



Khaqan Shah Nawaz draws ire for 'age shaming' Kareena Kapoor

Thursday 26 December 2024

Protection of minorities' rights focus of Pakistan's fundamental agenda: PM

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said the country's fundamental agenda of development and prosperity hinges upon the protection of the rights of Christian community and other minorities.

Addressing an event held in connection with Christmas celebrations here at the PM House, he extended cordial felicitations to the Christian community in the country and the world.

PM Shehbaz Sharif underscored that the nation must join its forces for the betterment of mankind. "The Holy Quran has a

revered mention of Prophet Jesus Christ (PBUH) and Hazrat Maryam (PBUH). Today, the birthplace of Prophet Jesus Christ is tainted in bloodbath and thousands of Palestinians including children, youth, elderly and women have been killed. All Christians and Muslims should unite and join forces to stop this bloodshed and uphold the mission of peace of Jesus Christ in Palestine's holy land," the PM urged.

He acknowledged that the Christian community rendered indelible contributions in the independence, betterment of the nation's education, defence, and protection of



the motherland in different ways that would be remembered in golden words, adding, "Cecil Chaudhary and Justice Cornelius are known to everyone." PM Shehbaz noted that he and his elder brother Mian Muhammad Nawaz

Sharif had also graduated from missionary schools whose teachers played a critical role in grooming their personalities. "We

should promote unity, interfaith harmony and tolerance in the society to ensure protection of the rights of the minorities and ensure that they consider themselves as a respected member of the society. Pakistan belongs to all and we should celebrate this day as a more revered occasion as it is the birthday of Jesus Christ, and Qaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah as well," Shehbaz Sharif said. The prime minister quoted Quid-e-Azam's statement saying, "Protection and promotion of minorities rights has been our top priority. You all are the proud citizens of Pakistan."

Security forces eliminate 13 terrorists in S-Waziristan gunbattle

HUMA REHMAN

RAWALPINDI: As many as 13 Khawarij were killed in a gunbattle with security forces personnel in South Waziristan District. According to an ISPR press release which was issued on Wednesday, the security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in general area Saratogha, South Waziristan District on reported presence of Khawarij terrorists on the night between December 24 and 25. During the conduct of the operation, troops effectively engaged Khawarij location, as a result of which, 13 Khawarij were sent to hell. Killed Khawarij remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as killing of innocent civilians, the ISPR statement said and added, a denitization operation was carried out to eliminate any other Khawarij found in the area, as security forces of Pakistan were determined to wipe-out the menace of terrorism from the country. The latest operation came days after Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) had claimed a raid on an army outpost near the border with Afghanistan, which Pakistani officials said martyred 16 soldiers.

COAS joins Christian community to celebrate Christmas

SAMRA ATHAR

RAWALPINDI: Underscoring the spirit of inclusivity and harmony, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) joined the Christian community in celebrating Christmas here Wednesday at St. Joseph's Catholic Cathedral Church. The congregation extended a warm welcome to the COAS, expressing gratitude for his presence and solidarity during this cherished occasion, said a news release issued by Inter-

Services Public Relations (ISPR).

On this festive day, the COAS conveyed his heartfelt Christmas greetings to the Christian community across the nation.

He emphasized that Christmas serves as a profound reminder of the universal values of compassion, generosity, and goodwill—principles that bind our diverse society together.

He further acknowledged the remarkable contributions of minorities and the Christian community to



Pakistan's cultural, social, economic and national progress, which remain a source of pride and strength for the nation. During the occasion, General Asim Munir also

paid a solemn tribute to the founder of the nation, Qaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

He highlighted that the Qaid's visionary leadership, unwavering determination, and steadfast adherence to the principles of Faith, Unity and Discipline not only paved the way for the creation of Pakistan but also provided a timeless blueprint for nation-building.

The COAS remarked that Quid-e-Azam's enduring commitment to the ideals of freedom,

equality, and religious tolerance continues to inspire and guide the nation in addressing contemporary challenges, from safeguarding territorial integrity to fostering internal stability.

"As we commemorate this festive season, let us reaffirm our collective resolve to transform Pakistan into the peaceful, prosperous nation envisioned by the Qaid," the COAS concluded, urging all citizens to work tirelessly toward achieving this shared aspiration.

Military courts' verdicts announced under law enacted by parliament: FO

KOMAL BUTT

ISLAMABAD: In response to statements on recent verdicts by military courts, the Foreign Office reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to fulfilling all its international human rights obligations, said that the verdicts had been made under a law enacted by the Parliament of Pakistan and in line with the judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Pakistan's legal system is consistent with international human rights law including provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the FO Spokesperson said in a statement. The spokesperson added that the country's legal system had remedies of judicial review by the superior courts and guaranteed the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The statement added that Pakistan believed in constructive and productive dialogue to promote principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Pakistani Christians celebrate Xmas with religious zeal

SEHRISH NAZ

LAHORE: Like the rest of the world, Christians in Pakistan on Wednesday celebrated Christmas with religious zeal amid strict security.

In Lahore, celebrations started with mass in churches where people prayed for the prosperity and peace of Pakistan.

Across Punjab, more than 2,900 churches have been illuminated. Worship began at midnight and a large number of people thronged churches. A prayer ceremony was organised at St. Patrick's Church in Karachi, which was

attended by a large number of people from the Christian community.

