





# PML-N wins 9 out of 14 constituencies of Rawalpindi district

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Muslim League (N) has emerged as the leading political party in Rawalpindi district by securing 9 out of 14 Punjab Assembly seats in the general elections 2024 on Feb 8 polls. According to the unofficial results issued by the Returning Officers/ECP, Muhammad Bilal Yamin of PML N has won the election for Punjab Assembly PP-6, Rawalpindi I (Murree) constituency by securing 65,056 votes. His runner-up Zain ul Abideen bagged 33,475 votes. Overall Voters' turn-out remained 56.32%. From PP-7, Rawalpindi II (Murree) constituency independent candidate Muhammad Shabbir Awan has won by securing 72,898 votes against his runner-up Raja Saghir Ahmad of PML N who bagged 66,338 votes. Turn-out remained 49.66% in the constituency. Independent candidate Javed Kausar has won from PP-8 (Gujarkhan) constituency by securing 47,526 votes, while his runner-up Khurram Parvez Raja of PPP

secured 40,603 votes. Voters' turn-out remained 45.88%. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz candidate, Shaukat Raja has won the election for Punjab Assembly constituency PP-9, Rawalpindi-III (Gujarkhan) by securing 50,560 votes. His runner-up was PPPP candidate, Chaudhry Sarfaraz Ahmad Khan who bagged 43,528 votes. The voters' turn-out remained 55.18%. PML N candidate Naeem Ejaz has won the election from PP-10, Rawalpindi IV constituency by securing 48,759 votes. His runner-up was independent candidate Muhammad Ameer Afzal who bagged 34,413 votes. Overall turnout of voters remained 56.26%. From PP-11, Rawalpindi V (Taxila) constituency, PML N candidate Imran Ilyas Ch has won the election for Punjab Assembly by securing 27,657 votes whereas his runner-up Haji Zafar Iqbal, independent candidate secured 16,594 votes. Voters turn-out remained 50.04%. PML N candidate Mohsin Ayub Khan has won the election for Punjab Assembly PP-12 (Taxila) Rawalpindi VI constituency

by securing 41,338 votes. Independent candidate Saad Ali Khan remained runner up by securing 35,108 votes. Voters turn-out 53.89%. Independent candidate, Malik Fahad Masood has won the election PP-13, Rawalpindi-VII constituency by securing 56,723 votes. His runner-up was PML N candidate, Malik Umer Farooq who bagged 24,087 votes. The voters turn-out remained 47.47%. PML N candidate, Malik Iftikhar Ahmad has won the election from PP-14 Rawalpindi VIII constituency by bagging 40,148 votes. His runner-up Nasir Ali Khan, independent candidate secured 33,487 votes. Voters turn-out remained 56%. Malik Mansoor Afsar of PML N has won the election for Punjab Assembly PP-15 Rawalpindi IX constituency by securing 62,163 votes. Independent candidate Ziada Khalique Kayani remained runner-up by securing 54,036 votes. Overall voters turn-out remained 52.20%. PML N candidate, Ziaullah Shah has won the election for Punjab Assembly PP-16, Rawalpindi X constituency. He secured



45,478 votes while his runner-up Ejaz Khan, independent candidate secured 36,402 votes. Voters turn-out remained 41.80% Abdul Latif, candidate of PML N has won the election for Punjab Assembly PP-17, Rawalpindi XI constituency by securing 45,677 votes. His runner-up Raja Rashid Hafiz who was independent candidate secured 38,189 votes. Overall voters turn-out remained 41.14%. Inde-

pendent candidate Asad Abbass has won the election from PP-18, Rawalpindi XII constituency by securing 46,295 votes. His runner-up Sajjad Khan who was candidate of PML N, bagged 30,640 votes. Voters turn-out remained 41.95%. Independent candidate Muhammad Tanveer Aslam has won the election for Punjab Assembly constituency PP-19, Rawalpindi-XIII by securing 43,987 votes. His runner-

up was Pakistan Muslim League (N) candidate, Haji Parvez Khan who bagged 16,768 votes. Overall voters turn-out remained 42.69%. The highest turnout among all 14 constituencies of Rawalpindi district was found to be 56.32% in PP-6 (Murree area) where Muhammad Bilal Yameen of PML N has won the election. Whereas, Muhammad Shabbir Awan, an independent candidate got the highest number of votes in all provincial constituencies of Rawalpindi by securing 72,898 record votes, in PP-7 (Murree area) constituency. Overall polling process remained peaceful throughout the polling day. The district administration, law enforcement agencies, district election commission and district police had been continuously monitoring the process. Overall monitoring was being monitored from the district control room as well as from the police command and control room. Rescue 1122 and police patrolling parties too, remained vigilant at their respective beats.

