



Xi, Belgian PM meet in Beijing, agreeing to enhance ties

Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium Alexander De Croo in Beijing on Friday. Noting that China attaches great importance to the development of China-Belgium relations, Xi said bilateral cooperation has yielded fruitful results and benefited the two peoples since the establishment of diplomatic ties 53 years ago. (Report on Page 5)



PTI to face consequences if intra-party polls found discrepant, CJP Isa says

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa asserted that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) would face repercussions if discrepancies were found in its intra-party polls. These comments were made during the hearing of an appeal filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) against a Peshawar High Court (PHC) ruling regarding PTI's intra-party polls and election symbol. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Exercise Al-Bayza-III

COAS General Syed Asim Munir observes the firing of various Air Defence weapon systems during Exercise Al-Bayza-III, 2024, in Sonmiani on Friday.



Photo: ISPR

Gen Asim witnesses Al-Bayza-III exercise at Sonmiani

Appreciates achievement of operation readiness of Army Air Defence Corps

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff, (COAS), witnessed firing of different Air Defence weapon systems during Exercise Al-Bayza-III, 2024 at Sonmiani. COAS viewed integrated fire and battle maneuvers of Army Air Defence systems which includes High to Medium Air Defence Weapons System

(HIMADS), Low to Medium Air Defence System (LOMAD), Short Range Air Defence system (SHORADS) and Extended Short Range Air Defence system (ESHORADS). In a landmark achievement and milestone in enhancing the Air Defence of the aerial frontiers of Pakistan, HIMAD system in maiden fire was able to successfully engage the target at maximum ranges along with

other layered weapon systems which were tested during the exercise. COAS highly appreciated the remarkable achievement of engaging targets with precision and operational readiness of Corps of Army Air Defence. While interacting with the officers and troops, COAS highlighted that Armed Forces of Pakistan are modernising their systems in line with our require-

ments to deter and be able to respond to any threat emanating against Pakistan. Corps Commander Karachi, Commander Army Air Defence, Inspector General Training & Evaluation and Inspector General Arms also witnessed the exercise. Earlier, COAS visited Army Air Defence Center. He laid floral wreath at Yadgar e Shuhada and paid homage to martyrs



of Armed Forces. COAS installed Lieutenant General Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, HI (M), as Colonel Commandant of Army Air Defence Corps.

Conduct Phase EX Sea Guard -24

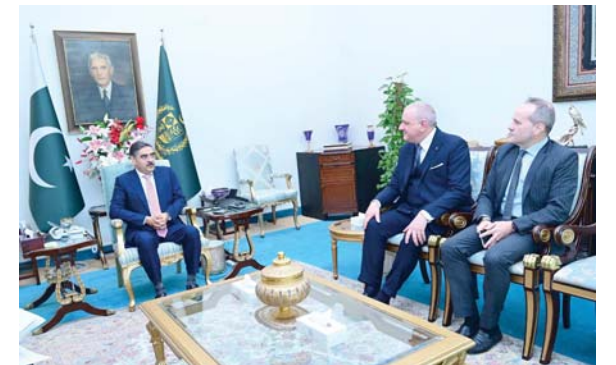


Bureau Report

KARACHI: Conduct phase of Pakistan Navy's maiden EXERCISE SEA GUARD is being undertaken from 10-13 Jan 24. EX SEA GUARD served as a platform for all stakeholders to engage in tactical exercises, exchange best practices and foster mutual understanding. Various scenarios based on contemporary asymmetric challenges being faced in maritime domain were rehearsed, wherein, personnel and assets of PN Coastal and Fleet Command, PMSA, Customs, FIA, Coast Guards, ANF and other national stakeholders participated. This exercise aimed at enhancing interoperability and showcas-

ing shared resolve for ensuring robust coastal security. During conduct phase of the exercise, apart from practical scenarios being rehearsed at sea, table top discussions were also conducted at JMICC involving SMEs from intelligence community, LEAs, shipping and fishing sector. Ex SEA GUARD 24 provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to unite at a single pedestal for mutual learning, interoperability and improving respective SOPs to further hone their professional skills. Conduct of Exercise SEA GUARD by Pakistan Navy also underscores its commitment to coastal security and its proactive role in collaborative efforts towards ensuring Maritime Security.

PM for boosting trade, investment ties with Italy in diverse sectors



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday, acknowledging Pakistan's longstanding friendly ties with Italy, emphasized the need to boost trade, investment and cooperation in diverse areas, including migration, mobility, agricultural technology, education and tourism. The bilateral ties were discussed in a meeting with Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese who paid a farewell call on him, a PM Office statement said. During the meeting, the prime minister appreciated the ambassador's contribu-

tions to strengthening bilateral relations, noting his efforts to foster economic ties and facilitate cooperation in various fields. The Italian ambassador thanked the prime minister for receiving him and expressed gratitude for the excellent cooperation he received throughout his stay in Pakistan. He also briefed Prime Minister Kakar on key developments during his tenure. The ambassador lauded the valuable contributions of the vibrant Pakistani diaspora to Italy's economic development. The prime minister wished the outgoing ambassador success in his future endeavors.

Achakzai withdraws papers in favour of Maulana Fazl for Feb 8 polls

Bureau Report

QUETTA: Pashtoonkha Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) Chairman Mahmood Khan Achakzai has withdrawn his nomination papers from the National Assembly constituency of Pishin on Friday. According to the statement issued by the PkMAP, Achakzai has withdrawn his nomination papers from NA-265 Pishin in favour of another stalwart Maulana Fazlur Rehman of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F). The chairman of PkMAP has directed the party to withdraw his nomination papers in favour of JUI-F chief. According to the reports, JUI-F chief is contesting from Pishin, Balochistan for the very first time.

PTI unveils names of candidates for National Assembly seats

Naveed Ahmad Khan



ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Friday announced its candidates for national assembly from across the country for the February 8 general elections, apparently ruling out any seat adjustment plan. According to the list issued on X (formerly Twitter), the PTI announced candidates on 233 National Assembly constituencies out of 266 general seats. The National Assembly has a total of 266 general seats, 10 reserved seats for non-Muslims and 60 reserved seats for women. This makes the total number 336, as per the new delimitation list. PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan is set to contest from NA-10, Buner, while Sher Afzal Marwat has been nominated for NA-41 Lakki Marwat and Ayaz Amir secured a ticket for NA-58 Chakwal. Murad Saeed will be contesting on NA-4 (Swat), while Omar Ayub Khan will contest for NA-18 (Hara-

pur). Meanwhile, Asad Qaiser - former national assembly speaker - is the candidate for NA-19 (Swabi), Ali Muhammad Khan for NA-23 (Mardan-III), Shahryar Afridi for NA-35 (Kohat) and Ali Amin Gandapur for NA-44 (DI Khan-I). The other PTI candidates for the National Assembly seats included Shohib Shaheen from NA-47 (Islamabad-II), Raja Basharat from NA-55 (Rawalpindi-IV), Shahryar Riaz from NA-56 (Rawalpindi-V) - the constituency of Sheikh Rashid, Seemabia Tahir from NA-57 (Rawalpindi-VI) and Ayaz Amir from NA-58 (Chakwal). The PTI has decided to back Shahryar Riaz against veteran politician Sheikh Rasheed. The former

interior minister's nephew, Sheikh Rasheed Shafiq, did not receive a PTI ticket. In Lahore, PTI unveiled its contenders, with Aaliyah Hamza, Wasim Qadir, Latif Khosa, and Afzal Azim securing tickets across various constituencies. While Karamat Khokhar and Zaheer Abbas received endorsements in NA-126 and NA-127 respectively, NA-129 saw Mian Azhar emerge as the party's candidate. Senior party leader Yasmin Rashid's ticket for NA-130 was also confirmed, solidifying her place in the upcoming electoral battle. However, several constituencies, including NA-132 in Kasur - from where PML-N president Shehbaz Sharif will contest election, are pending nominations. Similar uncertainty swirls around four Lahore constituencies - NA-117, NA-119, NA-120, and NA-125 - where PTI is yet to announce its candidates. Decisions for NA-74 Sialkot, NA-82 Sargodha, and NA-94 also hang in the balance.

Top PTI, IPP leaders opt out of election race

Bureau Report

LAHORE: In a surprise move, Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) leader Farrukh Habib and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shafiqat Mahmood have withdrawn from February 8 general elections. Taking to X (formerly Twitter), former Punjab minister Shafiqat Mahmood said that he has withdrawn the nominations papers, submitted for Lahore's NA-128 and PA-170. The PTI leader said that he wasn't a candidate from any constituency. Meanwhile, IPP leader Farrukh Habib withdrew papers, submitted for NA-102 and NA-101 and PA-114 and PA-115, Faisalabad. In a statement, the former minister's counsel claimed that he had withdrawn from elections over personal issues, ruling out any political reason in this regard.

Ata Tarar to face Bilawal as PML-N announces candidates from Lahore

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has released the list of its candidates for the National Assembly and Punjab Assembly from Lahore District for the Feb 8 general elections. According to the list issued on

X (formerly Twitter), the PML-N fielded veteran politician Sheikh Rohail Asghar for the NA-121 constituency in Lahore. Meanwhile, Ayaz Sadiq - who was also eye to contest from the same constituency - will contest the election from NA-120 on the party's ticket. The country would witness another big contest in

Lahore as the PML-N fielded former minister Attaullah Tarar against Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal-Bhutto Zardari in NA-127. Among other leaders, PML-N supremo to contest from NA-130, President Shehbaz Sharif from NA-123, Hamza Shehbaz from NA-118, Maryam Nawaz from

NA-119 and NA-159 and Khawaja Saad Rafique from NA-122. For the provincial assembly seats, Shehbaz Sharif will also contest polls from PP-164 and PP-158, while Hamza and Maryam from PP-147 and PP-159 constituencies, respectively. Earlier, it was reported that differences among the PML-N ranks emerged as the party could not decide on its ticket holder from NA 143. Sources 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 were unhappy with the seat adjustment with the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP). Tufail Jall has decided to contest the poll as an independent party after not getting the party ticket. 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 challenge of former Mayor Asad Khan Baloch.

PML-N decides not to award ticket to Talal Chaudhry

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has decided not to award the party ticket to senior leader Talal Chaudhry either for the national or provincial assembly for the February 8 General Elections 2024. Sources privy to the development said that instead of fielding Talal Chaudhry in the general polls, the PML-N decided to make him a senator in the upcoming Senate Elections. The party also decided to award two party tickets for Punjab Assembly constituencies to persons recommended by Talal Chaudhry. Muhammad Ashraf Chaudhry, father of Talal Chaudhry, will contest the election from PP-101 seat.

Another nominee Khan Bahadur will be vying for PP-100. Meanwhile, Malik Nawaz is being considered the top candidate for Mayor Faisalabad slot. PML-N Punjab President Rana Sanaullah also appreciated Talal Chaudhry's sacrifices for the party. In a conversation with Talal Chaudhry, Rana Sanaullah said, "Your struggle has freed the people from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government. The PML-N Punjab President said that the party will not forget Talal Chaudhry's struggle. It is pertinent to mention here that the Next Senate election is scheduled to be held by March 2024 as 52 out of 100 incumbent senators will retire after completing their six-year terms.



# Former PM Gilani demands province for South Punjab

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister and Senator Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has said that the development and prosperity of the region is impossible without the establishment of a separate province, so the people should make the People's Party successful in the elections with a heavy mandate and stamp the sign of the arrow on February 8, Bhapla community. Union Council Qasim Beila. To solve the problems of the residents of Mohamadpur Ghotla, I laid the net of development projects in my ministry.

Qasim Beila, Union Council of NA 148 will express these views. On the occasion of Muhammadpur Ghotla Amid while addressing the workers convention organized by the Bhapla community in connection with the election campaign in which the candidate of the provincial constituency 214, Barrister Syed Mudassar Shah, Syed Ahmed Mujtabi Gillani also addressed while on this occasion Malik Owais Bhapla, Malik Khizr Bhapla and other dignitaries of the region participated in large numbers.

Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani further said that if the politicians are consistent in politics, the people also love them. The people have the best chance to make the party candidates successful. I have



already taken steps for the development of South Punjab including Multan and the constituency and it is up to the people to complete the unfinished business.

Am I so that I can go to the House and play my role to solve these problems? He said that there is a dire need for the establishment of a separate province for the development of the region.

Better opportunities will be available and deprivation and backwardness will be eliminated.

## Hard work

FAISALABAD: Labourers are busy in their work during the construction of flyover at Abdullapur area in City.