In Hyderabad, a prayer service was held late at night at St. Francis Church. A large number of women, children, and youth participated in the worship, praying for the prosperity and safety of the country and the nation. Later sweets were distributed among the worshippers.

In Faisalabad, women and children went shopping for Christmas, while in Gujranwala, Christmas market, the community enjoyed discounts of up to 20%. In Quetta, bakeries and cake shops are



buzzing with specially designed cakes for Christmas. The Christian community in Lahore is also excited to celebrate the occasion. Prayer ceremonies are being held at

have been beautifully decorated for Christmas, and the Christian community has adorned their homes with Christmas trees.

Meanwhile, the Punjab police announced that 30,000 officers and personnel have been deployed for the security of churches. In Lahore, more than 600 churches will be guarded by more than 5,000 personnel. Female police officers will also be present for checking women. Surveillance will also be conducted with the help of cameras from the Safe City Authority. Commandos and snipers will be stationed at sensi-

tive churches and other locations. CTD (Counter-Terrorism Department) and Special Branch teams have been deployed to tackle any troublemakers.

In his message, Punjab police chief Dr. Usman Anwar stated that the police will remain on high alert during Christmas, ensuring the promotion of interfaith harmony during the celebrations. President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have extended heartfelt greetings to the Christian community in Pakistan and around the world on the occasion of Christmas.

No pressure on govt to initiate dialogue with PTI: Sanaullah

AYESHA REHMAN

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah said that there is no pressure on government to initiate dialogue with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Talking to a private television channel, Rana Sanaullah said that the government is taking all decisions in the larger national interest. Under trial prisoners could not be released on the intervention of the government but courts

could take the decisions on the basis of evidence, he said. PTI leaders have been found involved in different cases including May 9, riots, he said.

Replying to a question about dialogue with PTI, he said, there must be dialogue between the government and opposition benches to strengthen political and democratic system.

The PTI would bring character of demand and the discussion would be held after the consultation of the coalition partners, he added.

Students must utilize knowledge for Pakistan's development: BBZ

PEAK POINT

SUKKUR: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has emphasized that the digital space in Pakistan is under threat, urging the youth to engage in "democratic and peaceful resistance" to secure digital rights, including high-speed internet.

According to a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, speaking at the convocation ceremony of Sukkur IBA University, Chairman PPP said, "It is a matter of pride for me that this institution was established by my mother, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, during her second tenure as prime minister. The seeds planted by her has now grown into a tree, earning recognition not only

nationally but also globally." He highlighted that students from across Pakistan and even international students from countries like Sri Lanka are receiving education at the university.

Discussing the role of students in addressing national challenges and enhancing Pakistan's global image, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said, "Students must utilize their knowledge for Pakistan's development. Today, we face challenges such as poverty, economic inequality, and climate change."

Bilawal reminded the audience that every generation has fought for its rights. "Democracy wasn't handed to us as a gift. It was achieved through struggle. Generations of youth, using their education, voices, and skills, have



defeated oppressors time and again. From the colonial era to today, the youth have been at the forefront," he highlighted.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari stressed the need for better internet access and data privacy protections for the younger generation. He announced plans to visit educational institutions across the country, including Sindh, to gather student feedback on proposed digital rights legislation. "Tag me on social media and share your suggestions," he urged the youth. Addressing climate change, he warned of severe consequences if its impact is not mitigated. "Pakistan risks devastating floods and infrastructure collapse if we fail to address climate change," he stated. "We're not asking for personal compensation but for funds to repair the

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari lamented on the absence of proper planning to combat climate change in the budget. He pointed out that Pakistan is among the top 10 countries most vulnerable to climate change. He urged developed nations to take responsibility, stating, "The industrialization and capitalism of these countries have caused the climate crisis. While they amassed wealth, they ignored the damage inflicted on the rest of the world. Now, when others seek their fair share, they lecture us about climate change limitations. If these countries profited from industrialization, others also have a right to that wealth."

He concluded, "We're not asking for personal compensation but for funds to repair the damage they have caused."

The chairman extended his best wishes to the graduating students, urging them to contribute to national progress through the power of education. He praised the Sindh government's achievements in health and education, highlighting how students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Punjab, and even Sri Lanka come to Sindh for quality education at institutions like IBA Sukkur, just as patients from across Pakistan seek treatment at Sindh's hospitals.

During the event, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari distributed medals and certificates to students, accompanied by Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah.

CM Gandapur pays tribute to Quaid-e-Azam, extends Christmas greetings

PEAK POINT

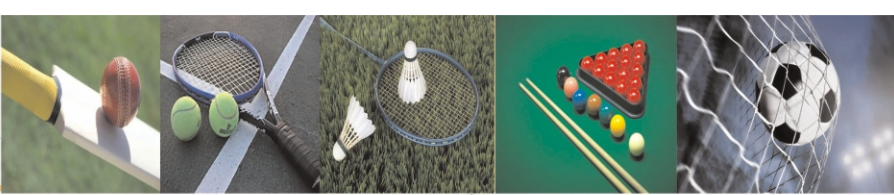
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister, Ali Amin Gandapur, congratulated the nation on the birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

In his message, Gandapur hailed Quaid-e-Azam as a great leader of the Muslims of the subcontinent who turned the dream of a separate state into reality. He emphasized that Pakistan came into being due to Jinnah's leadership and relentless struggle. He noted that India's anti-Muslim stance vindicated the decision for a separate state, enabling Muslims to breathe in a free atmosphere. He further stated

that Pakistan was founded to establish an Islamic welfare state for Muslims of the subcontinent, and he paid tribute to the armed forces for ensuring the nation's strength and security.

