





# People’s Party is an ideological Party: Yousaf Raza Gillani

**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister and Senator Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has said that the People’s Party is an ideological party which has always advocated the rights of the people and, apart from NA-148. He expressed these thoughts by bringing the projects to completion, providing employment to the unemployed youth, and providing development funds for the improvement of health and other sectors. He did this on the occasion of the announcement of joining the People’s Party by saying goodbye to PTI along with former chairman of Union Council 68 Zakariya Town of NA 148 and PP 214 Malik Ghulam Nabi Vance and Syed Farrukh Gardizi’s colleagues at Geelani House.

But Syed Ali Haider Gilani, the candidate of Provincial Constituency



213, was also present. Malik Ghulam Nabi Vance and Syed Farrukh Gurdizi also announced their support for Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and the

candidates of the People’s Party and said that they are Syed. Standing by the side of Yusuf Raza Gilani, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani further said that

those who join the party will be given a legitimate position. Will do and continue the mission of serving the people.

## Warm welcome

FAISALABAD: Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's beautiful appearance on his arrival at Tandali-anwala Jalsa.



Photo: Abdul Majid

## BOP offers Interest Free Green Loans

**PPA**

LAHORE: The Government of Punjab, Transport Department, held a launch ceremony on January 09, 2024 to introduce exciting initiatives aimed at revolutionizing Transportation Sector. The event, held at Faletti’s Hotel Lahore, showcased the GoPb’s commitment to promote sustainable and eco-friendly modes of transportation.

This initiative featured the launch of an interest-free scheme in partnership with The Bank of Punjab (BOP), aimed to providing 10,000 e-Bikes to university students across Punjab. Besides, GoPb also initiated the registration of retrofitted three-wheelers and issued inaugural license for eRickshaws. These are significant milestones in the transition towards sustainable transportation in Punjab.

This event was graced by Mr. Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Chief Minister of Punjab, who in no unequivocal



terms expressed about the dedication of his Government in promoting e-Mobility for environmental benefits. Mr. Zafar Masud, President/CEO of BOP, and senior officials from the Bank, high-level government representatives, and delegates from various electronic vehicle manufacturers were also present at the occasion.

Mr Naqvi stated that Lahore is one of the most polluted cities in the world and time has come where

we all need to play our due part. He felt proud that BOP had taken the lead role in this initiative, and was delighted to launch 1st interest free e-Bikes Scheme for students as well as interest free financing of 10,000 eRickshaws in Punjab. He announced that from now on, GoPb shall only purchase e-Bikes. The Honorable Chief Minister also added that 2,000 e-Bikes for Government Servants, 2,000 e-Bikes for Working Women and 2,000 e-Scooters for disabled

persons shall also be provided through an interest free program soon.

Mr. Zafar Masud while speaking at the occasion, emphasized upon the core advantages this program shall have on promoting Economic Activity, Environmental Sustainability, Youth Empowerment, Green Financing, Financial Inclusion and Wider Demographic accessibility for the people of Punjab. He expressed his gratitude to the CM Punjab and underscored the significance of this partnership, contributing towards preservation of the environment. Mr. Masud also said that integrating environmental considerations into banking system would assist BOP in directing international financing from multilaterals. He mentioned about an opportunity where an agreement with a foreign agency is being finalized to the tune of € 50 M to help support green-financing projects through BOP.

## Azad Kashmir committee reviews preparedness for emergencies and disasters in Sudhnuti district

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

PILANDRI: On the special instructions of Chief Secretary Azad Kashmir, a special committee to examine preparedness for dealing with sudden and emergency disasters and situations in Azad Jammu and Kashmir on Additional Secretary Home Surya Razak, Director SDMA Saeed Qureshi Deputy Secretary Sports Youth and Culture Dr. Rabia Naqvi. Contain

“Evaluation of preparedness of SDMA, Rescue 1122 & Civil Defense of AJ&K for Emergencies & Disasters”.

The committee visited the ground level of Azad Kashmir and reviewed the technical manpower and equipment of these departments.

## TEVTA to start vocational training in religious madrasas



**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: A hectic move in AJK history the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (AJK-TEVTA) on the basis of the Prime Minister’s Azad Jammu and Kashmir State’s “Artful Kashmir Program”, a consultation meeting was held with the Ulemas and Mashaikhs regarding vocational training in religious madrasas at new TEVTA Head Office. The meeting was presided over by Chairman AJK-TEVTA Chaudhry Muhammad Farid. The meeting was attended by Chairman Ulema Mushaikh Council Maulana Imtiaz Ahmed Siddiqui, Ulemas, elders of all schools of thought, respected teachers of Madrasahs and officers of TEVTA. Chairman Ulama and Mashai-kh Council Maulana Imtiaz Ahmed Siddiqui praised the initiatives of TEVTA and praised the initiatives taken by TEVTA to start vocational training in madrasas. In the meeting, Maulana Hameeduddin Barkati Jamia Barkatiya gave special comments.

First In this phase, training courses related to dressmaking, fashion designing and information technology will be conducted for female students according to the contemporary requirements, while providing training to institutions and candidates nominated by madrasas. Students in male madrasas will arrange training in their institutions while getting training in Computer, IT, Electrical, Welding, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning or any trade available in nearby institutions.

In this mission, awareness workshops will be organized by including other districts and a lab equipped with modern technology will be established. After graduating, they will play a key role in the society along with getting employment at the national and international level. Emphasized on playing one’s role with hard work and dedication purely for the sake of Allah’s pleasure. Appreciated Chairman TEVTA for continuous communication with institutions, guidance and technical support.

## Khanewal district literacy target achieved: Fauzia Hameed

**Waqar Paracha**

KHANEWAL: District Education Officer Literacy Khanewal Fauzia Hameed Chaudhry has said that the target of establishing 484 literacy schools in Khanewal district has been achieved on the special instructions of the Punjab government.



While on the occasion of the International Literacy Day, the best teacher/performance award in Lahore has also been received by the teacher of Khanewal district, Ms. Zubaydah Parveen, for her excellent performance, which is an honor that has increased 68 learners and the ratio of those who have achieved success. There has been an increase of ten percent—Fauzia Hameed Chaudhry further informed that during the calendar year 2023 the enrollment of new learners in non-formal schools of Khanewal district has increased by 12.27 percent –

## Vice Chancellor Nishtar Medical University visited to Various Departments of NMU



**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: Vice-Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Professor Dr. Mahnaz Khakwani visited various departments of the university to review the ongoing educational and teaching activities in Nishtar Medical University. He went to Department of Medical Education, Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORC), Quality Enhancement Cell and Biochemistry Department including Examination Department and reviewed various issues related to these departments in detail. The heads of the respective departments gave a briefing to Professor Dr. Mahnaz Khakwani about the ongoing development projects including educational, teaching and research activities in the departments. Vice-Chancellor Nishtar Medical University Professor Dr. Mehnaz Khakwani directed the heads of all departments not to compromise on transparency and high quality and assured their full cooperation. During this visit of the Vice Chancellor, Registrar Nishtar Medical University Professor Dr. Ghulam Abbas was also present with him

## A three-day Capacity Building Workshop held



**Quratul Ain Asim**

MULTAN: A three-day “Capacity Building Workshop” on “Early Childhood Development” of children was organized under the supervision of Dean Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti at Children’s Hospital Multan with the support of Government of Punjab and UNICEF in which core masters from all over Punjab. Trainers participated in the training.

Speaking to the participants on the first day of the workshop, Dean Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti shed light on the importance of the workshop. In the workshop Prof. Waqas Imran, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Sohail Arshad, MS Dr. Kamran Asif, Master Trainer Dr. Uzma, Dr. Iram Afzal and other senior doctors and a large number of participants from across Punjab also participated in the workshop and appreciated the organization of the workshop.

The aim of the workshop is to train and further update the doctors and all the participants on the “Early Childhood Development” of children.

## Islamic Ideology chief calls for stringent punishments in cases of child abuse, abductions

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: Dr Qibla Ayaz, the Chairman of Council of Islamic Ideology (CII), has stressed the need for legislation imposing strict punishments in cases of child abuse and abductions to send strong message to the criminals and curb such crimes.

He was speaking at a seminar titled “Addressing the plight of missing children and the corresponding legal framework in Pakistan”, organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with Roshni Research and Development Welfare Organization, commonly known as Roshni Helpline 1138.

The CII Chief said that political instability and social discord create space for evil forces in society to easily commit various crimes, including child abductions and serial abuse. He further said that the high prevalence of illiteracy

allows fake religious figures (peers) to prey on aggrieved parents and further adds to their misery.

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, the Executive Director of SDPI, said the issue of missing children and overall abuse of child rights cannot be resolved by any single institution and only collective wisdom and collaboration can be the effective remedy.

He further said that the diverse professional and social background of the speakers highlights the multi-dimensional nature of the issue and the need for collective as well as individual responsibility.

Tauseef H. Farooqi, the former Chairman of NEPRA, said that public regulators have a massive role to play in this regard. He recalled that NEPRA had taken five key CSR initiatives among which the awareness about missing children through electricity bills has been crucial. He said that loss of a child for a

family is much more devastating for a family compared to the death of a child.