Photo: Online

# ICMA International is Providing Quality Accountancy Education

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: ICMA International Chairman Strategic Board Zia-ul-Mustafa Awan said that ICMA International is providing quality accountancy education and that is the reason why the students graduating from here are today in Pakistan and all over the world. are proving their competence in the fields and are playing their best role in the development of Pakistan. He expressed these thoughts yesterday



while addressing the annual dinner and Qawwali night ceremony of the students as a special guest. Through the programs, we bring out the hidden talent in them. We try to give all the students an opportunity to come on the stage. Mrs. Zia Al-Mustafa, Mrs. Waqas Khalid, Mrs. Waqas, Chaudhry Abdul Qadeer, Umar Farooq Awan and students also gave speeches and presented tableau sketches. Finally, shields were given to the teachers and students for their high performance.

# Atif Ikram Sheikh Stressed The Need To Revisit The Economic Policies

PPA

ISLAMABAD: President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh said that the business community is the backbone of the economy and the FPCCI would take all possible measures to address their key issues. He said that we strongly believe in teamwork, he would ensure maximum participation of the business Community representing different Chambers and Associations of the country for economic prosperity and development of the country, along with welfare of the business community. He further said that we will play positive role and take necessary initiatives to solve the problems faced by business community of Pakistan and FPCCI will play leading role in development of Pakistan as well as to solve the problems of Unemployment also. He reiterated that now it's our duty to take steps to resolve the issues and problems of Business Community of Pakistan without any differences for the betterment of Pakistan and for the betterment of Business Community of Pakistan. He



was addressing different delegations of the members of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI), Pakistan Overseas Employment Promoters Association (POEPA) & Rawalpindi Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry who visited FPCCI Capital Office for presenting bouquets and felicitations to the whole team of UBG on historic victory in the recent elections of FPCCI.

Atif Ikram further said that volatile exchange rate, unprecedented

hike in markup rate, repeated increases in electricity rates, gas shortage, price spiral, mismanagement, and bad governance, becoming the hallmarks of the government. He further said that besides increasing exports and controlling imports the government will have to take administrative measures, as a large demand of cash dollars are seen in the market. He said the upcoming government should prioritize resolving the energy crisis by providing sufficient and affordable

electricity and gas to industries.

On the occasion, Mr. Karim Aziz Malik, Chairman of Capital Office Said that there is no doubt that the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Pakistan Overseas Employment Promoters Association (POEPA) & Rawalpindi Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry are active chambers & Associations and both has emerged as an effective voice on important forums across the country for promotion of trade activities like trade fairs, and the holding of business conferences abroad.

Malik Sohail Hussain Chairman Coordination FPCCI assured FPCCI will be a powerful voice of the business community on national as well as international level. He urged the Business Community of Pakistan to stand united on the platform of FPCCI, and we will support the government to make Pakistan Economic Tiger in the Region. We will make FPCCI stronger than ever before under the leadership of President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh,

## FPCCI calls for urgent action to revive faltering economy



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Forty percent of SMEs have been closed due to unprecedented inflation, high energy cost, delay in payment of refund claims, political uncertainty and inconsistent policies, said Dr Sajjad Arshad Acting President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI). He was addressing the participants of 34th Senior Management Course (SMC) of the National Institute of Management (NIM) Peshawar who visited FPCCI here today. He stressed the need for collaborative efforts by civil and military bureaucracy, politicians, business community and judicially to rehabilitate the economy on a strong footing and on a sustained basis. He said that chambers remained in touch with the government to resolve the issues faced by the business community. "FPCCI played a key role in budget formulation", he said and added that it was for the first time that President FPCCI was picked as chairman of the tax anomaly committee instead of FPCCI. He said that concerned ministries are always ready to discuss issues but they have their own limitations due to the direct intervention of the IMF. He said that exports have declined from \$18-19bn to \$14bn

Dr Sajjad Arshad said that Pakistan is predominantly an agrarian economy and we must introduce value added agri and dairy products from our basic field produce. He said that the Punjab government has established the first ever Business Facilitation Centre in Lahore while another one is nearing completion in Faisalabad. "However, I could not identify its benefits for the business community as it would be too early to comment on it", he added. The Acting President said that cotton production declined in Punjab and the Chief Minister had assured to fix the minimum cotton price at Rs. 8,000 but it is being sold at Rs. 6,000 while 17% GST has also been added on cotton seed. He further said that maize production increased three-fold but its rates have declined causing major loss to the farming community. "This situation may result in distrust between government and farming community", he said and added that the farmers would not sow these crops next season.

About CPEC, Dr Sajjad Arshad said that China has recently reduced duties on 313 items which would help Pakistan to export these products to China and enhance the overall quantum of Pakistani exports. He said that Pakistani exporters could not introduce their own brands as it is capital intensive and long-term investment. "We are generating our own funds from the membership, renewal and issuance of visa recommendation letters etc", he said and added that FPCCI has approximately 9,000 members who represent 118 sectors and bisectors of economy. Earlier Mr. Ziaullah Shams Directing Staff NIM Peshawar thanked FPCCI for hosting this fruitful meeting as it would help government offices to understand the economic pulse of FPCCI. Later Vice President Haji Muhammad Aslam Bhalli offered vote of thanks while Dr Sajjad Arshad and Mr. Ziaullah Shams exchanged shields of FPCCI and NIM Peshawar. Mr. Ziaullah Shams also recorded his impression in the FPCCI visitor's book.

## AIOU aims to enroll maximum students

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, has issued guidelines to assist students with the upcoming admissions for the spring semester of 2024. The Vice Chancellor has instructed regional heads to spread awareness about free matriculation education for students from Baluchistan, Gilgit Baltistan, and merged districts (previously known as FATA) to encourage the enrollment of maximum out-of-school children in the matriculation program. He has directed regional heads to ensure that admission awareness reaches every interested individual so that they can take advantage of this opportunity to continue their education.

Dr. Nasir has approved the establishment of prospectus sale points at the Union Council level across the country to ensure the availability of matriculation and FA programs prospectus and admission forms at the nearest places to the students. As per the instructions of VCAIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, the regional offices have set up the facility centers on the campuses and alerted the SWIFT centers established across the country to support and guide the students.

It is pertinent to mention here that the admissions of Matric, FA, BS (face-to-face programs), MS, MPhil and PhD programs of AIOU for the spring semester 2024 (first phase) are commencing across the country from March 15. Second phase admissions will start from 1st March which will include Teacher Training Programs, Associate Degree Programs, Post Graduate Diploma Programs and BS (ODL Programs). Admission forms and prospectus of the first phase programs will be available from 15th January on the University website www.aiou.edu.pk

## ADFLAP announces Saud Minam as Chairman

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP) has announced a significant transition in leadership, with the elevation of Saud Minam, a prominent Pakistani in Fiji, as its new Chairman.



Saud Minam, CEO of Fiji Development Bank, brings with him around 30 years of experience in the financial sector. He is an active member of the Pakistani community in Fiji and, in 2021, assisted the Fijian government by raising \$5,000 in donations along with more than 500 kilograms of clothes to assist relief efforts after Tropical Cyclone Yasa.

In Pakistan, members of ADFIAP have been playing a critical role for the advancement of sustainable development. Zarai Taraqati Bank Limited (ZTBL) has launched a pilot project of farmers training to inculcate best practices in crop production, orchard farming and livestock & dairy development for the farmers. The House Building Finance Company Ltd of Pakistan has also launched the Ghar Ujala Scheme to provide cost-effective financing option for installation of solar energy systems.

Founded in 1976, ADFIAP has currently 90 member-institutions in 40 countries and acts as the focal point of all development banks, and other financial institutions, engaged in the financing of development in the Asia-Pacific region.



Major operation of the Motorway Police, recovered non-customs paid goods near Swabi.





Islamabad

15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr .....5:45 am  
Zohr .....12:16 pm  
Asr .....3:41 pm  
Maghrib .....5:19 pm  
Isha .....6:47 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  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
Islamabad Metropolitan  
Corporation ..... 9209224  
Potohar Town ..... 9209224  
Rawal Town ..... 5773343

**COMPLAINTS**

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

*Exploring the intersection between climate crisis and faith*

PNP

ISLAMABAD: After many decades, faith and its inter-linkages with climate and environmental crisis has become a central discussion as humanity seeks answers to the contemporary challenges said Dr Adil Najam, President WWF, in a special conversation with Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director SDPI. The special conversation was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here today.

During the conversation the resurging interest in religions and faith, and their potential linkages with solutions to environmental challenges was discussed and the need for holistic approaches was emphasized by Dr Adil Najam. He said that modern society for the sake of economic growth and development started to view religion as a barrier in realizing human potential and liberties. He said that when population growth became a major point of discussion in the 1960s and 1970s, religion and faith were pushed back.

In times of crisis, humans tend to gravitate

# District-level Kashmir Consultative Committees to raise the Kashmir issue at grassroots level: Mushaal

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The inaugural session of the Rawalpindi District-level Kashmir Consultative Committee was held. This committee is established under the Broader Kashmir Consultative Committee led by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick. The primary objective of the district-level consultative committees is to address the Kashmir issue at the grassroots level for comprehensive understanding, engagement with the community and to create a platform for meaningful discussions, advocacy, and actions that resonate with the local population.

Speaking at the occasion, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, highlighted the significance of such meetings. She emphasized that similar gather-

ings would be organized in various districts. She announced that the inaugural sessions of the District-level Kashmir Consultative Committees in Lahore, Faisalabad, and Gujranwala were in the preparation phase and would be convened shortly. She further said that these District-level Committees comprise intellectuals spanning various age groups and diverse backgrounds.

Mushaal emphasized that these gatherings would play a pivotal role in organizing and propagating the Kashmir cause at the grassroots level. She underscored that Kashmir stood as a symbol of unity for Pakistan, transcending diverse beliefs and affiliations. She further said that People from all walks of life hold profound reverence for the Kashmir cause, and through these district-level consultations, the aim is to further solidify this unity.

Mushaal urged students and academics to contribute by writing articles, research papers, and

essays on the Jammu and Kashmir issue to raise awareness both locally and globally. She expressed her commitment to personally lead door-to-door campaigns to unite people for the Kashmir cause and promote collective efforts to advocate for justice and the rights of the oppressed people of IIOJK.

Mushaal voiced deep concern over the ongoing demographic changes being implemented by India in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). She highlighted the persecution faced by peaceful leaders of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and emphasized that such actions were intended to demoralize the Kashmiri people. She asserted that these tactics employed by India would never diminish the unwavering zeal and courage of the Kashmiri people.

Addressing the occasion, Focal person to SAPM, Ms. Sabien Hussein Mullick said that the District-level Kashmir Consul-



tative Committees would transform the people of Pakistan into the voice of the oppressed in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). She further

emphasized that these committees would play a pivotal role in launching media awareness campaigns, conducting seminars at educational institutions,

and engaging with international human rights organizations to shed light on the plight of the people of IIOJK under Indian occupation.

## Vending

ISLAMABAD: A street vendor is selling flowers bracelets at traffic signal to earn daily wages for the livelihood of his family.

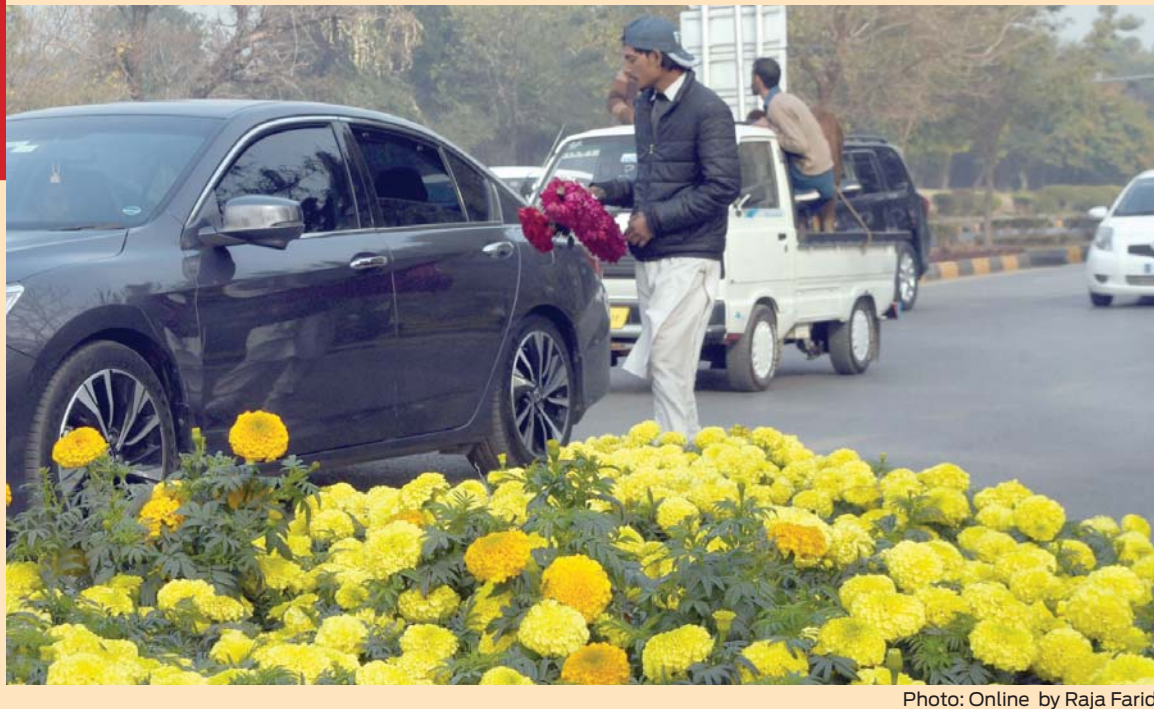


Photo: Online by Raja Farid

## Jamal Shah visits PAF-IAS, inaugurates innovation lab

PPA

HARIPUR: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah on Friday visited Pak-Austria Fachhochschule Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (PAF-IAS), Haripur.