Additionally, the Chief Minister extended Christmas greetings to the Christian community, highlighting that Christmas was an event celebrated to spread love, brotherhood, sacrifice, peace, and tolerance.

He stressed that Islam taught equal rights for minorities and acknowledged that Pakistan's constitution guaranteed the freedom for minorities to practice their faith and celebrate their traditions.



Pakistan vs South Africa two-match Test series on today

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

CENTURION, SOUTH AFRICA: Pakistan are set to feature in a two-match Test series against South Africa beginning with the Boxing Day Test at the SuperSport Park in Centurion on Thursday.

The second Test will commence at the Cape Town's Newlands Cricket Ground from January 3. In their ongoing all-format tour to South Africa, Pakistan lost the three-match T20 series 2-0 while came back to inflict a historic 3-0 whitewash in the ODI series. The Test series, part of the ICC World Test Championship, is expected to be highly competitive as well. Members of the Pakistan's Test squad reached South Africa on 13 December in order to prepare well and acclimatise with the local conditions.

The Test squad has seen return of the experienced fast bowler Mohammad Abbas, who last played for Pakistan against West Indies in August 2021. He has forced his way back in the squad with 31 scalps in five Quaid-e-Azam Trophy matches this season. Fast bowler Khurram Shahzad, who was ruled out of the three-match home Test series against England due to injury has returned to the squad too. Aqib Javed is the interim head coach of Pakistan men's team and this will be his first red-ball series after taking the charge in the white-ball series against Zimbabwe last month.

Pakistan and South Africa have played each other in 12 Test series since 1995, out of which seven have been won by South Africa while

and the ODI series which featured a number of our Test squad members. "The return of pacer Khurram Shahzad, who did really well on his debut in Australia and the seasoned campaigner Mohammad Abbas is a welcome development for Pakistan's Test side looking to bag wins in one of the toughest conditions for overseas teams. "We know South Africa have done well in this iteration of the ICC World Test Championship but we have prepared for this series in the best possible manner as well after having arrived in the country at least two weeks ago."

Pakistan Test squad: Shan Masood (vice-captain), Shah Shaeek (captain), Aamir Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Babar Azam, Haseebullah (wk), Kamran Ghulam, Khurram Shahzad, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Abbas, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Naseem Shah, Noman Ali, Saim Ayub and Salman Ali Agha.

Schedule of matches: 10 Dec - 1st T20i - South Africa beat Pakistan by 11 runs at Kingsmead Cricket Stadium, Durban. 13 Dec - 2nd T20i - South Africa beat Pakistan by seven wickets at SuperSport Park, Centurion. 14 Dec - 3rd T20i - Match abandoned without a ball being bowled at the Wanderers Stadium, Johannesburg. 17 Dec - 1st ODI - Pakistan beat South Africa by three wickets at the Boland Park, Paarl. 19 Dec - 2nd ODI - Pakistan beat South Africa by 81 runs at Newlands Cricket Ground.



Pakistan emerged victorious in two, while three ended-up as draws. In the recent most Test series between the two nations, Pakistan beat South Africa 2-0 at home in Jan-Feb 2021. Shan Masood, Pakistan's Test captain in a statement said: "We are eagerly looking forward to measure ourselves against South Africa, who have always been one of the top sides in the world. We have got some momentum from the recently concluded home Test series against England

and the ODI series which featured a number of our Test squad members. "The return of pacer Khurram Shahzad, who did really well on his debut in Australia and the seasoned campaigner Mohammad Abbas is a welcome development for Pakistan's Test side looking to bag wins in one of the toughest conditions for overseas teams. "We know South Africa have done well in this iteration of the ICC World Test Championship but we have prepared for this series in the best possible manner as well after having arrived in the country at least two weeks ago."

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PSB reforms likely to face backlash from POA, affiliated federations

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: The reforms introduced by the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) are likely to backlash from the Pakistan Olympic Association and affiliated federations leading to a prospective crisis in the country's sports governance.

The POA and other bodies agree that the PSB's measures, available on its website, threaten autonomy and violate international norms.

The PSB's move includes the enforcement of election regulations, a new Code of Ethics and Governance, and a Model Constitution for federations.

The body's officials have termed these steps critical to improving governance, ensuring transparency, and eradicating malpractice in the country's sports sector. However, critics argue that these steps are a violation of international sports statutes.

The Sports Election



Regulations aim to centralise electoral processes under the supervision of an independent Election Commission formed by the PSB. This body is tasked with overseeing the scrutiny of club memberships and the finalisation of voter lists, ensuring elections are conducted fairly

and transparently. According to the notification, the director general of the PSB can mandate elections in any federation, whereas disputes arising from these elections would be resolved by an election tribunal also formed under the PSB's framework.

"The entire election process, from club scrutiny to NSE elections, will be completed within 120 days," the notification said, with the election tribunal authorised to resolve objections and disputes. While the PSB insists these measures will improve efficiency, the POA and member federations view them as overreach. In a letter sent last month, the 23 federations have said that any such steps by the PSB would be violating international sports laws and interfering with their autonomy. "Every federation operates under the rules of its respective international governing body, and interference by the PSB violates these frameworks," they noted. In addition to the election regulations, there's also an introduction of the Code of Ethics and Governance which addresses unethical practices such as match-fixing, corruption, aggression, doping, harassment, and human trafficking.

