



**AJK PM: Government will do whatever it can to support Kashmir's cause**

PM Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the govt of Azad Kashmir would go to any lengths to promote and support Kashmiris' just cause for right to self-determination. AJK PM said this while talking to the PSF delegation, which was led by President Peoples Party AJK chapter... (Details on Page 2)



**100 days of genocide in Gaza Strip: Palestinians demand end of Israeli rule**

100 days of genocide that passed on our people in the Gaza Strip equals an entire eternity of suffering, pain, torment, oppression, injustice and tears, and 75 years have passed since the Great Nakba against the Palestinian people. The international community reproduces its failure to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy regarding the Palestinian issue and repeats its inability and failure to resolve the issue. (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Protest**

"Cease-fire now," people chanted, while carrying banners and posters.



Photo: AFP

**Caretaker PM arrives in Zurich to participate in WEF meeting**

Spokesman Report

ZURICH: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar arrived here on Sunday to participate in the 54th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos to be held from January 15 to 19.



Pakistan's Permanent Representative to Geneva Bilal Ahmed, Pakistan's Ambassador to Switzerland Amir Shaukat and high level officials received the prime minister.

PM Kakar would attend three key thematic events on 'preventing an era of global conflict; restoring faith in the global system and preventing economic fracture'.

In the meeting, the prime minister would deliver a keynote address on the theme "Trade Tech's Trillion Dollar Promise", the Foreign Office Spokesperson wrote her official X account.

On the sidelines of the event, he would also hold meetings with the government and business leaders.

During his visit, Prime Minister Kakar would lead a special "Invest in Pakistan" event.

**Thousands of pro-Palestinians march on Washington to demand ceasefire in Gaza**

Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: Tens and thousands of demonstrators rallied and marched in Washington, D. C., on Saturday to demand an end to Israel's deadly military campaign in Gaza, marking almost 100 days since the start of the Israel-Palestinians war that is killing 250 Palestinians per day. The march, one of the biggest in this capital city, was led by a coalition of pro-Palestinian groups who are calling for a permanent cease-fire in Gaza, an end to US funding for the Israeli military, and for Israel to be held accountable for war crimes and violations of international law.

At a rally on Freedom Plaza, speakers shared stories of victims in Gaza, and marchers walked several blocks before arriving in front of the White House. Protesters carried signs listing the names of Palestinians killed and accusing President Joe Biden of participating in a 'genocide'. Israel's siege of Gaza has killed more than 23,800 Palestinians, according to Gaza's health ministry, since it declared war on October 7. One of the organizing groups in Washington, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), said that they had sent a letter to the White House calling on the president to secure a "complete and verifiable cease-

fire," the release of all hostages in Gaza and political prisoners in Israel, and the termination of unconditional US financial and diplomatic support for the Israeli government.

The letter also called for Israeli officials to be "held accountable for the Gaza genocide" and the initiation of credible negotiations for a just and enduring peace by ending the Israeli occupation of Palestine. The rally in Washington is the second in the US capital since the current Israeli offensive began on October 7. The Gaza Health Ministry has estimated that at least 23,708 Palestinians have been killed, mostly women and chil-

dren, and 60,000 wounded in the Israeli action, the vast majority civilians.

Earlier this week, South Africa accused Israel of genocide in a case brought to the International Court of Justice, charging that Israel's far-right government was "intent on destroying the Palestinians in Gaza" and creating conditions "calculated to bring about their physical destruction". Among those addressing the crowd in Washington, by video link, was Al Jazeera journalist Wael al-Dahdoh, whose wife, daughter, two sons, and a grandchild were killed by Israeli airstrikes. Also speaking were long-shot US presidential

candidates Cornel West and Jill Stein, as well as the daughter of Malcom X, Ilyasah Shabazz. Al-Dahdoh spoke about the dire conditions Palestinians in Gaza are struggling to exist in while under Israeli bombardment. "The people are paying an exorbitant price and are living a disastrous life," he told the crowds in Washington. "People do not have sustenance, food or drink, a place to sleep, a bathroom, or what is necessary for a life—not for a decent life, but rather what is basically necessary to maintain life." Al-Dahdoh himself was injured in an Israeli airstrike that also killed his camera operator, Samer Abu Daqqa.

**Five police officials suspended for raid at residence of PTI chairman**



Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: police on Sunday suspended five officers, including the Margalla station house officer (SHO), following a preliminary inquiry into yesterday's raid at the residence of PTI leader Barrister Gohar Ali Khan.

According to the statement, when the police party found out that the said house was the residence of Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, the raiding police party came back immediately.

"The Honourable Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan summoned the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) and ordered an investigation into the matter," the police noted.

Islamabad IGP Dr Akbar Nasir later visited the house of Barrister Gohar. It is pertinent to mention

here that the PTI chairman was informed about the raid while he was attending the Supreme Court hearing regarding his party's electoral symbol of "bat".

During the hearing, Barrister Gohar informed Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa about the incident and claimed his son and nephew were "tortured". He added that the police also confiscated a computer and documents.

The PTI chief asked the court to excuse him from the hearing and left. Meanwhile, the chief justice called Additional Attorney General Chaudhry Amir Rehman to the rostrum and said: "Whatever happened should not have happened."

The additional attorney general said he would look into it and left the courtroom.

After a while, Barrister Gohar returned to the court, to which CJP Qazi Faez Isa asked if all was right. "The situation is very serious," he responded. The chief justice directed the additional attorney general to resolve the matter.

**Renowned Urdu poet Hafeez Jalandhari remembered**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Renowned Urdu poet, the creator of the country's national anthem, Abul Asar Hafeez Jalandhari was remembered on the occasion of his 124th birth anniversary on Sunday. Born in Jalandhar on January 14, 1900, Hafeez Jalandhari migrated to Lahore after the independence of Pakistan in 1947.

He wrote the lyrics for the national anthem in 1952. Hafeez Jalandhari actively participated in freedom movement and used his writings to propagate for the cause of Pakistan. He also wrote the Kashmiri Anthem, "Watan Hamara Azad Kashmir". He also wrote many patriotic songs during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965. For his literary and patriotic services to Pakistan, Hafeez Jalandhari was awarded the Hilal-e-Imtiaz and Pride of Performance by the Government of Pakistan.

**Elections on Feb 8 in interest of country, political parties: Solangi**

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Sunday that it was in the interest of all political forces and parties concerned that general elections should be held on February 8.

Speaking at the seventh edition of Think Fest 2024, the minister said it would be good for the country if the elections were held on the scheduled day i.e., Thursday, February 8.

He reminded that it was clearly written in the preamble of the Constitution that Pakistan would be run by the elected representatives.



The minister said that in the run-up to the elections, everyone was complaining about the level playing field. The Pakistan Peoples Party and the Muslim Pakistan League (N) were voicing their complaints in that regard while Maulana Fazlur Rehman also complained of a lack of level playing field in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and

Balochistan. "In fact, the working class of Pakistan does not have a level playing field," Solangi maintained.

Without a fundamental change in the system enabling the common man to contest elections, there would not be a level playing field, he remarked. The minister stressed that every political party should give its members the right to vote in the election of its office-bearers.

He said in his opinion, the yesterday's Apex Court decision was a good precedent. It would have been better if there were legal experts in the panel who could explain the legal position, he added.

**ECP concludes NA, PA reserved seats scrutiny**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Returning Officers of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) have completed the scrutiny of nomination papers for seats reserved for women and minorities in the national and four provincial assemblies.

According to the schedule issued by the ECP here Sunday, appeals for the acceptance or rejection of nomination papers by Returning Officers can be submitted until January 16 and the Appellate Tribunal will hear them until January 19.

The revised list of candidates will be released on January 20, withdrawal of nomination papers can be done until January 22, and the final list of candidates will be unveiled on January 23.

**ECP urges political parties to ensure 5pc women candidates on general seats**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has urged the political parties to ensure 5 percent representation of women on general seats for General Elections 2024, in

accordance with Section 206 of the Elections Act, 2017. The ECP spokesperson on Sunday stated that all political parties need to provide the Election Commission with the list of male and female candidates holding party tickets for general seats within a period

of five days. It is noteworthy that political parties assigned symbols for the 2024 general elections must comply with Section 206 of the Elections Act, 2017, ensuring a 5 percent representation of women candidates on general seats.

**Arfa Karim remembered on her 12th death anniversary**



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Today is the 12th death anniversary of Arfa Karim Randhawa – the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional of the world. She died on January 14, 2012 in Lahore at the age of 16 due to an epileptic attack.

Arfa Karim, who was in a small village near Faisalabad on February 2, 1995, became the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) by passing the MCP examination at the age of just nine in 2004. Microsoft owner Bill

Gates invited her to visit the company's headquarter in the United States when she was 10. She won many awards and international recognitions for her brilliance in the world of Information Technology (IT). She was awarded the Fatima Jinnah Gold Medal in the field of Science and Technology in 2005 by the government. She also received the Salaam Pakistan Youth Award the same year. Arfa Karim was also given the Pride of Performance award. A well-equipped software technology park in Lahore has been named after her.



# AJK PM: Government will do whatever it can to support Kashmir's cause

**Bureau Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the government of Azad Kashmir would go to any lengths to promote and support Kashmiris' just cause for right to self-determination.

AJK premier said this while talking to the PSF delegation, which was led by President Peoples Party Azad Kashmir chapter Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin and PML-N President Shah Ghulam Qadir who called on him separately here today.

Speaking on the occasion, the AJK premier said that the government would use all its energies to highlight the Kashmir issue both at national and international level.



He said that a massive public gathering held in Kotli was part of the government's campaign to highlight the Kashmir cause. He said that similar type of rallies would be organized at all divisional headquarters and important world capitals in future.

Terming youth as valuable capital for the nation, the PM said that the educated youth should dedicate themselves to highlight the freedom movement. He said that Burhan Wani Shaheed raised the banner of revolt against India at a tender age.

The PM said that the coalition government would use all available resources to strengthen Kashmir's ongoing freedom struggle.

He said that the establishment of an independent accountability system, putting the liberated territory on the path of development, creating employment opportunities in the state and providing basic amenities of life to the common masses were among the government's top priorities.

On this occasion, PPP president Ch. Yasin and PML-N President Shah Ghulam Qadir assured the PM of their full support to strengthen the freedom movement. They also appreciated the government's initiatives aimed at establishing good governance in the region.

## Younus Dagha to honor today academic feat by hundreds of students from deprived families

**PNP**

KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Minister for Revenue, Industries, and Commerce, Muhammad Younus Dagha, will be the chief guest of the ceremony being held on Monday (today) to celebrate academic achievement by hundreds of students from deprived families.



