statistical projection. The registered patients are less than 10% due to reasons such as lack of awareness, diagnostic facilities, and underreporting (Hemophilia foundation Pakistan—<https://hemophilia.org.pk/>).

Hemophilia is a genetically inherited disease, passed down through generations. It is caused by mutations in genes, leading to insufficient or absent blood clotting.

Hemophilia prevails in two primary forms in Pakistan—Individuals with Hemophilia A have a deficiency in clotting factor VIII, while those with Hemophilia B lack clotting factor IX. The prevalence of this disease in the country is substantial and poses a battle for those struggling with it, bringing attention to the dire need for

increased awareness and improved healthcare facilities that ensure affordable access for quality treatment.

Hemophilia is often confused with Thalassemia, as even though both of them are genetic disorders, they affect different components of blood. Hemophilia affects blood clotting, whereas thalassemia affects the production of hemoglobin (protein responsible for carrying oxygen in the blood). Both



Analysis

Waseem Khokhar

require different types of disease management and treatment strategies.

Hemophilia requires lifetime treatment and management as there is currently no cure. The treatment basically focuses on preventing and controlling bleeding episodes. Pakistan, like many other developing countries, faces different challenges in its healthcare system, including limited access to specialized services, diagnostic facilities, and treatment options. In such circumstances Hemophilia and other rare diseases face additional hurdles in terms of timely and adequate care.

Individuals and families coping with hemophilia face extreme challenges associated with the severity of the condition. For individuals suffering from severe hemophilia, frequent and spontaneous bleeding episodes not only go through physical pain and discomfort but also emotional and psychological strain. The constant attention required to prevent injuries, alongside the financial burden of treatment, puts affected individuals and their families into a continuous struggle.

The resilient stories of Hemophilia patients like Shees, Umer, and Ali, aged 1, 4, and 7, respectively—echo the journey shared by a number of hemophilia patients across Pakistan. These young souls go through a number of obstacles, relying on consistent medication, family support, and emergency care access to lead normal, healthy lives. Extensive awareness and accessibility become extremely important for their well-being, providing them the space to explore without limitations and vigilance of their family. The prevailing ignorance, despite hemophilia prevalence delays diagnoses and hinder proper treatment access, in addition to inadequate healthcare infrastructure.

As a way forward, on this Rare Diseases Day and beyond, it is extremely important to advocate, amplify awareness and healthcare resources for individuals like Shees, Umer, and Ali and ensure they receive the empathy and care they rightly deserve.

Reasons and suggestions for declined tourism rate in AJK

Fatima Javed

AJK is heaven on Earth, and Allah has blessed this heaven with hilly, towering mountains, lakes, valleys, and waterfalls. Despite its immense tourism resources, AJK has not fully capitalized on its tremendous tourism potential due to various reasons.

There are several factors for the declined tourism rate in AJK. Tourism rate has always fluctuated since the outset. However, tourism had been at its acme during 2017-19. Political instability has played a major role in this regard. One problematic factor is the neighbourhood dispute, from recurrent firing near Neelum Valley road, which results in frequent closure of routes to a series of armed clashes consisting of cross-border airstrikes and exchanges of gunfire between India and Pakistan during different times, such as 26 Feb 2019 at Balakot.

While mentioning reasons for declined tourism in AJK, the Covid-19 Pandemic has also had a detrimental impact on tourism due to lockdowns and travel restrictions. Inadequate infrastructure and lack of connectivity have deterred tourists from visiting many places in AJK. Previous road accidents have instilled fear and hesitation among people about visiting the region's beautiful locations. Addition-

ally, there is a lack of proper tourism management and guidance, with no dedicated websites or organizations providing information and assistance to tourists, and no proper setup or guidelines for tourists.

Limited service facilities such as guesthouses or restaurants further discourage tourists from visiting AJK. There is no proper tourism training and educational programs to involve local people in tourism promotion as well, which can contribute to improving their attitude towards tourists.