Pakistan name playing XI for first Test against South Africa

PEAK POINT

CENTURION: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Wednesday announced the playing XI for the first Test against South Africa at SuperSport Park in Centurion.

Pakistan will field four fast bowlers, with experienced pacer Mohammad Abbas returning to the playing XI. Abbas last played a Test for Pakistan in August 2021 against the West Indies. His selection comes after an impressive performance in the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, where he took 15 wickets in five matches this season. The playing XI includes captain Shan Masood, Salman Ayub, Babar Azam,



Boxing Day match, will be played at SuperSport Park in Centurion, while the second Test is scheduled from January 3 in Cape Town. Earlier, Pakistan faced a 2-0 defeat in the T20 series but secured a historic 3-0 whitewash in the ODI series on South African soil.

Saim Ayub, Salman Agha rise in ICC ODI rankings

JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's cricketers Agha Salman and Saim Ayub have made significant progress in the latest ICC ODI rankings, following their remarkable performances in recent matches.

Emerging batter Saim Ayub, who was awarded Player of the Series in Pakistan's 3-0 victory against South Africa, has climbed an impressive 57 places to secure the 23rd position with 609 points.

His consistent performances, including two centuries in the series, have solidified his reputation as one of cricket's rising stars.

Vice-captain Agha Salman also enjoyed a Peshawar day, moving up 28 places to claim the 80th position with 468 points. His vital contribu-



tions with the bat further showcased his growing importance to the team. At a new high, Pakistan's skipper Babar Azam maintained his dominance in ODI cricket,

retaining his position as the world's top-ranked batter. This marks the fourth consecutive year Babar has held this title, despite facing recent challenges in form. He also moved up three places

in the ODI batter rankings, climbing to 21st with 612 points. However, Abdullah Shafique faced a significant drop, falling 21 spots to 98th after a disappointing series marked by three consecutive ducks. In the ODI bowling rankings, Naseem Shah made notable progress, jumping 10 places to reach the 51st spot. Harris Rauf slipped one spot to 16th, while Mohammad Wasim Jr remains ranked 61st. Shaheen Afridi fell to 10th in the rankings for ODI bowlers, overtaken by India's Kuldeep Yadav, with Rashid Khan retaining the top position. In T20I rankings, Saim Ayub advanced to 57th place among batters, while Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan maintained their positions at sixth and eighth, respectively.

The story behind Boxing Day Test matches

KOMAL BUTT

ISLAMABAD: Boxing Day Test matches, a much-anticipated tradition in cricket, begin tomorrow (Thursday) with two high-profile games. Australia will host India at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), while Pakistan faces South Africa in Centurion.

The Boxing Day Test, primarily popular in Australia, traditionally starts on December 26, the day after Christmas. This day, known as "Boxing Day," has historical roots in the tradition of distributing gifts in boxes to employees and the underprivileged, marking the conclusion of Christmas festivities. The tradition of Boxing Day Test matches began



in 1950 with a match between Australia and England. Since then, it has evolved into a major festival, especially in Australia, where families and friends gather at stadiums to enjoy cricket in a festive atmosphere.

This year's clash between Australia and India at the MCG is expected to set a record for the highest attendance for a non-Ashes Test on the opening day. Meanwhile, in Centurion, the Pakistan cricket team is set to field seven batsmen as they take on South Africa. Boxing Day remains a public holiday in various countries like Australia, England, South Africa, and New Zealand, where it has grown into a cherished tradition, combining sports and celebration.

Serena Tennis Masters Cup Begins today in Peshawar: Aisam-ul-Haq



PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: The Serena Tennis Masters Cup is set to commence in Peshawar today, featuring Pakistan's No. 1 tennis player, Aqeel Khan, along with the top eight male and female players

from across the country. Addressing a press conference in Peshawar Aisam-ul-Haq President of the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF), national champion, and international tennis player, shared details about the event. The press conference was attended by PTF Secretary Colonel (R) Ziauddin Tufail, Aqeel Khan, and other notable personalities. Aisam-ul-Haq stated that despite being at the helm of the PTF for just nine months he is committed

to expanding tennis across Pakistan. As part of this mission various tournaments are being organized in different cities starting with the Serena Masters Cup in Peshawar. Aisam-ul-Haq announced that the Serena Masters Cup will also be held in Karachi, Multan, and Faisalabad next year. Additionally, plans are in place to organize the National Tennis Championship in Peshawar soon. He emphasized the importance of grassroots development to identify and train new talent, stating that Pakistan has no shortage of potential. The PTF aims to support and encourage promising players by providing training opportunities in Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Thrilling clashes dominate day 3 of Combaxx-Roshan Khan National Team Championship

SEHRISH NAZ

LAHORE: The day three of the Combaxx-Roshan Khan National Team Championship 2024 delivered a series of thrilling matches at the Pakistan Navy Roshan Khan Jahangir Khan Squash Complex, Karachi. The Peshawar session witnessed intense clashes in Pool A and Pool B of the men's and women's competitions. Defending champions SNGP demonstrated their dominance in Pool A with a clean sweep over PAF. Asim Khan, Aamad Fareed, and



Israr Aamad all won their matches by walkovers, showcasing their readiness for the next stages of the championship. In Pool B, Army outclassed Railways

with a comprehensive 3-0 victory. Muhammad Talha Saad in a well-fought match, clinching victory with scores of 11-6, 11-6.