The non-profit Green Crescent Trust (GCT) is organising the ceremony in Karachi to honour hundreds of students from less-privileged families who recently passed the Secondary School Certificate Annual Examinations with distinction.

The students to be honoured at the ceremony are enrolled in the charitable schools of the GCT in the backward and remote areas of Sindh. The GCT in pursuit of its charitable cause of enrolling out-of-school children in Sindh, in the past 29 years has established a network of 166 schools having an enrollment of 31,799 students from the deserving families.

Interim Sindh Information Minister, Muhammad Ahmed Shah, Caretaker Sindh Law Minister, Barrister Muhammad Omer Soomro, and Additional Chief Secretary of Sindh Home Department, Muhammad Iqbal Memon, will also likely attend the ceremony as the guests of honour. They will distribute commendation certificates and prizes among the distinguished students of the GCT's school network who recently passed the matriculation exams.

The ceremony will be held at the Auditorium of the Sindh Boy Scouts' Association.

"This ceremony completely reflects the vision of donors, supporters, and well-wishers of the GCT to recognize and celebrate academic excellence shown by students from deprived areas to encourage them to continuously make efforts to brighten their future and that of their families," said Zahid Saeed who is the GCT CEO.

## IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar visited Faisalabad.

**Abdul Majid**



FAISALABAD: RPO Dr Muhammad Abid Khan and CPO Capt Retd Muhammad Ali Zia welcomed IG Punjab Dr Usman Anwar. IG Punjab met the families of martyrs at Police Line Faisalabad. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar and RPO Faisalabad Dr. Muhammad Abid Khan distributed the file of plots among the families of martyrs. Dr Usman Anwar said that the sacrifices of the martyrs will never go in vain. The families of the martyrs are our own families and they will be taken care of in every way.

## Muslim Conference chief lauds late Mirza Zaidullah as great legal expert

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MIRPUR: resident of Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that Mirza Zaidullah, Advocate, Member of Majlis-e-Amila, former judge, was a great legal expert and ideological Muslim Conference personality. He performed his professional services with utmost integrity and Judgments given on merits And also played a role in politics with ideological commitment. His death caused a great ideological loss.

Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan Mirpur went to the house of the late Mirza Zaidullah, where he expressed his condolences to the sons of the deceased, Mirza Tala Zaidullah and Mirza Owais Zaidullah, saying that the late Mirza Zaidullah has rendered valuable services for the Muslim Conference, which will never be forgotten. Paying great respect to the deceased, he condoled with the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace of the late deceased.

## New appointments in AJK

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar Haq approved the members including the Chairman of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission. Lieutenant General (Retd) Hidayat Rehman was appointed as the Chairman of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission. Former Secretary Khawaja Ijaz Hussain Lone, Hafiz Muhammad Ibrahim Aziz and former Judge Saeed Bashir Butt were appointed as members. From Services and General Administration. Notification issued

## First female lawyer elected as President Attock bar

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: For the first time in the over 70 years history of Attock bar, a female lawyer Farzana Raja was elected as President. Belongs to Syed Azmat Bukhari Group was elected president with 245 votes while Malik Usman Advocate was elected General Secretary by securing 233 votes. Over 250 members of legal fraternity cast their votes. After announcement of official results, Ms Raja vowed to uphold the honor of the judiciary and making providing litigants speedy justice. She said that the rights of the legal community especially female members would be protected at all costs while efforts would be made for smooth working relationship between bar and judiciary.

## Rizwana Raja elected as Attock Bar Association President with 245 votes

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: District Bar Association Attock elections have been completed, the support of Syed Azmat Ali Bukhari group candidate Rizwana Raja has been elected President with 245 votes while Malik usman Ali Khan has been elected as General Secretary with 233 votes. In the association's annual elections, for the first time in the history of Attock, a female candidate, Rizwana Raja, was elected as the President of the Advocate District Bar Association. She won 245 votes against Advocate Ali who defeated by obtaining 212 votes while Malik Osman Ali Khan Advocate was elected General Secretary by obtaining 233 votes and against him Malik Rabnawa Zahyat Advocate obtained 230 votes, the supporters of the winning candidates In district Kachhari, there was a celebration, banging on the beat of drums, loud sloganeering and distribution of sweets.

## Memento

ISLAMABAD: Creative Director- Devcom - Pakistan Riffat Ara Baig presenting a memento of the 13th Pakistan Mountain Festival to a well-known artist and jury of the painting competition Tayyaba Aziz.



Photo: INP

## JK Traeen starts election campaign

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: Pakistan Ihtakam Party Chairman Jahangir Tareen started his election Campaign from Constituency NA 149 Multan. Jahangir Tareen reached the residence of former MPA Zaheeruddin Alizai where Zaheeruddin Alizai,

Former Provincial Minister Punjab Hafiz Iqbal Khan Khakwani Former Provincial Minister, Shujauddin Khan Alizai, Ibrahim Khan Alizai, Nasiruddin Khan Alizai, Tahsin Khan Babar, Professor Amjad Khan, Irfan Khan Alizai, Owais Khan Khakwani,

Alizai community, Khakwani community, Saduzai community, Tareen community, Baduzai community, Malayzai

community, Bamuzai community unanimously declared full support of Jahangir Khan Tareen. Former MPA, Deputy Mayor Haji Saeed Ahmad Ansari, former MPA Aamir Saeed Ansari, former candidate MPA Aamir Manzoor Ansari met Jahangir Tareen at his Multan residence and expressed the full support of Jahangir Khan Tareen and his panel. announced.

On this occasion, Akhtar Alam Qureshi, Qazi Naeem Aslam, former governors, councilors and other important political figures also announced their support for Jahangir Tareen. Jahangir Tareen thanked and welcomed the former MNA and MPA ticket holders who declared their support. Jahangir Tareen reached the residence of Syed Babar Shah,

the candidate of his panel for the Provincial Assembly from PP 216, where he addressed a corner meeting. Senior leaders Ishaq Khan Khakwani and Jehangir Khan Tareen's campaign in-charge in Multan Azhar Kamlana were also present. Talking to the media and addressing public gatherings, Jahangir Tareen said that Multan is also my home like Lodhran. I will solve the problems of Multan on priority basis. We will start a new era of development and prosperity in Multan and our constituency. We will remedy the deprivations of the people of South Punjab. South Punjab province will be formed one day and we will make it. Jahangir Tareen further said that Inshallah the election will be on time. Keeping the economy stable and controlling

inflation is the first priority. There is always a level playing field. They will do such things for Multan that the people here will remember. He said that I do whatever work I do with hard work, I will do such work that will benefit people. In 2018, we came with a passion, but I will not go into the details of what happened. Still entering the field with renewed passion and purpose to serve the people. He said that no one should have a media trial, we have learned from experience, the problem is in every city of Pakistan, but the biggest problem is inflation and economy of Pakistan. Lodhran has honored me, I will never leave the people of Lodhran alone. God willing, the fate of the people of Multan and Lodhran will change.

## District Bar Association Election 2024



**Waqar Paracha**

KHANEWAL: District Bar Khanewal election Zafar Iqbal Chaudhry President, Chaudhry Hamid Masood elected General Secretary. According to the details, in the polling for District Bar Khanewal election year 2025-2024, a large number of lawyers cast their votes and the three groups In the election, the nominee of Professional Lawyers Alliance, Zafar Iqbal Chaudhry, was elected as the president by getting 245 votes, while his opponent, Iqbal Hussain Jafari, got 210 votes. Mehr Muhammad Rafiq Malana got 187 votes. On the other hand, Chaudhry Hamid Masood of the District Bar Democratic Grand Lawyers Alliance became the General Secretary by getting 289 votes, Rana Kaleemullah got 240 votes and Rafafat Hussain Bhatti got 113 votes. But celebrated the victory.

## Armed clash leaves one dead near Thatta

**Kamran Khamiso Khowaja**

THATTA: Tension gripped Chanesar Goth and its nearby areas of district Thatta in the wake of a furious armed clash between two rival groups of Gujira and Tanda tribe on Sunday. Unabated use of sticks and hatches left Rahmatullah Tando, 28, dead on the spot while two others sustained critical injuries.

The groups were at loggerheads over a domestic issue and minor clashes had taken place between them in the past as well. SHO Keti-bunder Kashif Khuwaja upon getting information of the incident reached at the crime scene and cordoned off the area.

## Independent candidate Taj Wazir starts election campaign in Wana

**Adam Khan Wazir**

WANA: Taj Muhammad Wazir, a prominent political figure of South Waziristan Lower District, independent candidate of constituency PK 110, started his election campaign in Spin and Tanai area of Wana Tehsil on Sunday.

On this occasion met with different people, from Spin and Tanai assured that we are with you, your services are not hidden from anyone in South Waziristan Lower.

The youth of the Spin and Tanai areas declared their full cooperation with Taj Muhammad Wazir.

On this occasion, Taj



Muhammad Wazir said that parliamentarians did not pay attention to communal issues in the past.

He said that the people of Spin and Tanai have been neglected in various development projects.

However, these two areas have already been deprived of clean drinking water, electric-

ity and roads.

He assured the people of the area that if I am elected in the elections this time, I will solve the problems of these areas soon.

He clarified that apart from being elected, our mission is to serve.

He said that the promises made to the people will be

fulfilled without any greed.

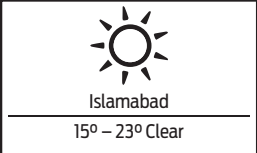
Taj Muhammad Wazir further said that I am being given great respect and honor by the people to whom I am grateful will be less.

He said that the MPA has been continuously present among the people without any position or greed and I will stay.

He appealed to the people to choose politics to serve the people in the true sense.

He appealed to the people to elect a political leader who would truly serve the people, so that by electing that representative, the deprivations of the neglected people and the people living in remote mountainous areas can be remedied.





**SERVICES**  
**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	5:45 am
Zohr	12:16 pm
Asr	3:43 pm
Maghrib	5:21 pm
Isha	6:49 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**AIOU announces admissions today**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced the admissions for the Spring 2024 semester (first phase) across the country, including AJK and GB, today (Monday, January 15, 2024). Admissions in this phase include Matric, FA, I. Com, certificate courses, BS (face to face), MS/ MPhil, and PhD programs. Prospectuses and admission application forms for all the programs are available online on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk).

Admission in BS (face to face) MS/MPhil and PhD programs can only be applied online whereas admission application forms for matriculation, intermediate and I Com can be submitted manually as well as via online mode. Admission forms and prospectuses for certificate courses, matriculation, FA programs are also available at university's main campus, regional campuses, swift centers and prospectus sale points established across the country. Admissions in second phase will commence from March 1, 2024.