Adviser National heritage and Culture Muhammad Kashif Ishaq, Director General PNCA Muhammad Ayub Jamali, Director Lok Virsa Anwar ul Haq and Director Humerkada Amna Shah were also accompanied the Minister.

Prof. Dr. Mohammad Mujahid, Rector, along with faculty members and Prof. Zafar Iqbal extended a warm welcome to Federal Minister.

The Rector provided a comprehensive overview of PAF-IAS, highlighting cutting-



edge features and facilities. He said that from modern Smart Classrooms, advanced Data Center, and powerful HPC Cluster, to state-of-the-art buildings and infrastructure, every aspect reflects commitment to excellence.

"We also had the opportu-

nity to showcase our prestigious Medical College, advanced HiTech labs and the groundbreaking Sino-Pak Center for Artificial Intelligence", he added. He also highlighted Center of Excellence in Transportation/Railway Engineering, as well as Special Technology Zone and

vibrant Technology Park.

The Minister inaugurated Innovation lab at School of Design, Art & Architecture Technologies (SDAAT), PAF-IAS.

After briefing, Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) were also signed between PAF-IAS and National Institute of Folk & Traditional Heritage-, Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) and Humerkada.

Addressing the students and faculty members, the Minister highly praised the efforts of PAF-IAS for education, research and innovations.

He said that diverse and rich cultural heritage, beautiful topography and archaeological sites of historical value situated in Pakistan offer enormous opportunities those could be utilized for economic advancement of the country.

## Govt urged to resume affordable house financing scheme

PPA

KARACHI: The government should resume the affordable house financing scheme through commercial banks to facilitate masses for purchasing and constructing residential housing units to revive economic activities across the country.

This was stated by the real estate tycoon and founder of Shangri-la City, Syed Afzal Hameed, at the annual meetup of developers and the launch of one-window solutions for allottees of the international housing project at a local hotel here on Thursday.

Speaking to the media, he said the real estate stirs commercial activities in construction and various allied sectors, including steel, cement, paint, cable, marbles, etc, which ultimately benefits the economy through taxes and employment opportunities.

He added that owning a decent residential unit is a dream these days, but it had been made possible through affordable projects launched by Aimal Builders.

On the occasion, CEO Al Meeraj Marketing, Kashan Siddiqui said the success of any housing project depends on its construction, facilities, amenities and payment structure, which the administration of Shangri-la City assured to win the trust of its customers.

He lauded the role of partners and dealers in this project to make it successful, which began to receive booking of the housing units from day one of the launch, receiving overwhelming response from the buyers and investors.

The annual event was also attended by the city's renowned builders, developers, and dealers.

## ANP election campaign launch in Wana, opening ceremony held



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: District South Waziristan Lower in Wana bazar on Friday Awami National Party (ANP) nominated candidate for National Assembly Constituency NA 42 Hamid Ullah Afghan and Provincial Assembly PK 110 nominated candidate Ayaz Wazir officially started the election campaign, while inaugurated the ANP office.

On the occasion of Awami National Party District President Malik Aziz Ullah and Malik Elboogh Ji Khel said this time people will ensure to the success of National Party candidates.

In the opening ceremony of the office, Abdur Rauf Wazir also presented the manifesto of Awami National Party at the regional level. On this occasion, Abdur Rauf Khan stated his manifesto in the opening ceremony.

He said, a commission would be formed for land disputes and district demarcation and small dams will be constructed for agricultural lands to create employment opportunities for people.

Speakers expressed hope that this time the victory of Awami National Party (ANP) in both the seats is certain.

Both the candidates vowed to solve public problems on priority basis. The speakers requested the general public not to listen to false rumours while both the ANP candidates should try their best to win with a huge majority.

## SW Lower & Upper PTI issued one NA, two PK tickets among candidate

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf issued tickets for the upcoming elections in South Waziristan Lower and Upper on Friday and distributed among the respective nominated candidates.

According to the report, the PTI ticket was issued to Zubair Wazir for South Waziristan Constituency NA-42, while the PTI ticket for South Waziristan Lower PK-110 constituency was issued to Ajab Gul Wazir and PK-109 ticket issued to Asif Khan Mehsud.

All the three candidates received tickets from the former Provincial Local Government Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Amin Gandapur. It should be noted that Ajab Gul Wazir also contested the mayor election on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf ticket.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) South Waziristan Lower PK-110 candidate Ajab Gul Wazir said on this occasion, as the people of South Waziristan are deprived of the basic facilities of life, solving their problems is among the top priorities of all of us.

## Grapefruit: Introduction, Benefits and Drug-Nutrient Interaction

Dr Afifa Tariq

Grapefruit, a tropical citrus fruit, has sweet and tart taste. It has a lot of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and fiber. This nutrient dense and low calorie fruit comes with many health benefits. It helps in weight loss and reducing the risk of heart diseases. Regular grapefruit intake is helpful for immune system. Grapefruit contains vitamin C, which helps protect the skin against inflammation, sun damage and aging. Vitamin C protect cells from harmful bacteria and viruses as it contains antioxidants. The presence of fiber in grapefruit helps to promote fullness and reduce the calorie. Grapefruit also helps in preventing insu-

lin resistance and helps in better blood sugar control. It may reduce the risk of kidney stones. Citric acid, an organic acid found in grapefruit, may help reduce the formation of calcium oxalate kidney stones. A high water content in grapefruit helps you stay hydrated. Grapefruit also contains tartaric acid and malic acid. These are all different types of alpha-hydroxy acids (AHAs). AHAs are often used in skin care products due to their variety of benefits, including improved skin texture and elasticity. Grapefruit requires little-to-no preparation and hence, it's fairly easy to add to your diet. Even if you live a busy, on-the-go lifestyle, you can still enjoy grapefruit on a regular basis without worrying about it taking up too much of your time. Select smooth, uniformly colored and shiny

grapefruits that look slightly flattened on the sides. These are all signs the fruit has ripened fully before it was harvested.

### Medication Interactions

Grapefruit is not for everyone. There are a few reasons why some people may need to avoid eating grapefruit.

It contains substances that inhibit cytochrome P450, an enzyme your body uses to metabolize certain medications. If you eat grapefruit while taking these medications, your body may not be able to break them down.

Grapefruit juice contains two members of a class of chemical compounds called furanocoumarins in high concentrations. These compounds can enhance or reduce the uptake of certain drugs by the body. This may in turn result in dangerously low or danger-

ously high concentration of drugs in the body. The medications most likely to interact with grapefruit include Immunosuppressant's, Benzodiazepines, most calcium channel blockers, Indinavir, Carbamazepine and some statins.

It's best not to take medicine with grapefruit or its juice. Take it 2 hours away from when you take your medications. Moreover, If you have particularly sensitive teeth, you may need to avoid acidic fruits to avoid tooth enamel erosion.

On the whole, grapefruit is delicious and incredibly easy to add to your diet.

Writer is M. Phil in human nutrition and dietetics, she associate with Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan in food science and nutrition department



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## Two resigned, others may follow... - I

In Pakistan, an atmosphere of palpable excitement and tumult prevails, akin to the thick smog in Punjab and Lahore, where visibility is so limited that even one's own hands become unseen. Every passing moment is laden with significant and breaking news, constantly keeping the public on edge. Unfortunately, this pervasive frenzy is not a harbinger of hope but rather a thick cloud of war alarms that hangs over the nation, casting a shadow on aspirations for a better future. In this relentless struggle to outmaneuver rivals, the foundational pillars of the state and its institutions are engaged in a perilous game of pulling each other down.

The Senate, pitted against the Judiciary, has taken a bold step by passing a resolution calling for an indefinite delay in the upcoming elections. This move, a direct challenge to the Supreme Court of Pakistan, which had firmly set the election date for February 8, 2024, serves as a mockery of the highest court's historic decision.

The Supreme Court, issued a stern rebuke to the Lahore High Court, asserting in no uncertain terms that the court is complicit with those seeking to delay elections for their vested interests.

The PTI's struggle over the BAT symbol has become a legal rollercoaster, marked by conflicting decisions. Despite the Peshawar High Court's back-and-forth on allocating the symbol, the Election Commission chose to disregard court orders and withhold the emblem. PTI

swiftly responded by filing a contempt petition, slated for tomorrow (12th Jan 2024). The Election Commission is all set to file an appeal before the Supreme Court. The deliberate choice of the Peshawar High Court, over the potentially jurisdictional Islamabad High Court, underscores PTI's resolute belief in the latter's compromise.

The two judges of the Supreme Court have already tendered their resignations, with the looming possibility of more following suit. If this trend continues, it could plunge the credibility and impartiality of both the Supreme Court and the Chief Justice into intense scrutiny, potentially rendering the apex court practically dysfunctional.

The rift within the Supreme Court was initiated by an audacious move from an unfamiliar lawyer, Mian Dawood, who, in February 2023, filed a complaint against Justice Mazhar Naqvi. The complaint alleges violations of the code of conduct for judges outlined in Clause (8) of Article 209 of the Constitution. The accusations leveled against Justice Naqvi include misconduct, the creation of illegal assets, and the accumulation of wealth

through frontmen. Later, this complaint was turned into a formal complaint. The SJC issued two show-cause notices, demanding that Justice Naqvi explain the apparent inconsistencies in his financial records.

Justice Naqvi, vehemently denied any wrongdoing and labeled the show-cause notices as politically motivated tools wielded against him. He filed a petition with the Supreme Court seeking a stay order. The Supreme Court's dismissal of Naqvi's petition proved to be a turning point.

With the SJC investigation set to move forward, Naqvi opted for a dramatic exit. In a concise resignation letter, he maintained his innocence but acknowledged that continuing under such a cloud of suspicion was untenable.

Justice Naqvi's resignation left more questions than answers. Did it signify an admission of guilt, or was it a strategic retreat from a perceived unfair process? Was it a tacit acknowledgement of wrongdoing or a desperate attempt to escape scrutiny?

As a former Deputy Commissioner of Income Tax with over a decade of

experience, I assert with confidence that the allegations against Muzhar Naqvi, revolving around property transactions at significantly disparate values, resonate across civil and military officers, politicians, judges, and business figures. If such practices were absent, and all individuals adhered strictly to legal obligations, our nation might have charted a different course.

The inherent inconsistency in the handling of similar circumstances, particularly the parallel allegations against Qazi Faiz Isa, raises questions about the fairness of the entire episode. In a situation where allegations against Isa were dismissed, and accusations of amassing wealth exceeding 12 billion by former Army Chief Qamar Javaid Bajwa only led to the incarceration of those disclosing this information, it suggests a nuanced and potentially unjust dimension to the legal proceedings.

Recalling the allegations against Qazi Faiz Isa, pertaining to the acquisition of three London properties leased in the names of his wife and children between 2011 and 2015, raises parallels with the current situation, emphasizing the need for consistency and fairness in addressing such matters across different individuals and institutions.

Let us peruse, the Supreme Judicial Council decision point wise.

The reference to be of no legal effect, non-maintainable whatsoever and stands quashed.