Natural disasters such as heavy rainfall trigger landslides, which disrupt transportation and pose risks to both locals and tourists. Due to unpredictable rainfall and floods, tourists do not visit these beautiful areas to protect themselves from any unforeseen incident.

To enhance tourism in AJK, several steps can be taken: infrastructure development, safety and security, promotion and marketing, diversification of attractions, community involvement, preservation of natural and cultural heritage, government support, and tourism training and education.

Steps should be taken for infrastructure development to improve roads, transportation, accommodation facilities, and basic amenities to make it easier for tourists to visit and explore the region. Ensure a safe environment for tourists through effective securi-

ty measures and initiatives to prevent any security threats. Launch targeted marketing campaigns domestically and internationally to showcase the unique attractions and experiences offered in AJK.

Travel bloggers/YouTubers should be invited to visit these places and do promotions. Moreover, they can give their points of view, reviews, and suggestions. Develop a diverse range of tourist attractions, including cultural sites, adventure tourism opportunities (such as hiking, mountaineering, and water sports), and eco-tourism initiatives. Involve local communities in tourism development projects to empower them economically and ensure sustainable tourism practices. Preservation of natural culture and heritage implement conservation efforts to preserve the natural beauty and cultural heritage of AJK, ensuring that future generations can also enjoy these assets. Government support provides financial incentives, tax breaks, and regulatory support to encourage private sector investment in tourism infrastructure and services. Tourism training and education offer training programs for residents to enhance their skills in hospitality, tourism management, and customer service to improve the overall tourist experience. By addressing these areas, AJK can attract more tourists and become a thriving tourism destination in Pakistan and in the world.

IFRC Deputy Regional Director for Asia-Pacific Calls on PRCS Chairman

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) was honoured to welcome Ms. Juja Kim, Deputy Regional Director Asia-Pacific, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), on her inaugural visit to Pakistan. Kim's visit culminated in a significant meeting with Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari at the PRCS national headquarters, where they discussed strategies to enhance humanitarian efforts and strengthen PRCS's operational capacity.

During the meeting, Chairman Laghari extended a warm welcome to Kim, expressing gratitude for IFRC's unwavering support to PRCS. He underscored PRCS's response to the 2022 monsoon floods, which provided assistance to over 2.8 million affected individuals, and emphasised the crucial role of IFRC and ICRC in facilitating PRCS's humanitarian efforts.

Highlighting the ongoing commitment of PRCS teams in the field, Chairman Laghari stressed the importance



of sustained efforts in the recovery phase and appealed for continued support to bridge resource gaps. He specifically requested IFRC's assistance in providing model shelter houses, livelihood opportunities, and ensuring the well-being of the flood affected communities.

In response, Juja Kim appreciated PRCS's humanitarian efforts to help the affected people under the dynamic and forward-thinking leadership of Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari. She assured IFRC's continuous support to PRCS. Kim outlined forthcoming initiatives such as the Strategic Development

2030 of the national society, partnership meetings, and operational planning, as well as support for peer-to-peer support through the IFRC network.

According to Juja Kim, "Climate change is unpredictable now, leading to an increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events. IFRC is supporting PRCS for climate change adaptation efforts to build the resilience of communities to climate change. In response to the 2022 monsoon floods, IFRC launched an Emergency Appeal to provide shelter, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and health support, food rations and cooked meals, and livelihoods for the flood affected communities in Pakistan. We are committed to working hand-in-hand with our host national society (PRCS) for the implementation of the flood recovery plan."

Kim's visit underscored the strong partnership between IFRC and PRCS and reaffirmed their mutual commitment to alleviating the suffering of vulnerable communities and enhancing disaster response and recovery efforts.

Of opposition in democracy not just's lander'-Pakistan Muslim League

Arif Chaudhary

BIRMINGHAM: Where there is politics of slander in the opposition or institutions, the economic process slows down, the effects of which are clearly visible in the misery of the country, the nation and the people, and the negative thoughts and actions in the society, Dr. Shaukat said. Ali Sheikh, Secretary General of Pakistan Muslim League QA Overseas England, said this while talking exclusively to journalists at a local hotel during his recent visit to Pakistan.