# Mushaal distributes winter kits to refugees in Kashmiri Camp

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick on Sunday distributed winter kits among the refugees from Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) residing in Kashmiri Refugee Camp Muzaffarabad. She is accompanied by the Focal Person to SAPM Sabien Hussein Mullick and DG Legal Aid and Justice Authority Dr. Raheem Awan on a two-day visit to AJK. SAPM is leading an initiative to provide critical relief to refugees facing the challenges of harsh weather conditions in AJK, said a press release issued here.

The winter kits include essential items such as warm clothing, blankets, thermal socks, gloves, and other necessities to help vulnerable families in camp cope with the severe winter conditions. She personally mingled and engaged in conversations with the refugees. She said that in the face

of adversity, it was our collective responsibility to extend a helping hand to those who needed it the most. She said that the winter kits were aimed to provide some comfort and relief to the brave individuals and families forced to live away from their homeland due Indian atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Expressing unwavering solidarity, she assured refugees in Azad Jammu and Kashmir that they would not be left alone in their plight.

She expressed the Government of Pakistan commitment to alleviate the pain of their forced eviction from homes in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). She said that apart from expending maximum public funds for AJK, the Government was also diverting private funding towards the region to ensure its uplift. Mushaal assured the refugees that the recent distribution of aid was not a one-time effort but part of an ongoing commitment. She announced a Ramadan package for the refugees aimed



at providing sustained relief during the holy month. She also expressed her steadfast commitment to ensure the establishment of proper education facilities for children within the refugee camps. Mushaal expressed her belief in the liberation of Kash-

mir from Indian occupation, a day when refugees would be able to return to their homes and reunite with their loved ones.

Mushaal also undertook a visit to Central Jail Muzaffarabad, where she issued directives to the superintendent to ensure

all necessary measures to facilitate the prisoners. She underscored that prisons were correction facilities meant for reformation of convicts and their conversion into contributing citizens of the State. She further underscored that convicts or under-trials indi-

viduals continue to be entitled to fundamental human rights and the State remains duty-bound to protect and preserve their rights at any cost. She distributed winter kits among the prisoners to provide them some relief during the colder months.

## Price hike

ISLAMABAD: People are busy buying vegetables in Sunday weekly bazaar at Sector G-10 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

# PHMA asks for more funds in SBP solar financing as all funding goes to big industry

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers & Exporters Association (PHMA) has proposed the State Bank of Pakistan to allocate more funds for renewable energy schemes, including solar energy financing exclusively to the export-oriented value-added textile sector. This strategic allocation will not only boost apparel sector's growth but also promote a more inclusive and resilient economy.

These views were expressed in an interactive session held

here at PHMA regional office to review the private sector credit offtake, especially to the Apparel sector's SMEs, with the PHMA north zone senior vice chairman Amanullah Khan in the chair.

Participants of the meeting urged the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to strengthen the industry and export sector by releasing their payment, as a huge amount of refund claims under DLT 2021 is pending, beside speedy payment of sales tax refunds, because the commitment of the FBR to instantly release exporters' tax refund claims through FAST-



ER System seems to be just an eyewash.

Amanullah Khan, in his key note address, proposed the

central bank to review its credit policies by fixing a special quota to finance the hosiery sector's small and medium enterprises, as only the large industries have been availing government's all major concessional export loaning facilities, with very limited financing is left for the PHMA members which are the backbone of the economy.

He said that in its endeavor to provide concessional financing to the export-oriented sector, the State Bank Pakistan had announced to extend the financing scheme for renewable energy for next two years till 2024.

## Elections of Photojournalist Association Professional Sajjad Haider President elected



**News Desk**

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Islamabad Photojournalist Association Professional elections have been completed according to Chairman Election Committee Nasir Mir member Aamir Lodhi all the candidates of the panel have been declared successful. Sajjad haider President Jahangir Chaudry SV President Mudasser Raja Gen Secretary Muhammad Asim finance Secretary Vice Presidents Khadim Hussain Irshad Sheikh Joint Secretary Raja Asim Press Secretary Tahir Kazmi while the members of Governing Body Rizwan Khan Raja Zafar Raja Riaz Hanif Khattak Raja Farid Sultan Bashir Khurram Latif were elected.

## PIMS denies reports regarding closure of its OT

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has contradicted the news item appearing in a section of press on closure of its Operation Theatre (OT). In a statement on Sunday, Dr Mubashar Mushtaq Doha, spokesperson to Executive Director PIMS said that such news about the federal capital's largest government hospital were baseless. According to the records, supplies are being received in PIMS for emergency operations, he added.

He said that supply was being provided according to the demand of the procedure. The list displayed outside the OT is baseless and the PIMS administration has nothing to do with it. Who put the list outside the OT and under what purpose, investigations are being done, he said. "PIMS has sent a request for release of funds to the concerned department while the OT was not closed and still working." He said that caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan is ensuring effective measures for the release of funds. He said that these funds would also be released by the end of this month due to the efforts of the Minister for Health.

## Veterinary Pharma Association announces to join PLAF after formal registration

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Veterinary Pharma Association (PVPA) has announced to join Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) after its formal registration here at a ceremony held today. The PIAF Chairman Fahimur Rehman Saigol, while congratulating the core committee of PVPA on the occasion of joining the Front, observed that the regularization of the new Association is a welcome step, as it would facilitate conveyance of relevant sector issues to the power corridor through the platform of the PIAF.

The representatives of the Association including Dr. Saleh, Malik Abid Sarwar, Dr. Sajeel Das, Dr. Usman, Dr. Majid Ijaz and others thanked the PIAF leaders for giving them a wonderful welcome and providing all kinds of support.

## PIDE Launches Comprehensive Debate on Reform

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) launched its latest issue of Discourse Magazine this week, an extensive publication that seeks to initiate a nationwide debate on the reform of key sectors, domains, and institutions. According to its Chief Editor, Abbas Moosvi, Pakistan has failed to overhaul its colonial-era state configurations - top-down, extractive, and bureaucratic - which is the primary reason for its current socioeconomic and political woes. In light of the upcoming election cycle, which seems to be arriving at a critical juncture, the issue emphasizes that the time is optimal for taking a radical departure from current institutional arrangements to foster a Pakistan that works for the many - not just the privileged few.

Fifteen unique areas are covered in 'Discourse - Reconfiguring Pakistan: State, Society, and Economy,' which include Reconceptualizing Development, Constitutional Reform, Political Contestation, Parliament and Civil Service, Economic Policy, Foreign Aid, Energy, Trade and Industry, Land and Agriculture, Labour Relations, Education, Public Welfare, Cities and Local Governance, Climate, and Society and Culture.

# Innovative solutions a must for early retirement of coal powered plants under CPEC: Experts

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Experts at a webinar stressed the need for exploring innovative financing mechanisms in the context of Pakistan's energy sector to facilitate the early retirement of coal power plants under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The webinar titled, 'Scoping the Feasibility of Early Retirement of Coal Power Plants under CPEC,' was organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Khalid Waleed, SDPI Research Fellow, remarked that Pakistan's energy landscape is dominated by affordability crisis, which makes the reliance on indigenous coal a viable solution.

Mustafa Hyder Sayed, the Executive Director of Pakistan-China Institute,

stressed the need for political consensus to create conducive environment to boost investments in energy sector. He underscored the need to move beyond theory and make a bankable case for retiring the coal power plants in Pakistan, which is acceptable to investors and is financially sustainable.

Shuang Liu, the Senior Associate and China Finance Lead at the World Resources Institute (WRI), emphasized the importance of gaining a clear understanding of investor motivations and the constraints that exist in the early retirement of these plants. She highlighted the need to revisit and renegotiate terms, particularly with the major financial institutions such as the China Development Bank and EXIM Bank.

Haneea Isaad, Energy Finance Analyst at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis

(IEEFA), said that immediate retirement for the selected coal fleet had economic valuation of US\$1.1 billion-1.6 billion and delays in retirement will significantly reduce these values to a range of US\$398 million to US\$628 million, highlighting the economic implications.

Julia Skorupska, Head of Secretariat, Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA) urged governments and power companies to create credible transition plans, increase public finance for coal retirement, provide regulatory clarity, and actively generate pipeline projects. She called for including social cost of emissions from coal power plants in estimation processes.

Dr Daniele Malerba, Senior Researcher at the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), stressed the need to consider the social

and local consequences of such transition. He emphasized the need to leverage the JETPS framework, pointing out that success depends on involving Chinese stakeholders.

Christoph Nedopil Wang, Director of Griffith Asia Institute, cited Egypt as a successful model in executing a debt-for-climate swap, showcasing the potential for innovative financial arrangements to address climate-related challenges, which can resolve the financial challenges faced by Pakistan.

Ubaid ur Rehman Zia, SDPI Senior Research Associate, said that the recent 3rd Belt and Road Forum and COP28 underscored the crucial role of energy transition in tackling climate change. Global trends, coupled with the decreasing costs of renewable energy, have transformed it into both environmentally and economically viable solutions, he added.



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# TTP and BLA two headed monstre - I

**Qamar Bashir**

I take pride in hailing from my beautiful hometown, Quetta, and my beloved province, Balochistan. It's a unique province with vast barren land but abundant mineral wealth. Despite the absence of permanent rivers, our water needs are met through rain and snow, replenishing aquifers to sustain the entire human and animal population. The province also stands out for its demographic diversity. It's neatly divided into two major ethnicities, with Balochs in the south and Pathans in the north. Quetta, on the other hand, is a melting pot, hosting settlers from various ethnic backgrounds like Punjabi, Kashmiri, Sindhi, Hazara, and more. My own Kashmiri family resides in Quetta, fostering strong bonds with Pashtoon, Baloch, and Hazara friends. Over the years, intermarriages, once considered impossible, are now common and flourishing.

Both the Pathan and Baloch ethnicities are deeply rooted in tribal societies, often regarded as some of the most beautiful communities in the world. These societies value honesty, trustworthiness, truthfulness, friendliness, and hospitality. The people prioritize honor and dignity above all else and guard it against any threat. It's important to note that this commitment to honor doesn't imply a hostile posture unless they face denigration, insult, deception, or a trampling of their honor and dignity. Once these communities declare someone as an

enemy, however, they become formidable foes. They are known to pursue their enemies relentlessly for generations if necessary. This fierce loyalty and determination are integral aspects of their cultural values.

Now, the significant question arises: why did groups like the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) emerge from these culturally rich societies? How did they transform into formidable and lethal entities? Before delving deeper, it's essential to distinguish the Pathan and Baloch communities within the religious context.