MERCE & INDUSTRY CELEBRATIONS OF

COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



RAWALPINDI: President of RC CI Usman Shaukat, Mushaal Hussein Malik and others cutting the cake during Quaid-e-Azam Day ceremony on the eve of 148th Birth Anniversary of Baba-e-Qaum ("Father of the Nation") Quaid-e-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah, in the city.

NDMA steps in to tackle Parachinar's critical medicine shortage

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has initiated an emergency relief operation to tackle the severe medicine shortage in Parachinar caused by road blockages. Acting on the prime minister's special directives, NDMA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, swiftly organized the transportation of 5,000 kilograms of essential medicines to ensure timely aid to the

affected areas. NDMA steps in to tackle Parachinar's critical medicine shortage. The first flight also evacuated four critical patients: Zamin Hussain, a heart patient; Shamim Begum, suffering from Glaucoma stage-4; Bibi Khanum, with heart and lung issues; and Masidh Agustinaa, an Indonesian national, along with her 2-year-old son. NDMA steps in to tackle Parachinar's critical medicine shortage. The second flight evacuated an 8-year-old girl, Subah Hussain, who has a brain tumour. This swift and coordinated response underscores the Government of Pakistan's commitment to safeguarding public health and ensuring the well-being of citizens in times of crisis.

Nation marks 148th birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam with patriotic zeal

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: The nation commemorated the 148th birth anniversary of the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on Wednesday showing great patriotic zeal and reverence. The day observed with a 21-gun salute in provincial capitals and national flag hoisting at major government and private buildings, symbolizing the deep respect and gratitude for the visionary leader. The celebrations began with special prayers at mosques across the country for the progress, prosperity, and unity of Pakistan. The day observed with a 21-gun salute in provincial capitals and national flag hoisting at major government and private buildings, symbolizing the deep respect and gratitude for the visionary leader. An elegant change of guards' ceremony was held at the Quaid's mausoleum in Karachi to pay trib-

ute to the Founder of Pakistan. Special ceremonies and activities were organized nationwide, including seminars, conferences, debates, cultural events, and exhibitions. These events highlighted the struggles and achievements of Quaid-e-Azam while also promoting his vision for Pakistan as a progressive, inclusive, and democratic state. Schools and colleges arranged debates, art competitions, and essay writing contests focusing on Quaid's leadership and principles of unity, faith, and discipline. The television and radio channels aired special programs and documentaries throughout the day, highlighting Quaid-e-Azam's pivotal role in the creation of Pakistan. The newspapers also

published special supplements, recounting his enduring legacy and unparalleled contribution to the nation. As a part of activities to mark Quaid Day, Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) organized an on-the-spot Painting and Drawing Competition on Wednesday to mark Quaid-e-Azam Day, providing a platform for young artists to pay tribute to the Father of the Nation through their creativity. Lok Virsa hosted a series of events to celebrate the 148th birth anniversary of the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on Wednesday. The celebrations and documentaries include artists-at-work, showcasing traditional craftsmanship while a cake-cutting ceremony was held

to mark the occasion, followed by a tribute to Quaid and a Milli Naghma Show at the same time, featuring patriotic songs. Additionally, documentaries on Quaid-e-Azam's contributions were also screened throughout the day, offering insights into his life and vision. Earlier, an exhibition was held at Mini Gold Club on Wednesday with participation of youth. Quaid Day Festival was held at the Information Service Academy (ISA) on Tuesday, featuring rare photographs and portraits of the founder of Pakistan, aiming to educate the younger generation about his monumental struggle and sacrifices for a separate homeland.

ADC pays visits to churches on Christmas; inspects arrangements

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Christmas festivities are in full swing at churches across the federal capital, with the district administration actively monitoring the arrangements to ensure everything runs smoothly. In this regard, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Osman Ashraf, made visits to several churches to oversee the preparations and meet with church officials, said a spokesman of the ICT administration here. During his visits, ADC was briefed by senior police officers about the security measures in place.

He directed all assistant commissioners to remain in the field and maintain vigilance throughout the celebrations. Meanwhile, the ADC also urged security personnel to extend full cooperation to the Christian community during the holiday season. The ADC also inspected the arrangements to ensure everything runs smoothly. In this regard, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Osman Ashraf, made visits to several churches to oversee the preparations and meet with church officials, said a spokesman of the ICT administration here. During his visits, ADC was briefed by senior police officers about the security measures in place.

ICT Police holds farewell ceremony to honor sub-inspector

PEAK POINT
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police held a farewell ceremony on Wednesday to honor Sub-Inspector Farhat Shah in recognition of his dedicated services.

Shakir Hussain Dawar chaired the ceremony as chief guest, while other police officers were also present on the occasion. During the ceremony, he was held in recognition of the services of the retiring police officer. Speaking at the occasion, the DG Shakir Hussain Dawar said that retirement is part of the service as the one who joins the service has to retire one day. DG asked the serving police officers to do their best to earn respect for the department. He was of the view that public service only could earn a good name for the officer and the department.