Dr Jahanzeb Khan, Director General of Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Agency (ZARRA) said that the agency is mandated to issues alert when a report for a missing child is made through PEMRA, PTA. He informed the audience that law-enforcement agencies are responsible to immediately lodge FIR for missing children and notify to ZARRA. He highlighted that the law-enforcement agencies have notified 2271 cases out of which 1411 children were recovered. He maintained that child rights and child protection are shared responsibilities and any progress in these domains is not possible without the collective efforts.

Dr Syed Kaleem Imam, former Federal Secretary, stressed the need for addressing the root cause of the issue to ensure the safety of the children. He emphasized that understanding and

addressing the underlying psychological and social causes behind such predatory behaviour is crucial. Strengthening of law-enforcement must go hand in hand with scaling up individual responsibility and cognizance. He also suggested the sensitization and capacity building of law-enforcement personnel, especially female police officers.

Dr Tabassum Naz, Director of Schools, Federal Directorate of Education, stressed the need for preventative measures to protect children. We need to identify the weak links which lead to the issue of missing children and address the root cause, she added.

Earlier, Executive Director of Roshni Helpline 1138, Muhammad Ali, shared that Roshni Helpline has assisted over 20,000 families and successfully recovered 9600+ children nationwide because of the helpline’s innovative campaigns initiated to raise awareness about the issue.



Islamabad

15° – 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr .....5:45 am

Zohr .....12:15 pm

Asr .....3:40 pm

Maghrib .....5:18 pm

Isha .....6:46 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) ..... 15

Bomb Disposal ..... 15

Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad .....1122 & 16

Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 & Rescue Services ..... 4451122

Motorway Police ..... 9266044

Motorway Police ..... 9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad ..... 9222596

Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance .....115

PIA Flight Info ..... 114

PIA Cargo ..... 9280979

Railway Inquiry .....117

Railway Exchange ..... 9270831-5

WASA Rawalpindi .....5555489

CAA ..... 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH .....561111

MH .....561116

MH .....561116

Cantt Hospital .....9270907-11

DHQ .....5556311-4

RGH .....9290301-7

Holy Family .....9290322-7

PIMS .....9261170-79

Polyclinic ..... 9218300-09

Shifa International .....4603666

DEPARTMENTS

CDA ..... 9221334-43

CDA ..... 9208301-04

*Dr. Gohar Anticipates a \$20 billion surge in exports for 2024*

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Gohar Ejaz, the Federal Minister for Commerce, Industry and Investments envisions a substantial boost in Pakistan's exports, projecting a \$20 billion increase for the year 2024 (January to December).

This optimistic outlook comes after concerted efforts by the caretaker team to address the challenges faced by Pakistani exports.

In July 2023, Pakistani exports had faced a setback, declining to \$2.068 billion. Recognizing the significance of this challenge, the caretaker setup, assuming office in August 2023, dedicated itself to enhancing exports and curbing the trade deficit.

The results of these efforts are evident in the remarkable progress achieved by December 2023, with exports surging to \$2.812 billion—a noteworthy increase of \$511 million. The caretaker team's strategic focus on elevating the export of manufactured goods has played a pivotal role in this success.

By ensuring adequate energy supplies for industrial production, Pakistan has successfully revitalized exports, particularly targeting markets in the USA and EU. This revival in export capacity sets the stage for Dr. Gohar's optimistic projection of a \$20 billion increase in exports for the upcoming year.

Dr. Gohar Ejaz expressed confidence in the positive trajectory and emphasized his commitment to fostering sustained economic growth through robust export strategies.

**BS** **'Be careful, the flowers of morals should not wither'**

# Hamdard Foundation holds 2nd Hamdard Naunehal Conference

**PPA**

KARACHI: Hamdard Foundation Pakistan organized the 2nd Hamdard Naunehal Conference yesterday, held online via Zoom (social media platform) on the topic "Be careful, the flowers of morals should not wither", presided over by Ms. Sadia Rashid President, Hamdard Foundation Pakistan. Newly elected office bearers of all four Hamdard Naunehal Assemblies participated in the conference. Ms. Sadia Rashid participated in the conference from Hamdard Corporate Head Office. She was accompanied by Director Syed Muhammad Arsalan and the office bearers of Hamdard Naunehal Assembly Karachi. The office bearers from Rawalpindi/ Islamabad, Peshawar, and Lahore joined the meeting through Zoom and shared their thoughts.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Sadia Rashid said that morality holds significant and essential importance in the establishment of a peaceful and progressive society. Advancement on the path of development is unattainable for any nation without the adoption of good morals and attributes. Throughout history,

Allah sent prophets in every age to guide and teach humanity moral values. Those who adhere to the teachings of these prophets contribute remarkably to the welfare of society and leave a lasting impact on people's hearts. Among such distinguished personalities is Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said, who occupies a prominent place in our national history. His legacy includes providing mental and intellectual training to the youth, promoting their constructive and creative potential, and setting up a practical path to the realization of the dream of a bright and prosperous Pakistan.

Describing the aims and objectives of the Naunehal Conference, she said that the first Hamdard Naunehal conference was organized in 2023. This choice was influenced by the fact that January marks the birth month of Quaid-e-Naunehal Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said. Therefore, this month was chosen for hosting the Naunehal Conference, aiming to facilitate a meeting of all office-bearers from assemblies in all four centres and through sharing of ideas formulate a strategic plan for the future.

The young speakers Syeda Maryam Fatimah (Hamdard Public School Karachi),



Atiya Al Wakil (Divisional Public School Lahore), Rida Nadeem (City English School Rawalpindi), Marwa Gul (Al Faisal Model High School Peshawar) and others said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) emphasized that morals serve as the embellishment of knowledge and worship. On the Day of Resurrection, the actions of a believer will be primarily weighed on the scale, and nothing

will hold greater significance than good conduct. When an individual succumbs to their animalistic instincts, it not only robs them of the spiritual vitality derived from a moral existence but also diminishes their intellectual capacity. Ultimately, these worldly passions become dulled, leading to societal decline.

A patriot by heart, Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said undertook the task of preparing the youth of Pakistan to face

future challenges and contribute to shaping the nation's destiny. He dedicated his life to the mission of nation-building through the education and development of young minds. Following in the footsteps of reformers like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who initiated educational reforms for Muslims, Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said also built educational institutes and became Sir Syed's successor. He established schools for children, including those who hail from rural areas. He established Bazam-e-Naunehal, Hamdard Naunehal Assembly, and the published monthly Hamdard Naunehal magazine. Additionally, he authored numerous travelogues for children. His practical efforts extended to the establishment of the city of knowledge and wisdom, Madinat al-Hikmah, and throughout his life, he strived and struggled for the promotion of education.

At the end of the meeting, Syed Muhammad Arsalan conveyed appreciation for the participation of all attendees. He expressed the hope that the students would enlighten their peers about the life of the Pakistani martyr, Hakim Mohammed Said, and increase their knowledge base with continuous reading.

## Compulsion

ISLAMABAD: Gypsy Women holding bunches of dry woods are moving towards their homes after collecting them to use as fuel in their kitchen due to the load shedding of gas in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

## LOU signing ceremony to advance climate education in informal schools in Islamabad

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: In a momentous occasion that underscores the commitment to environmental education and human rights, BECS and fdi joined forces in a formal Letter of Understanding (LOU) signing ceremony. The partnership aims to enhance climate education initiatives within informal and formal schools across Islamabad.

The signing ceremony, held at BECS office marked the collaborative efforts of BECS, led by Mr. Hameed Khan Niazi and fdi, represented by Ms. Uzma Yaqoob. The event was attended by esteemed dignitaries, representatives from



both organizations, educators, and activists who share a common vision for a sustainable and informed future.

The Letter of Understanding outlines a comprehensive

framework for the integration of climate education modules into the curriculum of informal schools in Islamabad. This groundbreaking initiative seeks to empower students with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand, address, and mitigate the challenges posed by climate change.

The collaborative effort between BECS and fdi signifies a significant step forward in addressing the interconnected challenges of climate change and human rights. The signing ceremony represents a shared commitment to building a more sustainable and equitable future through education.

## Economic Analysis of Law

In the intricate dance of societal mechanics, economics and law intertwine, shaping the very fabric of our legal systems and economic landscapes. The economic analysis of law, a multidisciplinary approach, offers a unique lens through which we can scrutinize the efficiency of legal structures and the profound interplay between incentives and individual behavior.

At its core, the economic analysis of law places a theoretical spotlight on efficiency. It challenges traditional legal analyses by asserting that, in theory, markets outshine courts in achieving efficiency. This prompts a deeper exploration into the incentives guiding human behavior, going beyond theory to employ empirical and statistical methods that measure how individuals respond to these influential drivers.

Within the realm of the private legal system, property rights take center stage. The economic analysis of law identifies three crucial tasks: defining property rights, facilitating property transfers, and enforcing property rights through mechanisms such as criminal and tort laws. The linchpin of efficiency in property rights lies in their clear definition, universality, exclusivity, and transferability.

Delving into contract law reveals a fascinating alignment with economic efficiency. Research in the law and economics domain illustrates that allowing parties to draft agreements and upholding these terms, including agreed-upon prices, is generally efficient.