He further said that the misfortune of our country is that the loser often goes to such an extent that he neglects or tramples moral values and relationships and reaches the extent of ruining his own beautiful relationships. He is touched by the drunkenness of the seat of power.

He should remember that the eternal chair belongs to the true owner of Allah Ta'ala

Here I want to say that the loser often does not refrain from breaking the law and is ungrateful for the pleasure of Allah.

In a democracy, the rule of law prevails, but in the drunkenness of the chair, they start to consider themselves above the law, unfortunately, this is their fate.

With reference to the recent election, Dr. Shaukat Ali said that for the sake of the wider interest of the country and for the eradication of poverty, for the sake of the basic economic attainment of the people, they should put their personal interests at the top and get the country out of the economic crisis.

In the end, he led the leadership of his party Muslim League-Q, especially Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, Chaudhry Shafe Hussain, Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Bashir Cheema Chaudhry Sarwar Sahib and the respected women candidates of the party who swept into action from Bhadi Aksirit, on victory. On behalf of myself and the party members who are present in large numbers in foreign countries, I offer my best wishes.

Minister Dr. Al-Maliki discusses with his Spanish counterpart the international efforts made to achieve a ceasefire

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, Dr. Riyad Al-Maliki, met with his counterpart, Mr. Jose Manuel Albarez, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain, as part of his meetings on the sidelines of the work of the Human Rights Council, currently held at its 55th session in Geneva.

The meeting discussed the movement regarding the possibility of reaching a ceasefire and the international and Arab efforts to achieve that. Al-Maliki briefed his counterpart on the latest developments, the humanitarian catastrophe and the war of genocide against our people, especially in the Gaza Strip and their forced confinement and displacement to the city of Rafah, where more than a million and a half Palestinians gathered.

Dr. touched on Al-Maliki pointed to Israel's crimes in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, the invasions of cities, mass murder, and colonial terrorism, and the need for countries to take steps for accountability, including placing settlers on terrorist lists and imposing a system of sanctions on Israel and its officials.

Minister Al-Maliki expressed that the crimes of Netanyahu and his government are the problem and the obstacle to the ceasefire and aggression against our people, and that security cannot come through war, and that security comes through peace, and that Netanyahu and the Israeli governments are not governments of peace, and the international community has duties to end the occupation. Israeli colonialism immediately.

Minister Al-Maliki also referred to the Israeli government's plans during the month of Ramadan and its intentions to deprive our people of their right to worship during the holy month.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs also thanked Dr. Al-Maliki, Spain, for its positions and its important participation in the oral arguments at the International Court of Justice, and for all the efforts it is making.

Minister Al-Maliki stressed that Palestine will present a set of resolutions, and looks forward to their support.

In turn, the Spanish Foreign Minister stressed their positions that are consistent with international law and supportive of the rights of the Palestinian people.

AIOU hold Int'l moot on Research and Practices in Education

PNP

ISLAMABAD: A two-day 7th International Conference on Research and Practices in Education with the theme "Transforming Education: Empowering Learning for Life" started yesterday at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). Chairman, Akhuwat Foundation, Dr. Amjad Saqib was the chief guest at the opening session while Dr. Kiichi Oyasu, from Tokyo Healthcare University, Japan, and Dr. Fatima Rehan Dar from Karachi were the keynote speakers of the inaugural session. A large number of scholars from different universities of Pakistan were present at the session while foreign scholars joined the session online.

Dr. Amjad Saqib said that the beauty of the universe is hidden in knowledge and that knowledge is useless which does not help us to explore hidden things around us. He emphasized the need to expand the canvas of thinking. Dr. Amjad Saqib explained in detail the factors and attributes of knowledge, practice, sincerity and intrinsiveness for research. Dr. Saqib said that making the universe beautiful should be the focus of our research. He stressed the need for collaboration in research and education. Dr. Amjad said that our attention has been drawn towards these sustainable development goals by the Holy Quran and Hadiths.