*To be continued*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

The complaint alleges violations of the code of conduct for judges outlined in Clause (8) of Article 209 of the Constitution

## Earth 'scorching' as 2023 was hottest year on record

Last year was the hottest year since records have been kept—by a large margin—data from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), a Geneva-based UN agency, shows.

The average global temperature in 2023 was 1.46 degrees C (2.6 F) higher than the pre-industrial level, between 1850 and 1900, marking the 10th consecutive year that temperatures have been at least 1 degree C (1.8 F) above pre-industrial levels.

This is 0.17 C (0.3 F) warmer than 2016, the previous hottest year on record, at 1.29 C (2.3 F) above pre-industrial levels, the WMO's report said.

The World Meteorological Organization uses six leading international data sets from across the globe to monitor global temperatures, which reveal a new annual temperature average of 1.45°C set against the pre-industrial era (1850-1900).

Every month between June and December set new records. July and August were the two hottest months ever recorded, WMO said.

The 1.5°C figure is the temperature limit set out clearly in the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change but that refers to the long-term temperature increase averaged over decades, rather than an individual year like 2023.

"Climate change is the biggest challenge that humanity faces. It is affecting all of us, especially the most vulnerable," said WMO Secretary-General Prof. Celeste Saulo, presenting the report's findings.

"We cannot afford to wait any longer. We are already taking action, but we have to do more, and we have to do it quickly."

For that, Prof Saulo explained, drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and accelerated transition to renewable energy sources are needed.

Looking ahead, the head of WMO warned that as the cooling La Niña phenomenon was replaced with a warming El Niño midway through last year — which usually has the biggest impact on global temperatures after it peaks — 2024 could be even hotter.

Celeste Saulo, who became WMO Secretary-General on January 1, explained that "while El Niño events are naturally occurring and come and go from one year to the next, longer term climate change is escalating and this is unequivocally because of human activities".

Since the 1980s, each decade has been warmer than the previous one and the past nine years have been the warmest on record. The data drawn from the six data sets shows that the ten-year average temperature increase in 2014-2023 was at about 1.20°C.

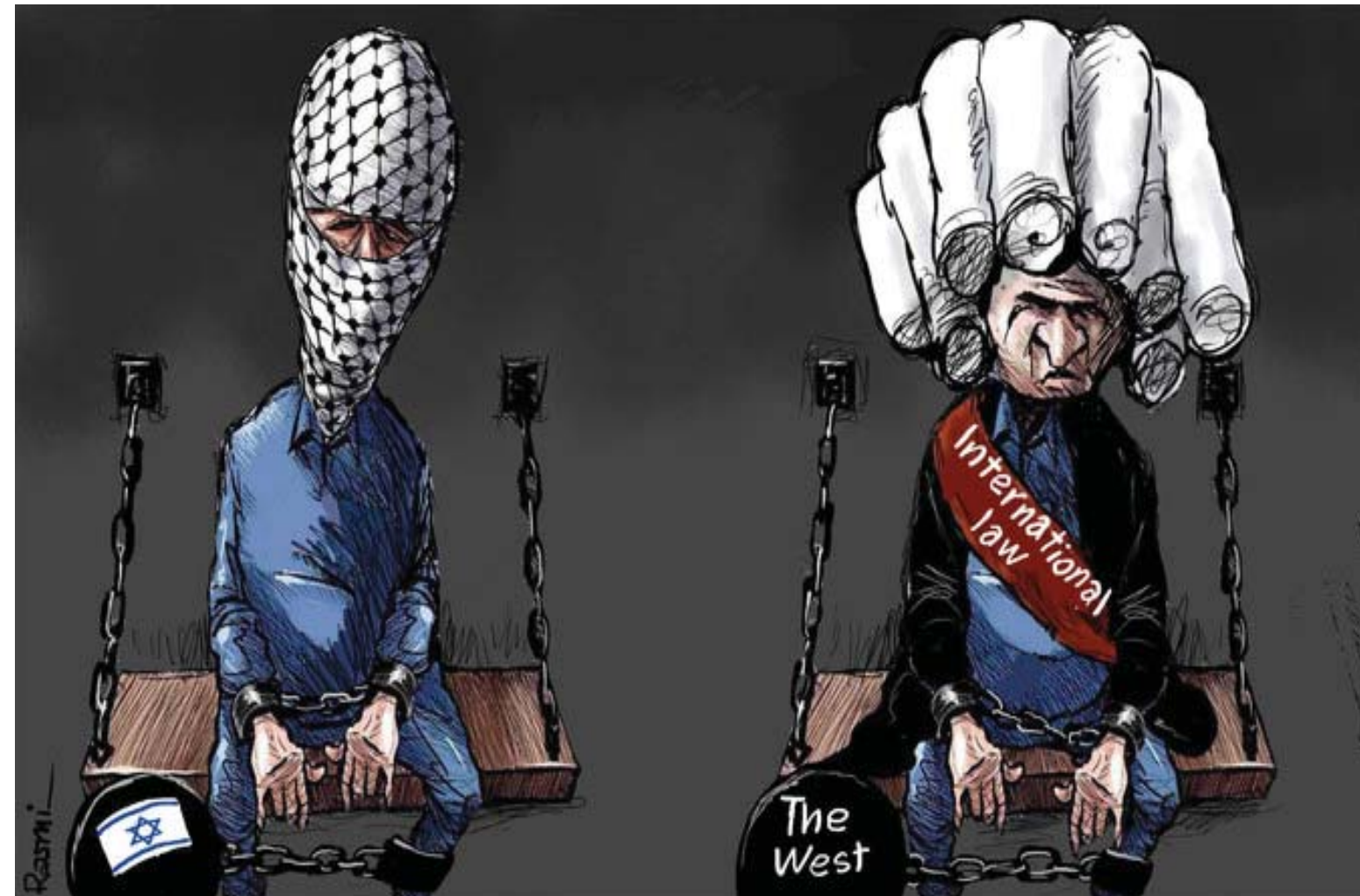
"Humanity's actions are scorching the Earth. 2023 was a mere preview of the catastrophic future that awaits if we don't act now. We must respond to record-breaking temperature rises with path-breaking action," UN chief António Guterres said in response to the latest data.

"We can still avoid the worst of climate catastrophe. But only if we act now with the ambition required to limit the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius and deliver climate justice," he said in a statement.

Long-term monitoring of global temperatures is just one indicator of how climate is changing.

Other key indicators include atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations, ocean heat and acidification, sea level, sea ice extent and glacier mass balance to name a few.

WMO's provisional State of the Global Climate in 2023 report, published on November 30, showed that records were broken across the board.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Ashraf Al-Awsat)

## Disqualification on Anti-Army Propaganda - III

In Pakistan, many politicians have been involved in heinous and malicious propaganda against the Pak Army, unfortunately gaining more acceptance and spreading rapidly in society. Media outlets that encourage negative content are also disappointing.

Recently, the Senate in Pakistan passed a resolution calling for severe punishment, including a 10-year disqualification from public office, for those engaging in negative and malicious propaganda against the Pakistan Army and other security forces. The resolution, presented by Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Senator Bahramand Tangi during a session chaired by Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani, emphasized the indispensability of a strong military, especially in the face of hostile neighbors. The unanimous approval of the resolution reflects cross-party consensus on the need for stringent measures against those spreading anti-military narratives on social media platforms. It acknowledged the significant sacrifices made by the armed forces in the war against terrorism and expressed deep concern over the negative and malicious propaganda circulating on various social media platforms. The resolution called on the government to take necessary steps to impose severe punishment as per the law, highlighting the Senate's concern over derogatory content targeting the Pakistan Army on social media and urging strict action against those involved in spreading anti-military propaganda.

The Pakistan Army stands as a formidable pillar of national defense, symbolizing sacrifice and resilience. Since the inception of the country, the Pakistan Army has played a pivotal role in safeguarding the nation's integrity, contrib-

uting not only to its security but also to various aspects of societal well-being. The primary duty of the Pakistan Army is to defend the nation's borders against external threats. Throughout a history marked by conflicts and challenges, the army has consistently demonstrated unwavering commitment and bravery in protecting Pakistan's sovereignty. Through military operations and border management initiatives, the Pakistan Army remains at the forefront, ensuring the safety and security of the nation.

Pakistan has confronted significant challenges related to terrorism, and the Pakistan Army has been actively engaged in counterterrorism operations to eliminate extremist elements threatening the peace and stability of the country. The army's efforts, often carried out in challenging and hostile environments, have contributed to reducing the impact of terrorism and creating a safer environment for citizens.

Beyond its military duties, the Pakistan Army has played a vital role in providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Responding swiftly to natural disasters, from earthquakes to floods, the army has conducted support, rescue operations, and medical assistance to affected populations. The army's ability to mobilize quickly in times of crisis has saved lives and mitigated the impact of disasters on communities.

Actively involved in nation-building projects, the Pakistan Army has contributed to infrastructure development, education, and healthcare. Army engineers have been instrumental in constructing roads, bridges, and critical infrastructure, enhancing connectivity and facilitating economic development in remote areas.

Pakistan has been a significant contributor to United Nations peacekeeping missions, and

the Pakistan Army has played a crucial role in these efforts. Pakistani peacekeepers have been deployed to conflict zones globally, working to maintain peace, protect civilians, and promote stability. The army's participation in international peacekeeping reflects Pakistan's commitment to global peace and security.

The Pakistan Army has actively promoted education and healthcare within the country. Through the establishment of schools and medical facilities, especially in remote and underserved areas, the army has contributed to improving citizens' quality of life. Educational initiatives, including scholarships and training programs, aim to empower the youth and build a skilled workforce.

The services rendered by the Pakistan Army extend far beyond conventional military operations. The army's multifaceted contributions encompass defense, counterterrorism efforts, humanitarian assistance, nation-building projects, peacekeeping missions, and the promotion of education and healthcare. As a stalwart guardian of the nation, the Pakistan Army continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the country's present and future, safeguarding its citizens, and contributing to overall progress and well-being.

Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir has played a remarkable role in alleviating economic crises and attracting foreign investment. Due to the initiatives taken by the Army Chief and the Pakistan Army, the rates of the dollar, fuel, and inflation are decreasing day by day, leading the situation towards improvement.

Readers, the nation acknowledges the remarkable services of the Pak Army and welcome the Senate of Pakistan's resolution to disqualify those engaged in anti-army propaganda. There is a need for strict legislation and punishment for individuals involved in such heinous activities.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

## IG should make Police, custodian of masses - I

'Thana culture' is a term used to refer to the non-friendly attitude of police officials and a below-par treatment they usually mete out to citizens, as and when a citizen comes into interaction with police either by visiting police station or while travelling on a road. Thana culture is often defined as culture of repression, abuse of authority, highhandedness, misbehaviour, "Sifarish" unsociability, pessimism, corruption, partisan, inefficiency, indifference and many other negative social attributes.

A police station is also called as a Thana in the local language. The officer in charge of a Police Station is designated as or called as the SHO. Law disobedience is a common thing in the police stations of Punjab. SHOs and other police officials often violate the law, including accepting bribes, abuses, and making illegal arrests. SHOs are often self-absorbed that they do what they want. An SHO often don't care about laws and regulations. That is why the people of Punjab have very little trust in the police. They believe that the police will not help them, but will deliberately abuse and do injustice to them. Due to these reasons, there is public fear in the police stations of Punjab. It is a pity that "no responsible officer tries on this aspect"

For any decent citizen like us, the thought of going to the police station is very terrifying. The common man has years of experience of

the unethical and illegal behaviour of the police. Common people fear that they may not be given justice in the police station, but may be arrested for some self-imposed crime to prove the accused to the plaintiff. IG Sir! Such concerns people have about the police are not fanciful stories or assumptions, but the experience of "anti-social performance" of the police. In fact, far more serious and violent incidents take place in police stations. Which cannot be described in words

There is no justice anywhere in our unfortunate country. Its continuation exists with great vehemence in the form of injustice and lawlessness. As a result, the feeling of insecurity and deprivation is born in police stations. In the police stations, the basis of cruelty and brutality against the deprived class is laid. The police station considers the plaintiff as accused and the accused as criminal. This section of the police has made the police stations a place of horror and terror. Therefore, along with beautifying the buildings of the police station, good character and law-abiding officers should be appointed in the police station so that the people can see the real change.

In the civilized countries of the world, police stations are considered and known as the symbol of peace, tranquillity, justice and guardian of law. No one is immune under any circumstances.

*To be continued*



Analysis

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid



# Xi, Belgian PM meet in Beijing, agreeing to enhance ties

Xinhua

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium Alexander De Croo in Beijing on Friday.