## PMLN sweep NA seats, PTI backed candidate dominates over PA seats

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: The PML-N candidates' sweeps both national assembly seats while independent candidates under PTI umbrella dominate on the provincial assembly seats as three out of five constituencies of the district. According to the results announced by returning officer (RO), the national assembly constituency, NA-49, Attock-I, the PML-N candidate former federal Minister Sheikh Aftab Ahmed was elected by securing 119727 votes while PTI leader and former member national assembly Major (ret'd) Tahir Sadiq who contested as independent candidate could not retain his seat and clinched 110230 votes. In the national assembly constituency, NA-50, Attock-II, the PML-N candidate Malik Sohail Khan was elected by securing 119075 votes while Eman Waseem- daughter of Major (ret'd) Tahir Sadiq who also contested as independent candidate loses with thin margin as she got 109189 votes. The TLP Chief Hafiz Saad who was contesting from this constituency secured 91709 votes. Mixed trend was witnessed on the



provincial assembly constituency landscape of the Attock district as political heavyweights suffered defeat in their strongholds. Although PTI failed to retain its domination; however PTI backed candidate made a surprising win in Hazro and snatched the constituency from PML-N. In the provincial assembly constituency of Hazro, PP-1, Attock-I, Qazi Ahmed Akbar- PTI district President contesting as independent candidate beats former provincial minister for sports Jehangir Khan-

zada- a political heavy weight. Mr Akbar secured 49,257 votes while Khanzada secured 36,443 votes. It worth mentioning that Mr Akbar is remain underground since May 9 incident and do not run his election campaign. In the provincial assembly constituency of Hassanabdal, PP-2, Attock-II, PTI leader Sardar Muhammad Ali- contesting as independent candidate elected by securing 36,093 votes while PML-N candidate Iftikhar Ahmed Khan secured 35,891 votes declared

runner up. In the provincial assembly constituency of Attock city PP-3, Attock-III, Syed Ijaz Boukhari- PTI leader contesting as independent candidate secured 36,897 votes while PML-N candidate Hameed Akbar secured 31,857 votes and was declared runner up. Ijaz Boukhari is a veteran politician and close relative of PTI leader Zulfi Boukhari and former provincial minister Syed Yawar Boukhari. In the provincial assembly constituency of Pindigheb, PP-4, Attock-IV, the PML-N candidate former provincial minister Sher Ali Khan grabbed winning slot by securing 48,593 votes, TLP candidate Malik Amnat Khan remain runner up by getting 43,365 votes while PTI candidate contesting as independent candidate secured third position. In the provincial assembly constituency of Jand, PP-5, Attock-V, Malik Itibar Khan of PML-N won by securing 46,665 votes while PTI candidate former member Punjab assembly contesting as independent candidate failed to retain his seat and get 43,620 votes.

## PPP registers clean sweep in Thatta and Sujawal

Kamran Khamiso Khowaja

THATTA: The Pakistan People's Party went on to register clean sweep in Thatta and Sujawal districts after it all candidates emerged victorious in both the district. As per the provisional results received from district returning officer PPP candidate for NA: 225 Thatta Sadiq Ali Memon who replaced his mother as candidate for this constituency toppled his opponents by securing 1,40,773, while Rasool Bux Jakhro of Pakistan Muslim League (N) stood second and could only muster 28,899 votes. Haji Ali Hassan Zardari PPP candidate for PS-76 once again won the seat comprising coastal areas of the district with a landslide



margin. Zardari acquired 71,408 votes while TLP candidate Altaf Katch could only receive 4,812 votes. The candidate of Pakistan People's Party Riaz Hussain Shah Shirazi son of veteran politician Aijaz Shah Shirazi, smoothly crossed the winning line by obtaining 80,744 votes, while JUI-F

grabbed 15,114 votes. Coastal constituency of district PS: 74 once again went to PPP following landslide victory of Muhammad Ali Malkani with a formidable score of 83,600 votes. Independent candidate stood way behind him with 14,103 votes. Shah Hussain Shah Shirazi of PPP also registered remarkable victory with 72,942. The polling process ended across district peacefully except few incidents of heated arguments reported from Tarr Khowaja. Patel Ismail, Faiz Muhammad Jat and a polling station of Jati town of district Sujawal. Supporters of winning candidates celebrated their victory by taking to steers and dancing on drum-beats in Darro and Mirpurbathoro cities of district Sujawal.