Opinion & Editorials

Immoral Exploitation of Freedom of Expression to Target Pak Army

Abdul Basit Alvi
 In Pakistan, there has been an increase in propaganda against the country and its military in recent days. The Pakistani government, along with the Pakistan Army, is working diligently to address the nation's current challenges. In a significant diplomatic development, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko recently visited Islamabad, marking a noteworthy moment in the bilateral relations between Belarus and Pakistan. The visit emphasized a mutual interest in strengthening economic cooperation, defense collaboration, and political dialogue between the two countries. It also highlighted the changing dynamics of global geopolitics, as both nations seek to diversify their international partnerships amidst shifting alliances and challenges in the global landscape. President Lukashenko's trip to Pakistan occurred against the backdrop of evolving international relations, as Belarus has increasingly turned to Moscow's actions in Ukraine. With the West imposing harsh sanctions on Belarus, the country has increasingly turned to new economic partners, particularly in Asia, to navigate these sanctions and secure its geopolitical position. For Pakistan, the visit presented a strategic opportunity to strengthen ties with Eastern Europe, diversify its foreign relations, and explore economic opportunities in sectors like trade, agriculture, defense, and technology. A key focus of the visit was to enhance economic and trade relations between the two nations.

As Pakistan seeks to diversify its defense sources, Belarus, with its well-established defense industry, is seen as a valuable partner for military hardware and defense technology. The two leaders discussed expanding joint defense manufacturing, training programs, and supplies of military equipment. With both countries facing security challenges, they also discussed enhancing cooperation on counterterrorism and regional security. Belarus expressed its willingness to assist Pakistan in tackling security concerns, particularly related to terrorism and militancy. Both sides recognized the importance of regional stability and pledged to collaborate on shared security issues. In addition to economic and defense matters, the visit highlighted the importance of strengthening cultural and educational ties. Although Belarus and Pakistan have a history of friendly relations, mutual public perception remains limited. The visit emphasized the desire to increase cooperation in areas like higher education, tourism, and cultural diplomacy. President Lukashenko proposed deeper collaboration between Belarusian and Pakistani universities, focusing on technical education, engineering, and science. Given Pakistan's growing interest in technology and biotechnology, Belarus presents an attractive partner for academic collaboration and research sharing. While Belarus is not a major tourist destination for Pakistanis, discussions during the visit also touched on promoting tourism exchanges and cultural diplomacy. Belarus

boasts a rich history, breathtaking landscapes, and a vibrant cultural heritage. The visit also held significant geopolitical importance. For Belarus, strengthening its relationship with Pakistan is a key aspect of its broader strategy to diversify its foreign relations in light of Western sanctions and growing isolation due to its support of Russia in the Ukraine conflict. By engaging with Pakistan, which holds a strategically advantageous position in South Asia and the broader Islamic world, Belarus aims to forge new trade and political alliances. For Pakistan, the visit presented a valuable opportunity to engage with a European nation outside its traditional sphere of influence. It reflects Pakistan's strategic intent to diversify its foreign policy, particularly as tensions with neighboring India and Afghanistan continue to shape its priorities. By strengthening ties with Belarus and other non-traditional partners, Pakistan aims to reduce its reliance on traditional allies. Given the importance of the visit, special security measures were required to ensure foolproof protection, and Pakistan is no stranger to deploying its armed forces to secure foreign delegations. In international diplomacy, ensuring the safety of foreign dignitaries and official venues is crucial for maintaining strong and productive relations between countries. While diplomats and government officials work to build ties, the protection of visiting officials often involves military forces. Many nations have relied on their military to safeguard foreign

delegations, integrating national security with diplomatic protocol. In the United States, the military plays a key role in securing foreign dignitaries and heads of state. The U.S. Secret Service, alongside the Department of Defense, is responsible for securing visiting foreign leaders. For example, when a foreign leader visits Washington, D.C., the U.S. Army's Military District of Washington (MDW) coordinates the security effort, deploying specialized units like the Army's Presidential Security Detail and Military Police Corps to provide protection and manage crowds. The Secret Service works with other law enforcement agencies to ensure the physical safety of foreign visitors. High-level buildings like the White House, U.S. Capitol, and the State Department's headquarters are often guarded by military personnel, including the U.S. Army Military Police and National Guard, to deter threats and respond to emergencies. Similarly, in China, the military plays an essential role in securing foreign diplomats and officials at state buildings. During official visits by foreign dignitaries to Beijing or other major cities in China, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) would be called upon to provide both security and military honors to the visiting leaders. For instance, when the President of the United States or other world leaders visit China, a meticulously planned deployment of PLA personnel typically accompanies the foreign dignitaries. PLA troops are often assigned to secure key locations such as the Great Hall of the People, where meetings between foreign and Chinese officials take

place, as well as other significant sites, including the Chinese Embassy and consulates abroad. The People's Armed Police (PAP), operating under the control of the Central Military Commission, plays a vital role in these security efforts. The PAP is primarily responsible for maintaining internal security in Beijing, such as guarding large public gatherings and official ceremonies involving foreign dignitaries. The Chinese government also relies on its military to secure important buildings, especially in symbolic locations in Beijing such as the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, and the Presidential Compound. These areas, where key political decisions are made, are guarded by both police and military personnel, with the military on standby for emergency interventions. In the United Kingdom, the British Army works alongside law enforcement agencies to provide security during foreign leaders' official visits. When heads of state or other international leaders visit London, the British Army is often involved in both ceremonial and security roles. For example, during the visit to Buckingham Palace or 10 Downing Street, British Army units ensure the safety of these locations and their personnel. The Household Cavalry also participates in state visits, offering ceremonial and security services, while the Royal Military Police ensures the safety of the visiting dignitaries. Additionally, for high-profile international events, the Specialist Protection Group (SPG) of the Metropolitan Police collaborates with military personnel to enhance security