WaterAid Unveils Key Health Study on WASH in Pakistan

PPA

ISLAMABAD: WaterAid's latest Health Study, "Determining the Health Cost of Inadequate Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene in Pakistan," was unveiled in Islamabad today, marking a significant step towards addressing critical public health challenges.

Led by Dr. Abid Aman Burki from Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), the study sheds light on the economic burden of illnesses such as malaria, diarrhoea, and typhoid due to inadequate access to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) facilities. Key findings underscore a staggering household cost of PKR 116.13 billion, with lower-income households bearing the brunt of the burden.

Esteemed guests, including Professor Dr. Meher Taj Roghani, Member of Senate Standing Committee on National Health Services, Regulations, Pakistan emphasised the urgency of addressing the nexus between health and WASH.

The insightful panel discussion featured experts such as Dr. Masood Jogezi, Technical Consultant, Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination; Itsuro Takahashi, WASH Manager, UNICEF; Dr. Shahzeb Mirza, Assistant Director, M&E, Health Department, Govt of



Sindh; and Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI.

Muhammad Fazal, Head of Program Strategy and Policy at WaterAid, emphasised that recent research studies have highlighted that poor WASH is one of the major cause of morbidity and

mortalities in Pakistan that requires all of us to take collective actions to ensure access to safe WASH for better health and nutrition of people of Pakistan.

Furqan Ahmed, Interim, Country Director of WaterAid Pakistan, emphasised the urgency of addressing climate

change's impact on WASH and public health, stating, "Together, let us continue our collective efforts to prioritise WASH interventions from a health perspective and work towards achieving universal access to sustainable and safe WASH services in Pakistan."

Eighteen Signs MOU with Joint Ventures Cell of GHQ for Future Projects

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Defense Housing Authority (DHA) and Eighteen by Elite Estates Pvt. Ltd. (EEPL), a subsidiary of ORA developers which is a renowned international real estate development organization, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at fostering collaboration in the development of properties. The MoU signing ceremony took place between the Joint Ventures Cell of GHQ Rawalpindi, Defense city Karachi and Elite Estates Pvt. Ltd.

The MoU was signed by Brigadier Muqem Ahmed Subhani, Director of Joint Ventures Cell at GHQ, Brigadier Imran Naqvi, Executive Director Business Planning, DHA City Karachi and



Mr. Tarek Hamdy, CEO of Elite Estates Pvt. Ltd. Brig. Sohail Imtiaz, Administrator DHA Karachi and other key officials were also present at the event.

The partnership signals a commitment to explore and undertake joint initiatives for the development of residential cum commercial apartments, shopping malls, golf courses, community clubs, hotels, and entertainment

arenas within DHA, Defense City Karachi and Askari Housings.

While Commenting this latest development, Tarek Hamdy, CEO of Elite Estates Pvt. Ltd., stated, "We are excited about the opportunities that this MoU brings forth. We are committed to leveraging its expertise in real estate development to deliver projects of the highest standards by joining forces with DHA.

Brigadier Muqem Ahmed Subhani, Director of Joint Ventures Cell at GHQ remarked, "Our shared vision for sustainable development and excellence in real estate will drive positive outcomes for our communities. Through this partnership, we aim to create iconic spaces that enhance the quality of life for residents and contribute to the economic growth of the region."

British Trade Delegation Visits Pakistan to Bolster Bilateral Trade

PPA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of 15 UK business representatives is visiting Pakistan to build links in the textiles, agrifood, handicrafts and home decoration sectors.

The delegation, led by the Presidents of the Birmingham, West and North Yorkshire Chambers of Commerce, and the Asian Chamber of Commerce, will meet members of chambers of commerce in Karachi, Lahore, and Sialkot.

The mission is organised by the International Trade Centre (ITC)

and funded by the UK Government. Delegates will also travel to the "We Exhibit" trade fair—a trade-expo of women-led businesses in Sialkot which is funded by the UK Government. The delegation will be in Pakistan until 03 March.