## JI congratulated Tehreek-e-Insaaf for its success despite the worst conditions

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Secretary General Jamaat-e-Islami Amir-ul-Azeem has congratulated Tehreek-e-Insaaf for its success despite the worst conditions. In a statement from Mansoorra, he said that unlike institutions and courts, the public decision has come in favor of Tehreek-e-Insaaf, which should be respected. He said that the results of distant areas of Sindh continued to come, but the old history of honoring MKM by withholding the results of Karachi was repeated. He said that the Chief Election Commission should have restored the phone service or else resigned but he is still in his post showing brazenness. Voting continued to be accurate during the elections, but in those constituencies where the counting was rigged and the results were changed later, they should be rectified immediately.

## Asad Qaiser clinches victory in NA-19 Swabi

PPA

SWABI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) backed independent candidate and former speaker of National Assembly Asad Qaiser has clinched victory in NA-19 Swabi in the general election 2024. According to unofficial results, the PTI-backed independent candidate Asad Qaiser bagged 115,635 votes followed by JUI candidate Fazal Ali with 45,567 votes. Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) backed independent candidate Barrister Gohar Ali Khan clinched victory in NA-10 Buner in the general election 2024, ARY News reported. According to unofficial results, the PTI-backed independent candidate Barrister Gohar Ali Khan bagged 110,023 votes followed by Awami National Party (ANP) candidate Abdul



Rauf with 30302 votes. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) backed independent candidate Malik Muhammad Aamir Dogar clinched victory against Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) patron-in-chief Jahangir

Tareen in NA-149 Multan. The PTI-backed - independent candidate bagged 143613 votes over the IPP's Jahangir Khan Tareen, who managed to get 50166 votes. A daylong polling process concluded

on Thursday for the General Election 2024 overall in a peaceful manner, with active participation from all age group voters who came out in droves to elect candidates of their choice. The polling started simultaneously across the country at 8 am and continued till 5 pm without any break to provide maximum time to citizens to exercise their right to vote enshrined in the constitution. The voters present in the premises of the polling stations at the poll-ending time were allowed to cast their votes, said a spokesperson for the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). According to the ECP, over 128 million registered voters were scheduled to exercise their democratic right by casting votes for candidates participating in elections for the national and provincial legislatures. The polling was held for 265 seats of

## We will bring country back to path of stability: Yusuf Raza Gilani

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani has said that the nation has given a divided mandate, but all political parties should unite to get the country out of crises. We have extensive experience of coalition governments. We will take everyone together. Political stability is essential for economic stability

## AJK Election Commission approves issuance of orders for registration of political parties

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: In the press release issued by the spokesperson Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission, has said that according to the order issued by the Election Commission, the decision of the High Court dated 05.10.2023 entitled Waheed Ashraf v. Election Commission etc. The Chief Election Commissioner of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, after reviewing the preliminary report of the documents submitted to the committee established to regulate the registration of political parties, approved the issuance of orders and its publication in print and electronic media issued. In the light of the decision of the Supreme Court, according to the decision of the Election Commission, a meeting of the commission was held to regulate the registration of the political parties. In order to regulate the registration of parties it was directed to submit the required documents by 19 November 2023, which date was later extended to 19 December 2023 and 19 January 2024 at the request of the political parties, but the date was not fixed. No political party has submitted the documents in full till now, the documents submitted by the parties are either incomplete or not correct as per the rules. Therefore, in continuation of the decision of the Supreme Court, dated 05.10.2023 entitled Waheed Ashraf v. Election Commission etc., it is ordered that all such political parties do not come under the definition of a registered political party until they fulfill all the required documents, and till such time any such political party shall neither have any privilege as a registered political party nor shall be eligible to contest the election as a registered political party on any particular electoral symbol in any subsequent election.

## Muslim Conference to observe 9th anniversary of Afzal Gaur

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan said that the ninth anniversary of the great hero of the Kashmiri freedom movement, Dr. Muhammad Afzal Gaur, who lived all over the world, was celebrated with devotion and respect. India has been hanged the prominent Kashmiri hero Muhammad Afzal Gaur on February 9, 2013, while Muhammad Maqbool Butt was hanged on February 11, 1984 in Delhi's infamous Tihar Jail. Their dead bodies were buried in the prison premises. He expressed these views while talking to the media. President Muslim Conference paid great tribute to Maqbool Muhammad Butt and Muhammad Afzal Gaur and said that the martyrdom of the two leaders killed the freedom movement. A new spirit has breathed in Kashmir. He said that the Kashmiri people will not let their sacrifices go in vain and will fulfill their mission at any cost. He said that it is a cruel and inhumane act that after hanging Maqbool Butt and Afzal Gaur, their bodies have been imprisoned by India for many years. No civilized society in the world can adopt such cruel behavior. After some time it was proved that Afzal Gaur was hanged innocently on a false charge and similarly Maqbool Butt was executed for the Kashmir Freedom Movement. He said that India cannot achieve its nefarious goals through executions and oppression. In any case, India should give Kashmiris the right to self-determination. India cannot suppress Kashmir's freedom movement by brutality. The movement of Kashmiris will surely succeed and they will surely get freedom one day. He appealed to the international community to play its role in stopping the atrocities in Occupied Kashmir and for a just solution to the Kashmir issue.