When a contract's performance becomes inefficient, courts often opt for damages instead of enforcing the agreement. This delicate balance between legal enforcement and economic efficiency is further complemented by the design of contracts and contract law, serving as mechanisms to mitigate opportunistic behavior and foster trust.

Beyond the microcosm of contracts and property rights, the economic analysis of law extends its gaze to the broader impacts of laws and regulations on society. Applying economic principles and tools, it scrutinizes their effects on wealth distribution, resource allocation, and overall economic efficiency.

This comprehensive evaluation equips lawmakers and policymakers with invaluable insights to formulate regulations that not only uphold stability and fairness but also catalyze economic growth.

In the symbiotic relationship between economics and law, the economic analysis of law emerges as a powerful tool. It unveils the intricacies of legal structures, providing a lens through which we can comprehend and enhance the efficiency of our societal frameworks. As lawmakers and policymakers navigate the complexities of crafting regulations, the economic analysis of law serves as a guiding beacon, fostering stability, fairness, and the sustained growth of our shared economic landscape.

*Writer is fresh BS. Economics graduate from Quaid-e-Azam university Islamabad.*



Analysis

Ahmed

## Gavi Board appoints Senator Dr Sania Nishtar as Chief Executive Officer

**PNP**

ISLAMABAD: Commenting on her appointment, Dr Nishtar said: "Health starts with life-saving vaccines. Over the past 23 years, Gavi has been one of the most impactful organisations in global health. The task ahead is enormous – from health impacts of climate change, to the need to tackle vaccine inequity, prepare for future outbreaks and boost routine immunisation, which I believe is the gateway to achieving Universal Health Coverage. I am honored by the trust the Gavi Board has placed in me and look forward to working with Gavi's talented staff and skilled Alliance partners to ensure Gavi reaches hundreds of millions of children in lower-income countries with life-saving vaccines against deadly and debilitating diseases."

David Marlow, Gavi's CEO ad interim, commented on Dr Nishtar's appointment: "I have been honoured to lead Gavi with the senior leadership team during this interim period and congratulate the Board on attracting and securing Dr Sania Nishtar as our next CEO. Together with the Gavi team, I am very much looking forward to working closely with Dr Nishtar and our Alliance partners as we strive to meet our ambitious goals."

Dr Nishtar's appointment comes at an important time for Gavi. With its fifth five-year strategic period drawing to a close at the end of 2025, Gavi will seek Board approval during 2024 for its 2026–2030 strategy. Alongside future strategy, fundraising will be a priority for Dr Nishtar, with plans already in place for a high-level event to launch Gavi's investment opportunity, to be co-hosted by France and Africa CDC in June.

## DPO Tank conducted meeting regarding Polio Campaign, Security of elections



Adam Khan Wazir

TANK: In the light of the special instructions of Regional Police Officer Dera Ismail Khan Nasir Mehmood Satti, District Police Officer Tank Ifikhar Ali Shah held an important meeting in his office regarding the security of the anti-polio campaign 2024 and general elections 2024 on Friday.

In which DSP City Sharif Ullah Khan Kundi, DSP Rural Alamgir Khan and DSP Sub Division Jandola Sayed Marjan Khan participated.

On this occasion, DPO Tank gave a detailed briefing on the measures taken in connection with the upcoming anti-polio campaign and the security of the general election and the security measures to protect the public including the staff of anti-polio, health department and election commission.

DPO Tank urged all the police officers to continue their efforts to maintain public order and ensure the use of bullet proof jackets and helmets while on duty.

Apart from this, instructions were issued to avoid the use of mobile phones, to increase police patrolling, to establish check points at suitable places, to keep a close watch on the people coming and going.

However, in this regard, special orders were issued not to hesitate from any sacrifice, to treat the people in a friendly manner and not to abuse anyone.

## NBP Digital launches new mobile app donation feature

**PPA**

KARACHI: The National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) has embarked on a new initiative with the NBP Digital App to streamline and improve the digital customer experience for account holders, including both conventional and Aitemaad Islamic banking. This innovative feature in NBP Digital app allows users to make donations effortlessly with just a single tap, anytime and anywhere.

NBP customers can now donate to leading NGOs including Edhi Foundation, Saylani Welfare Trust, Chippa Welfare Association, Indus Hospital, and others. This innovation reflects NBP's commitment to providing a simplified customer experience with the help of digital technology, enabling the Nation's bank to further accelerate its technological innovation.



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## Gaza hospitals buckle under Israeli attacks, denials of aid missions

Repeated refusals by Israeli authorities to allow UN aid teams to deliver desperately needed humanitarian relief inside Gaza have effectively cut off five hospitals in the north from access to “lifesaving medical supplies and equipment”, the UN aid coordination office (OCHA) has warned. Amid new reports of intensified bombing and clashes across the Strip on Wednesday, OCHA said that requests had been denied five times since December 26 to reach the Central Drug Store in Gaza city and Al Awda Hospital in Jabalya, further north.

“At the same time, the continued denial of fuel delivery to water and sanitation facilities is leaving tens of thousands of people without access to clean water and increasing the risk of sewage overflows, significantly heightening the risk of the spread of communicable diseases,” OCHA said in its latest update on the impact of war in Gaza, issued late Tuesday. According to the UN World Health Organization (WHO), 15 out of Gaza’s 36 hospitals remain “partially functional”- nine in the south and six in the north. Since the start of hostilities, the UN and health partners have provided healthcare and medical services to an estimated 500,000 people. The development came as much of the Strip and especially central and southern areas in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis governorates, experienced further “intense” Israeli bombardment from the air, land and sea in the past 24 hours, OCHA said. Rocket fire into Israel by Palestinian armed groups also continued, along with ongoing clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian fighters, particularly in Deir al Balah and Khan Younis governorates. Citing the Gazan health authorities, OCHA noted that 126 Palestinians had been killed between the afternoons of January 8 and 9; another 241 were reportedly injured. The total estimated number of fatalities is at least 23,210 Palestinians killed and 59,167 injured from Israeli bombardment, that began in response to attacks in southern Israel on October 7, leaving some 1,200 dead including 36 children and another 240 taken hostage. “The Israeli authorities estimate that about 136 Israelis and foreign nationals remain captive in Gaza,” OCHA said. The ongoing Israeli offensive had resulted in “many” deadly incidents with “devastating consequences for tens of thousands of civilians”, OCHA said, noting that many had already fled Gaza City and the north to central and southern areas of the Strip. In one incident in Khan Younis, a five-year-old child of a Medecins Sans Frontières (MSF) worker died of her injuries after a MSF shelter was hit on Monday. In Deir al Balah, four people were also reportedly killed and dozens injured when a house northwest of the city was targeted, OCHA said. Citing the Israeli military, the UN office reported that between January 8 and 9, nine Israeli soldiers had been killed in Gaza, with 183 killed since the start of the ground operation and 1,065 personnel injured. Meanwhile, UN humanitarian officials reiterated warnings about the growing risk of disease in the Strip, particularly in the southern city of Rafah, as yet more civilians fled hostilities following Israeli evacuation orders. Pre-war, Rafah was home to around 280,000 people, but it now had a population of well over one million, the UN relief agency for Palestinians (UNWRA) said on Tuesday in an online post on X.

## 5-Strategic Communications to derail elections... - II

Strategic Communication-4 begins with the campaign to delay elections until the culprits of the 9th May incident are brought to justice. Campaign Title: ‘Justice Before Democracy: Holding Accountable the Culprits of 9th May’. Key Message: “Postponing Elections for Justice: Prioritizing Accountability and National Reconciliation”. Communication Strategy: Shedding light on the significance of addressing the unresolved 9th May incident, emphasizing its impact on national reconciliation and stability. Appeal to the public sentiment for accountability, stressing that bringing culprits to justice is crucial for healing and moving forward as a nation. Frame the resolution of the 9th May incident as a precondition for holding fair and transparent elections. Highlight that accountability fosters national unity and reconciliation, laying the groundwork for a stronger democratic future. Utilize various media platforms, arrange speeches by influential figures, keep the public informed about progress made in addressing the 9th May incident, showcasing steps taken towards accountability. Sample Slogan: “Justice Prevails: Ensuring Accountability for a Stronger Democracy. Visual Imagery: Visuals depicting the pursuit of justice, accountability processes, and images illustrating national unity and reconciliation.

Communication Strategy-5 Title: “Ensuring Fairness: Postponing Elections

for Inclusive Resolution’. Key Message: “Postponing Elections to Address Fairness Concerns: Prioritizing National Unity and Trust in the Democratic Process”. It begins with acknowledging concerns raised by political parties, particularly PTI, regarding fairness and transparency in the election process. Emphasize the necessity of creating an environment where all parties accept the election results to prevent post-election chaos. Position postponement as a means to ensure a more stable and consensus-driven electoral outcome. Leveraging Communication Channels Television, radio, newspapers, and social media—to communicate the rationale behind postponement and the commitment to fairness. Arrange discussions and forums for direct engagement with political parties to address concerns and seek collaborative solutions. Ensuring that decisions regarding the electoral process are made in the best interest of the nation. Sample Slogan: “Fairness Unites: Postponing for an Inclusive Electoral Process. Visual Imagery:

Graphics symbolizing fairness, inclusivity, and unity among political parties, aiming for a harmonious electoral process.