Noting that China attaches great importance to the development of China-Belgium relations, Xi said bilateral cooperation has yielded fruitful results and benefited the two peoples since the establishment of diplomatic ties 53 years ago.

China and Belgium are both beneficiaries of economic globalization and share common interests in resisting protectionism and safeguarding free trade, Xi said.

China appreciates De Croo's open opposition to the decoupling or severing of industrial and supply chains on many occasions, welcomes Belgian companies to invest in China, and stands ready to provide them with a sound business environment, Xi said, expressing his hope that Belgium will also provide a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese companies.

Xi said the two sides can combine their respective strengths to expand cooperation in traditional areas such as transportation, logistics and biopharmaceuticals, and explore new growth areas for cooperation such as green development and

digital economy.

He called on the two sides to encourage government departments, legislatures, and sub-national areas to strengthen exchanges and dialogue, expand tourism and exchange of students, organize large-scale cultural activities in each other's country, and carry out research on giant panda protection.

Xi said China is willing to strengthen communication with Belgium within multilateral frameworks such as the United Nations and carry out cooperation on issues such as climate change and biodiversity protection.

Stressing that China maintains long-term consistency in its policy toward Europe, Xi said China has always regarded Europe as a partner and hopes that Europe will play a positive and constructive role as an important force in a multipolar world.

In the face of the changing and volatile international situation, China and Europe need to build more "bridges," he added.

Xi said the two sides should work more closely to promote an equal and orderly global multipolarity and an economic globalization that benefits all, and jointly promote world peace, stability and prosperity.

China is willing to work with the European Union (EU) to foster progress in China-EU relations in the new year and

hopes that Belgium, as the EU rotating presidency, will play a positive role in this regard, Xi added.

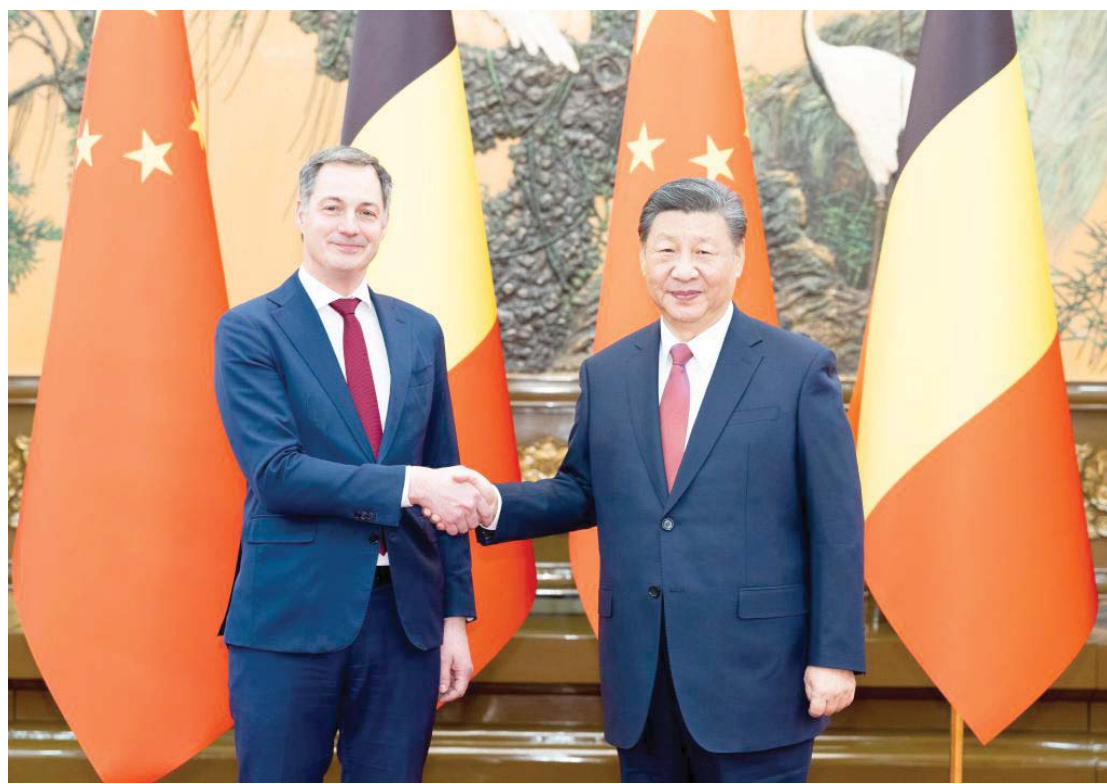
De Croo said the Belgium-China relationship is a pacesetter in European countries' ties with China in many aspects, noting that Belgium will continue to abide by the one-China policy, and have candid dialogue with China to deepen understanding and push for continuous development of bilateral relations in political, economic and other fields.

De Croo said Belgium opposes decoupling or severing of industrial and supply chains, welcomes Chinese enterprises to carry out cooperation in Belgium, and hopes to strengthen personnel and cultural exchanges with China.

De Croo noted that he was deeply impressed by President Xi's vivid description of "bridges" during his visit to Belgium a decade ago.

Amid the changing and turbulent international situation, the world needs China and Europe to work as partners and strengthen cooperation in a wide range of areas such as promoting world economic growth, addressing climate change and building a more stable world, De Croo said.

Belgium, as the rotating presidency of the EU, is willing to play an active role in the development of EU-China relations and hopes that this visit will help elevate



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium Alexander De Croo at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, Jan. 12, 2024. (Xinhua/Huang Jingwen)

# State of Palestine Welcomes South Africa's Legal Presentation at the International Court of Justice

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The State of Palestine welcomes and appreciates the compelling legal presentation made by the Republic of South Africa today at the International Court of Justice on Israel's egregious and massive violations of the Genocide Convention.

South Africa delivered unequivocal evidence that Israel is deliberately and systematically violating its obligations under the Genocide Convention. Israel is committing genocide in the Gaza Strip, failing to prevent genocide, and adopting genocidal policies and permitting hateful rhetoric and incitement that enables and excuses genocide against the Palestinian people. These abominable atrocities and crimes must be stopped, the Palestinian people must be protected, human life must be preserved.

This is a critical moment for Palestine and a pivotal moment for the



international system. It is a moment of truth and historic on many levels, not least for humanity and for the rule of law, which are under assault in Gaza. South Africa took the bold

and principled step of assuming its responsibilities and obligations under the Genocide Convention because it understands that they are binding, not optional.

This step was crucial because the international system has failed miserably to assume its responsibilities to maintain international peace and security and its obligations to prevent the crime of genocide. This political paralysis has exposed a grave and acute double standard crisis that threatens the credibility and the very viability of this system, to the detriment of all. The crimes being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, against Palestinian men, women and children, devastating and traumatizing an entire people, have shocked the world's conscience and require all States and all peoples to act for justice.

The international system owes South Africa a debt of gratitude because it took this step, instead of passively observing the undoing of international norms out of political expediency at the expense of human lives and existence of an entire nation. The voices of millions upon millions of

people who have taken to the streets around the world are echoed in South Africa's legal action. And the Palestinian people, in Gaza and beyond, draw hope from the affirmation that humanity, moral courage and consistency can prevail over racism, warmongering, and double standards, that there is political, legal and moral conviction to stand and act against genocide.

This is a legal case, not a political one. The law must be measure by which this grave matter is judged, not hateful, biased spin steeped in racism, supremacy and double standards. Attempts to sabotage or overrun these historic proceedings by politicization and weaponized rhetoric must be unequivocally rejected and exposed.

The State of Palestine trusts that the International Court of Justice, which is the highest Court in the world, will defend its independence and meet its noble obligations to uphold the law

and confront impunity.

We cannot remain silent in the face of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide against the Palestinian people. We seek accountability and justice, to protect our people and to ensure the dignity and rights they have been too long denied.

The Palestinian people are eternally grateful to the courageous people and government of South Africa for taking a stand when it mattered the most, a stand against injustice and a stand for humanity. Our long and deep friendship, which was always founded on a mutual commitment to freedom, equality and justice, shall remain an inspirational example of active solidarity and principled partnership in pursuit of these most noble objectives. We salute South Africa and all peace loving nations and peoples around the world who are standing with the Palestinian people in their time of greatest need.

# 40,000 dark web posts about corporate data surfaced in past two years: Kaspersky Report

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Worldwide, every third company was referenced in dark web posts associated with the sales of data or access.

Islamabad: Kaspersky Digital Footprint Intelligence team has over the past two years uncovered almost 40,000 dark web posts about the sale of internal corporate information. These posts – created by cybercriminals – are used to buy, sell, or distribute data stolen from various companies through cyberattacks. The number of posts offering access to corporate infrastructure has seen a 16% increase compared to the previous year. Worldwide, every third company was referenced in dark web

posts associated with the sales of data or access.

Kaspersky Digital Footprint Intelligence experts observed an average of 1,731 dark web messages per month about the sale, purchase and distribution of internal corporate databases and documents, totaling almost 40,000 messages between January 2022 and November 2023. The monitored resources encompassed dark web forums, blogs, and also shadow Telegram channels.

Distribution of the Dark web messages related to corporate data sale, purchase, or distribution, January 2022 – November 2023

Another category of data available on the dark web is access to



Distribution of the Dark web messages related to corporate data sale, purchase, or distribution, January 2022 – November 2023

corporate infrastructures allowing cybercriminals to purchase pre-existing access to a compa-

ny, enabling attackers to streamline their efforts. According to Kaspersky's research, more than

6,000 dark web messages have been advertising such offers in January 2022-November 2023.

Currently, cybercriminals are increasingly offering access, with the average number of corresponding monthly messages witnessing a 16% rise from 246 in 2022 to 286 in 2023. While the number of messages may not seem high, it doesn't diminish the potential magnitude of the issue. With the looming threat of supply chain attacks in the coming year, even breaches targeting smaller companies could escalate to impact numerous individuals and businesses globally.

"Not every message on the dark web contains new and unique information. Some offers can be repetitive; for instance, when a malicious actor aims to quickly sell data, they may post

it on different underground forums to reach a larger audience of potential criminal buyers. Moreover, certain databases might be combined and presented as new. For instance, there are 'combolists'—databases that aggregate information from various previously leaked databases, such as passwords for a specific email address," explains Anna Pavlovskaya, expert at Kaspersky Digital Footprint Intelligence.

To further enhance security of businesses worldwide, Kaspersky Digital Footprint Intelligence experts tracked mentions of 700 random companies related to corporate data being compromised in 2022, providing information about cyberthreats originating from the dark web.

# US and Britain strike Yemen in reprisal for Houthi attacks on shipping

News Desk

WASHINGTON D. C./ADEN: US and British warplanes, ships and submarines launched dozens of air strikes across Yemen overnight in retaliation against Houthi forces for months of attacks on Red Sea shipping that the Iran-backed fighters cast as a response to the war in Gaza.

Witnesses confirmed explosions at military bases near airports in the capital Sanaa and Yemen's third city Taiz, a naval base at Yemen's main Red Sea port Hodeidah and military sites in the coastal Hajjah governorate.

"These targeted strikes are a

clear message that the United States and our partners will not tolerate attacks on our personnel or allow hostile actors to imperil freedom of navigation," US President Joe Biden said.

The Houthis, who have controlled most of Yemen for nearly a decade, said five of their fighters had been killed in a total of 73 air strikes. They vowed to retaliate and continue their attacks on shipping, which they say are intended to support Palestinians against Israel.

"We saw a large fire from where the attack took place. It was half an hour of terror," said Kheloud, a Sanaa resident who awoke to loud explosions from

the direction of the airport.

By mid-afternoon, crowds had gathered in central Sanaa and other cities. Drone footage on the Houthis' Al-Masirah TV showed hundreds of thousands of people carrying Palestinian and Yemeni flags, chanting slogans denouncing Israel and the United States in a response to a speaker on a giant screen.

"Your strikes on Yemen are terrorism," said Mohammed Ali Al-Houthi, member of the Houthi Supreme Political Council. "The United States is the Devil."

The commander of US air operations in the Middle East, Air Force Lt. General Alex



Grynkewich, said 60 targets at 16 locations had been hit using more than 100 precision-guided munitions.

A US official said the targets had been chosen to weaken the Houthis' ability to attack: "We were going after very specific

capability in very specific locations with precision munitions."

In a poor country only just emerging from nearly a decade of war that brought millions to the brink of famine, people fearing an extended new conflict queued at petrol stations.