for both the British government and foreign delegates. In 2014, a political party and its allies threatened to Pakistan's peace and development, planned a long march to Islamabad during the visit of the Chinese President. This party also orchestrated a similar attack on Islamabad on the exact dates of the Belarusian President's visit. The protest march, which had no connection to the interests of the common people and was solely driven by political motives, was dispersed through a crackdown. To protect key government buildings and secure the visit of the foreign President, the government deployed the military in the capital. The same political party and its allies abroad began spreading propaganda against the military's deployment. At a recent meeting of the Commanders' Conference of the Pakistan Army, participants expressed concerns over the malicious spread regarding the army's role in securing government buildings and ensuring a safe environment for foreign delegations. The two-day 84th Formation Commanders' Conference, chaired by Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir, addressed these concerns, as reported by the Department of Public Relations (ISPR). In a statement released after the meeting, the Formation Commanders' Conference, the ISPR condemned the malicious propaganda against the Pakistan Army and its military. The people of Pakistan stand firmly with the Army and reject any attempts to spread hatred against the true defenders of the country.

Governor pays tribute to Quaid-e-Azam on birth anniversary at Mazar-e-Quaid

PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tesori paid homage at the Mazar-e-Quaid on the birth anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

The Governor laid a wreath at the mausoleum and offered prayers for the country's progress and prosperity.

During his visit to the mausoleum of Quaid on Wednesday, Governor Kamran Tesori penned his thoughts in the visitor's book. He also extended his congratulations to the nation on Quaid-e-Azam's birthday, emphasizing that Pakistan's development is only possible by adhering to

Jinnah's guiding principles.

Speaking to the media at the Mazar-e-Quaid, Governor Kamran Tesori said that he had come to pay tribute to Quaid-e-Azam's services for the nation. He acknowledged that Pakistan is going through challenging times but urged the people not to lose hope, assuring that the country will move towards progress.

The Governor also highlighted the continued growth of the stock exchange and the positive cooperation from countries like Iran and Türkiye. He praised the role of Pakistan's military, not only for safeguarding the borders but also for contributing to economic stability.

Sindh Governor Kamran Tesori commended the leadership of the Prime Minister and the Army Chief in the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), which he said is playing a crucial role in steering the country towards development.

Responding to a question about the situation in Parachinar, the governor stated that the issue would be resolved through consultation and dialogue. He concluded by reassuring the nation that, collectively, the people will continue Quaid-e-Azam's mission and work towards making Pakistan stronger and more prosperous.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tesori speaks to the media after visiting the Quaid-e-Azam Mausoleum on the occasion of the 148th birth anniversary of the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Govt 'decides' to promulgate ordinance regarding madaris registration



JAVED KHAN

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari will promulgate an ordinance for the registration of religious seminaries in the country, reports say, on Wednesday, quoting sources.

According to reports, the decision, the sources said, had been taken at Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's meeting with President Zardari and JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, and that all stakeholders, including the JUI-F, were taken on board prior to taking the decision.

Sources informed that the ordinance would provide legal cover to Madrasahs under the Directorate General Religious Education and the Society Registration Amendment Act.

On Saturday, JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur

Rehman had expressed the hope that the government would approve the Societies Registration (Amendment) Bill 2024, also known as Madrasah Registration Bill, 2024, after fulfilling the legal formalities.

Speaking on a private news TV channel, the JUI-F emir said: "I hope that we will need to march on Islamabad nor [the government] will require a joint session."

Fazl's comments came after the government, following a meeting between the prime minister and the JUI-F chief, reportedly "accepted all demands of the Ittehad Tanzeemat-e-Madaris Deenia (ITMD)" regarding the bill.

The government assured to register all madrasahs under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

Fazl said his party had reached an agreement on a few issues, adding that one of the points in the bill was that the status of the registration of madrasahs will remain unchanged.

The other points were that bank accounts of all madrasahs would be opened and the students of the seminaries would be issued visas to study abroad.

The senior politician said that the National Assembly had already approved the bill following which the president sent an eight-point objection to the assembly on November 13. "Now there is no justification for calling a joint session on the bill again," Fazl asserted.

The bill, which has already been passed by both houses of parliament, became a bone of contention between the JUI-F and the government after President Zardari returned it to the National Assembly with some objections.

Its enactment was part of an agreement reached between the government and the JUI-F in exchange for supporting the 26th Amendment.

Azerbaijan Airlines plane crashes in Kazakhstan, many feared dead



BY: REUTERS

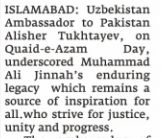
ASTANA: An Embraer (EMBRJ.SA), opens new tab passenger plane flying from Azerbaijan to Russia crashed near the city of Aktau in Kazakhstan on Wednesday with 67 passengers and five crew on board, Kazakh authorities announced, saying 12 people had survived.

Unverified video of the crash showed the plane, which was operated by Azerbaijan Airlines, bursting into flames as it hit the ground and thick black smoke then rising.

The Central Asian country's emergency ministry said in a statement that fire services had put out the blaze and that survivors were being treated at a nearby hospital.