These five strategies, while aimed at achieving certain objectives, raise concerns about their alignment with constitutional principles. It’s evident that our nation, already fragile, cannot endure another unconstitutional disruption, as any illegal actions to achieve these goals could result in dire consequences. Despite our history marked by martial laws and setbacks, there’s a recurring pattern where powerful forces often achieve their objectives by disregarding, manipulating, or violating the constitution without facing consequences.

The constitution provides for holding provincial assembly elections within 90 days of dissolution, yet despite court orders in September 2023, elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces were delayed with total impunity. The absence of fresh elections since the National Assembly’s dissolution in April 2023 raises questions about adherence

to reasonable timeframes implied by constitutional provisions. Legal experts have raised concerns about the interim government’s decisions, suggesting they might overstep constitutional limitations. Issues surrounding the independence of the judiciary and media under the interim setup add complexity to the situation. The Supreme Court and the interim government are going to face off once again on the question of holding elections on 8th February.

The nation is keeping its fingers crossed. It’s critical to emphasize the importance of upholding the rule of law and respecting the decisions made by the Supreme Court. In any democratic society, institutions must function independently within their prescribed roles. If there’s a disagreement or concern about a decision, the appropriate and lawful approach is to address it through legal channels, such as filing appeals or presenting arguments in court that adhere to the legal framework and the constitution.

Attempting to circumvent or undermine the decisions of the Supreme Court through illegal or unconstitutional means can have severe consequences, not just for the democratic process but also for the stability and credibility of the country’s institutions.

*Writer Is Former Press Secretary To The President, Former Press Minister At Embassy Of Pakistan To France, Former MD, SRBC*



The Supreme Court and the interim government are going to face off once again on the question of holding elections on 8th February.



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

## Disqualification on Anti-Army Propaganda II

Countries enforcing strict rules against anti-army propaganda underscore the significance they place on their armed forces. These legal measures aim to maintain discipline, uphold national security, and preserve the positive image of the military within society. While some may perceive these measures as limiting freedom of expression, they reflect a commitment to safeguarding the reputation and integrity of the armed forces, often considered the backbone of a nation.

Recognizing the vital importance of upholding the reputation and morale of their military, numerous countries have proactively enacted measures by passing resolutions in their legislative assemblies to counter anti-army propaganda.

In the United States, Congress has consistently displayed bipartisan support for resolutions condemning anti-army propaganda. Given the central role of the armed forces in U.S. national security, these resolutions aim to reaffirm the commitment to supporting military personnel and their families. They often stress the significance of accurate information and discourage activities that could harm the military’s reputation.

China, with its expansive and rapidly modernizing military, has implemented measures to counter anti-army propaganda. While China’s political system may not follow traditional parliamentary resolutions, the government actively regulates information to maintain a positive image of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). Strict controls on media and online platforms are integral to efforts preventing the spread of negative narratives about the military.

Russia, boasting a rich military history, has taken legislative steps to counter anti-army propaganda. The State Duma has passed resolutions condemning activities that undermine the reputation of the Russian Armed Forces. These resolutions underscore the importance of national unity and the imperative to protect the image of the military amidst evolving security challenges.

The passage of resolutions in legislative assemblies against anti-army propaganda signifies a collective acknowledgment of the importance of maintaining a positive image of the armed forces.

In these countries, the resolutions not only denounce disinformation campaigns but also highlight the broader societal need for unity, national security, and respect for those serving in the military. As the global landscape evolves, such measures play a vital role in cultivating a society that values and supports its armed forces while promoting the responsible dissemination of information.

In recent times, Pakistan has grappled with the repercussions of false anti-army propaganda circulating through various mediums. While propaganda and misinformation pose long-standing challenges for any nation, the impact of such campaigns can be particularly detrimental when directed at the armed forces—an institution pivotal to maintaining national security and stability.

The false anti-army propaganda finds its origins in both internal and external sources. Within the country, individuals with vested interests may be responsible for spreading misinformation to advance their agendas. External actors seeking to destabilize Pakistan or sow discord may also play a role in promoting such prop-

aganda. Social media stands out as a primary channel for the dissemination of false anti-army narratives, with platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp providing fertile grounds for the spread of misinformation. The ease of information dissemination on these platforms allows false narratives, distorted images, and manipulated videos to quickly go viral, creating a challenging ripple effect to contain.

The consequences of false anti-army propaganda go beyond damaging the reputation of the armed forces. They can erode public trust in the military, potentially leading to a decline in morale among soldiers. Additionally, the divisive nature of these narratives can contribute to internal strife and impede efforts to foster national unity. The Pakistani government and military are actively addressing the issue by launching awareness campaigns to educate the public about discerning credible information from misinformation. Legal measures are also being explored to hold individuals accountable for spreading false narratives that harm national interests.

The problem of false anti-army propaganda in Pakistan has international dimensions, as external actors may be orchestrating and disseminating such campaigns. Diplomatic channels and international organizations are being engaged to address this concern and hold accountable those attempting to destabilize the nation through disinformation. In the face of rampant misinformation, media literacy becomes crucial in helping citizens distinguish between fact and fiction. Educational initiatives and awareness campaigns are vital components in the fight against false propaganda, and citizens have a responsibility to critically evaluate the information they encounter and refrain from sharing unverified content contributing to the spread of false narratives.

*To be continued*

## FDI, debt-trap diplomacy: How to balance growth and sovereignty - II

In many cases, these countries do not have the financial means to repay the debts and are forced to give up ownership of strategic assets, such as ports, airports, or telecommunications infrastructure. The term Debt trap Diplomacy was firstly coined by Indian Scholar Brahma Chellaney in 2017. He used this term specially for China by giving an example of Hambantota port. The country invested heavily in infrastructure at the Hambantota Port, which was built under the BRI. When it became apparent that Sri Lanka would struggle to repay the Chinese debt, the port was leased to a Chinese company for 99 years. Djibouti, Kenya, and Zambia etc are other countries where China has negotiated favourable debt restructuring terms in exchange for strategic assets.

China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is often cited as a prime example of debt-trap diplomacy. Since its launch in 2013, BRI has been successful in attracting many developing countries to invest in infrastructure. The initiative aims to encourage economic development and connectivity across a broad swath of Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. However, the initiative has also come under criticism for being exploitative, especially in countries with low economic growth and high debt burdens. Similarly in Pakistan CPEC, a flagship project under China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), exemplifies the interplay between FDI and Debt Trap Diplomacy. While it aims to bolster infrastructure, energy, and connectivity between China and Pakistan, concerns have surfaced regarding its long-term implications for Pakistan’s economy. On one hand, CPEC has injected

substantial FDI into Pakistan, catalyzing infrastructure development and economic growth. However, the financing mechanisms, including loans with stringent conditions and high-interest rates, have sparked debates about Pakistan’s increasing indebtedness to China. This has raised apprehensions about the potential erosion of Pakistan’s sovereignty due to the debt burden.

Examining these examples underscores the necessity for recipient nations to exercise caution and due diligence in negotiating terms for foreign investments. They must prioritize transparency, sustainable financing, and rigorous risk assessment to avoid entrapment in debt cycles that could compromise their sovereignty. FDI, when transparent and mutually beneficial, can propel economic progress. However, nations must remain vigilant against potential debt traps inherent in certain investment schemes. Crafting robust

financial strategies and fostering equitable partnerships are essential to harnessing the potential benefits of FDI while mitigating the risks associated with Debt Trap Diplomacy. By fostering a climate of informed decision-making and fostering collaborations among nations based on transparency, mutual benefit, and sustainable practices becomes imperative. It is through these avenues that countries can navigate the complexities of global financial engagements, harnessing the benefits of Foreign Direct Investment while guarding against the pitfalls of Debt Trap Diplomacy. By prioritizing prudent financial strategies and fostering equitable partnerships, nations can build a more resilient and mutually beneficial global economic landscape for future generations.”



Abdul Basit Alvi



Sohail Ahmad Baber



# Speakers for effective dissemination of Hajj practices through strong media partnerships

**Spokesman Report**

JEDDAH: Speakers at the session titled "Media's Role in Hajj: Perspectives from Local and Global Contexts", held Thursday – the last day of Hajj and Umrah Service Conference & Exhibition 2024, called for enhanced multi-media coverage and dissemination of annual Hajj practices through strong partnerships among various media organisations from across the world.

The session moderated by Hammam Juraid, Vice President of Saudi Strategic Partnerships and Communication, was addressed by Dr Abdullahif ALAbdullatif, Chief Executive Officer of the Saudi General Commission for Audiovisual Media; Colonel Talal Al-Shalhoub, Spokesperson of Saudi Ministry of Interior; Akhmad Munir, President Director of Indonesian news agency ANTARA; and Shahid Saleem Khah, Director News of the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP).

Speakers for effective dissemination of Hajj practices through strong media partnerships

Pakistan's Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmad was also present in the session which was attended among others by senior Saudi government officials from various ministries and departments as

well as media persons.

The speakers were unanimous in the view that there was a need to adopt strong media strategies for more effective dissemination of annual Hajj rituals across the world through partnerships between the media entities of Saudi Arabia and other countries and by using all modern tools of mass communication.