"There is a lot of worry that the fuel shortages will repeat themselves and food supplies will be scarce," said Ali Ahmad, 52. "We are rushing to fuel our car and we bought flour and rice in case of any emergency because we are expecting the Houthis to respond

and an escalation to take place." In Hodeidah, a resident who gave only his first name, Mahmoud, said troops were spreading through the streets and military vehicles were leaving barracks with security escorts.



**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
64,637.63	64,617.56
Day's High	Day's Low
65,356.85	64,491.08
Index Value	Change
14,718,461,689	+20.07
Percentage	Time
+0.03%	12 Jan, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,624.93	+48.34
Percentage	Time
+0.64%	12 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
37,565.41	-145.61
Percentage	Time
-0.39%	12 Jan, 1:11 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
35,577.11	+527.25
Percentage	Time
+1.50%	12 Jan, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	186	187.85
Bahrain Dinar	748.26	756.26
Canadian Dollar	207.5	209.5
China Yuan	39.45	39.85
Danish Krone	41.3	41.7
Euro	306.5	309.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.99	36.34
Indian Rupee	3.39	3.5
Japanese Yen	1.94	2.15
Kuwaiti Dinar	914.97	923.97
Malaysian Ringgit	60.59	61.19
New Zealand \$	175.03	177.03
Norwegians Krone	27.16	27.46
Omani Riyal	730.83	738.83
Qatari Riyal	77.29	77.99
Saudi Riyal	74.45	75.2
Singapore Dollar	208.5	210.5
Swedish Korona	27.47	27.77
Swiss Franc	328.79	331.29
Thai Bhat	8.02	8.17
U.A.E Dirham	76.5	77.3
UK Pound Sterling	357.5	360.5
US Dollar	280	282

# Necessary to roll over other loans despite IMF credit: Mian Zahid Hussain

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Friday that the approval of the seven hundred million dollar tranche for Pakistan by the IMF Board is a welcome development.

The move will decrease the financial difficulties of the country and increase the confidence of local and international investors in Pakistan while facilitating new loans from other international institutions, he said.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the loan payments were stopped by the IMF in December 2022, and it agreed to help Pakistan after the Shehbaz Sharif government agreed to its conditions.



The IMF agreed to a three-billion-dollar standby loan to Pakistan in June 2023 when the country was suffering from wrong policies,

losses of government institutions, and irresponsible spending, he recalled.

At that time, the IMF forwarded a loan of 1.2 billion dollars to Pakistan as the first tranche, and now, after the payment of 700 million dollars by the IMF, the total payment will be 1.9 billion dollars, while 1.1 billion dollars in loans are still to be paid to Pakistan.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the remaining amount will be paid to Pakistan after review by the lender, which will help the country recover from the worst economic crisis in its history.

The business leader said that the IMF has played a laudable role which has reduced the country's financial difficulties, but this money is not sufficient. The friendly countries must also come forward to lift Pakistan out of problems.

The United Arab Emirates must roll over the two billion-dollar loan because the country's conditions and resources are not able to

repay it. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the financial support of friendly countries is necessary to get Pakistan out of this quagmire. Apart from this, the deferred payment condition from Saudi Arabia will also require an extension of one year.

Saudi Arabia's monthly oil loan facility of one million dollars expired last month, while the two billion dollar loan arranged from the United Arab Emirates is to be repaid in the current month.

Pakistan has to pay off \$28.4 billion in debt, liabilities, and interest this year, which will be a challenge, and the rollover of debt will be necessary to remain in the IMF programme and meet its conditions.

Even in these circumstances, people will be responsible for paying the costs of failed businesses and unnecessary expenses.

## Animal feed

ISLAMABAD: A worker is busy in arranging husk bundles at warehouse in Golra area of the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

## ICCI urges political parties to unveil their manifesto for revival of economy

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that less than one month period is left in the next general elections, but most of the political parties have not announced the economic agenda of their election manifesto as yet, which is very important to guide the voters in electing the next government. He urged that all political parties should unveil the economic agenda of their election manifesto for the revival of the economy that would provide a direction to the business community and the investors and help them finalize their short and long-term business and investment plans for the country. He said this while talking to a delegation of traders and industrialists during their visit to ICCI. Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader ICCI, Khalid Javed, Zafar Bakhtawari & Nasir Khan former Presidents ICCI, Rafat Farid and others were in the delegation.



Ahsan Bakhtawari said that the economy of Pakistan is facing many big challenges as the external debt has exceeded US\$ 124 billion by June 2023, the power sector circular debt has crossed Rs.2.3 trillion, the inflation rate surged to over 39 percent in 2023, which has drastically reduced the purchasing power of the common man and reduced the growth of business activities.

He said that the high energy tariff in Pakistan has made

the exporters uncompetitive in the international market due to which Pakistan's exports during 11 months of FY 2022-23 remained around USD 30 billion while the exports of Bangladesh in FY 2022-23 exceeded US\$ 64 billion.

ICCI President said that the UN's World Economic Situation and Prospects Report for 2024 has also projected that the economy of Pakistan is confronted with many challenges, including inflationary pressures, currency

depreciation, and high levels of sovereign debt.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that all political parties should announce the economic agenda of their election manifesto to address these challenges and revive the economy, which will help the voters including the business community to see which party offers them the best solutions to address the economic issues and put Pakistan on the path of sustainable economic growth.

## Political parties should present a solid program of economic recovery

**ABC**

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Economy Watch, Dr. Murtaza Mughal, said on Friday that the economy is facing dire consequences and masses are suffering greatly due to poor choices by economic managers. He said that the country needs a robust economic recovery programme from political parties, which are busy making tall claims to misguide the masses for their motives. He said that the economy has been played as a toy, which has led the country to bankruptcy while the people are straying. Dr. Murtaza Mughal said in a statement issued here today that the role of criminals and corrupt elements in the economy should be eliminated.



Instead of making loud claims, the political parties should present a concrete programme of economic recovery.

He claimed that many careless economic managers were more concerned with maintaining their popularity than with strengthening the economy, which could not withstand the damaging effects of their actions. He noted that criminals,

corrupt elements, and their patrons are overly involved in the economy and are destroying the country for their interests.

The dollar has declined and the rupee has stabilised slightly as a result of the government's recent measures to lessen the influence of criminals in the economy; however, these factors still need to be removed. Dr. Mughal said that those who run the economic affairs of the country should be kept away from adventurers and should be told that they are not there to gain political popularity but to stabilise the economy.

He warned that if the government formed after the election also tried to gain fame, manipulated the currency rate, and engaged in reckless economic endeavours the country would be bankrupt.

The government formed in 2013 took huge loans for unnecessary development projects. It increased expenditure without increasing income and tried to control the dollar without adequate foreign exchange reserves, which damaged the economy. Later attempts to topple the government in 2017 also damaged the economy. From 2017 to 2019, all previous records of money printing were broken, while in 2020, unsuccessful attempts to increase GDP artificially were made, which accelerated GDP growth but resulted in the destruction of the economy. As a result of these misadventures, the politicians became famous, but the people were stuck in a trap of inflation from which there was no way out.

## Zong 4G and ASA Pakistan (MFB) Limited Sign Corporate Partnership Agreement for Communication and Data Connectivity Solutions

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading digital communication company, has signed a corporate partnership agreement with ASA Pakistan Limited, a leading Microfinance Bank, to provide data and voice services for their customers.

Zong Business team strives to provide each client with industry-leading tailored solutions that can enhance their business productivity and streamline their processes. This partnership was finalized with a signing ceremony conducted on 2nd November 2023 at ASA microfinance bank Pakistan ltd head office in Karachi. Mr. Farooq Raza Khan, Director Govt. & Corporate Sales & Services Zong CMPAK and CEO ASA Pakistan Mr.

Saeed Uddin Khan signed the partnership on behalf of their respective organizations.

The Official Spokesperson of Zong 4G added, "Our partnership with ASA Pakistan (MFB) Limited is a testament to our commitment to excellence and innovation. We are dedicated to providing our customers with customized GSM and data products that cater to their communication needs."

Mr. Saeed Uddin Khan, CEO ASA Pakistan, emphasized the importance of telecom services for his company and discussed the benefits of Zong 4G's services. "Zong 4G's seamless services will help ASA Pakistan (MFB) Limited users to improve their productivity and drive business growth".

## Happilac Construction Chemicals inaugurates another production plant in Faisalabad



**Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: Director Sales and Markets Khawaja Fahad Khalid Sikka, Director, s Ahsan Shahid Sikka, Shahroz Shahid Sakka of Happilac Construction Chemical Relied Items Pvt Ltd cut the ribbon and inaugurated another production plant. Speaking to the media on this occasion, Happilac Construction Chemicals Director Sales and Markets of Relied Items Pvt. Ltd.

Khawaja Fahad Khalid Sikka said that Happilac Construction Chemicals will continue to play its role in the development of Pakistan as always and will continue to serve the public by providing quality products to its customers. Director Ahsan Shahid Sikka, Shahroz Shahid Sikka, senior management and others participated in the event. The participants also prayed for the development and success of the company.

## Save on your holiday or stopover to Dubai this winter with Emirates

**PPA**

KARACHI: Emirates has today announced an exciting new offer for travellers planning to visit Dubai this winter. Starting from 12th January, people who have bought flights to Dubai or add a stopover in Dubai of 8 hours or more can enjoy free tickets to two of Dubai's biggest attractions – the Museum of the Future and Atlantis Aquaventure.

The Museum of the Future is the newest jewel in the Dubai skyline where you'll be transported into the world 50 years from now. Furthermore, you can cool off on the slides and rides at Atlantis Aquaventure, the world's largest waterpark.

This special offer is valid on tickets bought between 12th January to 1st February 2024, for travel between 15th January and 31st March 2024.

The offer is available in all cabins and bookings made on emirates.com, Emirates call centre, Emirates ticketing office or via travel agents can be redeemed at least 96 hours before you travel.

From soaking up the sun on beautiful beaches, shopping at Dubai Mall, enjoying the views from the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa to dining at incredible restaurants in Dubai, why not make Dubai your next winter sun holiday? Other Emirates benefits include.



# Multan Sultans excited to play in front of passionate home fans

**Sports Desk**

MULTAN: Multan is all set to buzz with excitement as Multan Sultans will begin their HBL Pakistan Super League 9 campaign at home.

Mohammad Rizwan-captained team will host all HBL PSL sides from February 18 to 25 at the picturesque Multan Cricket Stadium.

The tournament, as announced by the Pakistan Cricket Board, will commence on February 17 in Lahore and the action will move to Multan the next day as Multan Sultans play Karachi Kings in a night game.

The Sultans will then host Islama-



bad United (Feb 20), Lahore Qalandars (Feb 21), Peshawar Zalmi (Feb 23) and Quetta Gladiators (Feb 25, day game). Owner and chief executive Ali Tareen said "I am extremely delighted that Multan Sultans will be playing their all home games in front of their fans in Multan. Whenever Multan Sultans

play at the Multan Cricket Stadium, the stadium oozes with passion and love and the atmosphere there is second to none. That same passion, love, and enthusiasm of the people of Multan will be palpable in the week-long cricket festival in the city and it will make for the perfect beginning for the HBL PSL 9."

"We had back-and-forth discussions with the PCB about the possibility of playing all our home games in Multan because our fans deserve nothing less than that and I am thankful to the decision-makers at the PCB for awarding the MCS, which is one of the most scenic stadiums in the world, all of our

home games."

"We have a brilliant record at the MCS and I am sure that the team that we have put together will bring smiles on the faces of the thousands of Sultans."

Multan Sultans, the most successful team in the history of the HBL PSL, enjoy a tremendous record at home with seven wins in eight games.

After completing their home leg, the Sultans will travel to Lahore to play Lahore Qalandars on February 27. Their last four group games are divided equally between Karachi (v KK on March 3 and v QG on March 12) and Rawalpindi (v PZ on March 5 and v IU, on March 10).

# National Women's T20 Tournament to commence from Jan 15

**Sports Desk**

PESHAWAR: The six-team National Women's T20 Tournament 2024 is all set to commence from Monday, January 15 at three venues in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

The tournament will feature six regional teams namely Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Peshawar, Quetta and Rawalpindi.

The 17-day tournament will see every team play 10 matches before the top two sides feature in the final on January 31. The venue of the final will be announced in due course.

The double round-robin matches will take place in Rawalpindi's Ayub Park Ground and Islamabad's Diamond Cricket Ground and Shoaib Akhtar Stadium. Matches at the Shoaib Akhtar Stadium will be live-streamed on PCB's YouTube channel.

The toss will take place at 1030 PKT, while the first ball of the match will be bowled at 1100 PKT.