Uzbekistan ambassador praises jinnah's vision, highlights ties with Pakistan

MOHSIN ALI



ISLAMABAD: Uzbekistan Ambassador to Pakistan Alisher Tukhtayev, on Quaid-e-Azam Day, underscored Muhammad Ali Jinnah's enduring legacy which remains a source of inspiration for all who strive for justice, unity and progress.

The ambassador of Uzbekistan to commemorate Quaid-e-Azam Day, marking the birth anniversary of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan.

In his message, he emphasized Jinnah's pivotal role in shaping an independent Pakistan, describing him as a symbol of determination and



unity.

He called on people to draw inspiration from Jinnah's principles of justice, unity, and mutual respect, urging them to work collectively for national progress.

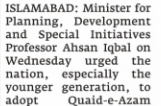
Reflecting on Pakistan-Uzbekistan relations, the ambassador noted the deep historical and cultural ties between the two countries. He highlighted the ongoing efforts to strengthen cooperation and foster friendships. "Together, we aim to open new horizons for development and prosperity for our peoples," he stated.

He also reiterated the shared commitment of both nations to peace and regional progress. "Our collaboration serves as a model for mutual understanding and development in the region," he said.

Concluding his message, the ambassador extended his best wishes to the people of Pakistan, expressing hope for their continued prosperity and harmony.

Ahsan urges adopting Quaid's golden principles to transform Pakistan into strong, developed nation

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday urged the nation, especially the younger generation, to adopt Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's golden principles of unity, faith, and discipline. "This adoption will transform Pakistan into a strong, sovereign and prosperous nation—a true embodiment of Quaid-e-Azam's dream," he said in a message on the founder of Pakistan's 148th birth anniversary. He said that the Quaid's tireless work and dedication to national unity were a beacon for all Pakistanis, adding, "His life gives us the message that if we move forward with determination, integrity and mutual con-



sent, no obstacle can stop us from becoming a developed and prosperous state." The minister said that today, Pakistan stood at a crucial crossroads and it was the duty of every citizen to play their part in national development by upholding the principles of Quaid-e-Azam and setting aside personal interests. The government, he said, guided by the principles of Quaid-e-Azam, was adopting the 5Es framework as the basis of its development strategy. "This framework, based on exports, e-Pakistan, equity, energy and environment, is meant to put Pakistan on the path of sustainable growth and prosperity, so that when we celebrate the centenary of Pakistan's independence in 2047, Pakistan will be among the leading economies of the world," Ahsan Iqbal said the current economic challenges in the country also required the nation to adopt the principles of discipline from Quaid-e-Azam and put the economy on the path of stability by promoting self-reliance. "It is the time to eradicate corruption, promote tolerance, and provide equal opportunities for development to every citizen so that all segments of society can participate in the process of national development," he remarked.

Mohsin Naqvi meets Vatican Ambassador Archbishop Germano Penemote

ARSHAD MALIK

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi met with Archbishop Germano Penemote, the Holy See (Vatican City).

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest and bilateral relations were discussed.

The Interior minister

also apprised the ambassador regarding his visit to Vatican City.

Mohsin Naqvi extended Christmas greetings to Archbishop Germano Penemote and expressed good wishes for Pope Francis and the Christian community.

He stated that his meeting with Pope Francis in Vatican City was extremely pleasant.

Mohsin Naqvi praised Pope Francis's services for social and economic justice and humanity and commended his efforts for peace in the world.

The Interior minister said that his visit to Vatican City and meeting with Pope Francis are still fresh in his memory. He highlighted that Pope Francis took a

courageous stance on the Palestine issue, which was appreciated by everyone.

He emphasized that there is an excellent opportunity to further enhance relations between Vatican City and Pakistan.

He underscored that exchanges bilateral delegations will strengthen the bilateral relations.

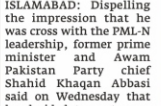
Fog again disrupts road traffic on motorways in parts of country

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Dense fog again blanketed different cities of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh on night between Tuesday and Wednesday, paralyzing routine life and disrupting road traffic. With intensification of fog and poor visibility several sections of Motorways were closed.

Shahid Khaqan says left PML-N over its preference for power to people's vote

PEAK POINT



ISLAMABAD: Dismissing the PML-N, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said on Wednesday that he decided to part ways with the party when the latter preferred coming to power rather than giving respect to 'vote'.

Speaking to the media in Sukkur, Abbasi said it was a fact that despite being in a power, the PML-N was not a popular party. "I dissociated myself from the ruling party not for my own interests."

He said that former prime minister and PTI founder Imran Khan was receiving training in jail.



"Whenever a politician goes to jail, he undergoes training," he elaborated. He said that every party had a manifesto, but the problem was that it failed to deliver on it. "Not a single government has been able to provide facilities to the masses."

Abbasi said he had reached Sukkur for organizing the party. "People belonging to different cities of the country have joined the Awam Pakistan Party," he informed.

The former prime minister was of the view that the government and the opposition should sort out their differences in the parliament rather than washing their dirty linen in public. "But the question is what is being discussed these days is in the benefit of the country or its people?" he questioned, and added, "Certainly not."

Abbasi said whenever there was issues in a country like the ones being witnessed these days, there was bound to be foreign interference. He said this categorically that no province could deprive the other province of its share in the water resources.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with the Ambassador of Holy See (Vatican City) Archbishop Germano Penemote.