The Pathan community is predominantly religious, actively practicing Islam through rituals such as offering prayers, observing fasting, and performing Hajj. However, in societal conduct, their primary adherence is to the Pashtunwali code of life. They can readily align with movements that claim to uphold Islamic values, as perceived by them, and may fiercely engage in struggles aligned with these principles.

On the contrary, the Baloch community is not as inherently inclined toward religious practices. While maintaining the distinct identity of each Baloch tribe, they follow a tribal code of conduct rooted in traditions and customs. This code is adhered to not only by the general populace but also by figures of authority such

as Nawabs and Sardars.

The lethal, violent, and inhuman activities perpetrated by both the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) are in no way aligned with either the Pashtunwali code of the Pathan community or the tribal code followed by the Baloch. These acts of violence, insurgency, terrorism, and extremism are foreign to the inherent values and conduct of both societies. Such streaks of violence starkly contrast

with the overall cultural and traditional norms observed by the Pathan and Baloch communities.

The seeds of these violent tendencies were planted during a time when both the USA and USSR were actively seeking allies worldwide, making friends of their enemies' enemies. My first hand experience in college in Quetta during (1978-82) reflects this, where the propaganda arms of both superpowers were actively engaging Pathan and Baloch students. Through offers of free books, cash incentives, scholarships, and all-expenses-paid trips to their respective countries, they sought to sway student leaders to their side. In addition to these inducements, they provided financial support and furnished lethal arms and ammunition. Once student leaders were effectively brought on board, they were strategically pitted against governments they

opposed, serving as vocal proponents of either capitalist or socialist ideologies.

The USA found common ground with Pathans, utilizing religion as a catalyst and supporting them with weapons and financial aid. They manipulated them into denouncing the USSR as Kafir (infidel) during the Cold War, but eventually left them without clear support. India, seizing an opportunity, stepped in and employed a similar strategy—using religion as a foundation, providing financial support and weapons. They redirected their focus toward a new enemy, the state of Pakistan, and encouraged politico-religious parties, assuming their religious nature would align with the Taliban's resistance against the government. Recent attacks on the JUI (Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam) are likely driven by the same motive.

Shifting focus to the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), the USA attempted a similar strategy by aligning Baloch interests against the USSR. However, this approach proved less effective with the Balochs. Unlike the Pathans, the Baloch people prioritize their tribal code over other considerations, including religion. Recognizing this distinction, the USSR strategically leveraged nationalism, combined with financial support and weapons. This potent combination resonated well with the Baloch, who passionately began demanding complete control over provincial resources, including minerals, gas, oil, and land.

*To be continued*



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

## Indian False Assertions about Normalcy in Occupied J & K - I

India is home to a diverse array of religious communities, encompassing Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and others. Despite constitutional guarantees of fundamental rights for all citizens, irrespective of their religious or ethnic background, there are growing concerns about human rights in India due to incidents of discrimination and violence against religious minorities.

A discernible trend of discrimination against religious minorities, especially Muslims and Christians, is evident in various policies and incidents. These include instances of violence, forced conversions, discriminatory laws, and restrictions on religious practices. Events like the 2002 anti-Muslim violence in Gujarat and religiously motivated lynchings have heightened worries about the safety of minorities. Controversies surrounding citizenship, such as the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), have fueled debates on their potential impact on religious minorities, particularly Muslims.

Anti-conversion laws in several states, ostensibly aimed at preventing forced conversions, are being misused to target religious minorities, particularly Christians and Muslims. These laws have raised concerns about freedom of religion and the right to propagate one's faith. Allegations of human rights violations against minorities in India have garnered international attention, leading to diplomatic discussions and global debates.

The situation in occupied Jammu and Kashmir is even more distressing. The region has been a longstanding point of contention, marked by historical complexities, regional tensions, and varying narratives. Recent years have seen international attention drawn to human rights violations and atrocities committed by Indian security forces in the region, especially after the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019.

Accusations against Indian security forces include extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture, arbitrary detentions, and the use of pellet guns causing civilian casualties. Despite India's insistence that security operations are essential to counter terrorism and maintain law and order, international entities and human rights organizations have accused Indian security forces of atrocities. Calls for an independent and impartial investigation into reported human rights abuses have been made by some nations and organizations.

Addressing the allegations is challenging due to difficulties in independently verifying claims, stemming from media restrictions and communication blackouts imposed by the Indian Army in the region. This lack of transparency has fostered skepticism and uncertainty about the true extent of human rights violations. Beyond political and diplomatic concerns, the allegations of atrocities raise significant humanitarian issues, particularly regarding the well-being of the civilian population, including women and children. India has failed to ensure the protection of human rights in occupied Jammu & Kashmir, emphasizing the urgency for a thorough and impartial examination of the situation.

The situation in occupied Jammu and Kashmir worsened following the abrogation of Article 370. On August 5, 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Indian government took a controversial step in revoking Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, causing significant implications for the state. Article 370, integrated into the Indian Constitution in 1949, provided special autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir, allowing it to have its constitution, autonomy over internal administration, and limited legislative powers. The decision aimed to eliminate the special status of the region, integrating it more closely with the rest of India. The government argued that Article 370 had impeded development, hindered national integration, and fostered a sense of isolation with a separate set of laws for Jammu and Kashmir. This move led to the reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir into two separate Union Territories - Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, marking a significant shift in governance structure. The scrapping of Article 370 also nullified Article 35A, which granted the state legislature the power to define 'permanent residents' and accord them special rights and privileges. The political landscape underwent substantial changes, including the dissolution of the assembly and elections conducted under the new Union Territory framework.

*To be continued*

## An Expo Learning & Networking Culture

An expo in an educational institution holds significant importance as it serves as a dynamic platform for students to showcase their talents, innovations, and academic achievements. This event fosters a culture of creativity, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among students, faculty, and visitors. In Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan two days (3 & 4 January 2024) Expo organized by the Study Aid Foundation for Excellence (SAFE) BZU commenced with an inaugural ceremony. On the first day, Director Students Affairs Professor Dr. Fawad Rasool, Director Public Relations Dr. Muhammad Binyameen, Professor Dr. Muhammad Riaz, Resident Officer Professor Muqarrab Akbar, Bro. Hassan Bilal Hashmi (Provincial President IJT), Deputy Director Students Affairs Dr. Muhammad Anees and Director Zakariyan Educational Expo (ZEE) Bro. Harris Baloch delivered speeches. Bro. Hassan Bilal Hashmi addressing the crowd, expressed appreciation for the collaborative effort of the university and Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba BZU in organizing such an expo for the first time in the university's history. Director Students Affairs Professor Dr. Fawad Rasool, remarked that similar programs would continue to boost morale in the future. The organizing team, along with university societies, played a significant role in making this program a success, deserving congratulations from the students. Director Public Relation Dr. Muhammad Binyameen, praised the positive initiative and congratulated the Director Students Affairs and his team. He emphasized the need to conduct such programs to enhance the university's environment and provide opportunities for students to excel not only in academics but also in personal development. Different Stalls were set up during the expo, featuring companies from outside, along with university students, showcasing various extracurricular activities. The expo included an engineering conference, quiz competition, tableau, entrepreneurship seminar, and various other programs on the first day. The expo continues today. On the second day of the expo Dr. Abdul Qadus Director Research Center, Farrukh Arslan Sadiqi, General Secretary Pakistan Engineers Teachers Forum, Dr. Osman Saleem, Syndicate Member, and Chief Security Officer, Dr. Safdar Iqbal Hashmi

(Ameer Jamat e Islami District Multan) and Deputy Director Students Affairs Dr. Muhammad Anees delivered speeches. The last day of the expo included conferences, such as the Agricultural Conference, Entrepreneurship Conference, and CSS Conference. In the Agricultural Conference, discussions revolved around modern agricultural tools, government policies, and the future of students in the field. The students also posed questions to the experts. The Entrepreneurship Conference featured a panel of CEOs from various companies engaging with students. The CSS Conference focused on insights about CSS and PMS, providing students with information for their future endeavours. Following the conferences, the concluding ceremony began with a speech by Bro. Shakeel Ahmed (President Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba Pakistan). Mr. Shakeel Ahmed praised the university and Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba BZU for organizing such an expo for the first time in the university's history. He acknowledged the significant roles played by the Jamiat team and university societies in making the program successful, congratulating the deserving students. Bro. Shakeel Ahmed concluded his speech by expressing solidarity with Palestine and appealing for the boycott of Israeli products.

The event ended with shields and certificates distributed to position holders from every department of the university, recognizing their achievements and boosting their morale. The teams' efforts in organizing the program were appreciated, and shields and other prizes were distributed to participants in painting, calligraphy and quiz competitions. Stalls set up during the expo included both university students and companies from outside. The expo's final night featured a poetry recital by renowned Urdu and Saraiki poets from across the country at Jinnah Auditorium BZU. In this expo, renowned companies from the country had set up stalls to showcase their brand displays also. Certainly, in the educational expo, there existed a dual opportunity for both rejoicing and learning. Participants found moments of celebration as they proudly displayed their academic projects and accomplishments. This sense of achievement created an atmosphere of joy and pride, fostering a positive and supportive community spirit within the educational institution.



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi



Analysis

Hafiz Arqum Zain



# 100 days of genocide in Gaza Strip: Palestinians demand end of Israeli rule

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: 100 days of genocide that passed on our people in the Gaza Strip equals an entire eternity of suffering, pain, torment, oppression, injustice and tears, and 75 years have passed since the Great Nakba against the Palestinian people. The international community reproduces its failure to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy regarding the Palestinian issue and repeats its inability and failure to resolve the issue. The Palestinian Authority and ending the Israeli occupation of the land of the State of Palestine and enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination. The occupying state continues to benefit from this failure and inaction and uses it to continue committing more war crimes and crimes against humanity that turn the Palestinian people and their successive generations into victims without stopping. 100 days in which the occupation army turned the Gaza Strip into an uninhabitable place and committed horrific crimes that claimed the lives of nearly 100,000 Palestinians, including martyrs, missing persons, and wounded, the majority of whom were children and women, and forced displacement on nearly 2 million Palestinians without any safe shelter and without the minimum amount of shelter.

The necessities of life and basic human needs, where famine circles expand and diseases and epidemics spread in light of the continuous



destruction of health centers and the absence of treatments and medicines, in a cycle of certain death in various forms that threatens the lives of citizens in the Gaza Strip. This is in addition to the systematic occupation war to destroy UNRWA and put it out of service, with all the dimensions that this entails. Political, and a complete survey of the camps and areas in the Gaza Strip in preparation for reformulating the reality of the Strip in all its urban and population dimensions in a way that serves the occupation's agenda.

