

# QUETTA VOICE

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## 8000 CCTV Cameras To Be Installed on Feb 8 in Balochistan

Manan Mandokhail:

**QUETTA:** The Balochistan government has taken a significant step towards ensuring the integrity of the upcoming general elections in the province by deciding to install 8,000 CCTV cameras. This decision, made during a high-level meeting chaired by Caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki at the CM Secretariat in Quetta, reflects the commitment to a transparent and impartial electoral process.

The meeting, attended by provincial administrative secretaries, divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners, and senior police officials, focused on enhancing security measures at sensitive polling stations across Balochistan.

The approved installation of CCTV cameras at these key locations aims to closely monitor and safeguard the electoral proceedings, fostering an environment of fairness.

### Peaceful Elections Priority Of Government: Domki

Acknowledging the progress made in preparing for peaceful elections, commissioners and deputy commissioners briefed Caretaker Chief Minister Domki on ongoing efforts. They expressed satisfaction with the arrangements in place and emphasized the need for finalizing all aspects to ensure transparency and impartiality throughout the process.



Addressing concerns about the secure and timely delivery of election materials, helicopter transport to remote and inaccessible areas. Additionally, provisions for heavy machinery in districts prone to snowfall, such as Ziarat and other cold regions, were discussed to ensure logistical challenges are effectively managed.

**Conducive Atmosphere Exists For Elections: CM**

Continuing coordination among law enforcement agencies was emphasized, with the Caretaker Chief Minister highlighting proactive steps being taken daily to resolve challenges.

Caretaker Chief Minister Domki underscored the urgency of immediate action on proposed measures to address the shortage of security personnel.

He emphasized the importance of creating a conducive environment that addresses concerns raised by candidates and citizens.

Administrative officers were urged to formulate comprehensive plans tailored to regional conditions, with a primary focus on restoring peace and security.

Continuing coordination among law enforcement agencies was emphasized, with the Caretaker Chief Minister highlighting proactive steps being taken daily to resolve challenges.

Emphasizing the commitment to a peaceful election process, officials were directed to address concerns promptly, fostering an environment where voters can cast their ballots without fear.

As Balochistan gears up for the upcoming elections, the government's comprehensive approach and strategic decisions aim to instill confidence in the electoral process.

Prioritizing security and transparency at every step, these measures reflect a commitment to a fair and democratic election in the province.

## Govt moves SC against IHC nullifying cypher jail trial



**SLAMABAD:** The federal government contested the Islamabad High Court's (IHC) November 21 decision on Friday invalidating Imran Khan's jail trial in the cypher case.

In its petition, the government has argued that the IHC failed to assess the facts appropriately before declaring the special court designated to hear the cypher trial null and void. It maintained that the high court does not have the authority to abolish the status of a special court.

Advocate Raja Rizwan Abbasi submitted the application on behalf of the federal government.

Imran Khan, special court judge Abul Hasanat Zulkarnain, DG FIA, IG DC, and chief commissioner Islamabad, among others, have been named as respondents in the petition.

On November 22, the IHC declared the proceedings of PTI chairman Imran's and vice chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi's trial conducted in jail in the cypher case so far as null and void.

The court declared that the notification issued by the law ministry on August 29 - which read that the Law and Justice Division had "no objection" to PTI chairman's trial in the cypher case being held at Attock jail - was without lawful authority and no legal effect "for want of an order by the appropriate government and fulfillment of requirements provided in Section 352 of the CrPC [Code of Criminal Procedure] as well as Rule 3 in Part-A of Chapter 1 in Volume-II of the Rules and Orders of the Lahore High Court".

In its short order, the court also declared the law ministry's notifications about Imran's jail trial issued on September 12, September 25, October 3, and October 13 to be "without lawful authority and no legal effect". **NEWS DESK**

## A somber pall hangs over the coal-mining community of Dukki

Mir Salam Jogezei:

**Dukki:** A somber pall hangs over the coal-mining community of Dukki, Balochistan, following the tragic deaths of three miners on Friday.

The miners succumbed to methane gas poisoning while working inside a local coal mine. Details surrounding the incident remain under investigation, but initial reports suggest a build-up of methane gas, a colorless and odorless natural gas commonly found in coal mines, led to the fatal accident. Rescue operations were hampered by the hazardous conditions within the mine, and it took several hours to retrieve the miners' bodies.

The news of the tragedy has sent shockwaves through the close-knit mining community of Dukki. Family members and friends are mourning the loss of their loved ones, while expressing concerns about the safety of working conditions in local mines. "This is a devastating loss for our community," said a local resident, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"These men were not just miners; they were husbands, fathers, and sons. Their families are



struggling to cope with this tragedy."

The incident has also reignited calls for stricter safety regulations and improved working conditions in Balochistan's coal mines.

The province has a long history of mining accidents, often attributed to outdated equipment, inadequate ventilation, and a lack of proper safety training.

"The safety of our miners must be a top priority," said a local activist.

"The government needs to take immediate steps to ensure that such tragedies never happen again. An investigation into the cause of the accident is currently underway, and the provincial government has promised to provide support to the families of the deceased miners."

## 2 Injured In Mithri Sibi blast

From Our Correspondent:

**SIBI:** At least two people were injured in a blast in the Mithri area of Sibi, Pakistan, on Friday morning. Levies sources reported that an improvised explosive device (IED) planted by unknown miscreants caused the explosion.

The blast occurred near an under-construction road in the general area of Mithri Bhagra Raisan Mithri Road Khario Sibi. The impact damaged a pickup truck and injured two individuals.

The injured, identified as Nazeer s/o Jan Muhammad from Dhadar and another unidentified person, were rushed to the hospital for medical treatment.

Nazeer reportedly sustained normal injuries, while the extent of the other person's injuries remains unclear.

Levies forces immediately reached the scene and cordoned off the area. Forensic teams are currently investigating the site to gather evidence and determine the nature of the IED used.