British Deputy High Commissioner and Director of Trade Pakistan, Sarah Mooney, said:

"Trade between the UK and Pakistan is already growing at an impressive rate. This delegation clearly shows the interest in growing that, and the opportunities that lie ahead for

increased trade and investment. The UK will continue to work with the Government of Pakistan, supporting changes that make trade fairer and easier for everyone."

Delegates will gain insights into Pakistan's business environment, and specific market requirements for importing from Pakistan. The mission will establish direct contacts between UK companies and potential suppliers in Pakistan, enhancing awareness of the vast business linkages possible between the two countries.

ITC will also launch an export

readiness handbook and two export guides to help access the UK market, available in both English and Urdu, to support Pakistani exporters in understanding UK market guidelines.

The UK is Pakistan's third-largest trade partner, with total trade being £4.3 billion, and the third biggest source of foreign direct investment. The UK's Development Countries Trading Scheme has opened up new avenues of trade between the UK and Pakistan by reducing tariffs and simplifying trade terms for 94% of Pakistani exports.



Inauguration

ISLAMABAD: A view of debris of the demolished Chambers of Lawyers at F-8 Football ground after the Supreme Court ultimatum, which was till 01-05-2021, as the Workers of Anti encroachments.



Photo: Online

Yadgar-e-Dastur and Bagh-e-Dastur 1st of their kind to reflect history and soul of constitution says NA Speaker

By Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf has said that Constitution would continue to be a guiding document for generations to come to lead the country on path of development and progress. He said, "it is constitution which creates strong link between state and People." He also

said that this constitution monument would continue to remind about significance and sanctity of constitution. He expressed these views while inaugurating the Yadgar-e-Dastur (Constitution Monument) and Bagh-e-Dastur in front of parliament lodges Islamabad underscoring Pakistan's unwavering commitment to democracy and steadfast adherence

to the principles enshrined in the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf also said that country's progress and development is interlinked with adhering to constitution.

Yadgar-e-Dastur and Bagh-e-Dastur are 1st of their kind in constitutional and political history of Pakistan. Standing tall at the heart of nation, the

Yadgar-e-Dastur monument embodies the sanctity of the Constitution of 1973, with its towering plaques bearing the Preamble and fundamental rights.

The Islamic motif framing the constitution reminds of Article 227, binding that all existing laws shall be brought into conformity with the injunctions of Islam. As the national flag waves

high, symbolizing a constant reminder of every citizen's solemn duty to uphold loyalty and obedience to the constitution and the law, a fountain nearby represents the balance of power. Amidst lush greenery, each tree planted in bagh-e-Dastur signifies an article of the constitution, while the parliament, at the center, echoes its pivotal role in governance.

Al-Shifa Trust annually saves 1500 premature babies from blindness

By PPA

RAWALPINDI: The majority of premature newborns born weighing less than 1.5 kg are at a higher risk of developing retinal blood vessel disorganisation, which can result in visual issues, including life-long blindness.

The development of the baby's eyes is one of the numerous challenges faced in those first few vulnerable weeks by prematurely born babies that are born before 266 days, according to Dr. Wajid Ali Khan, chief of medical services at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital.

He told media representatives that the issue can be fixed with screening and surgery to help prevent major vision issues in children in the future.



He explained that an infant's eye development may be affected if delivered prematurely. The retina's blood vessels start to expand three months after conception and finish at the time of a normal birth.

The smallest and sickest are most at risk of developing Retinopathy of Prematurity

(ROP), which is the primary cause of paediatric retinal blindness, he said.

This is because using extra oxygen to treat premature newborns in hospitals promotes aberrant vascular growth in the eyes, and research indicates that the rate of advanced retinopathy can be lowered by maintaining a lower oxygen saturation level.

He stressed that to ensure that their premature infant receives the ongoing care of an ophthalmologist due to their increased risk of developing amblyopia, eye misalignment, and the need for glasses to develop normal vision, parents should incorporate a vision screening into their schedule between the ages of six and twelve months.