100 days of massacres and destruction have passed and the international community is still making appeals and demands and expressing concern and urging directed at the Israeli government, whether to stop the aggression, protect civilians and spare them the scourge of war and mass killing, or

bring in aid and provide basic humanitarian needs, but without finding any listening Israeli ears. The Israeli officials were arrogant and proud of the continuation of the war of extermination on the Gaza Strip, and found official Israeli rebellion against the relevant UN resolutions and disdain for the international legal process and the sessions of the International Court of Justice, and persistence in implementing Netanyahu's real goals from the war, which are summed up in the extermination of more than 2 million Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip. Gaza and creating the appropriate racist colonial environment to expel and displace them from the Strip. 100 days have passed since the largest humanitarian disaster in history, and a number of countries are not convinced that the occupation's mass massacres have completely eroded the argument for self-defense, and



they are now required to review their positions in support of the continuation and prolongation of the war.

Also 100 days of the unjust siege imposed by the occupation on our people, closing the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and committing the most horrific crimes against Palestinian citizens, their land, homes, property and sanctities. Armed settler militias supported by ministers in the

Israeli government are given free rein to commit the most heinous violations and expand colonial control over more Palestinian citizens' lands, in a clear complementarity between the roles of the occupation army and those militias in dismembering the West Bank and turning it into isolated areas from each other drowning in a huge settlement environment. It is linked to the Israeli depth, which leads to eliminating

any opportunity to embody the Palestinian state on the ground with East Jerusalem as its capital. 100 days have passed since the unprecedented escalation in mass arrests, heinous crimes of murder, oppression and abuse against detainees, and racist inflammatory calls issued from the top of the political pyramid in the occupying state to impose more restrictions and punishments on the heroic prisoners.

## Dragon dance

Residents practice the dragon dance in Guangnan village of Pingdeng township in Longsheng County, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Jan. 13, 2024. China's 2024 Spring Festival holiday will run from Feb. 10 to 17.



Photo by Pan Zhixiang/Xinhua

## Denmark's new King Frederik X assumes throne as Queen Margrethe II steps down

Denmark witnessed a historic moment as King Frederik X officially ascended the throne on Sunday, succeeding his mother, Queen Margrethe II, who voluntarily abdicated after 52 years as the monarch.

The abdication marked a significant event in the nation's history, with large crowds gathered in the capital to witness the transition.

Queen Margrethe, 83, surprised the nation on New Year's Eve with her announcement, becoming the first Danish monarch in nearly 900 years to voluntarily relinquish the throne.

The formalisation of the succession occurred as Margrethe signed the abdication declaration during a Council of State meeting at parliament, as Denmark, one of the world's oldest monarchies, does not have a coronation ceremony.

## A ceremony held in honor of Chairman Kashmir Council EU



### PNP

BRUSSELS: A ceremony was held in Brussels in honor of Chairman Kashmir Council Europe (KCEU) Ali Raza Syed for receiving a significant human rights award. The reception was organized by Pakistan Press Club Belgium and other European-Pakistani social organizations including Ittefaq Welfare Society Belgium, EU Pak Belgium Federation, Pak Belge Welfare Association and Pak Socio Cultural Association.

It should be remembered that during its annual award ceremony in Islamabad last month, the Human Rights Council of Pakistan honored Chairman Kashmir Council EU Ali Raza Syed with a human rights award for his humanitarian services at the international level, especially in Europe for highlighting the rights of the oppressed Kashmiris.

The event in honor of Ali Raza Syed in Brussels was started with recitation of Quran, the holy book. A number of Pakistanis and Kashmiris living in Europe participated in the ceremony. The ceremony was presided over by renowned scholar and historian Dr. Aslam Syed. President Pakistan Press Club Belgium Choudhary Imran Saqib moderated the ceremony. Participants of the event congratulated Ali Raza Syed for receiving the human right award and wished him well.

Chairman Kashmir Council EU Ali Raza Syed, Dr. Aslam Syed, Sardar Sadiq, Sadrar Mahmood Iqbal, Chaudhry Zahid Bhattar, Shakeel Guhar, Nadeem Butt Dani, Rao Mustajab, Hafiz Uneeb Rashid, Keneth Raye, Malik Ajmal, Haji Pervez, Imran Mirza, Nasir Chaudhry and Uzair Chaudhry were speakers of the event.

The speakers appreciated the efforts of Chairman Kashmir Council EU Ali Raza Syed for the last twenty years for the cause of Kashmir at the global level, especially to highlight the rights of the oppressed Kashmiris in Europe. They said that Ali Raza Syed has played a significant role in informing all European institutions, especially the European Parliament and the European External Action Service, and European politicians and European authorities about the issue of Kashmir and especially the rights of Kashmiris. The speakers further said that Ali Raza Syed and his team have set up numerous camps, processions, and demonstrations during public awareness campaigns in different European countries in the last two decades. Additionally, through a one million signature campaign across Europe, he informed the European people about the issue of Kashmir and Indian atrocities on Kashmiris and tried to get Europe's support in favor of Kashmiris.

On this occasion, Chairman Kashmir Council EU Ali Raza Syed thanked the office bearers of Pakistan Press Club Belgium and other host organizations for managing the reception in his honor.

## 'India Out': Maldives tells India to pull out troops amid tense ties

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu has issued a deadline for India to withdraw its military personnel from the island nation, emphasizing that Indian troops must leave by March 15.

This announcement comes in the wake of Muizzu's recent state visit to China, marking an upgrade in diplomatic ties with Beijing.

Diplomatic tensions between India and Maldives escalated following derogatory comments made by Maldivian ministers against Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, leading to their dismissal. President Muizzu, in response to the criticism, asserted, "We may be small, but no one has the licence to bully us."

Abdulla Nazim Ibrahim, the public policy secretary at the President's Office, stressed, "Indian military personnel cannot stay in the Maldives. This is the policy of President Dr Mohamed Muizzu and that of this administration." Reports indicate the presence of approximately 88 Indian troops in Maldives.

The call for the withdrawal of Indian troops aligns with President Muizzu's election promise and his "India Out" campaign. Both nations have established a high-level core group to negotiate the troop withdrawal, with the group's inaugural meeting held at the Foreign Ministry Headquarters in Male.

# Cost-Push Inflation, Monetary Tightening and Pakistan's Stagnant Economy

## Uzma Noreen

The second edition of IMF's World Economic Outlook (2023) forecasted Pakistan's GDP growth rate to 2.5% and raised the country's anticipated inflation rate to 23.6% for FY24. Amid slowly declining global core inflation, the IMF advised central banks to avoid prematurely easing monetary policy. The IMF's recommendation of a tight monetary policy across the globe is a universal prescription, a kind of one-size-fits-all solution, rather than taking into account the local economic situation of different economies. For instance, despite the economic depression that Pakistan is experiencing, IMF recommendations of fiscal austerity and maintaining an incredibly high interest rate would reduce public and private investment hence deepening Pakistan's stagflation. Moreover, monetary contractions have welfare implications (increase poverty, worsen the inequality and unemployment) as highlighted in Social Footprint of Monetary Policy by Javed (2021). He stated that, "In 2018-19, the SBP raised the interest rate from 6% to 13.2% in less than a year in order to manage the growing current account deficit and balance of payment crisis. The GDP growth rate decreased from 4.8% to 1.9% as the economy slowed down, and large-scale manufacturing saw a steep decline. Industries were shut down. Poverty struck millions of people. The balance of payment was settled at the cost of millions losing their jobs and livelihoods. There can be serious repercussions for a society when large distributional and intergenerational issues are ignored in policy decision".

Even though Central banks around the globe have been using demand

management strategies such as interest rate instruments to dampen the inflation, this kind of monetary policy fails to account for supply shock disruptions. The State Bank of Pakistan also raised the policy rate to control inflation, however, since inflation in Pakistan is not demand push but caused by supply side factors particularly food shortages and hike in energy product prices. In the face of supply shocks, which can lead to cost-push inflation, the central bank might choose to look



through and tolerate a temporary deviation from their inflation target. For example, in 2011 the UK saw a few instances of cost-push inflation when it increased above 5%, primarily as a result of a substantial increase in global energy prices and depreciation of the pound. The monetary policy committee of Bank of England, however, did not raise the interest rate, when the shock subsided and the inflation rate returned to the target level of 2%. As mentioned, Pakistan's high and persistent inflation is mainly cost-push, rendering interest rates an ineffective instrument, so advising monetary tightening will entail real economic losses for the society and exacerbate the country's economic problems. In addition, interest rate inflation would raise the cost of borrowing for the formal sector already suffering from low-capacity utilization due to an import crunch. Keeping a record high interest rate makes it difficult for businesses to grow as the cost of doing business is rising. Many existing

firms have been closed due to unsustainable borrowing costs, which further increase the economic losses in the form of unemployment and low output.

As per the Forbes Report (Aug 2023), globally Pakistan is among top ten countries with a very high interest rate. While in the Asian region, Pakistan has the highest interest rate (i.e. 22%) as compared to India (6.5%) and Bangladesh (6.5%). The high credit cost affects the competitiveness of the already struggling export industry in the region. Also, high interest rates is widening the fiscal deficit with significant increase in domestic debt in addition to raising the interest payment manifold (Since now the share of the floating rate debt is higher as compared to fixed rate). So, it is evident that the IMF policy recommendation of an old instrument of stabilization policy in the form of a high interest rate is actually worsening the debt sustainability indicators for the Pakistan economy. IMF analysts also observed that lower average inflation forecasts are linked to more sustainable budgetary positions. However raising interest rates would only increase the cost to the government thus making the fiscal position more unsustainable. So how could this policy guideline of contractionary monetary policy in the form of high interest rate ensure fiscal sustainability?

The IMF Report also highlights that fiscal support measures could be useful in reducing inflation or at the very least smoothed out a severe inflationary shock. Nevertheless, the report doesn't discuss the effects of the monetary tightening and fiscal austerity measures that the IMF recommended to developing economies like Pakistan in order to use its funding facility. "It is generally argued that monetary

policy actions transmit their effects on key macroeconomic indicators with a considerable lag and with a high degree of volatility and uncertainty. Empirical evidence reveals that the interest rate influences the rate of inflation with a lag of 12 to 18 months, and the magnitude of this impact is very small while some studies show positive relation. Additionally, empirical data for Pakistan demonstrates that the recent increase in interest rates has not significantly reduced inflation". For instance, despite sacrificing growth, SBP's monetary tightening failed to achieve the target of price stability.