### Heightened Security Measures Implemented

Following the blast, security has been heightened in Mithri and surrounding areas. Levies



and police personnel have been deployed in greater numbers to patrol the area and prevent further incidents. Checkpoints have also been established on key roads leading in and out of Mithri.

### Investigation Ongoing

The motive behind the blast and the identity of the perpetrators remain unknown.

Levies officials are kept apprised about the details of the investigation, citing ongoing efforts to gather evidence and track down the culprits.

## In call with Iranian counterpart, FM Jilani expresses Pakistan's readiness to work with Tehran on all issues

**NEWS DESK:** In the backdrop of recent tensions between Pakistan and Iran, Foreign Minister Jilani Abbas Jilani on Friday held a telephonic conversation with his Iranian counterpart, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, and expressed Islamabad's readiness to work with Tehran on all issues.

On Tuesday, Iran had launched attacks in Pakistan targeting what it described as bases for the militant group Jaish al-Adl in the border town of Panjgur in Balochistan, Iranian state media reported, prompting strong condemnation from Islamabad and downgrading of diplomatic ties.

The Iranian strikes were part of a series of attacks carried out by Iran in recent days in Syria and Iraq as a response to recent terrorist attacks on its territory. They have heightened concerns about regional stability, particularly amid ongoing conflicts in the Middle East.

The next day, Pakistan struck "hideouts" used by terrorist organisations namely Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan province, in an intelligence-based operation.



codenamed 'Marg Bar Samachar'.

Iran's IRNA news agency had reported that nine people were killed in the attack targeting a village in the city of Saravan, with Iranian Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi saying all the dead "were foreign nationals".

Iran had condemned the strikes, and summoned Pakistan's charge d'affaires "to protest and request an explanation from the Pakistani government," according to a statement by foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani.

However, the Iranian foreign ministry later said in a press release that it was committed to good neighbourly relations with Pakistan while condemning what it said was an "unbalanced and unacceptable drone attack on non-Iranian villagers".

Following Pakistan's tit-for-tat response to Iran's missile attack, caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar, who was in Switzerland for the 34th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF), decided to cut short his visit. Similarly, FM Jilani, who was in Uganda to attend a ministerial meeting of the non-aligned movement, also decided to return to the country.

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## Pakistan Delegation Returns Amid Iran's Panjgur Incursion

Staff Reporter:



**QUETTA:** In response to Iran's firing of drone missiles and airspace violation during the Joint Border Commission (JBC) meeting in Chah Bahar, a Pakistani delegation led by Chief Collector Customs Balochistan Bashir Memon returned abruptly. The delegation, including members of Chambers of Commerce and Industry Balochistan, senior security officers, and Balochistan government officials, left as a protest against Iran's actions, according to Abdullah Achakzai, President of Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCI).

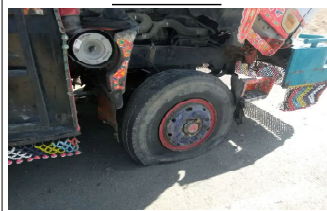
The JBC, convened quarterly to address Pak-Iran border issues, had terrorism, human trafficking, and trade on its agenda. Meanwhile, Pakistan heightened security along the 900-kilometer border, deploying Frontier Corps personnel to respond to potential Iranian aggression.

Despite tensions, the Pak-Iran border remained open on Thursday, allowing routine trade and movement. A senior official at Tattan clarified that no instructions to shut down the border were received. Chief Minister Balochistan, Ali Mardan Domki, chaired a high-level meeting to review security and law and order along the border, deciding to further tighten security in bordering areas.

### JBC Discussing Terrorism, Human Trafficking

## Truck Carrying Marble Stone Attacked In Kalat

Abdullah Lehari:



**KALAT:** In a concerning incident along the Quetta-Karachi national highway near Granit, unidentified armed individuals targeted a truck, resorting to stoning and gunfire, as confirmed by police sources. Authorities reported that the truck's tires suffered damage as a result of the gunfire, leading to a burst. Despite the intensity of the attack, the driver and the cleaner emerged unharmed, according to the police.

The incident occurred on a crucial stretch of the national highway, highlighting the security challenges faced in the area.

Law enforcement is actively investigating the incident to identify the perpetrators and ascertain their motives.

Authorities are urging heightened vigilance and cooperation from the community to ensure the safety of commuters and prevent further incidents of this nature.

## QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

## Lost potential: Exploring the plight of out of school children in Balochistan

## EDITORIAL:

Despite the allocation of more than 90 billion rupees for the education sector in the budget for the year 2023-24, still more than 2 million children are out of school in Balochistan. Much has been said and repeated promises have been made by successive governments, nevertheless, the number of out-of-school children has grown. The alarming rise of out-of-school children means the potential of a generation is lost and the future of out-of-school children is at stake.

The number of enrolled students in government schools is 1,119,925, the report mentioned. The students studying in private schools are in addition to this. However, no data about the private schools' enrollment is available.

## Balochistan's Silent Crisis

The province has not conducted any survey to assess the learning quality of students studying in over 15,000 government-run primary, middle and high schools across Balochistan. As per a confidential report obtained by Quetta Voice, still over 2 million children are out of school. It has been evident that the law and order situation always overshadows the education issue.

Caretaker Education Minister Balochistan, Qadir Bakhs Baloch revealed that there was no toilet facility in 5716 government-run schools of the province. Such data has been repeatedly shared by every new education minister. Enough is enough, the rulers must go beyond statements and translate their words into action.

## Breaking the chains of illiteracy

The literacy rate in Balochistan is 46 percent as per statistics obtained from the education department with 61 percent male and 29 percent female. If our government and policymakers are committed to breaking the chains of illiteracy, then, they have to make sure the enrollment of every child in school and every teacher in class. This strategy offers the panacea to this alarming problem.

Children of Balochistan also deserve better and the government must launch a practical education emergency to enroll all out-of-school children in the province. Otherwise, the impact of out-of-school children is huge for the country and nation.