According to him, every year

in Pakistan, over 900,000 kids are delivered prematurely, and 80 percent of them have vision issues.

Over 40 highly skilled eye surgeons, including some of the most experienced eye specialists in the paediatric department, work at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital in Rawalpindi. With the hospital's current expansion, the paediatric department can now care for more than 500 OPD newborns per day, he informed.

According to Dr. Wajid Ali Khan, we have MoUs with the administrations of the Benazir Bhutto, Combined Military, and Fuji Foundation hospitals. Under these agreements, we will provide all medical services, including screening and surgery, for newborns born

at these hospitals and transportation.

He said that Al-Shifa is one of the few hospitals in the world and the only one in the SAARC region with the most up-to-date equipment and trained medical professionals to treat newborns with ROP.

Since March 2013, Al-Shifa has screened and treated newborns, focusing on those under seven months old. In the past ten years, the trust has successfully treated almost 15,000 babies.

He asserted that as awareness rises, the number will inevitably rise, and he said that with the use of teleophthalmology, we are offering free consultation to all state-owned and private health facilities, including those located abroad.

ECP appoints

Continued from Page 1

Commission of Pakistan, will supervise polling in the Provincial Assembly of Punjab, located in Lahore. The Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court will supervise the Presidential Elections in the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, situated in Karachi. Similarly, the Chief Justice of the Peshawar High Court will supervise the polls in the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, located in Peshawar. Finally, the Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court will conduct the presidential polls in the Provincial Assembly in Quetta. According to the notification Chief Justice Islamabad High Court will supervise elections in Senate and National Assembly, Islamabad. Member Election Commission-I, Election Commission of Pakistan will oversee polling in the Provincial Assembly of Punjab, Lahore. Chief Justice, Sindh High Court will supervise Presidential Elections in the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, Karachi. Chief Justice Peshawar High Court will supervise polls in the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar. Chief Justice Balochistan High Court will conduct the presidential polls in the Provincial Assembly, Quetta.

Hamas urges Palestinians to march to Al-Aqsa Mosque in Ramazan

By Reuters

GAZA: Hamas urged Palestinians on Wednesday to march to Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque at the start of Ramazan next month, raising the stakes in negotiations for a truce in Gaza, which U.S. President Joe Biden hopes will be in place by then.

The call by Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh followed comments by Biden, broadcast on Tuesday, that there was an agreement in principle for a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas during Ramazan, while hostages held by the militants are released.

Biden said he hoped such an agreement, which a source said would also allow more aid into the stricken Palestinian enclave and bring the release of Palestinian prisoners, could be finalised by March 4. The Muslim holy month of Ramazan is expected to begin on the evening of March 10.

Both Israel and Hamas have played

down the prospects for a truce and Qatari mediators have said the most contentious issues are still unresolved.

Israel said on Monday it would allow Ramazan prayers at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque but set limits according to security needs, setting the stage for

end Israeli attacks on Palestinian territories and sites.

In a televised speech, he said Hamas was showing flexibility in negotiations with Israel but at the same time was ready to continue fighting. Israel has said any deal with Hamas would require the group to drop "outlandish demands".

Hamas is weighing a proposal, agreed by Israel at talks with mediators in Paris last week, for a 40-day ceasefire, which would be the first extended truce of the five-month-old war. Both sides have delegations in Qatar this week hammering out details.

A senior source close to the talks said Israeli troops would pull out of populated areas under the agreement. But it did not appear to meet Hamas's demand for a permanent end to the war and Israeli withdrawal, or resolve the fate of fighting-age Israeli men among those being held by Hamas.



PM Kakar appears before IHC in compliance of court orders

By City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday appeared before the Islamabad High Court in compliance of the court orders in the case of Baloch missing persons.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani heard the case pertaining to the missing students. Caretaker Interior Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz Khan and Attorney General of Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan were also present on the occasion.

During the court proceedings, PM Kakar said the government was working in line with the constitution and the law.