Since the policy of increasing interest rates to reduce inflation has failed, the interest rate should be reduced to boost the business activity. Further, it will also help the government to improve fiscal outlook in the short term. However, monetary policy itself is unable to achieve the targets unless fully supported by fiscal policy, deregulatory measures, and enhancing supply side shift factors like investment, enhance the productive capacity, and competition. Even though fiscal space is very limited at this time, but certain measures (along with reducing policy rate) which includes widening tax base (rather than increasing tax rates), reforming power sector (major source of circular debt), promoting public private partnerships (PPP) and coordinated monetary and fiscal policies would help to achieve the growth, employment and price stability targets. As highlighted by PIDE Reform Agenda, "moving to a high and sustainable growth trajectory calls for breaking away from the past, which is possible only if we undertake deep-seated structural reforms in almost all areas influencing growth".

Writer is PhD Student in PIDE



**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%	13 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

# Railways have no future in Pakistan, should be sold immediately

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Friday that there is no future for railways in Pakistan, therefore it should be sold without any delay.

All the efforts to rehabilitate railways have failed; therefore, this sick enterprise should be sold instead of new experiments, which will waste time and money.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that once railways were the most popular and cheapest means of transporting passengers and goods, but now it is a failed enterprise with no hope of revival.

He said that railways could not function in a country where transporters and contractors make important decisions in assemblies.

In such a country, trucks will continue to



replace the railways; billions will be wasted on constructing unnecessary roads, and the railway tracks will be stolen and sold to private steel mills.

He said that the railway is the backbone of the economy of neighbouring India, but it has

been made a liability in Pakistan, which has caused a loss of Rs977 billion from December 1, 2022, to July 31, 2022.

The business leader informed that until 1960, the railway was very popular; it was a major means of travel, and 75% of commercial goods were transported through it.

Afterwards, this department became a victim of the conspiracies of transporters, contractors, and bureaucracy, and now it is among the most incompetent and corrupt departments.

Now the share of railways handling cargo is not even 25%, it no longer enjoys the confidence of the masses while transporters are thriving at the cost of the masses, he said.

In many nations, it is illegal to use trucks and trailers to transport goods from one province to another because they are expensive, and the public pays for them, but this is not the case in Pakistan.

Here, this important department is being destroyed, and its lands are continuously seized.

Shahid Rashid Butt said that the elements who destroyed the railway are against its sale because if the private buyers revive it, their transport business will be affected and there will be a lesser need for new roads.

Policymakers know that an effective railway system facilitates commerce and trade, reduces transportation costs, and promotes rural development and national integration, but it is not given importance in Pakistan for obvious reasons.

He said that lack of attention, poor policies, increasing expenditures, misappropriation of funds, pilferage, nepotism, floods, inadequate technology, and mismanagement have left railways with huge budget deficits running in billions of rupees, which is a question mark on its sustainability.

## Peanuts

LAHORE: A worker is roasting peanuts at his workplace at Do Moria Pull Misri Shah area in the Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

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

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: 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.

## Apple farmers in occupied Kashmir face uncertainty

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Last year, during this season, the apple and other farms, sprawling over thousands of hectares, were carpeted under a thick layer of snow, particularly in the upper reaches of south Kashmir, signaling a bountiful harvest. According to Kashmir Media Service report on Sunday, although an erratic weather condition, which was experienced from March to June, impacted various horticulture crops, the farmers by and large harvested a good crop.

However, this year the situation seems diametrically different with a long-drawn-out dry spell becoming a cause of concern for thousands of apple farmers across occupied Jammu and Kashmir. While a good snowfall often holds the promise of quality harvest, its continued absence during the ongoing winter has begun leaving thousands of farmers, particularly the apple cultivators, distraught. "We are deep into Chillai Kalan - the harshest leg of winter - and still there is no snowfall. It is a cause of worry for the farmers' community," said Muhammad Ashraf Wani, a fruit grower



and former president of Fruit Mandi Shopian. He said that apart from spurring water shortages, the dry spell would significantly affect the yield and quality. "The warmer temperatures could also precipitate early flowering of stone fruits," he added. Experts say a significant dip in temperature coupled with a good snowfall is imperative for the

quality and good production of apples and other crops. Many growers from south and north Kashmir districts said that they were anxiously waiting for snowfall. Kashmir produces around two million metric tonnes of apples annually. The industry provides livelihood to more than three million people directly or indirectly.

## Huge borrowing unlikely to put economy on track without Ease of Doing Business: APBF

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: The All Pakistan Business Forum has said that extensive borrowing, including the recent

omy back on track without improving the Ease of Doing Business Index of the country.



IMF \$1.9 billion financing for Pakistan, is unlikely to put the country's econ-

The APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood said that with continuous hike in cost of production in the country, what the Pakistan's economy really needs is persistent and sound economic management, asking the authorities for undertaking economic reforms and improving the regulatory environment for better Ease of Doing Business level to boost foreign investment so that financial stability can be achieved in the long-run.

## The kind of leadership Pakistan needs to rise

The elections are around the corner. The Pakistani nation will elect the next government with the expectation that it will lead the country toward progress and prosperity and end the miseries of the common man. However, 76 years have passed since Pakistan gained independence and still, the majority of people of the country are yearning for an improved living standard, which no government has been able to give them as yet. So, what kind of leadership does the Pakistani nation need to uplift the common man and bring Pakistan to par with emerging economies?

Pakistan is a country of over 240 million people and 60 percent of them are youth. The youngsters need jobs to become productive citizens of the country, but unfortunately, getting employment for youth has become an uphill task as our fragile economy is unable to create new jobs in an environment where many industries have closed or heading towards closure due to the high cost of doing business. Therefore, Pakistan needs a kind of leadership that gives high priority to

human resource development and focuses on the skills development of youth to improve the prospects of their employability. Pakistan has gone down on the Human Development Index due to a lack of attention from the successive leadership, therefore, human resource development should be the key priority of the new leadership to transform human capital into a great dividend to improve the economic growth of the country.

The private sector is the major employer in Pakistan but is confronted with many challenges due to which the jobs are shrinking. The public sector is already over-employed and the only good option for the government is to expand the private sector to create new employment opportunities to absorb youth in jobs. Millions of people have lost jobs in the recent past due to the closure of industries from textile, automobile, and other sectors triggered by the ban on imports. Therefore, Pakistan needs a kind of leadership that

should promote ease of doing business and create a conducive environment for the private sector for its smooth expansion and growth to create new jobs for youth.

The last Global Climate Risk Index ranks Pakistan as the 5th most climate-vulnerable country in the world. Pakistan has already suffered huge human and economic losses due to flash floods in 2022. Lahore is considered the most polluted city in the world while the situation of Karachi, Faisalabad, Multan, and many other cities is far below the desired level. Successive governments paid no proper attention to making Pakistan a climate-friendly country. The country needs to spend billions of dollars to make itself a climate-resilient country. Therefore, Pakistan needs a kind of leadership that should give high priority to controlling emissions and improving the overall environment of the country to develop a healthy nation.

According to a UNICEF report,

over 22 million children in Pakistan between the age of 5-16 years are out of school. Education has never been a high priority for the successive governments in Pakistan as the country is spending a nominal amount of its GDP on education and health. The result is that over 40 percent of children in Pakistan under 5 years of age are stunted. A nation without education and healthy people can never achieve better economic growth. Pakistan needs a kind of leadership that should provide the children with quality education and nutritious food to develop a healthy nation to drive the economy.

Pakistan is characterized by bad governance, corruption, and lack of rule of law. The law treats differently the influential people and the common man in Pakistan. Getting justice for poor people in Pakistan is like surmounting a mountain as the courts take years to decide the civil and criminal cases in the country. The common man has almost lost trust in the judicial system, which is unaffordable for him and deprives him of justice. Therefore, Pakistan needs a kind of leadership that should estab-

lish good governance, purge Pakistan of corruption, and establish the rule of law to ensure a just and peaceful society that will ultimately enable the country to unlock its true economic potential.

There are many other big challenges including the rising cost of domestic and foreign debt, surging circular debt, the poor performance of utilities leading to very high energy tariffs, huge cost to the national exchequer of the loss-making public sector commercial entities, record high inflation, high-interest rate, rising water shortage, food insecurity. We need visionary and farsighted leadership to cope with these challenges and put Pakistan into fast gear of growth and development.

Apart from the advanced economies, the leadership of many countries including China, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, and Turkiye have transformed their countries into rising economies. Will the Pakistani nation be able to choose a kind of leadership in the February 8 elections that would transform Pakistan into a rising economy in South Asia? Only time will tell.



Analysis  
Muhammad Ramzan



# Inter-University Chess Championship starts at LUMHS

**Sports Desk**

HYDERABAD: The All Pakistan Intersports Chess (Men) Championship started at the Liaquat University of Medical and Health Science (LUMHS), Jamshoro on Sunday. According to university spokesman, the championship organized in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC), would continue till January 17.

The spokesman said 20 teams from different universities were participating in the championship. LUMHS Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Ikram Din Ujjan, while welcoming the participating teams, said the game of chess strengthened the human mind as it was an exercise of intellect. Besides officials of participating teams, Director Sports of LUMHS Faisal Laghari was also present on the occasion. The teams of LUMHS, University of



Punjab, Lahore, University of Engineer-

ing and Technology, Lahore, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Islamia University, Bahawalpur, Comsats University, Islamabad, NUML University, Islamabad, University of Karachi, IBA Sukkur, Institute of Business Management (IOBM) Karachi, Sindh University Jamshoro and Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro, among others, are participating in the championship.

# Rift between players, team director behind defeats in NZ?

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: An ongoing tussle between Pakistan senior players and Team Director Muhammad Hafeez over 'permission for franchise leagues' has reportedly affected the recent performance of the Pakistan cricket team.

New Zealand beat Pakistan by 21 runs in the second Twenty20 international on Sunday to take a 2-0 series lead.

The Green Shirts threw away a strong position in their run chase after Babar Azam and Fakhar Zaman scored half-centuries as they were dismissed for 173 in the final over, in response to New Zealand's 194-8.

The match bore similarities to New Zealand's 46-run win in the opening match in Auckland on Friday, with their attack taking wickets at regular intervals to deny Pakistan a foothold in their chase.

The cricket team also faced another whitewash in Australia earlier this month. The third Test in Sydney was Pakistan's 17th consecutive loss in Australia. It extended the wait for their first Test victory in Australia since 1995-96.

Sources told that the



ongoing tussle between Pakistan senior players and Team director has led to the recent dismal performance.