## AI in education

By Faisal Bari:

INVESTMENTS in artificial intelligence are massive (\$94 billion in 2021 alone). They will continue as people see profit-making potential in them. We have all heard the rhetoric that AI is going to revolutionise many areas and have a major impact on jobs in several sectors.

Where it might increase marginal productivity (output per worker), it will automate jobs and thus replace workers. This is already happening in some spaces.

AI is expected to have a large impact on education too. There were already over 30 multimillion-dollar-funded AI-in-education corporations in 2022, some analysts expect AI in the education market to be worth more than \$200bn in less than five years.

But the same apprehensions surface in this sector too. Where AI can help create more pathways for personalised and lifelong learning, it will also automate a lot of processes. Teachers fear they might be 'replaced' by AI systems eventually. These apprehensions are a bit premature. AI is still developing and it is hard to predict all that it will be able to eventually accomplish. Although there are early indications that some teacher tasks can be automated, there is also a perception that certain functions that teachers perform, and that are relevant to socialisation and the development of deeper,

more contextualised learning, won't be easy to automate. The future being unknown, let us see how technology develops and is deployed.

Pakistan is not at the frontier of AI use in education. For now, its most common application is seen in students using GPI-3 to do their assignments or assessments and for writing essays. Professors are using AI-based systems to detect AI-generated assignments, assessments. The main concern so far is the increase in the incidence of cheating. Submitting someone else's work as one's own is cheating and hurts the learning process. Students, instead of trying to understand a topic, submit something they might not even understand. The struggle is not to stop students from using AI, but to convince them to use it for understanding concepts and deepening their learning instead of cheating. This is not a major issue. There are programmes that detect cheating and many professional tasks are these. The cut-and-paste game between programmes that allow students to produce content without detection and programmes that allow professors to detect cheating will continue until we have a way to eventually accomplish. What are more interesting, but have not come to Pakistan in any significant manner yet, are intelligent tutoring systems. ITS allow a person-based introduction of information and then personalised feedback to students and the

monitoring of progress by students as well as teachers (dashboards). They open up doors for increasing outreach, reducing the cost per student and allowing more student-specific learning opportunities.

Pakistan, with some 23 million out-of-school children, faces significant issues regarding the quality of school education, and limited and low enrolments at under-secondary levels. It could really benefit from ITS but it is a distant prospect. We need good internet connectivity for this: we need students to have computers and tablets at home; we need teachers who are tech-savvy and are not afraid of ITS could do. We need ITS that are much better than where they are, in the right now. They still have a long way to go before they start delivering well on the personalisation and customisation at low prices.

Existing ITS are better able to work in mathematics and physics, are more geared towards specific tasks, and are more suited to preparation for specific examinations. A lot of development is still needed to take place before it is possible to see them being used for educating out-of-school children or ensuring improved learning for millions of children. There are also AI-assisted applications that allow language translation and/or mathematics learning. However, it is not clear if they assist student learning or undermine it by taking away the need for learning.

Muhammad Jahangeer Kakar

## Environmental Woes of Balochistan

Environment and climate change are the prospective strategic priorities that would define the international fraternity of relations.

The prosperity and longevity of nations around the world would be both defined and jeopardized by the elements of environmental preservation and climate change management. Pakistan in general and the Balochistan, in particular, are threatened by the climate change shifts and the threats of environmental degradation.

Balochistan attains a peculiar nature both in terms of geographic extension as well as the various trends associated with this expansive bounty.

It is the gift of nature that we are turning into a potential curse. The documentation of environmental laws is insufficient and not in currency thereby making it less effective being less responsive.

The inequity of law with time and space has made it hard for implementing the environmental restraint necessary to cause a chance that one would want to see around intangible meters.

Other than the Balochistan Environmental Protection Act 2012, there are no rules, regulations, or Provincial Environmental Quality Standards ever

framed that could regulate the issues of environmental hazardousness. The insufficient law further has given out a polarized institutional dichotomy which is also the quality of the marine environment. There can be said to be no institutional arrangement making one department completely responsible for looking at these parameters.

The complete missing links between the departments of the forest, agriculture, water management, and environment aren't systematically and institutionally addressed. Reason would demand a synergized level where these various department would focus on working together with a jointly hatched institutional framework that could allow for information passage, initiatives, and segmentation and avoid parallelism in terms of applications of actions.

This could also produce joint results and could gauge the grey areas. The hollow base in terms of legal terrain has raised an intractable institutional pyramid which is aiming a cry in the wilderness. Balochistan is a land of mysterious habitat. Its environmental issues are multifaceted. The long coast remains unwatched in terms of coastal and marine life preservation.

There is no documented study that has yet scaled and mapped

the condition of the coastal life with the mapping of various types of marine and aquatic species, the climate record measurement, the environmental conditions and baselines, and the quality of the marine environment. There can be said to be no institutional arrangement making one department completely responsible for looking at these parameters.

Rapid industrialization along the coast in Lasbella, Gwadar districts going unchecked

The rapid industrialization along the coast and especially in the coastal districts of Lasbella and Gwadar go unchecked and are at large as of this moment. The industrialization is good enough but its goodness is the expense of environmental degradation would be a sorry compromise we may be intentionally or unintentionally making up.

The Gaddani Ship-breaking yard could one day result as the Wuhan of China as it hosts the most hazardous activity of shipbreaking which is like turning the thick dirt of the world to our clean, green, and serene shores.

The cost-benefit analysis of this and other such activities along the coast remains something yet to be done though it has been so long to have

been so earlier done. Increasing urbanization another reason for environmental nuisance

The unchecked urbanization is another cause of environmental nuisance. The dearth of amenities and facilities of life and livelihood have pushed the rural populace to shift and center around the urban centers of which the provincial capital city of Quetta takes precedence over all other cities of the province.

The city has degenerated into one large stockpile of human pollution without any town planning, the invocation of town management rules, and facilities.