APP's Director News Shahid Saleem Khan, while speaking in the session, highlighted the potential of partnerships between media entities and its importance to ensure multi-media dissemination of annual Hajj practices across the world, particularly in the Muslim World.

He viewed that new strategies with focus on the dissemination of Hajj and Umrah practices, should also be aimed at highlighting, promoting and presenting the soft and true image of Islam before the world, particularly the non-Muslims, so as to remove their misconceptions about the religion.

Speaking on behalf APP and its Managing Director Muhammad Asim Khichi, he informed the participants that APP and SPA, already having a news exchange agreement since 2005, were actively working together to disseminate the news shared by each other, including those related to the Hajj through their respective media platforms.

He further said that APP, which had news exchange agreements with around 50 media organizations from around the world, had the honour of multi-media coverage of the last year's Hajj practices in cooperation and partnership with the official Saudi new agency.

Speakers for effective dissemination of Hajj practices through strong media partnerships

For the purpose, he added that a strong media team from APP Islamabad travelled to the holy cities of Makkah and Madina during the Hajj Season 2023 and ensured an effective multi-media coverage of the pilgrimage.

Shahid informed the audience that owing to the APP-SPA cooperation and the hard-work of APP media team, over 450 multi-media news reports were released and published by the agency on its various platforms, including through Text Service, Video News Service, social media posts (Twitter, Facebook), and Website: "app.com.pk" in diverse languages.

Abdullatif ALAbdullatif, CEO of the Saudi General Commission for Audiovisual Media and Colonel Talal Al-Shalhoub, Spokesperson of the Saudi Ministry of Interior, briefed the participants about the measures being taken by their respective ministries / departments in the areas of audiovis-



ual facilitation and security respectively.

Speakers for effective dissemination of Hajj practices through strong media partnerships

Later, the APP Director News also availed the opportunity of holding a

meeting with SPA President Dr Fahad Alagran, and discussed the prospects of an increased and strong cooperation between the two news agencies not only in the Hajj coverage but in other areas of news cooperation as well.

Dr Fahad appreciated APP for an

effective media coverage of the Hajj Season 2023 and expressed his desire for engaging more APP staffers for the Hajj Season 2024.

He also conveyed his good wishes for APP Managing Director Muhammad Asim Khichi.

## CPEC important pioneering project of Belt and Road Initiative: Mao Ning

**Spokesman Report**

BELJING: The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has achieved some early harvests in transport infrastructure, energy, Gwadar Port, and other areas, giving a strong boost to economic and social development and regional connectivity in Pakistan, Chinese Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson Mao Ning said on Thursday.

The CPEC, the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is providing important support for building an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era, she said during her regular briefing.

Mao Ning said that CPEC is an important pioneering project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

"With the concerted efforts of the



two sides, the CPEC has achieved some early harvests in transport infrastructure, energy, Gwadar Port, and other areas, giving a strong boost to econom-

ic and social development and regional connectivity in Pakistan and providing important support for building an even closer China-Pakistan commu-

nity with a shared future in the new era," she added.

The spokespersons said that the Chinese side stands ready to work with Pakistan to implement the common understanding between the leaders of the two countries.

"With a high-standard, people-centered and sustainable approach, we can jointly develop the CPEC for growth, better life, innovation, green development, and openness, upgrade it and better boost the two countries' development to the benefit of the two peoples," she added.

As per official data, the CPEC has brought \$25.4 billion in direct investment to Pakistan and created about 236,000 jobs there.

It helped Pakistan generate 8,000 megawatts of electricity and build 886 kilometres of national core transmission grid.

## Pakistan supports South Africa's application against Israel in ICJ: FO



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: "Pakistan supports the application filed by South Africa before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) concerning Israel's violations of its obligations under the 1951 Genocide Convention in relation to the Palestinian people in Gaza." "We consider this legal action timely and an important step towards holding Israel to account for its well-documented atrocities unleashed against Palestinian people since 7th October 2023," the Foreign Office Spokesperson said during her weekly press briefing.

"Pakistan shares the concerns raised in the application by South Africa. Israel's ongoing military aggression and actions against the Palestinian people constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity and amount to genocidal act," she remarked. She said, "We reiterate our call for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire; an end to Israel's unabated massacre of the Palestinian people; an uplifting of an inhumane siege; and expeditious delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people." "Pakistan firmly believes that the only just solution to the Palestinian question is the creation of an independent, viable, sovereign and contiguous Palestinian State along the pre-June 1967 borders with Al-Quds-Al-Sharif as its capital," she added.

## China-Pakistan International College of Resources and Environment unveiled

**News Desk**

BELJING: China-Pakistan International College of Resources and Environment jointly built by Yunnan Land and Resources Vocational College and the University of Baltistan was unveiled in Beijing recently. The two sides will cultivate Pakistani talents who master not only technology but also Chinese language in the future based on the newly signed agreement, China Economic News (CEN) reported.

In view of the various energy and mineral projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a large number of professional and technical talents on geological survey and mineral exploration are in demand. According to Chen Ying, President of Yunnan Land and Resources Vocational College, skilled Pakistani professionals will be trained for Pakistan's local enterprises as well as Chinese enterprises in Pakistan to alleviate the skilled labor shortage in Pakistan. Furthermore, teacher training, exchange visits, and seminars are also on the way.

## Shahera appreciates PID for initiating debate on national issues ahead of general elections

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Information and Broadcasting Shahera Shahid on Thursday appreciated the Press Information Department for holding a series of seminars in the run up to coming general elections to generate debate on national issues. Addressing the opening session of a seminar on "Pakistan Election 2024: The Economic Reforms Agenda of Political Parties" here, she said that through this series of seminars, the government wanted to initiate debate on issues being faced by Pakistan and their solutions in the backdrop of upcoming general elections.



The objective of this seminar was to educate the

people about the problems to be faced by the govern-

ment which would come to power after February 8 elec-

tions and what policies should be adopted to overcome these problems and put the country on path of development, she said.

The Secretary said that in the seminar, not only experts on economic affairs were invited but also representatives of the political parties to give their respective parties perspective on economic revival.

She said that it was praise worthy that media was playing a proactive role in highlighting national issues, adding that such seminars would provide good opportunities to people from various segments of society to give their input in putting the country on path of economic development.

## Senate to support HG1 Garlic growers to help end import: AJA

LAHORE: Senate Standing Committee on Commerce has directed the National Agriculture Research Centre, the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) and the provincial governments to collectively prepare a plan to support HG1 variety of garlic growers which has the potential of producing enough to put an end to Rs 80 billion per annum import.

The plan will identify policy, investment, training and other support measures which assistance is required from Export Development Fund (EDF) to increase NARC HG1 Garlic variety's production and export surplus.

This was disclosed at a seminar arranged by the Agricultural Journalists Association (AJA) here on Thursday. Pakistan Horticulture Development & Export Company (PHDEC) Punjab Region's

head Jafar Ali, progressive growers, CEO of a seed development company Tariq Ismail Mayo and others addressed the event.

PHDEC Punjab's regional head Jafar Ali speaking on this occasion said that his organization was ready to extend assistance needed to promote HG1 garlic variety. He said it was the mandate of his organization to help promote the horticulture products and their export from Pakistan. He invited the growers and the companies involved in production of the above mentioned variety to come up with a plan and they would fund it from the Export Development Fund (EDF).

Tariq Ismail Mayo, CEO Agro Bridge (Pvt) Limited said at present 577 farmers which sowing the variety on around 2,100-2,200 acres of land and

if this figure could be pushed to 20,000 acres to 25,000 acres in next three years, it would help our dependence on import of garlic from abroad. "At present we were importing around 60 per cent of our domestic need from different neighbouring countries formally or informally," he added.

Muhammad Luqman President Garlic Growers Association said that total consumption of the garlic in Pakistan was around 300,000 tons per annum and major chunk of it was imported. He stressed for organic to make the garlic crop more profitable to make it acceptable in the international market. He also called for promotion of value addition to ensure export, as it could not be exported in raw form.

Ali Raza Kharal, a progressive farmer from Sheikhpura termed the HG1 a promising crop



to earn handsome profit. However, he stressed the need to sow at least 100,000 plants in an acre with distance of 5 inches between two plants to get 60 mm off fruit

which was acceptable for domestic use.

Hussnain Akhtar Virk, another farmer speaking on this occasion called for educating the

farmers that what crop they should sow according to the climatic and soil conditions of their area. He said education was essential for the growers

in our country, as most of these have around less than 12 acres of land and they should be imparted knowledge of which crop was more profitable for them.



Bull & Bears

PSX 100-Share

Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
64,617.56	63,919.84
Day's High	Day's Low
64,700.97	63,914.94
Index Value	Change
11,548,187,891	+697.72
Percentage	Time
+1.09%	11 Jan, 2024 5:00 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,576.59	−75.17
Percentage	Time
−0.98%	11 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
37,480.52	−215.21
Percentage	Time
−0.57%	11 Jan, 12:34 pm GMT-5
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
35,049.86	+608.14
Percentage	Time
+1.77%	11 Jan, 3:15 pm GMT+9

IS

EU Ambassador Visits FPCCI

# FPCCI urges EU to help Pakistan boost exports as part of broader economic ties

PPA

Karachi: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has stressed that the 27-country economic alliance of European Union – with a cumulative GDP of almost \$20 trillion – can help Pakistan steer out of the chronically dilapidated state of the economy of Pakistan; and, enhancing our exports to the EU nations should be the cornerstone of broader economic relations. Pakistan has achieved an encouraging 108 percent growth in exports to EU over a period of 10 years; however, in order to retain our GSP Plus status, we must not be complacent and be vigilantly continuing to fulfill EU criteria, he added.