Muhammad Hafeez has shut the doors of franchise leagues on players as he refused to give clearance to some cricketers. Following the restrictions, contracts of Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shadab Khan, Azam Khan and Mohammad Wasim were affected.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had issued NOCs to the players for Twenty20 (T20) franchise league.

The players have expressed displeasure with team director for not giving clearance and raising objections.

Last year, team director Muhammad Hafeez said

that Pakistan's contracted players must put national team duty ahead of franchise cricket after fast bowler Haris Rauf declined to be part of the team's test tour of Australia.

White-ball specialist Rauf, who played only one test and nine first-class matches in his career, turned down an offer to tour Australia where Pakistan played three tests. The 30-year-old instead joined the Melbourne Stars in Australia's Big Bash League.

"All centrally contracted and domestic contracted players, for all of them, the priority is Pakistan," former captain Hafeez told reporters.

"The point of offering it (contract) to the 20-25 players... is to make sure they are

available to play," he said.

"Now there is a parallel option in the form of leagues and we experienced this in the Asia Cup and World Cup.

"There was talk of fatigue, or players were getting injured because their workloads were too much, or not performing as they should."

Hafeez is part of a new team management that was put in place after Pakistan failed to make the semi-finals of this year's 50-overs World Cup in India.

Hafeez said the board would factor in a players' workload ahead of next year's T20 World Cup before giving him a 'No Objection Certificate' (NOC) to take part in one of the growing number of lucrative franchise leagues around the world.

# Pak vs NZ: Pakistan suffer defeat in second T20I against New Zealand



HAMILTON: New Zealand inched closer to winning the series after defeating Pakistan in the second T20I match by 21 runs at Seddon Park, Hamilton, on Sunday.

The visitors struggled in the chase of the 195-run target from the start as they lost both of their openers, Mohammad Rizwan and Saim Ayub, within the first overs for just 10 runs.

After two early departures, Babar Azam and Fakhar Zaman brought the Green Shirts back in the game by forming a formidable 87-run partnership which saw the latter completing a well-deserved half-century in 24 balls with the help of five sixes and three fours.

However, as soon as Fakhar departed by becoming victim of Adam Milne, wickets started to fall and the visitors soon found them 125-6 in 14.3 overs.

Ifthikhar Ahmed (4 off 8), Azam Khan (2 off 3), and Aamer Jamal (9 off 8) failed to stay and help their side put up a fight.

Once again, just like the first match, Babar Azam top scored for the Men in Green by scoring 66 runs off 43 runs with nine boundaries but his effort went in vain.

Milne bagged four wickets and was followed by Ben Sears and Ish Sodhi, who picked two each.

Earlier in the first innings, Finn Allen powered New Zealand to a 194-run total as the right-hander played a rapid innings of 74 runs on just 41 balls, courtesy of seven fours and five sixes.

Thanks to Allen's brilliant start, the home side looked all set to score a big total but things started to fall apart as soon as he was removed by Usama Mir's googly in the 13th over.

The home side was 137-2 in 13 overs when Allen walked back to the pavilion, but after his departure, they only managed to score 57 runs in the remaining seven overs.

Pakistani bowlers made an excellent comeback in the match and managed to restrict the in-form Kiwis to 194 runs, a total they can chase down.

Haris Rauf took three wickets in the 19th over and became Pakistan's top wicket-taker of the match. All of the visitors' bowlers, except skipper Shaheen Afridi, picked up wickets.

**Playing XIs**  
Pakistan: Mohammad Rizwan, Saim Ayub, Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Ifthikhar Ahmed, Azam Khan (wk), Aamer Jamal, Usama Mir, Shaheen Afridi (c), Abbas Afridi, Haris Rauf

New Zealand: Finn Allen, Devon Conway (wk), Kane Williamson (c), Daryl Mitchell, Glenn Phillips, Mark Chapman, Mitchell Santner, Adam Milne, Tim Southee, Ish Sodhi, Ben Sears

# Miller, Van Buuren aid Paarl Royals to edge Pretoria Capitals

**A Sports**

CENTURION: David Miller and Mitchell Van Buuren scored blistering half-centuries to power Paarl Royals to a thrilling ten-run victory over Pretoria Capitals in the sixth SA20 match at SuperSport Park on Sunday.

Royals registered their second victory in the ongoing season of SA20, while the Capitals sunk to the bottom with losses in both games.

Capitals after opting to field drew first blood with the wicket of Jason Roy in the second over, however, Jos Buttler and Wilan Lubbe raised a solid second-wicket stand to get their team out of the trouble.

Their 44-run partnership was dominated by Buttler, who scored 32 runs while Lubbe added 12 before James Neesham sent him packing.

Adil Rashid then removed Buttler, who scored 39 runs from 23 balls, including five



boundaries and one six.

Royal's skipper David Miller was joined by Mitchell Van Buuren with 69 runs on the board in the ninth over and the duo soon turned the game on its head with belligerent hitting.

They added an unbeaten 141 runs from 72 balls to propel their side to a mammoth 210 runs in their allocated 20 overs.

Miller top-scored with 75 off 42, featuring eight boundaries and three sixes, while Van Buuren played a brisk

40-ball knock of 72 runs with the help of seven boundaries and three sixes.

Daryn Dupavillon, Neesham and Rashid picked one wicket each for the Capitals.

While chasing the mammoth target, the Capitals lost two wickets in the first over of Lungi Ngidi with four runs on the board.

Opening batter Will Jacks and Rilee Rossouw then counter-attacked with a 147-run stand from 77 balls to push the team's total to 151 before Ngidi removed the

latter in the 14th over.

Rossouw top-scored for his side with 82 runs from 45 balls courtesy of ten boundaries and four sixes.

Bjorn Fortuin castled Jacks in the next over, reducing the Capitals to 153-4 inside 15 overs.

Jacks returned to the pavilion after scoring 58 off 34, which featured six boundaries and three sixes.

Skipper Neesham then played a nine-ball cameo, scoring 20 runs with four boundaries before skiing Andile Phehlukwayo's delivery which landed safely in Fabien Allen's hands.

The Capitals lost track of their chase, ultimately losing by 10 runs, as Obed McCoy bowled a brilliant last over, giving only three runs.

Ngidi led the bowling charts with the figures of 4-39, while Fortuin, McCoy and Phehlukwayo picked one wicket each.

# Disgusted O'Sullivan slams Masters venue Alexandra Palace as 'filthy'

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: Snooker great Ronnie O'Sullivan surged through to the semi-finals of the Masters on Thursday but left London's Alexandra Palace with a sick feeling after labelling the venue disgusting and filthy.

O'Sullivan, 48, has won the Masters seven times in his illustrious career but was not satisfied with the cleanliness of the arena which was built in 1865 and hosted the tournament since 2012.

"I don't like this place. I think it's filthy. Everything is filthy. It's cold. It's very cold. I have to wear my coat everywhere," said the world number one, nicknamed 'The Rocket', after beating Barry Hawkins 6-3 in the quarter-finals on Thursday.



"I'm a bit of a neat freak and when I come in here it makes my hair stand on end. I can't wait to

get out of here. I don't like it here. I find it disgusting. "You pass car parks. There are

dumpsters. Honestly, it makes me feel bad." Alexandra Palace has also

served as the venue for the World Darts Championship since 2008, memorably hosting 16-year-old Luke Littler's run to the final earlier this month.

"We work alongside Alexandra Palace to provide the best possible conditions for players on and off the table," said the World Snooker Tour (WST) to local media in response to O'Sullivan's comments.

"All the other players have spoken unanimously positively about the venue. The fans love coming here. This is evidenced by record ticket sales and the fact that all standard entry seats sold out before this year's tournament."

O'Sullivan will face Shaun Murphy in the semi-final on Saturday after the 41-year-old beat Jack Lisowski 6-3.

# Rohit Sharma achieves historic feat in T20I cricket



**A Sports**

INDORE: Indian captain Rohit Sharma became the first player in the history of T20I cricket to feature in 150 matches during the second T20I against Afghanistan here on Sunday.

Rohit Sharma holds the record for the most capped T20I player across the globe, followed by Ireland's Paul Stirling with 134 matches.

Meanwhile, Virat Kohli is the second-most capped Indian player with 116 matches after Rohit Sharma.

Notably, Sharma and Kohli made their return to the T20I format during the ongoing series after a hiatus of more than a year.

They had not featured in the shortest format for India since their semi-final defeat against England in the T20 World Cup in November 2022.

Both batters are mainstays of the Indian team and sit at the top of the list of highest run-scorers in T20I cricket, with Kohli leading the list by virtue of being the only batter to score 4000 runs in the format.

Meanwhile, Sharma has scored 3853 runs at an average of 31.07 at a strike rate of 139.14, with four centuries and 29 half-centuries since making his T20I debut against England in 2007.

He also holds the record for most centuries (4) and sixes (182) in T20I cricket.

# Pakistan's batting coach backs struggling Azam Khan



**A Sports**

HAMILTON: Pakistan's batting coach, Adam Hoolioake has backed wicketkeeper batter Azam Khan despite consecutive failures in the first two T20Is against New Zealand.

Azam Khan returned with scores of 10 and 2 in the two matches against New Zealand, which Pakistan lost by 46 and 21 runs respectively.

However, Adam Hoolioake, during the post-match conference after the second T20I, showed confidence in the abilities of the 25-year-old batter.

"Azam Khan is a destructive batsman, I mean unfortunately tonight he came in and he really needed to go straight away and he got out. One of those things where if it works you look great if it doesn't work you look stupid," said Hoolioake.

"He's an exciting player, a big hitter, though he hasn't shown it in these two games. Expect him to shine in the future," he added. Hoolioake also appreciated the competitiveness in Pakistan's squad, with talented players sitting outside, hinting at potential changes in upcoming matches.

"Azam [Khan] is a talented guy but there are lots of talented guys in the squad so you just have to see what the pitch is and what the makeup of the team is in the next game," said Hoolioake.

Pakistan team bundled out at 173 while chasing 195 runs against New Zealand in the second T20I match, with only three batters reaching double figures.

The two teams will square off in the third T20I University Oval in Dunedin on 17 January.

Pakistan squad for the tour of New Zealand: Shaheen Shah Afridi (c), Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Saim Ayub, Fakhar Zaman, Ifthikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Nawaz, Abrar Ahmed, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf, Mohammad Wasim Jr, Zaman Khan, Aamer Jamal, Azam Khan (wk), Sahibzada Farhan, Haseebullah Khan (wk) and Abbas Afridi.

# Matteo Berrettini pulls out of Australian Open



**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: Injured former top-10 star Matteo Berrettini pulled out of the Australian Open on Sunday on the eve of a blockbuster first-round clash with Greek star Stefanos Tsitsipas.