The air pollution caused by transportation has been on the ever-increasing rise with no controls over the fitness of vehicles piled on the roads. The lack of environmental fitness verification and the customary traffic licenses by the police have thrown the environmental hazards of pollution in the backyard.

Deforestation another reason for the environmental woes of Balochistan

The writer is the Director-General Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Balochistan. Mr. Kakar has been contributing to express tribune and other newspapers on various issues.

The depleting forest cover and the utterly diminishing green areas in the province are posing threats for the variety of flora and fauna in the province.

Due to ineffective efforts and plans by the respective forest department and agriculture department are making it hard to implement the designs of green Balochistan.

The institutional capacity of meeting up the challenges has to be well complemented. Given the typical public sector organizational mode, it would not be positive to be expecting such a grand change overnight.

The use of technical, biology, science, and research through professionals and academicians has to form a leading front to guide the entire body of the policy cycle. It is late to attend the call of change but it would rather be more chaotic if we still miss this opportunity as we missed others, many times.

Environmental Woes of Balochistan The writer is the Director-General Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Balochistan. Mr. Kakar has been contributing to express tribune and other newspapers on various issues.

## Sham elections

By Faisal Siddiqi:

IN the bail petition of Imran Khan and Shah Mahmood Qureshi in the 'caper case', Justice Athar Minallah, through an order dated Dec 22, 2023, observed: "Discrimination or intimidation on the basis of political opinions are alien to the concept of genuine elections and even such a perception would be sufficient to... relegate it to the status of sham elections [emphasis added]."

'PTI level playing field case'. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, through an order dated Dec 22, 2023, while prima facie accepting the allegations of the PTI against the ECP, observed: "A level playing field is essential for healthy competition, ensuring that elections are free from manipulation or coercion [emphasis added]."

Could anyone have even imagined that, less than a month after these two progressive Supreme Court orders, it would be another SC judgement which would deny electoral participation to a national popular political party like the PTI, by depriving its candidates of a common election symbol?

A 12-member bench of the SC in the landmark

'Benazir Bhutto symbols case' (1989) had held, in essence, that symbols are the very soul of elections and also a fundamental right of political parties under Article 17 of the Constitution because they are central to the voters' right to identify and choose their political opinions and elect their representatives in the less-educated societies of South Asia.

It is precisely because of this undisputed and entrenched constitutional jurisprudence that the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) brazen and outrageous judgement of Jan 12, 2024 also based its declaration and direction to allot the election symbol to the PTI on the series of SC judgements in the 'Benazir Bhutto symbols case' (1989) and the 'Nawaz Sharif case' (1993).

Constitutionally binding judicial precedents in Pakistan, party case' (1988), 'Benazir Bhutto symbols case' (1989) and the 'Nawaz Sharif case' (1993). Constitutionally binding judicial precedents in Pakistan, party case' (1988), 'Benazir Bhutto symbols case' (1989) and the 'Nawaz Sharif case' (1993).

The Supreme Court's short order dated Jan 13, 2024 in the 'PTI election symbol case', which upholds the ECP order of Dec 22, 2023,

denies the election symbol to the PTI, and sets aside the PHC judgement, has given the reasons for its order.

Firstly, the SC reasons that the PHC had no jurisdiction to entertain because petitions by the PTI challenging the earlier ECP order of Nov 23, 2023, declaring the PTI intra-party elections of June 10, 2022, illegal, were pending in the Lahore High Court. Thus, the PTI should have filed its petition challenging the ECP order of Dec 22, 2023, before the LHC.

But even this hyper-technical objection is erroneous because the SC itself accepts that both the PHC and LHC had concurrent jurisdiction to examine the legality of the ECP order of Dec 22, 2023. Moreover, the SC has completely failed to examine, even in the slightest, the substance of the Salahuddin Tirmizi SC judgement (2008), it is the PHC which had prima facie rejected the second-last petition (No.5791-P/2023) with regard to intra-party elections of the PTI in accordance with the PTI constitution. Therefore, the SC had no jurisdiction to give such a finding.

Secondly, the SC reasoned that the ECP order denying the election symbol to the PTI was not a case of victimisation, because the ECP had been calling

upon PTI to hold elections since May 24, 2021, when the party was asked to hold elections, and 13 other parties' intra-party elections had also not been accepted by the ECP.

This SC reasoning is erroneous for three reasons: (a) only those who are oblivious to events throughout 2023 to date would consider the ECP as being fair towards the PTI; (b) the SC judgement of Dec 22, 2023 in the 'level playing field case' itself acknowledges the prima facie validity of the unfair treatment towards PTI; (c) is the ECP action against the PTI insignificant parties even comparable to the PTI's case? Even otherwise, 13 wrongs don't make a right.

Thirdly, it was said there was no proof of sham elections or imbalance of intra-party elections being held. But this was never even an allegation by the ECP, which had accepted that intra-party elections were held, but not in accordance with the PTI constitution. Therefore, the SC had no jurisdiction to give such a finding.

Fourthly, few PTI members were denied nomination papers and the election notice did not mention the exact venue in Peshawar and even that venue was

changed. But this was never even an allegation made by the ECP. Therefore, the SC had no jurisdiction to give such a finding.

Fifthly, the PHC had wrongly held that the ECP did not have the jurisdiction to adjudicate on the internal legality of a political party's intra-party elections. But rather precisely, the PHC has held that Section 209 of the Election Act, 2017, doesn't confer any jurisdiction on the ECP to question the substantive and procedural internal validity of the unfair treatment towards PTI. On the other hand, the SC fails to point out any provision which confers such a substantive jurisdiction. What is surprising about the judgement is that it contains no discussion at all on the fundamental right of a political party to elect its members. It is to an election symbol based on the 'Benazir Bhutto symbols case' (1989) and other SC cases.