## Major upset as Rana Sanaullah loses Faisalabad's NA-100 seat

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has faced another upset as former interior minister Rana Sanaullah lost the elections in the National Assembly constituency (NA-100). According to unofficial results received from all polling stations of NA-100, independent candidate Nisar Jutt won the NA-100 seat by securing 131,996 votes having a lead of 19,593 votes over the PML-N's Rana Sanaullah, who came in second position with 112,403 votes.



Islamabad  
15° – 23° Clear

## SERVICES

## Namaz Timings

Fajr .....5:34 am  
Zohr .....12:22 pm  
Asr .....4:07 pm  
Maghrib .....5:46 pm  
Isha .....7:10 pm

## EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad .....1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 &  
& Rescue Services ..... 4451122  
Motorway Police ..... 9266044  
Motorway Police ..... 9270601-20

## Women Police Stations

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

## ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance .....115  
PIA Flight Info ..... 114  
PIA Cargo ..... 9280979  
Railway Inquiry .....117  
Railway Exchange .....9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi .....5555489  
CAA ..... 9281092

## HOSPITALS

CMH .....561111  
MH .....561116  
MH .....561116  
Cantt Hospital .....9270907-11  
DHQ .....5556311-4  
RGH .....9290301-7  
Holy Family .....9290322-7  
PIMS .....9261170-79  
Polyclinic .....9218300-09  
Shifa International .....4603666

## DEPARTMENTS

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
Islamabad Metropolitan  
Corporation ..... 9209224  
Potohar Town ..... 9209224  
Rawal Town ..... 5773343

## COMPLAINTS

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

## GDA will Announce Next Action Plan Very Soon: Dr Safdar

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Grand Democratic Alliance leader Pir Syed Sadruddin Shah Rashidi, Mir Murtaza Khan Jatoi, Dr. Zavalafiqar Ali Mirza, Syed Zain Shah, Ayaz Latif Plaju, Liaquat Ali Khan Jatoi, Dr. Arbab Ghulam Rahim, Dr. Safdar Ali Abbasi and others in their joint statement.

The 2024 general elections are the biggest in the history of Pakistan. It has been declared a rigged election.

The GDA leaders warned the election organizing bodies that wherever there is an attempt to suppress the voice of the people, no one can do irreparable harm to the country.

He said that GDA completely rejects this fraudulent election. He added that we will never let anyone steal our mandate and GDA will announce its future action plan very soon. Instructing the workers to remain peaceful and abide by the law. Wait for the decision of the GDA leadership.

## PM directs for focus on vertical buildings construction to provide maximum houses to people

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to make special focus on the construction of vertical buildings for providing houses to maximum people, instead of using valuable agricultural land in the allotment of plots to the employees.

Chairing the meeting of the Federal Cabinet, he also directed to formulate policy in this regard.

The policy of allotment of plots to the CDA employees was presented to the Federal Cabinet in light of the decision of the Islamabad High Court.

According to the decision of the Islamabad High Court, the CDA had to determine the difference in the income of the CDA by giving employees at concessional rates.

The Cabinet deferred the decision on

the proposed allotment policy.

On the recommendation of the Interior Ministry, the Cabinet also approved the open bidding for the procurement of services of a category A audit firm, issued by the State Bank of Pakistan for the audit of National Database Registration Authority (NADRA). It modified the decision taken by the Federal Cabinet in 2019, according to which only four large and reputed audit firms could be hired for the audit of NADRA.

However in this decision, all the category A firms registered in the SBP have been provided equal opportunities for the audit of NADRA.

The meeting was apprised that to make the audit of NADRA, more effective, transparent and in line with the international standard, it was important to provide equal opportunities to all the category A firms registered with the SBP for audit of NADRA.



## Fly

ISLAMABAD: A view of Herds of pelicans fly back to the nest at sunset at Rawal Lake, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

## Chief Justice of Pakistan to take action against election rigging

Arshad Raza Zaidi

MULTAN: Zahoor Ahmed Bhutta PTI an independent candidate from Multan's provincial constituency 218, has rejected the rigging of the election and has demanded immediate notice from the Chief Justice of Pakistan and the Chief Election Commissioner and if action is not taken, the streets will be taken. But he has announced this announcement in the press club. During the press conference with his supporters, what did Jawad Zulkafil do on this occasion? Malik Asif Naem. Malik Imran Bhutta, Muaz Bhutta, Malik Fakhrul Islam Bhutta, Shiraz Bhutta, Jamshed Sandhal and others were present. Zahoor Ahmed Bhutta added that form 45 was given to us last night and my victory was announced, but the opponent was Salman Naem, the candidate of PML-N. By declaring 45914 votes under Form 47 on the basis of preference. Successful and I was defeated by declaring 41627 votes and