It is pertinent to note that H. E. Dr. Riina Kionka, Ambassador of EU in Pakistan, has paid a detailed visit to the FPCCI Head Office in Karachi; along with her senior team members; aimed at offering the apex body their full support in fulfilling GSP+ opportunities and requirements.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, explained that Pakistan is, indeed, a major beneficiary of GSP Plus since 2014 as it has facilitated our exports to European Union.

Nonetheless, Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon stressed that, in order to maintain GSP Plus,



Pakistan needs to perpetually implement 27 core international conventions on human & labor rights; environmental protection and good governance.

Mr. Asif Inam, VP FPCCI, highlighted that EU can establish industry in Pakistan to not

only help us out; but, also manufacture world-class, quality goods for re-export to EU through utilizing their advanced technologies but for much lesser cost of production.

Mr. Shabbir Mansha, former VP FPCCI, specifically mentioned that Pakistan should

focus on exporting skilled workforce to the EU countries in good numbers as it will bolster the economy of Pakistan through directing more foreign exchange back to the country regularly.

Mr. Adeel Siddiqui, President of Hyderabad Chambers of Commerce & Industry (HCCI), proposed that Pakistan should actively and effectively look forward to attracting FDI and JVs from EU on top of exports as Pakistan has a lot to offer to EU investors and entrepreneurs; i.e. cheap & abundant human resources and, comparatively lesser, cost of doing business to EU.

H. E. Dr. Riina Kionka, Ambassador of EU in Pakistan, apprised the gathering that there will be a new EU parliament and EU Commission in June 2024; and, there might be some review or policy changes in rules framework for Pakistan's GSP+ status.

H. E. Dr. Riina Kionka also informed that the monitoring report on Pakistan vis-à-vis the above-mentioned four areas is expected to be released in November 2024. She also called upon the trade & industry representatives to fully capitalize on GSP+ status by the means of diversifying Pakistan's exports to EU other than textiles – which happens to account for upwards of 80 percent of Pakistan total exports under GSP+

## FFC successfully hosts the 1st physical SAP User Group Pakistan Event

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC) proudly hosted the inaugural Physical SAP User Group Pakistan (SUGPK) event at its Head Office in Rawalpindi. It was graced by Country Managing Director SAP Pakistan, his dedicated team, and Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and Chief Technology Officers (CTOs) from over 22 distinguished Government and private organizations.

The event served as a groundbreaking platform for SAP professionals across diverse sectors to converge, exchange valuable insights, and stay abreast with the latest developments in SAP technology. Renowned speakers and industry experts attended the event, delving into best practices, success stories, and strategies to harness SAP for business growth.



FFC MD&CEO, Mr. Sarfaraz Ahmed Rehman, CIO FFC & Chairman SUGPK North Chapter, Mr. Fakhar Ul Hassan and the Country Managing Director SAP Pakistan, Mr. Saqib Ahmed, shared valuable insights during the session and expressed

their delight on culmination of successful 1st Physical SUGPK event that undoubtedly has set a promising precedent for future gatherings, reaffirming FFC's commitment to foster innovation and collaboration within the SAP community

## VC University of Chakwal says 21st century is the century of computer technology

PNP

CHAKWAL: Vice Chancellor University of Chakwal Dr. Muhammad Bilal Khan has said that this is the century of computer technology and science. In the race for technology, only those nations will be able to progress internationally that will align themselves with innovation and expertise in this field. He expressed these views while addressing a digital seminar held at the University of Chakwal. The seminar was also addressed by the university's syndicate member and president of Chakwal Chamber of Commerce Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari, and syndicate

member of Warwick University UK Dr. Fareha Azmat.

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Chakwal's focus is on promoting technology and digitalization. Currently, five thousand students are studying at the University of Chakwal. The entire monitoring of the university is being done through internet and CCTV cameras.

Addressing the seminar, Syndicate Member University and President Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari said that the IT sector is of utmost importance. The whole world is moving towards digitalization.

## Oil tanker contractors to stop supply if PRA not opens corretran files

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson of Oil Tanker Contractors Association Noman Ali Butt has said that due to the incompetence of the Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) officials, the Punjab government has not been able to collect crores of rupees for November and December taxes. PRA has written several letters to open the corretran files and solve the problem, but they have not reached their ears. If the RA does not open the system by Tuesday, January 16, they will stop the supply in the entire Punjab, they expressed these views at the National Press Club Islamabad, President of Oil Tanker Contractors Association Syed Ghulam Abbas Shah, General Secretary Khurram Malik and Finance. During a pre-confer-

ence with Secretary Jahangir Alam, Noman Ali Butt further said that according to the rules of the Punjab Revenue Authority, companies and oil tanker contractors are obliged to pay seven and a half percent of the fifteen percent tax.

The tax has been paid in the November return, but due to mutual problems between PIA and the companies, the return files are closed, due to which not only the Punjab government but also the contractors are suffering, many letters have been written to the PRA in this regard, but So far no solution has been found to this problem, Chief Minister Punjab and Arbab Akhtar should take notice of this and immediately open the system and save us from unnecessary correspondence, if this problem is not solved soon.

## Faysal Bank Joins Forces for State-of-the-Art Consumer-Credit Decision Engine



PPA

KARACHI: Faysal Bank (FBL) one of the premier Islamic banks in Pakistan has partnered with DataCheck; forming the industry's first collaboration for "Hosted Decision Engine", licensed by Qarar. Through this initiative the Bank aims to enhance process efficiency in the consumer digital lending space through advanced credit-scoring techniques, for the enablement of instant decision-making.

The signing ceremony took place at Faysal Bank Head Office, attended by Mr. Yousaf Hussain-President and CEO Faysal Bank, Mr. Raheel Ijaz- Chief Operating Officer Faysal Bank, Mr. Tariq Jan-CEO DataCheck, Mr. Zaid Kamhawi-CEO Qarar, along with other senior management representatives from Faysal Bank, DataCheck and Qarar.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Yousaf Hussain, President & CEO, FBL said, "We feel privileged to collaborate with DataCheck and Qarar for this pioneering initiative. By harnessing the collective strength of our industry peers, we aim to deliver superior customer experiences, leveraging the latest advancements in 'Automated Credit Decisioning' technology. At Faysal Bank we strive to offer an inclusive and dynamic Banking experience. We are optimistic that this collaboration will play a key role in the expansion of the digital lending ecosystem in Pakistan."

Reiterating the importance of data driven decision making, Tariq Jan, CEO, DataCheck said, "We are delighted to partner with Qarar to host a much-needed credit decisioning solution for the industry, with Faysal Bank being the first to go.

## Winter food

ISLAMABAD: A vendor is preparing fried fish for customers at Melody Market in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

## ICCI calls for industrial tariff on cold storage industry to save it from troubles

PPA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of cold storage owners led by Anjuman-e-Wholesale Fruit Commission Agents President Babu Muhammad Aleem and General Secretary Tahar Ayub visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and highlighted the issues being faced by the cold storage industry.

Addressing the delegation, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the cold storage industry was paying electric-

ity bills under the industrial tariff, but the government has imposed a commercial tariff on this industry due to which the amount of their electricity bills has increased manifold giving rise to their cost of doing business. Due to this situation, this industry is facing great problems.

ICCI President said that due to the increase in the business cost of the cold storage industry, there is an unnecessary increase in the prices of vegetables and fruits, so the government should restore the industrial tariff for this sector to save the people from high inflation.

He assured the delegation that ICCI would cooperate with them in efforts to solve their problems.

Speaking on the occasion, Babu Muhammad Aleem, President and General Secretary Tahar Ayub of Anjuman Wholesale Fruit Commission Agents said that the wholesale vegetable and fruit market of Islamabad is meeting the needs of this region as well as supplying fruits and vegetables to Kashmir and North areas besides promoting exports. They emphasized that CDA should take steps to solve the issues faced by their market to



facilitate better growth of its business activities.

Amir Hamza, Arsalan Javed, Chaudhry Siddique,

Ziaur Rehman, Haji Bashir, Chaudhry Sohail and others were in the delegation. President ICCI Ahsan Bakhtawari,

appointed Arslan Javed as the convener of the Cold Storage Committee and issued him a formal letter to this effect.



# KP Sports Minister meets Chairman PCB Management Committee

Sports Desk

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Sports, Youth Affairs and Science and Information Technology Dr. Najeebullah Marwat Thursday visited PCB's headquarters Gaddafi Stadium on Wednesday afternoon and met Chairman of the PCB Management Committee Zaka Ashraf.

Chairman PCB Management Committee Zaka Ashraf said: "I had a fruitful meeting with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa minister and the PCB have requested the provincial government for the custody of the historic Arbab Niaz and Hayatabad Cricket Stadiums and other grounds in the region."

This initiative will not only help PCB to provide advanced facilities for our cricketers but also contribute to the overall development of cricket in the region, he added.