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## The bounced cheque

By Abdul Moiz Jafarri

THERE are some people who are born superheros. Others have superhero-like traits upon them, once a particular robe and wig becomes theirs to wear. But there are yet others who are natural sidekicks; those whose lot it is to set the superheros really shine, while they keep to the background and manage the admin. After all, someone has to keep the bat cave clean and ensure weapon refills orders aren't behind schedule. Even the batmobile needs servicing. Ijazul Ahsan was Robin to the Batman that was Saqib Nisar. He went around tut-tutting

after tasting prison food with chief justice Nisar, and stood around when the latter told off private hospital owners and gave them advice on what to wear whilst on a snap check of their private property. He enthusiastically helped host the Saqib Nisar weekend in the capital, where the population control. He was with the boss at the forefront of the dam-building effort.

Then came Gulzar Ahmed, and Ijaz sahib donned his boots and interlarded his wardrobe became a city engineer with the new hero in town. He helped the top judge point his magic wand left and right, filling

thousands of structures in Karachi for being illegal. This was the kind of superhero work which protected the paper plans of cities at the expense of the people for whom the cities are planned. But that didn't faze justice Ijaz. Next came Umar Ata Bandial, and here the sidekick took on the role of equal to the hero. It also helped that there was an Imran Khan-led political party that was asking the Bandial court political questions disguised as requests for interpretive assistance. Turn by turn, Ijaz sahib helped rewrite the Constitution. When it came to implementing the opinion-based works of fiction,

he again helped seat himself on the permanent three-member bench of the apex court. The same situation in two different ways depending on who petitioned it: the hero was obeyed by his party, it was a cancer affecting the body politic; if the hero was not obeyed, it was a cancer affecting the body politic; if the hero was not obeyed, it was a cancer affecting the body politic; if the hero was not obeyed, it was a cancer affecting the body politic.

Justice Ijaz also has several great achievements outside of the political arena. Such as when he prompted justice Gulzar to add the word 'alleged' in reference to Matullah Jan's

abduction when Gulzar sahib was dictating an order. Or when he dismissed three-member bench of the apex court. The same situation in two different ways depending on who petitioned it: the hero was obeyed by his party, it was a cancer affecting the body politic; if the hero was not obeyed, it was a cancer affecting the body politic; if the hero was not obeyed, it was a cancer affecting the body politic; if the hero was not obeyed, it was a cancer affecting the body politic.

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## Govt challenges IHC cypher trial verdict in Supreme Court

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government has challenged the Islamabad High Court's (IHC) 21 November, 2023 decision to annul the jail trial of PTI founder Imran Khan in cypher case.

On 21 November last year, the IHC had declared the proceedings of Imran Khan's trial conducted in jail in the cypher case as null and void. However, the appointment of the judge to the special court formed under the Official Secrets Act, 1923, Approving the maintainability of the appeal, the court declared that the notification issued by the law ministry on August 29 - which read that the Law and Justice Division had "no objection" to PTI chairman's trial in the cypher case being held at Attock jail - was without lawful

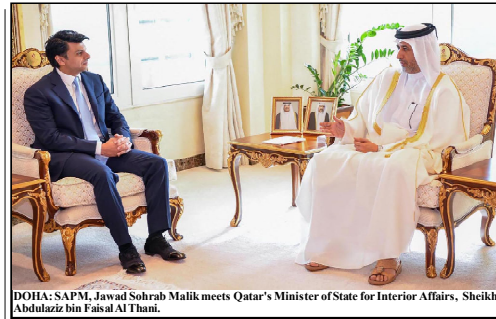
authority and no legal effect "for want of an order by the appropriate government and fulfilment of requirements provided in Section 352 of the CrPC [Code of Criminal Procedure] as well as Rule 3 in Part-A of Chapter-I in Volume-III of the Rules and Orders of the Lahore High Court".

In its short order, the court also declared the law ministry's notifications about Imran's jail trial issued on September 12, September 25, October 3, and October 13 to be "without lawful authority and no legal effect".

On Friday, the federal government challenged the IHC verdict in the order in the Supreme Court through Raja Rizwan Abbasi advocate, praying the apex court to annul the IHC verdict, arguing the high court did not analyse the facts correctly.

The federal government further said that the IHC has no authority to abolish the status of the special court. It is challenge, the federal government made founder and judge Abul Hasan as respondents along with FIA director general, Islamabad IG chief and deputy commissioners.

Liaquat Ali Chhatta, alongside Director General RDA, Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi, and CPO Rawalpindi, was overseeing the operation against illegal housing societies. DGRDA Mohammad Saif Anwar Jappa stated that the grand operation, guided by Commissioner in response to public complaints about the



DOHA: SAPM, Jawad Sohrab Malik meets Qatar's Minister of State for Interior Affairs, Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal Al Thani.

## Rawalpindi administration conducts operation illegal housing scheme

RAWALPINDI (INP): In adherence to the directives of the Divisional Intelligence Committee, a task force conducted raids on four site offices in Chakri main stop, Mouz Rajar, Main Chahan Bazar, and Sangral near Milo Mor (Jarar Camp), Mouz Raja, and Sangral Tehsil Rawalpindi. The operation targeted the illegal housing scheme, Khayaban Iftikhar, leading to the removal of promotional pin-fences.

Commissioner Rawalpindi Division,

illegal occupation by owners of such housing schemes. Stringent action is promised against those resorting to forcible land occupation. Legal possession has been granted to owners of housing schemes with completed legal documentation, and the RDA regularly issues press releases for public awareness.

Citizens are urged not to invest in illegal housing schemes and advised to refer to the RDA website (www.rda.gov.pk) for approved housing schemes. Earlier no-

ties were served to owners and sponsors of these housing schemes, instructing them to cease illegal advertisements, bookings, and development.

The operation team including Assistant Director Planning Mehwish Naseem, police teams from Chonra Rawalpindi and Wahi Chakri police stations, RDA scheme and building inspectors, district council inspector, representatives of district administration, and other team members jointly executed the extensive operation.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar chairing a meeting on drugs pricing mechanism.

## US lawmakers avert damaging government shutdown

WASHINGTON (INP): The US Congress greenlit temporary funding Thursday to avert a partial government shutdown that threatened the functions of multiple key federal agencies and could have seen thousands of employees sent home without pay.