13698 votes were rejected. What could be a bigger rigging? In response to a question, he said that on February 8 at twelve o'clock in the night I was given Form 45 when the polling station. But when they went to collect their belongings, the polling staff were opening and sealing the voting bags. When I inquired about this, the polling staff arrested 11 of my workers accusing me of interfering in the work of the polling station and filing a case in Jalilabad police station. How could we attack our mandate if we got it? If we do not get justice, we will be forced to protest for justice. In response to another question, he said that we will not remain silent and will not allow the rights of the people of the constituency to be robbed. A team of lawyers will fight the election rigging case and God willing we will succeed.

Multan. Zahoor Ahmad Bhutta, an independent candidate of Multan Provincial Constituency 218, supported by PTI, is holding a press conference.

## LHC bars ECP from releasing NA-128 result



Bureau Report

LAHORE: The directives were issued on a petition filed by Salman Akram Raja, who claimed the returning officer (RO) violated the election act by not releasing the election result.

The plea urged the court to order the Returning Officer to compile the election in the plaintiff's presence.

Hearing the petition, LHC Justice Ali Baqir Najafi barred the electoral watchdog from releasing NA-128 result. The court also issued notices to ECP and Awn Chaudhry for Feb 12.

According to unofficial results, IPP candidate Awn Chaudhry, backed by PML-N, secured victory in NA-128 Lahore with 172,576 votes, against PTI backed independent candidate Salman Akram Raja with 159,024 votes.

## Population Welfare chief discusses World Bank's Punjab Family Planning Program

Bureau Report

LAHORE: An important meeting was held in connection with the Punjab Family Planning Program of the World Bank under the chairmanship of Secretary of Population Welfare Punjab Salman Ejaz. In the meeting, Director General Population and CEO PPIF Saman Rai, Additional Secretary (A&F) Ahmed Usman, Additional Secretary (Tech) Dr. Naila Altaf, Director (A&F) Muhammad Shahid Nusrat, Director (Technology) Dr. Zubdah Riaz and Punjab Population Innovation Fund Chief Finance Officer Abdul Qayyum and other representatives attended. Secretary of Population Welfare Punjab Salman Ejaz while addressing the meeting said that Punjab province is home to more than half of the country's population. This World Bank program is based on improving the means and use of family planning to reduce population growth. This World Bank program is providing free access to quality family planning services to the people of Punjab and institutionalizing quality of care in family planning services. Salman Ejaz said that the delivery system focuses on creating awareness among the people and providing better health-related facilities to make more families aware of the benefits of family planning. Secretary of Population Welfare Punjab added that this World Bank program will help in scaling up innovations like clinical franchising, voucher schemes, and family planning counseling through community leaders. He said that this program has been piloted in different districts of Punjab and the results of family planning are improving. The program is being extended to remote areas and communities where there is limited or no access to family planning services. Salman Ejaz said that lady health workers, family welfare workers, and community health workers are linked to health facilities, family health clinics, and family welfare through a wide network. Through this World Bank program, the program will support voucher incentive schemes, social marketing, engagement of men and community leaders, and youth platforms to increase utilization of family planning services. Interconnection of service providers related to this will also be improved.



## JI announces sit-in outside ECP, RO offices over 'unfair' results

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has announced sit-in protests outside the Election Commission and RO offices, demanding a thorough review of the results of the general election 2024.

As per the details, all three Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) National Assembly candidates raised concerns about the results on the general election 2024 and announced to hold the protest.

The party has submitted formal requests to rectify the results in accordance with Form 45, raising concerns about the accuracy and fairness of the election outcome.

Form 45 is a critical document in the election process, and contains the consolidated statement of the results of the count in a polling station.



## Rigging complaint in general election held in District Vehari

Malik Saleem Shahid

VEHARI: According to the official results of 4 national and 8 provincial assemblies of Wahari district, PTI-supported candidate Ayesha Nazir Jat was declared successful by getting 1 lakh 19 thousand 820 votes from Constituency NA 156. League N candidate Nazir Ahmed Arain could get 90 thousand 353 votes. Constituency NSyed Sajid Mehdi of Muslim League (N) got 99,332 votes from A-157 and Sabin Safdar, an independent candidate supported by PTI, got 79,996 votes. Begum Tahmina Daultana of PML-N won from constituency NA 158 by securing 111,196 votes, while her rival, PTI-backed independent candidate Tahir iqbal Chaudhry stood second with 1,3052 votes.