## Pakistan eye series win against New Zealand to kick off T20 World Cup preparations

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan are set to face New Zealand in a five-match T20I series, with the first match scheduled to be played on Friday at Eden Park in Auckland. This will mark left-arm pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi's first assignment as captain, having taken over the reins from Babar Azam.

Fourth-ranked Pakistan last played T20s back in April 2023, when they faced New Zealand at home for a five-match series played in Lahore and Rawalpindi. Wicketkeeper batter Mohammad Rizwan, who has been named Shaheen's vice-captain, was Pakistan's leading run-getter in that series while right-arm pacer Haris Rauf was the most successful bowler. Leg-spinner Usama Mir, pacer Mohammad Abbas Afridi and wicketkeeper batter Haseebullah are the uncapped players in the squad while the returning trio of Sahibzada Farhan, Azam Khan and Aamir Jamal also adds depth to the squad. Spinner Abrar Ahmed, who was initially part of the squad, has been ruled out owing to an injury he sustained last month during Pakistan's Test tour of Australia. Shaheen Shah Afridi, in the pre-series press conference, the video of which has been shared by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said: "It is a great honour and a proud moment to be captaining Pakistan. We are a good T20 side and that has



reflected in our performances the past few years. We have done well in World Cups but have not been able to finish as we wanted. We will focus on getting the results we want in big tournaments. "We have 17 games before the World Cup, which is later this year. We want to make sure we have our combination locked in time for that but we also want to ensure that we have a strong bench, in case of injuries during the tournament. We will be testing our younger talent and rotat-

ing the players so that by the time we play the series in England, we have clarity about our combination." Pakistan's squad for tour of New Zealand: Shaheen Shah Afridi (captain), Mohammad Rizwan (vice-captain, wicket-keeper), Aamir Jamal, Abbas Afridi, Azam Khan (wicket-keeper), Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Haseebullah (wicket-keeper), Ifikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub, Usama Mir and

Zaman Khan.

**Full schedule:**

1st T20 – 12 January 2024 at Eden Park, Auckland  
2nd T20 – 14 January 2024 at Seddon Park, Hamilton  
3rd T20 – 17 January 2024 at University Oval, Dunedin  
4th T20 – 19 January 2024 at Hagley Oval, Christchurch  
5th T20 – 21 January 2024 at Hagley Oval, Christchurch

## Wanindu Hasaranga's record bowling figures aid Sri Lanka crush Zimbabwe

A Sports

COLOMBO: Star spinner Wanindu Hasaranga registered fifth-best bowling figures in Men's ODIs and powered Sri Lanka to thwart Zimbabwe by eight wickets and seal the three-match series 2-0.

Opting to bat first in a rain-affected fixture, Zimbabwe were rattled by Hasaranga, who returned with 7/19 in 5.5 overs, the fifth-best bowling figures in the history of Men's ODIs.

His ruthless bowling resulted in Zimbabwe bundling out for a meagre 96 in 22.5 overs.

The match was reduced to 27 overs per side due to a rain inter-

ruption. Consequently, two bowlers were restricted to six overs each, and the rest to five overs.

Zimbabwe openers Takudzwanashe Kaitano and Joylord Gumbie provided a steady start as the visitors, after eight overs, were 41/0.

Hasaranga came on as the fifth bowler for Sri Lanka in the ninth over of Zimbabwe's innings and took just six deliveries to send Kaitano back to the dugout, who scored 17 off 24 deliveries.

He then triggered a 10-ball sequence where he claimed three more wickets — Gumbie (29), Craig Ervine (0) and Milton Shumba (2) — at the cost of just four runs.



At one stage, Hasaranga's figures read 4.5-1-8-5, but a no-ball went for two runs before Luke Jongwe hit a six to dent his

figures. Consequently, skipper Kusal Mendis sent Wanindu Hasaranga off the attack but he soon

returned to claim two more wickets and finished with figures of 5.5-1-19-7, the fifth-best bowling figures in the men's ODIs.

Best figures in men's ODI history

8-19 – Chaminda Vaas vs Zimbabwe, 2001/02

7-12 – Shahid Afridi vs West Indies, 2013

7-15 – Glenn McGrath vs Namibia, 2003 (World Cup)

7-18 – Rashid Khan vs West Indies, 2017

7-19 – Wanindu Hasaranga vs Zimbabwe, 2023/24

Set to chase a modest 97, Sri Lanka comfortably chased it down for the loss of just two wickets with 62 balls to spare.

## Mohammad Haris opens up on his exclusion from Pakistan's T20I squad

A Sports

LAHORE: Young wicketkeeper batter Mohammad Haris on Thursday, opened up on his exclusion from Pakistan's squad for the five-match away T20I series against New Zealand, scheduled to run from January 12 to 21.

The much-anticipated T20I bilateral series between Pakistan and New Zealand will begin on January 12 in Auckland.

The second and third T20Is will be contested on January 14 and 17 in Hamilton and Dunedin respectively.

Meanwhile, Christchurch will host the fourth and fifth T20I on January 19 and 21.

Mohammad Haris, who failed to make it into Pakistan's new-look T20I squad, asserted in an interview, that he was not



upset on being left out as exclusions are part of the game.

## All Pakistan Inter-University Boys' Badminton Championship inaugurated in Faisalabad

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Prof. Dr. Tanveer Hussain Rector inaugurated All Pakistan Inter-University (Boys) Badminton Championship Zone-"I" at newly constructed Synthetic Court at National Textile University Faisalabad

(From Faisalabad) Prof. Dr. Tanveer Hussain Rector inaugurated All Pakistan Inter-University Badminton Championship Zone-I on January 11, 2024 at newly constructed Synthetic Court at National Textile University Faisalabad. Teams from seven different universities participated in the championship, including National Textile University Faisalabad, Namal University Mianwali, University of Mianwali, University of Sargodha, GC University Faisalabad, The University of Faisalabad, and University of Agriculture Faisalabad. The distinguished guests in attendance included Mr. Tariq Nazir, Divisional Sports Officer, and Ms. Sajida Latif, District Sports Officer, from the Punjab Sports Department. Additionally, Prof. Dr. Yasir Nawab (Dean SET), Dr. Sajjad Ahmad Baig (Dean FBS), Dr. Zafar Javed (Dean SA&D), Mr. Muhammad Zabiullah Khan (Controller Examinations), Mr. Zulfikar Ahmad (Director Finance), Dr. Danish Mahboob Baitab (Advisor Students), Mr. Waqar Ahmad (Convener Sports), Mr. Imran Ali (Sports Officer/Organizing Secretary), and Mr. Sardar Pervaiz Akhtar (Public Relations Officer).

## Gambian team feared death during flight incident, says coach



Sports Desk

BANJUL: The Gambian football team's players and staff were "afraid of dying" during an incident on board a scheduled flight to the Ivory Coast for the Africa Cup of Nations which was forced to turn around, coach Tom Saintfiet told AFP on Thursday.

Gambia's plane, headed for Abidjan, had to change course and return to Gambian capital Banjul on Wednesday just nine minutes into its journey.

The Gambian Football Federation said it was due to a "loss of cabin pressure and oxygen" but that everyone on board was "in sound health".

The squad will instead fly to the Ivorian capital Yamoussoukro on Thursday.

"We were afraid of dying, the whole team — for 30 minutes we saw ourselves dying," Saintfiet told AFP by telephone.

"After yesterday's experience, we are still a little afraid of travelling and have little headaches still too, but we want to leave, to finish preparing for the CAN."

The flight incident capped a difficult preparation for the Gambian football team, who boycotted their last training session before leaving for the tournament over a qualification bonus dispute.

The players had skipped training while demanding a bonus payment for qualifying for the tournament, local media reported, but the decision angered supporters who had come to watch the team in action.

Fans vandalised parts of the Independence Stadium in Bakau, not far from the capital Banjul.

Captain Omar Colley confirmed to local media on Wednesday that the bonuses had since been paid.

## Shivam Dube stars as India thump Afghanistan in T20I series opener



A Sports

MOHALI: Shivam Dube backed his figures of 1/9 with an unbeaten 60 and played a pivotal role in India's comfortable six-wicket victory over Afghanistan in the first T20I.

Put into bat first, Afghanistan could only raise 158/5 in the allotted 20 overs despite Mohammad Nabi's quickfire knock at the backend.

The touring side had a cautious start to their innings as openers Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran put together a 50-run partnership before Axar Patel removed the former. Gurbaz could score 23 off 28 deliveries with the help of two boundaries and a six.

His dismissal opened the floodgates as Afghanistan lost two more wickets — Ibrahim Zadran and Rahmat Shah — in quick succession and were consequently reduced to 57/3 in 10 overs.

Zadran remained a notable run-getter for Afghanistan with a 22-ball 25 while Shah only scored three.

Azmatullah Omarzai was then joined by Mohammad Nabi in the middle and they anchored the innings with a 68-run partnership. But Mukesh Kumar found the breakthrough for India in the 18th over by getting rid of Omarzai, who scored 29 off 22 balls, laced with three boundaries and a six.

Nabi also perished in the same over as India took control. He top-scored for Afghanistan with a quickfire 42 which came off just 27 deliveries and was peppered with two boundaries and three sixes.