With large sections of the government due to close at the end of Friday,

the House of Representatives voted to keep the lights for at least another six weeks, approving a measure that had advanced earlier from the Senate.

The last-ditch "con-

tinuing resolution" was pitched by leaders in the upper chamber as public works were preparing to be sent home unpaid, pending government functions from military operations to food aid to federal policymaking.

Complicating the negotiations, forecasts for a brutal winter storm curtailed the lawmakers' work, with Congress announcing that it would be closed for business all day Friday.

"We have good news for America: There will not be a shutdown on Friday," Democratic Senate leader Chuck Schumer said in a speech

to colleagues. "Because both sides have worked together, the government will stay open. Services will not be disrupted. We will avoid a needless disaster."

The short-term fix was pitched after negotiations on a full-year budget were stalled by the demands of House Republicans for deep spending cuts and sweeping immigration reforms that are dead on arrival in the more moderate Senate.

Under the agreement, services and administration related to agriculture, energy and

water, military construction and veterans' programs, transport and housing - all due to grind to a halt the weekend - will be funded until March 1.

The military, Justice Department, border security, Congress and many other federal agencies and departments were due to run out of money at the start of February but will now be able to function until March 8.

That will give lawmakers more time to set the full-year budget in line with spending limits that Democrats and Republicans agreed to last year.

SRINAGAR (INP): Posters have appeared in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir urging the people to pay tributes to martyrs and observe India's Republic Day on 26 January as Black Day.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the posters, pasted on pillars, poles and walls in different areas of the territory, said the purpose of the paying tributes to the Kashmir martyrs and observing 26 January as Black Day is to register their protest against the forcible occupation of their motherland by India. Termin-

ing the so-called Indian Republic Day celebrated in IIOJK a cruel joke, the posters, displayed by All Parties Hurriyat Conference and other Hurriyat organizations in different parts of the territory, read that India should read the clear message from the people of Kashmir that they have always rejected its illegal occupation.

The posters, also circulating on social media, further asked the people to hold special prayers for the Kashmir martyrs on the anniversaries of these massacres.

Meanwhile, the Jammu Kashmir National Front spokesperson Haseeb Wani in a statement in Srinagar appealed to the Kashmir people to observe India's Republic Day as Black Day, saying that the fascist country, which has denied the basic rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, has no justification to celebrate its Republic Day in the occupied territory. Condemning India's illegal and forced occupation of Jammu and Kashmir, he said, "For the past several decades, the Indian forces have been badly involved in

violating the basic political and democratic rights of the Kashmiri people."

He said that despite the promises of holding a free, fair and impartial plebiscite to allow the people of Kashmir decide their political destiny, the Indian rulers have resorted to violent means to suppress the aspirations of the Kashmiri people by force.

He also urged the international community to take serious notice of India's illegal occupation of Kashmir, which is the main cause of unrest in the region.

## North Korea tests underwater nuclear weapon system

PYONGYANG (INP): North Korea said Friday that it had tested an "underwater nuclear weapon system" in response to joint naval exercises by Washington, Seoul and Tokyo that involved a US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier.

The drills were "seriously threatening the security" of the North, so in response, Pyongyang "conducted an important test of its underwater nuclear weapon system Haei-5-23" under development in the East Sea of Korea, according to a statement from the defence ministry carried by state news agency KCNA. Early last

year, Pyongyang said it had carried out multiple tests of a purported underwater nuclear attack drone - a different version of the Haei, which means tsunami in Korean - claiming it could unleash a "radioactive tsunami".

Analysts have questioned whether Pyongyang has such a weapon. Earlier this week, South Korea, the United States and Japan carried out joint naval drills in waters off southern Jeju Island, which they said were in response to North Korea's Sunday launch of a hypersonic missile. The drills involved nine war-

ships from the three countries, including the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson. Pyongyang said Friday the drills "constituted a cause of further destabilising the regional situation, and they are an act of seriously threatening the security" of the North, the defence ministry spokesman said, according to KCNA. North Korea's own test - the exact date of which was not given - ensured "our army's underwater nuke-based countering posture is being further rounded off and its various maritime and underwater responsive actions will continue to deter the

hostile military maneuvers of the navies of the US and its allies," the spokesman said. Recent months have seen a sharp deterioration in long-tense ties between the two Koreas, with both sides jettisoning key tension-reducing agreements, ramping up frontier security, and conducting live-fire drills along the border.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un last week declared the South his country's "principal enemy", jettisoned agencies dedicated to reunification and outreach and threatened war over "even 0.001 mm" of territorial infringement.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary for Interior Aftab Akbar Durran in a meeting with UNHCR Representative Philippa Candler.

## Huthi missiles hit another US ship in Gulf of Aden

SANAA: Yemen's Huthi rebels claimed another attack on a US ship early Friday, after the United States flagged, US-Owned, Greek-operated tanker on Thursday night.

"The crew observed the missiles impact the water. There were no reported injuries or damage to the ship," the command said on the social media platform X.

Continued Huthi aggression against vessels in and around the Red Sea has led to strikes, in Yemen by US and British forces, with the United States reporting its latest attack on Huthi targets on Thursday.

The specialist website Marine Traffic said the Chem Ranger was a chemical tanker sailing from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to Kuwait.

British maritime risk management company Ambrey said a Marshallese chemical tanker sailing the same route had reported an incident southeast of the Yemeni port of Aden.

"An Indian warship responded to the event," it said.

The British maritime security agency

UKMTD, without identifying the vessel, also reported an incident in the same area, adding in a bulletin that the "vessel and crew are safe, vessel proceeding to next port".

The Huthis have launched numerous attacks on ships in the waters around Yemen since the war in Gaza

erupted on October 7 with Hamas's bloody attack on Israel.

The Huthi statement said the rebels were acting against "the oppression of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and within the response to the American-British aggression against our country".