From 159 to PTI supported independent candidate Aurangzeb Khachi 1 lakh 16 thousand 198 votes. He was successful, while his opponent Saeed Khan Munis of the Muslim League-N got 96 thousand 191 votes, Muhammad Yusuf Kasilia of the Muslim League-N won 47 thousand 360 votes from the provincial constituency PP 229, while Arifa, an independent candidate supported by PTI, won. 38 thousand 207 votes came in Nazirjat constituency. PTI from PP 230 constituency. Independent candidate Syed Salman Mehdi supported by 44 thousand 950 votes won and Muslim League-N candidate Mian Irfan Aqeel Daultana got 30 thousand 570 votes. PTI supported independent candidate Khalid Nisar Dogar got 50 votes from constituency PP 231. Successful

by getting 1,960 votes, while the candidate of Muslim League-N, Khalid Mahmood, won 40Hazarara was second with 28 votes. From constituency PP 232, Malik Naushir Langriyal of Muslim League-N won by getting 33 thousand 151 votes, while his opponent Ali Waqas Hanjra of Jamaat-e-Islami got 26 thousand 206 votes.

Successful by securing 816 votes while independent candidate Rai Zahoor supported by PTI Kharal came second by securing 48 thousand 491 votes. Naem Khan Bhabha of PML-N was elected with 43 thousand 908 votes from constituency PP 234. Against him, PTI-backed independent candidate Salman Bhabha got 24 thousand 484 votes. can take

PTI-backed independent candidate Jahanzeb Khan

Khachi won from PP-235 constituency by getting 50,250 votes, while his opponent, Muslim League-N candidate Khaliq Nawaz Arain got 39,525 votes. And from PP-236 constituency, P.T.I supported independent candidate Ali Raza Khakwani by getting 61 thousand 415 votes. Asif Saeed Munis of Muslim League-N was successful in the second place with 54 thousand 211 votes. The election commission and the returning officers kept the results for more than 12 hours and that is why the defeated candidates.

He has accused Election Commission and Returning Officers of rigging. Tahir Iqbal Chaudhry from NA 158 surrounded the Returning Officer's office along with his supporters and protested fiercely



ly and has announced to go to court refusing to accept Form No. 47 against him. Tahir Iqbal

said that Form No. According to 45 night more than 80% of results in 15 thousand I was

winning with a lead, then I and other PTI candidates were defeated by late night action



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Restrictions on Internet, mobile service on polling day Previous

The US Department of State said on Thursday it was “concerned” about Pakistan’s restrictions on mobile and Internet services on polling day, as millions of Pakistanis headed to polling booths across the country to vote during the country’s general elections. Arab News Reported

Pakistani authorities decided to suspend mobile data services across the country minutes before voting began Thursday morning. The move was seen by many as an effort to keep opposition voters from getting information or coordinating activities. However, Pakistan’s interior ministry said it opted for the blockade to ensure the security of polling stations after at least 28 people were killed in two explosions near election offices in the southwestern province of Balochistan on Wednesday. As of 3:00 a.m., mobile phone services remained suspended across the country even after polling had ended at 5:00 p.m.

Vedant Patel, the US State Department’s principal deputy spokesperson, said during a media briefing that Washington condemned election violence that impacted polling stations, election officers and Pakistan’s election regulator.

“And as you heard me say earlier in the week, we are concerned about the restrictions on the exercise of freedom of expression,” Patel said. We’re tracking reports of restrictions on Internet and cell phone access across Pakistan on polling day.”

He said the US, along with the international community, will continue to stress the importance of democratic institutions, a free press, a vibrant civil society, and “expanded opportunities for political participation of all of Pakistan’s citizens.”

When asked to comment on concerns of rigging, especially against former prime minister Imran Khan’s Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, the US official declined to comment on preliminary election results and media reports.

“I am not going to get ahead of any official results, and so I’m not going to comment or speculate further on what a government could look like, what the makeup could be or anything like that,” he added.

Khan, arguably the central pole of Pakistani politics, was missing from Thursday’s elections, as he has been in jail since August last year and is also disqualified from running for public office for ten years. The former premier was convicted in three back-to-back cases this month and faces dozens of other legal challenges, including one case in which he is accused of ordering violent attacks on military installations on May 9, 2023, which could entail the death sentence. Khan says all the cases are politically motivated to sideline him and his party from elections.

In the run-up to the polls, Khan’s PTI complained of a widening crackdown against the party, including not being allowed to campaign freely, and analysts questioned the legitimacy of an election that Khan, the main opposition leader and arguably the country’s most popular politician, was not allowed to contest.