The Italian, a 2022 semi-finalist, withdrew with a foot problem, tournament organisers said.

"Wishing @MattBerrettini a speedy recovery after being forced to withdraw from Melbourne with a right foot injury," the ATP Tour said on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter.

Seventh-seed Tsitsipas, who was beaten in last year's final by Novak Djokovic, will instead face Belgian lucky loser Zizou Bergs.

"Matteo Berrettini has withdrawn from the #AusOpen with a right foot injury. He will be replaced in the draw by Zizou Bergs. Wishing you a quick recovery @MattBerrettini," the Australian Open announced the replacement on their official X account.

Matteo Berrettini has not competed since last year's US Open, where he retired from his second-round match due to an ankle injury.



## Convocation

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf awards certificate to a student of Bahria University Karachi Campus during 19th Convocation Ceremony.



Photo: Online

## Naval Chief attends the 19th Convocation of Bahria University Karachi Campus

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: 19th Convocation of Bahria University Karachi and the Institute of Professional Psychology was held at Karachi. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf and Rector Bahria University, Vice Admiral (Retd) Asif Khaliq graced the twin sessions of the convocation ceremony as chief guests respectively and

awarded Medals and Merit Certificates to the students achieving outstanding performance in academics.

A total of 1632 degrees, including 11 PhDs, were awarded to students from various departments, encompassing Management Studies, Business Studies, Humanities & Social Sciences, Computer Sciences, Earth & Environmental Sciences, Electrical

Engineering, Software Engineering, Computer Engineering, Media Studies and Professional Psychology.

During the first session, Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf awarded 22 Gold Medals and 18 Silver Medals to students who excelled in their respective degree programs. In his address he highlighted the significance of meeting chal-

lenges and reframing them as opportunities. Chief of the Naval Staff emphasized that teamwork and communications are the pivotal elements for success.

During the second session, Rector Bahria University, Vice Admiral (Retd) Asif Khaliq awarded 24 Gold Medals and 19 Silver Medals to students for their outstanding achievements in their respective

domains. In his speech, he emphasized that responsibility is the price of greatness. He further encouraged students to stay focused on their life goals while upholding professional ethics and maintaining integrity.

The convocation ceremony was attended by naval officers, notable civilians, Bahria University officials and parents of graduating students.

## Bilawal vows to bring about 'people's rule' after 2024 general elections

## Faheem Soomro

KHAIRPUR SINDH: Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has promised the people of the establishment of real "people's rule" in the country after the general elections, saying that the Pakistan People's Party is going to form the government, the prime minister and the four chief ministers will be together. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari while addressing the public meeting said that on February 8, 2024, Pakistan People's Party's real competition is against Muslim League-Nawaz, which has ruled for 3 times. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressed a public meeting in Khairpur Sindh to the applause of the people and said that he will hunt a Lion with an arrow in the election



2024. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) will defeat PMLN which has sucked the blood of

the people three times and crushed the people of Pakistan in the mill of inflation, the dream of PMLN of becoming

the Prime Minister and forming the government for the sixth time will be shattered. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto

Zardari nominated PPP candidates Syed Qaim Ali Shah, Syed Khurshid Ahmad Shah, Nafisa Shah, Nasir Hussain Shah, Farrukh Shah, Owais Shah, Syed Fazal Shah, nominated PPP candidates for the constituencies of Khairpur and Sukkur District National and Provincial Assemblies. Syed Javed Shah, Sajid Ali Bhanbhan, Shiraz Rajpar, Syed Bachal Shah, Halar Wasan, Nauman Islam Sheikh and Naeem Kharaal stood in front of the people and took an oath from them that after winning the election, they will not ignore the people, will not engage in nepotism. Also they will not forget the promises made to the people, but will fulfill the duty of serving the people.

## Maryam Nawaz to launch election campaign in Okara tomorrow

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: As the electioneering has failed to gain the traditional momentum with the political parties delaying campaign for the reasons not explained, Maryam Nawaz is scheduled to address a rally in Okara tomorrow (Monday) - a move that will certainly boost the voters' mood.

In a post shared on X, the social media platform which was previously known as Twitter, PML-N Spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb said Maryam - who is the party's chief organiser and widely believed as the political scion of three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif - would share the important points of the manifesto to the crowd at Iqbal Stadium, Okara.

Describing the public gathering as a part of the PML-N's election campaign, she said



the people would be the winner on February 8 - the day when Pakistan will go for countrywide polling.

The victory, she added, the days of progress and development would return after her party wins the much-awaited general elections.

Shehbaz Sharif, the PML-N president, had spoken to his supporters at Farooqabad, Sheikhupura, on December 30 - in a National Assembly constituency from where the party has nominated Irfan Dogar as its candidate.

## PTI kicks off election campaign in Karachi

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: A day after losing 'bat' as electoral symbol, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) launched its campaign for the upcoming polls with a rally led by central leader Sher Afzal Marwat at Karachi's Sea View beach on Sunday.

Marwat led the party's first election rally at Sea View with a significant number of participants. The rally was announced by PTI leader Raja Azhar, who mentioned that the party chose Sea View, a popular picnic spot in Karachi, to kick off its campaign.

However, Azhar complained about police barricades on the roads leading to the venue. Subsequently, the traffic police clarified that the main track along Sea View beach was temporarily blocked due to

the political rally but was soon restored.

The party faced a setback on Saturday when the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), leading to the loss



of its electoral symbol 'bat'.

Following the Supreme Court's decision, the deadline for the allotment of electoral symbols to political parties expired. The ECP assigned different symbols to PTI candidates, who will now participate as independent contenders in the Feb 8 elections.

Barrister Gohar Ali Khan,

the now-former chairman, stated that all PTI candidates would participate independently, and the party would release a list of candidates with their new election symbols.

Expressing disappointment over the Supreme Court's decision, Gohar declared the party's intention to challenge the verdict. The absence of a unified symbol poses a challenge for the PTI, as voters typically associate a symbol with a party and its candidates, he added.

Some prominent PTI leaders, contesting elections with different symbols, include Yasmin Rashid from NA-130 with the symbol 'laptop', Salman Akram Raja on NA-128 with 'racquet', Latif Khosa with the English letter 'K' for NA-122, and Mian Azhar with 'wicket' for NA-129 in Lahore.

## CEC Raja instructs KP IGP to provide security to JUI-F rallies



## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Raja has instructed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Inspector-General of Police (IGP) to provide security to Jamaat-e-Ulema Islam Fazl (JUI-F) election rallies amid threat reports.

The development comes as interior ministry had warned that there were serious threats to the lives of JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Awami National Party (ANP) provincial president Aimal Wali Khan.

In a letter to the chief secretaries and inspector general of police of all provinces and circulated by the ANP, the interior ministry had said it had received reports from reliable sources

revealing serious threats to the lives of the Maulana and Aimal.

"It is requested that extreme caution and vigilance is exercised and necessary security arrangements are made at Maulana Fazl and Aimal's residences and during movement and public gatherings to avert any untoward incident," it said in a letter.

Meanwhile, JUI-F leader Maulana Hafiz Waqas submitted an application in election commission, seeking security for party workers and rallies ahead of general elections.

Responding to the application, CEC Sikandar Raja Sultan directed the KP IG to make necessary security arrangements at JUI-F election rallies. "Law and order should be maintained in the election campaign", he added.

## Yousuf Raza Gillani took another wicket of PML-N in Multan

## Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister and Senator Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani took another wicket Of PML-N in Multan

Pakistan People's Party candidate National Assembly Constituency NA 148 met former Prime Minister Senator Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani along with Barrister Mudassar Hussain Shah Malik Manzoor Domra and ex-PML-N ticket holder Constitu-

ency PP 214 Sardar Mehboob khan Khetran.

After the meeting with Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, Sardar Mehboob Khetran joined Pakistan Peoples Party calling PML-N Khairabad and announced full support for the candidates of Pakistan Peoples Party in the upcoming election.

Sardar Mehboob Khetran announced the joining on this occasion Malik Fayaz Jhakdi Malik Ghani Khokharseth Ishaq Rabnawaz Goga was present.

## Another resolution seeking delay in polls lands in Senate

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Another resolution seeking a delay in the February 8 polls moved in the Senate on Sunday, citing the weather and the security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Senator Hilalur Rehman of the Independent Parliamentary Group submitted the resolution citing severe cold weather, snowfall, and security challenges as the hindrances for the general elections.

"Severe cold and snowfall in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are depriving the citizens to cast their ballots while the candidates are also facing numerous challenges to run their campaigns," said the resolution.

"In the same way, due to security concerns in the country, espe-

cially in KP, candidates are facing threats of terrorist attacks while campaigning," it said, adding that it was also creating obstacles and limiting candidates' participation in their campaigns.

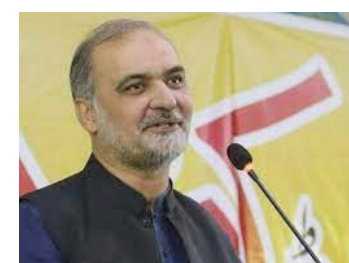
It added that the date of Feb 8 to hold the elections is not suitable. The resolution urged the ECP to delay polls to a date which was acceptable for all the relevant stakeholders.

It merits mention here that it was the third resolution moved in the upper house demanding delay in elections.

A similar resolution was tabled in the Senate a couple of days ago.

The resolution was moved by Senator Hidayatullah, a member of Pakistan's upper house from the Independent Parliamentary Group.

## Hafiz Naeemur Rehman hails South Africa for raising voice for Palestine



## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Amir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman hailed South Africa for raising voice for the oppressed people of Palestine and said Muslim World should have come forward against Israel's genocide but unfortunately it is not the case.

Addressing participants of the Gaza Million March, taken out at Shahrah-e-Faisal on Sunday, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman stressed the need to take all possible measures in everyone's capacity to support Palestinians

against Israeli occupation.

He said that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been carrying out a genocide in Gaza and he enjoys the support of not only the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and the European countries but also the silent but very decisive support from the Muslim World.

He also paid a rich tribute to the Houthi movement in Yemen for supporting Hamas against the occupation forces of Israel.

The JI leader said that after the October 7 initiative, the world has visibly divided into two parts and the people of conscience have lined up themselves against Israel.

The Gaza Million March in Karachi marked the 100 days of Israeli genocide campaign against Palestinians in Gaza and urged the global conscience to act immediately against the ethnic cleansing by Israel.

Ji Pakistan Ameer Sirajul Haq also addressed the participants of the Million March through an audio link.