### TENDER NOTICE

The Science And IT Department invites bids from eligible bidders for supply of following items: TSE-2244/17277 Note: In All Procurements of GOE Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPRA

GOB Tender Fee Rs.500-

Sl.no. Description of Object

1. IC I Equipment/Network, surveillance devices, storage devices, Office Equipment

(Total Items/Quantity: 2)

Procurement shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: 3 Assignments of Senior Sales and Commissioning 2,001,000 PKR in 3 Years. Turn over of at least 2,000,000 PKR in a Subsequent Previous Years. Personnel in Active Tax Payer List, Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. JV is not permissible. Submission of the required Bid Security in case of Bid Security is not found as required during financial evaluation the bidding firm shall be declared as ineligible and non-responsive. Submission of Irrevocable Bid Security (Amount Fee: Must agree to serve the contract within 30 (thirty) days). The bidder must have a valid corporate office in Quetta. As required by the procuring agency in the Data-sheet. Must unconditionally agree with all the instructions, terms and conditions specified in the bidding document or agreement. Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure: Bid Security. The bid must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee. Decal at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under signed from a recognized bank. Tender documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under signed 500 PKR (lease of tender documents). From the date of publication of NT to 08 February, 2024 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The bidders must be submitted latest by 08 February, 2024 at 11:30 AM. Tender opening: All bidders will be opened on same day at the office of the under signed at 12:30 PM. Address: Room # 15, First Floor Block # 14 Civil Secretariat, Quetta Phone no: 333761577 Fax no: 3516201745 Email: tharanga@gmail.com

SECTION OFFICER SCIENCE AND IT DEPARTMENT

PRO No. 1352/16-1-2024

GOB Tender Fee Rs.500-

Sl.no. Description of Object

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## Polio programme official killed, cop injured in firing on vehicle in Bajaur

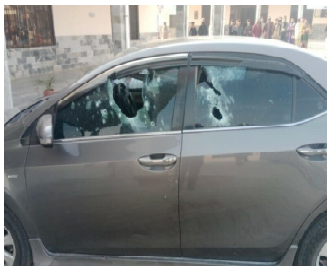
**BAJAUR:** A polio programme official was killed and a policeman sustained injuries on Friday after unidentified assailants opened fire on a vehicle in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bajaur district.

Station House Officer (SHO) of Mamond Police Station Dilawar Khan told Dawn.com that unknown persons opened fire on Dr Abdul Rehman's vehicle when he was coming back from the District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital Khar in the Tarkhoo area of Mamond Tehsil.

The SHO said the doctor was the coordinator of the polio immunisation programme in Bajaur. According to Rescue 1122 Media Coordinator Ibraheem Khan, the team provided medical aid to the injured persons and shifted them to DHQ Khar in critical condition.

The facility's medical superintendent, Dr Wazir Khan, said Rehman succumbed to his injuries and passed away.

Last week, two people were injured when a bomb planted on the roadside hit a



vehicle in the Bajaur tribal district.

At the start of January, at least seven policemen on polio duty were killed and more than 20 were injured in the bomb attack on a police vehicle in the Biloot area of Mamond Tehsil.

So far, 109 people have been killed in polio-related incidents since 2012, according to a report, which puts the number of injuries suffered by policemen and polio workers at 162 during this period. It said that a total of 13 people were kidnapped during vaccination drives.

The total number of killed and injured remained at 284, including 166 policemen, 87 health workers and 31 civilians. They included 255 men and 29 women. **NEWS DESK**



**NASEERABAD:** Deputy Commissioner Batul Asadi presides over a meeting dedicated to preparations for the upcoming general elections.

## Pak-US relations set on boosting economy, trade: Masood Khan

**WASHINGTON (INP):** Pakistan-US relations are strengthening in both security and non-security areas, with a special focus on investment and trade cooperation that emphasize the utility of the recently launched platform of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Ambassador Masood Khan has said.

"We must be partners ... we must continue to talk to each other and resolve issues that would hinder peace and security in the region, but, more importantly, we must develop people-to-people contacts and increase economic cooperation", the Pakistani envoy told a large audience in the prestigious University Club in Washington D.C.

The club's International Committee had invited Ambassador Masood Khan to speak on a wide array of subjects.

The audience comprised members of the think-tank community, businessmen, entrepreneurs, opinion makers, and the media.

Highlighted the importance of Pak-US relations, the ambassador cited the presence of 80 US companies in Pakistan, he said that the US has a standing advantage because of its companies' experience in Pakistan spanning decades and their existing investment infrastructure in the country.

In the field of education and technology, he termed the

recently renewed Pakistan-US Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement transformative and stressed that its potential should be fully utilized for higher education, research and development, and technological collaboration.

Identifying the sectors of agriculture, energy, IT, and mineral extraction, Masood Khan showcased the tremendous potential for investors to invest in Pakistan through the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

"We also need to collaborate in the realm of renewables, healthcare, education, and IT sector, particularly in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

banks, amounted to \$13,145.1 million. Of these, the commercial banks had net reserves of \$5,117.7 million. The SBP's reserves cumulatively rose \$1.32 billion in the prior two weeks, which reflected a rebound from almost six-month low of \$6.9 billion hit on December 15, 2023. The reserves grew on the back of official inflows coming from multilateral creditors. This helped the country to meet the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) end-December quarterly target of net foreign assets, according to industry sources and local research houses.

The latest rupee appreciation came as Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves, held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), reached \$8,027.4 million, down 1.6% week-on-week.

As of the week ended January 12, 2024, the SBP's foreign currency reserves stood at \$8,027.4 million, marking a \$127 million decline compared to the previous week's total of \$8,154.8 million. The central bank cited debt repayments as the reason for the decrease in reserves. Total liquid foreign currency reserves of the country, inclusive of the reserves held by commercial

banks, amounted to \$13,145.1 million. Of these, the commercial banks had net reserves of \$5,117.7 million. The SBP's reserves cumulatively rose \$1.32 billion in the prior two weeks, which reflected a rebound from almost six-month low of \$6.9 billion hit on December 15, 2023. The reserves grew on the back of official inflows coming from multilateral creditors. This helped the country to meet the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) end-December quarterly target of net foreign assets, according to industry sources and local research houses.