The National Women's T20 Tournament 2024 serves as a great opportunity for the players to stake a claim in the national team ahead of the busy international year.

Pakistan Women are set to feature in at least eight T20Is (five T20Is against West Indies, three T20Is against England) before taking part in the

ACC Women's T20 Asia Cup and ICC Women's T20 World Cup later this year. The winning team will receive PKR one million, while the runners-up will get PKR 0.5 million.

The player of the tournament will be awarded PKR50, 000 and the player of the match in each game will receive PKR20, 000. The tournament's top performers – best batter, best bowler and best wicket-keeper – will get PKR 25,000.

The PCB has also finalized the six squads, which consist of 16 players each. These squads have been selected by the national women's selection committee headed by former Test cricketer Saleem Jaffer.

**Squads:**

Karachi Region: Fatima Sana (Captain), Aimen Anwar, Aroob Shah, Esha Rahupoto, Hurraina Sajjad, Javeria Khan, Laiba Fatima, Maham Manzoor, Maham Tariq, Masooma Jaffri, Muneeba Ali, Najjha Alvi, Omaira Sohail, Rameen Shamim, Yusra Amir and Zunaira Shah

Team Management: Tahir Khan (Head Coach), Jaweria Rauf (Assistant Coach), Sehar Syed (Physio), Taimoor Mehmood (Strength and Conditioning Coach), Shagufta Kazmi (Manager)

Lahore Region: Nida Dar (Captain), Ayesha Zafar, Amber Kainaat, Areesha Noor, Bismah Maroof, Fatima Khan,



Fatima Shahid, Ghulam Fatima, Iram Javed, Kainat Hafeez, Nashra Sundhu, Noreen Yaqoob, Sadaf Shamas, Sidra Amin, Sidra Nawaz and Zunash Abdul Sattar

Team management: Mohsin Kamal (Head Coach), Tahir Mehmood (Assistant Coach), Iraj Athar (Physio), Asfand Yar Khan (Strength and Conditioning Coach) and Hina Azam (Manager)

Multan Region: Umm-e-Hani (Captain), Aisha Bilal, Aleena Masood, Amber Maria, Asma Shareef, Gul-e-Uswa, Gul Feroza, Gul Rukh, Noor Ul Eman, Rehmat Noreen, Saiqa Riaz, Samina Aftab, Shahmeer Rajput, Tasmia Rubab, Wajeelha Muneer and Warda Yusuf

Kamran Hussain (Head Coach), Maria Gulnaz (Assistant Coach), Laila Niaz Khan (Physio), Pervaiz Nabi (Strength and Conditioning Coach) and Najma Zafar (Manager)

Peshawar Region: Aleena Shah (Captain), Anaya Khan, Ayesha Afridi, Fatima Zeb, Javeria Qamar, Mahnoor Hayat, Mahnoor Qayum, Momina Riyasat, Nayab Ishaq, Rahyma Syed, Salwa Raheem, Seema Gul, Sehar Gull, Shabnam Hayat, Sumbal Bibi and Tehzeeb Shah.

Team Management: Hajra Sarwar (Head Coach), Rehmat Gul (Assistant Coach), Rummana Zubair (Physio), Fazal Wahab (Strength and Conditioning Coach) and Haseena Khushboo (Manager).

Quetta Region: Saima Malik (Captain), Anum Amin, Ayesha Asim, Dua Majid, Faiza, Fareeha Mehmood, Humaira Ghulam, Jannat Rashid, Khadija Chishtii, Khair-u-Nisa, Khizra Liaquat, Lubaba Sarwar, Nida, Subhana Tariq, Tuba Hassan and Zamar Shafee.

Team Management: Aqil Baloch (Head Coach), Nahida Bibi (Assistant Coach), Mahnoor Sajjad (Physio), Mujahid Shah (Strength and Conditioning Coach) and Hajira Baloch (Manager).

Rawalpindi Region: Aliya Riaz (Captain), Aima Saleem Sattii, Areeja Haseeb, Fajar Naveed, Farzana Farooq, Fatima Syed, Fatima Zehra Shah, Humna Bilal, Kainat Gulalai, Lubna Behram, Natalia Parvaiz, Noor Fatima, Sania Rasheed, Tania Saeed, Waheeda Akhtar and Zainab Arif Jutt.

Team Management: Jawad Hamid (Head Coach), Waqar Orakzai (Assistant Coach), Tehreem Sumbal (Physio), Farrukh Hayat (Strength and Conditioning Coach) and Saira Ifikhar (Manager).

# PCB releases PSL 2024 schedule

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Friday announced that the 2024 edition of Pakistan Super League (PSL) will commence from February 17 at the PCB's headquarters in Lahore, with two-time winners and defending champions Lahore Qalandars taking on winners of the 2016 and 2018 editions Islamabad United.

PSL 9 will be played in four cities – Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi – with the final of the six-team tournament taking place at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi on 18 March.

Over the course of the 34-match T20 tournament, Karachi will host 11 PSL matches, including the Qualifier, two Eliminator and the final. Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium and Rawalpindi's Pindi Cricket Stadium will each host nine matches, while fans in Multan, the city of saints, will witness five matches.

The much-anticipated contest between Lahore Qalandars and Karachi Kings will be played on 24 February and 9 March. Gaddafi Stadium will stage the 24 February contest, while National Bank Stadium will see Qalandars and Kings locking horns on 9 March.

Kings, Qalandars, Sultans and United will play five matches at their home ground, while Peshawar Zalmi will play four matches at the Pindi Cricket Stadium. Quetta Gladiators will play three matches each in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi, while they will play one match at the Multan Cricket Stadium

against the home side Sultans on 25 February.

Like the previous PSL edition, the forthcoming ninth edition of the HBL PSL will take place in two legs with Multan Cricket Stadium and Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium hosting 14 matches between them from 17 to 27 February. The cricketing action will then move to Rawalpindi's Pindi Cricket Stadium and Karachi's National Bank Stadium, where 16 matches will be played from 28 February to 12 March. The tournament will then move to Karachi in its entirety for the playoffs.

Chair of PCB Management Committee, Mr Zaka Ashraf:

"We are thrilled to announce that the HBL Pakistan Super League's ninth edition is set to kick off on February 17, showcasing the best of T20 cricket in four cities across Pakistan. The decision to host the marquee event across these cities is a testament to our commitment to bring top-notch cricket to fans across the country. We believe that hosting matches in these venues not only adds to the excitement for fans but also promotes cricket at the grassroots level.

"As we gear up for this spectacular event, we look forward to witnessing thrilling action and creating unforgettable moments for cricket enthusiasts worldwide."

**PSL matches schedule**

February 17, 2024 Lahore Qalandars v Islamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore

February 18, 2024 Quetta Gladiators v Peshawar Zalmi, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore; Multan Sultans v Karachi Kings, Multan Cricket Stadium

February 19, 2024 Lahore Qalandars v Quetta Gladiators, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore

February 20, 2024 Multan Sultans v Islamabad United, Multan Cricket Stadium

February 21, 2024 Peshawar Zalmi v Karachi Kings, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore; Multan Sultans v Lahore Qalandars, Multan Cricket Stadium

February 22, 2024 Quetta Gladiators v Islamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore

February 23, 2024 Multan Sultans v Peshawar Zalmi, Multan Cricket Stadium

February 24, 2024 Lahore Qalandars v Karachi Kings, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore

February 25, 2024 Multan Sultans v Quetta Gladiators, Multan Cricket Stadium; Lahore Qalandars v Peshawar Zalmi, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore

February 26, 2024 Peshawar Zalmi v Islamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore

February 27, 2024 Lahore Qalandars v Multan Sultans, Gaddafi Stadium Lahore

February 28, 2024 Karachi Kings v Islamabad United, National Bank Stadium

February 29, 2024 Karachi Kings v Quetta Gladiators, National Bank Stadium

March 2, 2024 Peshawar Zalmi v Lahore Qalandars, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Islamabad United v Quetta Gladiators, Pindi Cricket Stadium

March 3, 2024 Karachi Kings v Multan Sultans, National Bank Stadium

March 4, 2024 Islamabad United v Peshawar Zalmi, Pindi Cricket Stadium

March 5, 2024 Peshawar Zalmi v Multan Sultans, Pindi Cricket Stadium

March 6, 2024 Quetta Gladiators v Karachi Kings, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Islamabad United v Lahore Qalandars, Pindi Cricket Stadium

March 7, 2024 Islamabad United v Karachi Kings, Pindi Cricket Stadium

March 8, 2024 Peshawar Zalmi v Quetta Gladiators, Pindi Cricket Stadium

March 9, 2024 Karachi Kings v Lahore Qalandars, National Bank Stadium

March 10, 2024 Islamabad United v Multan Sultans, Pindi Cricket Stadium; Quetta Gladiators v Lahore Qalandars, National Bank Stadium

March 11, 2024 Karachi Kings v Peshawar Zalmi, National Bank Stadium

March 12, 2024 Quetta Gladiators v Multan Sultans, National Bank Stadium

March 14, 2024 Qualifier (1 v 2), National Bank Stadium

March 15, 2024 Eliminator 1 (3 v 4), National Bank Stadium

March 16, 2024 Eliminator 2 (Eliminator Winner v Qualifier Runner-up), National Bank Stadium

March 18, 2024 Final, National Bank Stadium

# 15-day KP Athletic camps begins in Kohat Sports Complex

**Sports Desk**

PESHAWAR: The 15-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Junior Athletic Training and Coaching camp has underway at the beautiful Kohat Sports Complex under the aegis of Directorate General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa wherein a total of 25 athletes will through rigorous training.

This was stated by Head Coach Directorate of Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abid Afridi while talking to media men here on Friday. He said the 15-day camp was formally inaugurated by Regional Sports Officer Kohat Sajid Khan Afridi at Kohat Sports Complex.

He said, at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Junior Athletics Camp all the 25 short-listed athletes would be provided modern-day coaching and training under qualified coaches. It has been done for the athletes who have performed prominently in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Youth Athletics Championship held from December 2 to December 6, 2023.

He said that all the facilities are being provided to the athletes in the camp so that they can represent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the national team. He said that Senior coach Jafar Shah also visited the coaching and training camp.

During his visit to the camp, Jaffer

Shah said that the best players will be selected from this camp for the National Junior and Senior Athletic Meets. Abid Afridi said that this camp will continue for 15 days and accommodation as well as diet and food has been arranged for the players it is hoped that the best players will be selected who will perform well while representing the province at the national and international levels.

He said that according to the instructions of Director General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abdul Nasir Khan Mohmand, this camp has been organized in which not only the players of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but also the

adjoining merged districts have been included.

Abid Afridi said that in the first phase, 25 Athletes were selected, among the prominent athletes comprising Anisur Rahman at 400 meters from Mohmand district, Muhammad Hassan in 400 meters from Charsadda district, Khabaib and Shahswar in 800 and 1500 meters from Mardan district, Shah Hussain in 100 meters from Mardan district, Abrar and Irshad in 5,000 meters from Kohat, Uzair and Faizan of Bannu district in 10,000 meters, Abu Bakr and Zaid Khan of Peshawar in 22 meters, Attaullah Khan from

## A star in making – Islamabad's Shamyl Hussain cricket journey continues



**Sports Desk**

PESHAWAR: Shamyl Hussain, a tall southpaw hailing from Islamabad, has grown up loving the game as he inherited the passion from his father. Shamyl will be a key part of the Pakistan U19 team in the upcoming ICC Men's U19 World Cup at the top of the order. He was introduced to the game by his father, who featured in one List A game for Islamabad region in the One Day National Tournament 2001-02 and had to give up on his dream due to a back injury.

In a chat with PCB Digital, he talked about how he started club cricket: "My first memory of playing the game is at six or seven years of age as my father used to throw plastic balls at me. I joined Shalimar Cricket Club as an 11-year-old and never looked back. A lot of first-class players used to turn up for training and I was pushed to get involved as well. I remember facing Amir Jamal in the nets quite often. It felt tough but that exposure helped strengthen my game."

Shamyl represented Islamabad region in PCB U13 Inter-Regional T20 Tournaments in 2017 and 2018. In December 2019, he smashed a brilliant ton for Northern U16 against Balochistan U16 in a three-day game where no batter from either team crossed 50. Like most left-handed batters, he too grew up being impressed with Brian Lara's style and flair. Luckily, his father arranged a meeting for him with the West Indies great, who was visiting Islamabad for work commitments.