Najibullah Zadran's 19-run cameo at the death took Afghanistan past the 150-run mark.

Kumar and Patel bagged two wickets each for India while Shivam Dube made one scalp.

Set to chase 159, India comfortably amassed the target for the loss of four wickets and 15 balls to spare despite a horror start.

The hosts lost their captain Rohit Sharma, who fell for a two-ball duck.



## Convocation

KARACHI: Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf conferring degrees to graduates of Altamash Institute of Dental Medicine at Convocation 2024 ceremony.



Photo: PID

# Nation highly indebted to security forces for fearlessly fighting against terrorism: PM

## Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday said the entire nation was highly indebted to the KP police which was fighting against the terrorists with bravery and valour.

"You are God's chosen group who are fighting for the State's security, the martyrs deserve paradise while the opponent group is destined to be the hell forever," he said while addressing the officials of KP Police at 'Police Darbar'.

He said the security forces always fought fearlessly with the terrorists, keeping in mind Allah's promise that those who were on the right path, would never get afraid of the enemy.

"The war you are fighting is



morally correct: you should do your duty with utmost belief, courage and confidence," he remarked.

Paying tributes to Shaheed Siffat and Shaheed Malik

Saad, the prime minister said that they were the assets of the KP Police.

Recalling the barbarism by the terrorists in APS incident in Peshawar some years back,

the prime minister said the cruelty of the terrorists who targeted innocent children would never be forgotten.

He said death was the ultimate reality which might occur to anyone, any time, so there was no need to be afraid. "Every attack from the terrorists will be responded with more power and in a ferocious manner."

Strongly condemning the miscreants, the prime minister asserted that he would continue to raise his voice against them till the last moment of his life. "They are cowardice and shameless, they have no courage to fight from the front and always fight from behind the doors," he added.

Earlier, in his welcome remarks, Inspector General

Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Gandapur said the provinces of KP and Balochistan had been under the war against terrorism for decades.

He said the KP police was bravely fighting with the terrorists in the province and had rendered numerous sacrifices in the war against the terrorism.

He said the KP police was committed to uprooting the menace of terrorism and eliminating other crimes. He said the security personnel were fighting bravely against the terrorists by putting their lives at risks.

He also sought financial help from the federal and provincial governments to equip the police with state-of-the-art weapons and facilities.

# Differences emerge in PML-N over tickets distribution

## PPA

SAHIWAL: Differences among the ranks of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) emerged as the party could not decide on its ticket holder from NA-143.

The sources privy to the development said that most of the PML-N leaders in Sahiwal will contest the elections on 8th February 2024 as independents from national and provincial constituencies, if they do not get the party tickets.

In NA-143, most of the

PML-N local leaders are unhappy with the seat adjustment with the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP).

Tufail Jatt has decided to contest the poll as an independent party after not getting the party ticket. Likewise, three candidates are hoping to get the PML-N ticker from PP-199.

PML-N's Qasim Nadeem, Malik Amir and Mubashir Hasan will face each other in the upcoming election on PP-199. Likewise, Malik Arshad Khan will face the chal-



lenge of former Mayor Asad Khan Baloch.

Earlier on Wednesday, former Federal Minister Daniyal Aziz, who was once consid-

ered PML-N stalwart, decided to contest election 2024 as an independent candidate after being denied of the party ticket.

Daniyal Aziz came into

limelight after PML-N issued a show-cause notice to him for violating party rules by posting controversial tweets on X, formerly Twitter, and a statement on TV channel holding his own party leader Ahsan Iqbal responsible for hike in prices.

Speaking in ARY News programme "11th Hour", Daniyal Aziz said that inflation is a big threat to the nation and he and his wife will contest election as independent candidates to fight against the hike in prices.

# President directs insurance company to refund Rs 100,000 with profit

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has directed EFU Life Assurance Ltd to refund Rs 100,000 along with profit to a poor lady who had been misled to obtain the insurance policy. According to a press release issued by the President House Press Wing on Thursday, Zubaida Begum had obtained an amount of Rs 100,000 by participating in a local "committee" and intended to deposit the amount in her bank account, but she was fraudulently issued an insurance policy at the bank.

The president noted that FIO had directed the insurance company to refund Rs 40,000 to the woman, without appreciating the fact that an amount of Rs 60,000 was remaining to be paid by the company. He said that as per Insurance Ordinance 2000, FIO was to ensure the protection of the interests of insurance policyholders, and non-refund of even the deposited amount by the insurance company was a sheer violation of the spirit of the Ordinance. He stated that



FIO had failed to follow the spirit of the Ordinance and had not realized that Rs 100,000 had been kept by the company since 2020, and they must also have earned considerable profit on it by investing it. The president wrote that the equitable principle of enrichment envisaged that no one should unjustly enrich themselves at the expense of others. He added that it would be unjust to deprive the lady of her share in respect of the profit earned on her money. The president, therefore, accepted the representation of Ms Zubaida Begum and directed EFU Life Assurance to refund the full amount of Rs 100,000 with profit to the complainant within 30 days of the order.

# NADRA launches mobile app for online issuance of documents

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has introduced Pak ID mobile app through which the people will be able to get Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) and Family Registration Certificate (FRC) online.

According to the details, the NADRA has provided modern facilities, refraining the citizens from long queues at the centers. After completing the process through the app, the applicant could get their ID documents delivered to their doorstep.

Through NADRA Pak ID mobile app, photo upload, fingerprints verification and online payment have been made easy. NADRA spokesperson said that now CNICs, FRCs and even CNICs for overseas Pakistanis could be issued online.

Earlier in December, NADRA updated the fee for the renewal of smart ID cards.

The NADRA smart card is a national identity card with the addition of a chip on the card which helps log information. It also secures your identity and other important records with an additional layer of biometric verification.

# PTI local leader Shah Khalid shot dead in Swabi

## Naseeb Ullah

SWABI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) local leader Shah Khalid was shot dead by unknown assailants in broad daylight in Swabi district today (Thursday).

According to the details, two armed motorcyclists opened fire on the vehicle of PTI leader, killing him on the spot. His body was taken to the hospital for further medical examination.

The attackers managed to escape from the scene.

Soon after the incident, Police reached the crime scene and cordoned off the area for investigation.

An investigation into the case has

been launched, said police.

Yesterday, Aslam Buledi, former senator and PML-N candidate for upcoming general elections, was critically injured in a gun attack in Turbat city of Balochistan.

According to police, the incident took place in Turbat's Mir Issa National Park when unidentified assailants opened fire, injuring the former senator and PML-N leader.

Aslam Buledi - a PML-N candidate from Ketch's NA-258 constituency - suffered four gunshot wounds and was being shifted to Karachi for medical treatment.

No one had claimed responsibility for the gun attack yet, while the police have cordoned off the area and further investigation was underway.



## Tribunal issues written order of PTI founder's nomination rejection

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: An appellate tribunal on Thursday issued written order of rejection of nomination papers of PTI founder from NA-122.

Justice Tariq Nadeem of the appellate tribunal issued the written order comprises of 19 pages.

PTI founder's lawyer Rae Muhammad Khan Kharal received the decision's copy.

"The election commission has declared the PTI founder disqualified. The court has suspended his sentence, but the crime still persists," written order read.

# MQM-P names contestants from Karachi, leaves 15 national and provincial seats for allies

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: In a major development, the MQM-P has decided not field candidates in 15 constituencies - five national and 10 provincial - of Karachi to accommodate the allied parties, mainly the PML-N, as the February 8 elections are now less than a month away.

On the other hand, the MQM-P also announced the list of candidates for National Assembly from Karachi as it is eyeing to regain its hold on the city's politics after the divisions it faced after 2013, leading to disappointing results in 2018.

At the same time, details are emerging about how the different parties will try to weaken

the PPP in Sindh with a final decision expected later today (Thursday) after their leaders hold a final meeting.

Most of the candidates in Kashmore, Jacobabad and Shikarpur will reportedly be from the JUI-F with the PML-N providing in some constituencies.

Rashid Soomro - the JUI-F provincial chief - will challenge PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in Larkana for the national legislature, as the party will field the majority of candidates for provincial assembly in Ghotki, Kashmore and Shikarpur.

However, the likeminded parties have decided to give PS-5, PS-6 and PS-9

to the PML-N which will also enjoy their support in NA-205 Naushehro Feroze I with Asghar Ali Shah being its candidate. Same is the case with NA-211 Mirpurkhas. In NA-216 Matiari, PML-N Sindh President Bashir Memon is the joint candidate.

The seat adjustment comes as megacity could play a decisive role in future politics at both national and provincial levels thanks to its sheer size. After the latest delimitations, Karachi has 22 National Assembly seats and 47 for the Sindh Assembly for which 130 members are to be elected directly on February 8.

However, NA-242 remains the point of contention after

both PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif and MQM-P Senior Deputy Convener Mustafa Kamal filed nomination papers for the constituency, as three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif zoomed in on Karachi in his attempt to enter the coveted office for a record fourth term.

But it is expected the two parties will develop a consensus due to the understanding reached for not only these elections but also a long-term relationship after the two sides agreed to empower local governments across Pakistan - the main slogan of the MQM-P which wants the urban centres in Sindh to govern the affairs locally.