**NASEERABAD:** Caretaker Provincial Interior Minister Captain (R) Muhammad Zubair Jamali is visiting the District Jail in Dera Murad Jamali.



**QUETTA:** A group photo features Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki, together with students during the distribution ceremony of scholarship checks under the Balochistan Education Endowment Fund.

## Faizabad commission: SC to hear extension plea next week

**ISLAMABAD (INP):** The Supreme Court (SC) will take up the federal government's plea seeking an extension in the committee's tenure probing the Faizabad sit-in, next week.

The committee was scheduled to submit its report in the third week of January.

On January 8, the commission investigating the Faizabad Interchange sit-in in Islamabad, sought a month extension from the Supreme Court (SC) to complete the probe.

According to details, the federal government submitted a formal request to Supreme Court (SC), seeking extension to complete the probe and identify those who planned, financed, and supported the 2017 Faizabad sit-in.

A three-member bench of the Supreme Court will take up the plea next week.

The committee has so far summoned former ISI director-

general Lt. General (retired) Faiz Hameed, former prime ministers Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Shehbaz Sharif and others.

Earlier on Jan 5, former director general ISI retired Lt. Gen Faiz Hameed submitted a written response to the inquiry commission. The federal government had established this Faizabad commission, headed by retired inspector General Akhtar Ali Shah, in response to the Supreme Court's rejection of the Fact-Finding Committee report.

Constituted under Section 3 of the Pakistan Commission of Inquiry Act, 2017, the commission is led by Syed Akhtar Ali Shah, a former civil servant, who also served as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's police chief. It also comprises Tahir Alam Khan, also a former police officer, and Khushal Khan, an additional secretary at the Ministry of Interior.

Back on November 08, 2017,

Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) organized a sit-in at Faizabad interchange against the amendments in the Election Bill 2017, changing the word oath to declaration.

The protesters demanded the resignation of Minister for Law and Justice Zahid Hamid to "protect the identity of the country". As a result of the protest, the then PM-N government had to sack its law minister Zahid Hamid. The Supreme Court had taken suo motu notice of the sit-in on November 21, 2017.

Later, a division bench led by Justice Qazi Faez Isa on February 6, 2019, unveiled its verdict in the sit-in case, criticizing the role of intelligence agencies in the saga.

Soon after assuming office of the chief justice of Pakistan (CJP) in September this year, Justice Isa listed for hearing the petitions that had been filed against the SC's February 2019 verdict.

## Engineering and Healthcare Show, kicks with largest Chinese delegation

**LAHORE (INP):** The 3rd edition of the Engineering and Healthcare Show, 2024, kicked off on January 18 in Lahore with the arrival of a high-level Chinese delegation.

Muhammad Irfan Commercial Counselor, Consultant General of Guangzhou, told China Economic Net that the Chinese delegation, consisting of renowned engineers and healthcare professionals, arrived in Lahore yesterday to participate in the show and the delegation is expected to share their expertise and knowledge during the event.

"The show features various exhibitions, seminars, and work-

shops that will highlight the latest technologies and innovations in engineering and healthcare.

From state-of-the-art medical equipment to groundbreaking engineering projects, attendees will have the opportunity to witness the future of these industries", he stated.

"Engineering and Healthcare Show is the flagship event of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan. This year, more than 180 leading manufacturers of Engineering and Healthcare sectors are exhibiting their products."

Besides, more than 500 foreign delegates from 50+ countries

including 150 plus Chinese companies are participating in the exhibition. It will open endless opportunities for the Engineering and healthcare sector of the country", he added. Dr. Jian Peng, the leader of the Chinese delegation from Guangzhou and Honorary Investment Counselor, expressed his excitement about the show and the potential for collaboration between Pakistan and China.

"Pakistan has shown remarkable progress in the fields of engineering and healthcare, and we are eager to explore opportunities for mutual growth and development."



**QUETTA:** Head of National party Dr Abdul Malik Baloch addressing a press conference.

## ICCI, UNICEF sign MoU to empower marginalized people economically

**ISLAMABAD (INP):** The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) on Friday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance bilateral cooperation for economic empowerment of marginalized people and to make progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Pakistan.

President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and Representative UNICEF Pakistan Abdullah A. Fadil signed the agreement during a ceremony held at ICCI.

Addressing the MoU signing ceremony, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari lauded the efforts of UNICEF Pakistan to address issues in health, education, child protection, skills development, climate change, nutrition, water, sanitation, hy-

giene and social protection and other fields.

He assured that ICCI would support UNICEF in its initiatives to advance children's rights and economic empowerment of neglected segments of society. Ahsan Zafar said that ICCI would mobilize members to support UNICEF and facilitate partnerships between ICCI members and UNICEF in areas of interest for the well-being and welfare of poor people.

UNICEF Representative in Pakistan, Abdullah A. Fadil thanked ICCI for signing the MoU and added that UNICEF Pakistan would like to strengthen its cooperation with ICCI to undertake joint initiatives in the areas of education, youth entrepreneurship, climate change, and others. He said that UNICEF will provide technical support to ICCI in sensitizing the business com-

munity for better protection of children's rights and bringing out-of-school children to the formal education system.

The ICCI and UNICEF will advocate jointly for the formulation of conducive policies and regulatory frameworks for creating an enabling environment to promote business and investment activities, empower marginalized people of society, and improve their living standards.

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI, Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader, Zafar Bakhtawari former President ICCI & Secretary General UBG Pakistan, Ms. Josiane Khoury Partnerships Manager UNICEF, Faseeh Ullah Khan, Maqsood Tabish, Raja Muhammad Imtiaz, Sheikh Muhammad Ejaz, Ch. Muhammad Ali, Khalid Chaudhry and others were also present on the occasion.