Shamyl said: "I've always followed Brian Lara. We used to have videos of his batting and I've watched his unbeaten 400 many times. I was asked to observe his technique and shots. The biggest compliment I've received in my life is him (Lara) saying that I bat really well." Shamyl scored 264 runs at an average of 52 in the National U19 Cup 2021-22 which led to him being called up for Pakistan U19 in the home series against Bangladesh U19. After sitting out due to a broken thumb, Shamyl got his chance in the away series against Bangladesh U19, where he impressed with his audacious stroke play. He shone with the bat against Sri Lanka U19 in the home series in late 2023 where he notched 326 runs in the five-match series at an average of 65 and a strike-rate of 95. He also bagged the Player of the Match award in the win over Afghanistan U19 in the ACC U19 Asia Cup. Talking about the expectations from the U19 WC, Shamyl stated, "We all know South Africa offers bouncy tracks and a bit of seam so we have trained accordingly in the camp. The net sessions emulated those conditions. I'm confident that our team is going to put a great performance in the World Cup. There is a lot of talent in the squad and fingers crossed for a good performance."

## Female Umpires induction course to begin from Saturday



**Sports Desk**

PESHAWAR: The four-day female umpire's induction course will take place at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore from Saturday.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) received applications from aspirants in December 2023 as per the criteria where a minimum of intermediate education was mandatory for applicants, except for international players, while the age bracket was kept between 28 to 40 years.

Member of ICC's Elite panel of Umpires, Ahsan Raza and PCB's International Umpire Asif Yaqoob will be the instructors of this course. The candidates will be required to undergo a three-day basic training course initially and on the fourth day, a written test, a fitness test and interviews will be conducted.

Successful candidates will be inducted into the PCB Female Panel of Umpires for the next domestic cricket season, which will allow them to officiate Region, District and Club level matches.



Nowshera in triple jump, Gibran Khan of Peshawar in javelin throw, Owais Khan of Bajaur in marathon, Arsalan of Khyber district in long jump, North Waziristan district Abrarul Haq in shot put. Have been short-listed on a

performance basis during the recently held Junior Athletic Meet. Abid Afridi said that holding such a camp will help in strengthening the performance of the athletes besides keeping them informed.

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## Inauguration

KARACHI: General Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff, along with Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, unveiling the inaugural plaque of National AeroSpace Science and Technology Park, Silicon on Friday.



## COAS Munir calls NASTP as project of 'national significance'

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir has called the National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) as a project of 'national and strategic significance', ARY News reported on Friday, quoting the military's media wing said. According to Inter-Services

Public Relations (ISPR), the army chief made these remarks while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the second chapter of National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) Silicon in Karachi. "NASTP would yield manifold benefits for the country since it would spur technological progress and foster self-reliance by offering a platform for

the nation's youth and future generations," ISPR quoted COAS Munir as saying.

The army chief praised the efforts of Pakistan Air Force (PAF), its leadership and its skilled personnel in the achievement of yet another milestone of NASTP Silicon.

Meanwhile, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu shared the vision for

NASTP to become one of the best Aerospace, Cyber & IT Clusters and transform national landscape with design, R&D and innovation centers for emerging and disruptive technologies to accrue maximum social, economic, security and scientific dividends for the country.

On his arrival, COAS Asim Munir was received by Air

Chief Marshal, Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu.

Later, the army chief also visited Corps Headquarters Karachi. Corps Commander Karachi Corps welcomed the COAS and briefed him about operational preparedness, training matters and administrative measures being taken for the welfare of the troops and Shuhada families.

## PTI to face consequences if intra-party polls found discrepant, CJP Isa says

## Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Fazl Isa asserted that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) would face repercussions if discrepancies were found in its intra-party polls.

These comments were made during the hearing of an appeal filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) against a Peshawar High Court (PHC) ruling regarding PTI's intra-party polls and election symbol.

When the apex court reconvenes on Saturday morning, PTI lawyer Hamid Khan is scheduled to commence presenting his arguments.

CJP Isa emphasised that the Election Commission of Pakistan was a constitutional institution, and the court should not intervene in its matters.

He underscored that the Supreme Court should not assume the functions of a constitutional body.

CJP Isa noted that democracy was a fundamental right, asserting that it should prevail not only in a country but also within a political group.

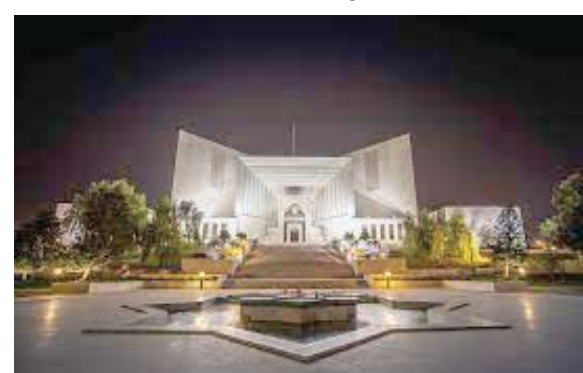
Earlier, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Friday objected to maintainability of ECP's appeal filed in the Supreme Court against PHC ruling on PTI's intra-party polls and election symbol.

A three-member Supreme Court bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan and comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali conducted hearing of the appeal.

ECP counsel Makhdoom Ali Khan and other legal team members were present in the court as the hearing started.

PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Hamid Khan, Shoaib Shaheen, PTI Chief Election Commissioner Niazullah Niazi were also present. Barrister Ali Zafar joined the proceedings through video link from Lahore Registry.

The CJP asked whether Peshawar High Court had issued its detailed judgement to which PTI counsel Hamid Khan replied in negative. Makhdoom Ali Khan read out the PHC verdict. Hamid Khan took the stance that his client had not received any notice as yet.



The CJP said he had not gone through the case file as yet. The CJP then asked Hamid Khan how much time he needed to advance his arguments in the case.

Hamid Khan said he would be ready to present argument by Monday. The ECP counsel prayed to the court to let the commission allot election symbols on Saturday.

The CJP remarked that in case of proceedings in the case to start on Monday, the court will have to suspend the PHC decision. He then said the court was ready to conduct hearing of the case even on Saturday and Sunday.

Hamid then sought time till

Saturday to prepare himself for the case. The ECP took the stance that PTI held its last intra-party polls in 2017. The party was bound to hold election in 2022. The ECP issued notice to the PTI for not conducting polls as per party constitution.

As the CJP inquired about notification of the chief election commissioner for party's elections, Hamid stated that he needed some time to furnish the required documents.

He then requested the court to hear first arguments regarding maintainability of the ECP appeal. He said he would give arguments that ECP appeal had no legal ground to be

heard.

The PTI counsel maintained that ECP could not file appeal in the Supreme Court. Only the affected party could go to the apex court and the ECP had no legal grounds to approach the court itself.

The CJP asked should the ECP not defend its decision. The PTI counsel then asked could any judge file an appeal to the higher court against any verdict issued against his court.

Justice Isa observed that it was duty of the ECP to regulate function of all political parties and hold transparent polls. Counsel Hamid Khan said as per apex court judgement no institution could file an appeal to defend any decision issued by it.

The CJP remarked that custom collectors also filed appeals against rulings issued against their decisions. Maintainability of PTI appeal in the high court could also be questioned. If ECP would not go into appeal, his decisions would become meaningless.

Later the court, adjourned the proceedings for Friday Prayer. The proceedings will start again at 1:30 pm.

## Government taking steps to boost FDI: President Alvi



## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday said the government was taking steps to promote foreign direct investment (FDI) in Pakistan. Talking to a German delegation of international food wholesaler, METRO Group, led by its CEO Dr Steffen Greubel here at Aiwan-e-Sadr, the president said Pakistan was an attractive destination for the foreign investment and business.

The president also appreciated the

METRO Group for their investment in Pakistan. The delegation briefed the president about business and investment of the METRO Group in Pakistan.

The delegation told that keeping in view the conducive environment for the foreign investment in Pakistan, the METRO Company desired to further expand the business activities in the country. Besides, the delegation was of the view that Pakistan was an attractive destination for business, investment and tourism.

## Differences emerge as MQM-P awards tickets for Karachi's NA, PA seats

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Differences have emerged among the ranks of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) as the party has finalised the names of its candidates for National and Sindh Assemblies from Karachi.

Former Opposition Leader in Sindh Assembly Khawaja Izharul Hassan has not been awarded the MQM-P ticket despite submitting nomination papers from four constituencies.

Sources privy to the development said that Khawaja Izharul Hassan has suspended his political activities.

The former leader of opposition in Sindh Assembly was offered the party ticket from PS-123 but he turned it down. He wanted to contest the elec-

tion from any other provincial constituency.

"Convener [Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui] is the party's candidate from PS123. How can I contest the election from the same constituency?" Khawaja Izharul Hassan said.

More major changes were made in the MQM-P's list for the candidates, as former Provincial Minister Muhammad Hussain Khan also could not get the party ticket.

Former MNA Abu Bakar, who was being considered to contest for a National Assembly seat, will now be vying for the provincial seat PS-91.

The MQM-P's ex-parliamentary leader in Sindh Assembly Ali Khursidi got the party ticket while former MPAs Abbas Jafri and Sadaqat Hussain could not get the same.

## PML-N finalises candidates for NA

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: As the general elections draw nearer, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) announced the names of party candidates for the National Assembly.

In the electoral lineup in Lahore, the PML-N strategically positioned former minister Attaullah Tarrar against Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in NA-127.

Among other notable leaders securing NA tickets in Lahore are party supremo Nawaz Sharif (NA-130), President Shehbaz Sharif (NA-123), Hamza Shehbaz Sharif (NA-118), Maryam Nawaz Sharif (NA-119), and Khawaja Saad Rafique (NA-122).

Ayaz Sadiq, who was vying for NA-121, will now be contesting from NA-120 on the party's ticket.

Here is the list of PML-N candidates contesting on National Assembly seats.

## Resolution for three-month election delay tabled in Senate

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Another resolution has been tabled in Senate for postponement of general elections scheduled on Feb 8.

Senator Hidayatullah tabled the resolution which mentioned "the prevailing security situation and terrorists attacks as the key factors for delaying elections."

The attacks on contesting candidates during election campaigns in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Waziristan were also listed in the resolution as reasons for seeking delay.

The resolution addressed the Election Commission (ECP) to take responsibility to hold elections peacefully as well as provide every political party level playing field.

It may be noted that Senator Dilawar Khan had submitted a resolution on Jan 5 for election delay.

## Gohar confident SC will allow PTI to retain electoral symbol

## Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on Friday stated that having an electoral symbol is not just symbolic but a fundamental right for every political party, as outlined in the Constitution.

Gohar was speaking to the media following Supreme Court's proceedings on Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) petition challenging the Peshawar High Court (PHC) decision to restore PTI's electoral symbol of "bat".



The PTI chief alleged a bias within the ECP, stating that it viewed all political parties through different lenses, especially when it came to the PTI.

According to Gohar, since 1960, no political party had faced symbol withdrawal based on the grounds presented by the ECP.

He said the PTI conduct-

ed its intra-party elections uniquely, surpassing the practices of the other 175 political parties.

Gohar disclosed that the PTI urged the apex court to direct the ECP to conduct free, fair and transparent elections.

The PTI chairman insisted that without the participation of Pakistan's most popular party, people would lose trust in the democratic process.

He warned that such skepticism could undermine the legitimacy of subsequent elected representatives.

Highlighting the issuance

of tickets for up to 850 seats, Gohar criticised the potential independent status of these candidates, arguing that it would signify the demise of democracy.

He claimed that such a move would disregard democratic values.

Despite expressing hope in the Supreme Court's integrity, Gohar stressed that the PTI placed its expectations on the court to overcome any conspiracies and safeguard democracy.

He expressed confidence that the apex court would allow PTI to retain its iconic symbol.

## PML-Q's 'no' to seat adjustment with PML-N

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) has decided not to make seat adjustment with the Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

An emergency meeting of the party was held under the chairmanship of PML-Q President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain on Friday to discuss

strategy to contest elections and seat adjustment with other parties.

The party spokesman said in his statement that the PML-Q has always played its role for the development and prosperity of the country and the people and will continue to do so.

"It [PML-Q] will not make seat adjustment with the PML-N personal gain," he



added.

The spokesman said that the PML-Q has fielded candidates against the PML-Q. "The PML-Q will not succumb to

the PML-N hypocrisy and will not go for seat adjustment," he continued.

Meanwhile, Chaudhry Salik Hussain said that the PML-N nominated candidates against him and his brother Chaudhry Shaaf Hussain from Gujarat.

He said that if the PML-N wanted to contest elections against them, they are ready for a face off.