Election 2024, Revenge and retribution - I

On election day, a multifaceted portrayal emerges from both social and traditional media, heralding the peaceful conclusion of the voting process. Despite efforts from all political parties, including state machinery, to diminish PTI’s influence, they misread the pulse of Pakistani voters. The dynamics of voting were reshaped by factors such as the influx of young and women voters, increased digital literacy and penetration, and the pervasive influence of social media platforms like WhatsApp. These elements were pivotal in this election, unlike in previous ones, marking a new era of voter empowerment in Pakistani politics.

While the state favored PML(N), the tactics employed by the state were thwarted by voters’ resentment over the heavy-handed crackdown on PTI leadership and supporters. Through their ballots, voters triumphed over planned irregularities, intimidation tactics, and pre-election rigging, underscoring a collective rejection of state interference.

The high voter turnout exemplified heightened public engagement and a desire for change. Overall, the prevailing mood among voters was one of seeking retribution for perceived injustices and asserting their autonomy in the electoral process.

The internet and mobile services were terminated throughout the day. Which were criticized by PPP and PTI criticized it, alleging an attempt to suppress voter

turnout and manipulate the outcome. This move sparked debates in traditional and social media, condemning it for impeding citizens’ rights and hindering transparency in the electoral process.

The services were partially restored after 6 pm but were again slowed down between 9 pm and 12 midnight, slowing down in the reporting of election results. This disruption occurred at a critical juncture, coinciding with the unexpected strong performance of PTI and PPP representatives, and the underwhelming showing of PML(N).

Returning offices cited server downtimes and technical difficulties as reasons for the delay, yet failed to provide clear explanations or confirm results compiled by presiding officers. The Election Commission intervened, instructing returning officers not to compile or issue results independently, but to forward them to the Commission for announcement, if deemed appropriate. The slow down of mobile services lead to rumors that since the PTI is winning in most of the seats, therefore, the state might step in to help its favorite party.

Despite widespread complaints from political parties about the prolonged delay, PML(N) remained conspicuously silent on the matter. Media outlets were abuzz with discussions on the implications of these delays, with many speculat-

ing about potential foul play or deliberate obstruction. The prolonged uncertainty fueled deep frustration among voters and raised doubts about the transparency and integrity of the electoral process. Calls for accountability and transparency are echoing across traditional and social media channels, with demands for swift action to address the delays and ensure the timely release of accurate results. The slow pace of result announcements cast a shadow of uncertainty over the election outcome, heightening tensions and underscoring the need for urgent measures to restore public confidence in the electoral process.

At midnight, despite the slowdown in reporting, notable developments emerged in various constituencies across

Pakistan. Shuib Shaheen in Islamabad secured a comfortable lead in PS 27, while Taj Mohammad of PTI surged ahead against the JUI candidate. Palarosan of PPP emerged victorious in Khairpur, while Ali Amin secured a commanding lead over Maulana Fazal ur Rehman. However, Jehangir Tareen of IPP faced defeat in both seats. Fazal Mohammad of PTI was also in the lead, and Umer Ayub clinched victory in 18 Haripur with a significant margin against PML(N). Asad Qaiser of PTI emerged victorious over the JUI-F candidate with a substantial lead, and Mr. Zubair Khan of PTI

secured a win in Battagram PK 34 against a JUI-F candidate. Meanwhile, Nawaz Sharif appeared to be leading with a clear majority.

At 12:30 am, these results prompted a sense of quiet unease in the PML(N) media center, where Nawaz Sharif was scheduled to deliver a victory speech. Journalists, who had been prepared for the event, were informed accordingly. However, a tweet from state representatives suggested optimism for PML(N) in Balochistan constituencies. Despite this, the dismal results in Punjab and KP provinces shifted discussions on TV channels toward the possibility of a PPP and PTI coalition government.

At around 2.30 am the Election Commission officially rebuked TV channels for disseminating inaccurate election results, asserting its sole authority in compiling and accepting final results.

Mr. Rauf Hassan, the PTI spokesperson, in an interview at 2:23 am, claimed that PTI has secured over 130 seats in the National Assembly and has dominated the KP province. Despite PTI’s apparent success, concerns arise over the election process’s slowdown and fears of potential rigging in favor of PML(N).

At 12:37 am in Karachi, Khalid Maqbool Siddique of MQM Haqparast confidently claimed victory in 18 to 19 out of 21 seats, breaking all previous records. He pledged to serve all citizens of Karachi, regardless of gender, race, or ethnicity.

To be continued



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

Corps Commanders Conference and Public Endorsement for Pak Army - III

In the intricate fabric of national defense and security, the relationship between the people and the armed forces mirrors the essential exchange of oxygen in sustaining life. This metaphorical connection underscores the critical role civilians play as the life-giving force that breathes vitality and purpose into the military.