"Being from Balochistan, I have more knowledge about the situation where people face armed resistance in the province," he said.

The caretaker PM said the activities of non-state elements were reported in Balochistan, and added a former Chief Justice of Balochistan, who was heading an inquiry, was martyred by militants.

Balochistan, he said, had been



facing terrorism for two decades and stressed that the issue needed to be addressed.

"All political parties should come together and find a solution to this issue," he said.

Kakar said the Constitution assures the security of all citizens and in return binds them for demonstrating an unconditional loyalty towards the State.

Justice Kayani remarked that the court in two years held several hearings in the case of missing persons and pointed out that the arrests by the authorities needed to be put on record.

PTI Spokesperson demands immediate release of all prisoners

By Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) stressed the need for restoring the constitution in its true sense and upholding rule of law by putting a halt on the ongoing series of reign of terror and releasing all unlawful incarcerated PTI's workers and leaders including its Founding Chairman Imran Khan forthwith.

PTI Spokesperson expressed its alarm over the unabated state coercive measures and open violation of the constitution and law in the country.

He demanded that the public mandate must be respected and the political party having clear majority in the center should be allowed to rule the country instead of re-imposing the people rejected PDM-2 in sheer violation of the constitution and the law.

PTI Spokesperson warned that the country would be plunged deep into the mire if the clique of certified criminals were imposed on the nation once again.

He said that the unstoppable series of massacres of the constitution and democracy in the country started from the regime change conspiracy to mandate theft completely exposed the already rotten system of the country.

PTI Spokesperson recalled that all kinds of unconstitutional, immoral and undemocratic tactics had been

used during the past two years to deprive the people of their right to freedom of expression and right to vote.

He stated that gravity of situation could be judged from the fact that the Founding Chairman of the largest and most popular political party of the country and former Prime Minister Imran Khan was given unconstitutional and illegal punishments in fake, frivolous and politically-motivated cases.

PTI Spokesperson continued that the extra-constitutional and legal measures started against PTI on May 9 were further intensified even after the public clear and unequivocal decision in support of the PTI and people beloved leader Imran Khan on February 8.

He highlighted that over 10,000 PTI's workers and leaders including women workers were still languishing in jails, who were completely deprived of their fundamental right of fair trial.

PTI Spokesperson stated that after the failure of all high fascist and brutal tactics to dampen the courage of PTI Founding Chairman, his veiled and virtuous wife was being targeted by the state, who was unjustly imprisoned in Bani Gala sub-jail.

He revealed that precarious situation was created to risk health and life of former first lady Bushra Bibi in order to compel Imran Khan to bow before this rotten corrupt system.

China's special envoy to conduct second round of shuttle diplomacy on Ukraine crises



By Spokesman Report

BELJING: China will send a special envoy to conduct the second round of shuttle diplomacy on seeking a political settlement for the Ukraine crisis, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning announced on Wednesday. Starting from March 2, Special Representative of the Chinese Government on Eurasian Affairs Li

Hui will visit Russia, the EU headquarters, Poland, Ukraine, Germany and France, Mao told reporters during her regular briefing held here.

The spokesperson said that the pressing priority now is to restore peace, adding that if peace talks can be started one day earlier, the losses will be reduced by one day. Mao Ning said that over the past two years, the Chinese side has never given up making efforts to promote peace and talks.

China has had in-depth communication with different countries, including Russia and Ukraine, and has played a constructive role in dealing with the crisis, she added. The trip by the Chinese special envoy comes shortly after the second anniversary of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Six terrorists gunned down in North Waziristan IBO: ISPR

Continued from Page 1 recovered from the killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities including target killing as well as extortion and abduction of innocent civilians. "Sanitisation operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area," the ISPR said, adding that locals of the

area appreciated the operation and expressed their full support to eliminate the menace of terrorism.

The operation comes amid a surge in terrorist activities across the country, especially in KP and Balochistan, since the outlawed militant group Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan ended its ceasefire with the government in November 2022.