Much like oxygen sustains the human body, the support and encouragement from the civilian population are crucial for maintaining the morale of the armed forces. Soldiers gain a sense of purpose and determination when they know their actions are appreciated and valued by the people they protect. Collective strength within the nation lies in the unity between the army and the people. When civilians actively participate in supporting the military, whether through moral backing, financial contributions, or voluntary service, they contribute to a powerful synergy that enhances the nation’s overall strength and resilience. Adequate resources are indispensable for the military’s operations, training, and equipment. Civilian contributions through taxes, donations, and investments act as the financial oxygen ensuring the armed forces have the necessary resources to fulfill their duties, making a well-funded military better equipped to face challenges and protect the nation. Just as oxygen sustains life physically, moral and emotional support from civilians is crucial for the mental resilience of military personnel. The continuous supply of

oxygen is necessary for the body’s growth and sustainability, and similarly, the youth of the nation represent the lifeblood for the military’s continued success. When young individuals are inspired, motivated, and encouraged to join the armed forces, it ensures a robust and capable military for the future. Oxygen symbolizes life, and national pride serves as the lifeblood of a nation. Civilians expressing pride in their armed forces and national identity create an environment where the military can thrive, fostering unity, resilience, and a shared commitment to the nation’s well-being. Support from civilians encourages innovation and adaptability within the armed forces, fostering an environment where they can evolve, stay technologically advanced, and effectively respond to emerging threats.

Among many reasons for the Pakistani people to support its army is the clear stance of the current Army chief and corps commanders on key national and international issues. The recent Corps Commander Conference is an example of this clear stance. The Corps Commanders’ Conference, chaired by Army Chief General Asim Munir, reiterated the commitment that no one would be allowed to use violence in the name of political activity. The army will perform its duties as per the constitutional mandate and the instructions of the Election Commission. The 262nd Corps Commanders’ Conference discussed the deployment of the army to assist the Election Commission in elec-

tions. The forum emphasized that violence in the name of political activism and sabotage of free and fair elections would not be allowed. The army will perform its duties as per the constitutional mandate and instructions of the Election Commission. The conference participants were briefed on Indian state-sponsored terrorism and India’s campaign to target Pakistani citizens. The forum agreed to expose India’s flagrant violation of international laws. Army Chief General Asim Munir asserted that Pakistan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity are sacred and inviolable, and the nation’s honor and aspirations will not be compromised. The forum expressed support for the people of Palestine, condemned India’s state-sponsored terrorism, and reiterated support for the right of Kashmiris to self-determination. The conference participants appreciated measures against smuggling, hoarding, money laundering, and illegal activities. The forum emphasized the need for economic and public welfare efforts to continue unhindered. The operational readiness of the formations was briefed, and the Army Chief urged commanders to maintain standards of professionalism and excellence during training. The conference paid tribute to the sacrifices of army officers and soldiers.

Readers, recent survey unequivocally demonstrates that the people of Pakistan stand behind their Army, appreciating the clear stance and actions taken by the Army chief and the Pakistan Army on national and international issues. The popularity refutes the false propaganda of anti-state elements and confirms the strong bond between the people and the armed forces of Pakistan.

Bonafide History of Israel

Syed Muawaz Ali Shah

On November 21st, 1917, Britain Foreign secretary “Arthur Balfour” wrote a letter that would set off a conflict that is still being fought hundreds of years later, “His Majesty’s Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object”. When Balfour wrote of his government’s intent to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine, 90 percent of the people living there were not Jewish.

But before this an Austro-Hungarian journalist named THEODORE HERZL started a new political movement “Zionism” a Jewish State which he mentioned in his 1896 pamphlet “JUDENSTAAT”.

At that time the idea of a new country for Jews wasn’t a new one. Since the 1870’s there were several organizations calling themselves “LOVERS OF ZION”.

They were really propagating this idea. Because of these reasons, in 1881, the first large-scale migration of Jews was seen in the Palestine area. Where Jews built many permanent settlements in the area and started living there.

Because this was a very holy area for them. Jerusalem is the holiest place for Jews. Do remember that at that time there was no Israel, Gaza or the West Bank.

The whole area was Palestine that fell under the Ottoman Empire. Under the Ottoman Empire, the Christians, Muslims and Jews lived together peacefully more or less.

Now we fast forward to the year 1915, World War I began. The British, French and Arab revolutionaries were fighting the Ottoman Empire. The British play a clever hand here. They tell the Arab revolutionaries that in return for their support in defeating the Ottoman Empire they will give them the Palestine area. And the Arab revolutionaries were fighting to create a unified Arab Country. The Arab revolutionaries wanted one Arab Country from Syria to Yemen. The Britishers promise the same thing to the Jews.

That they will help them to create their own Jewish Country near Palestine. They did so just in order to appease the American Jewelry and gain influence on American Politics.

But in reality, the British made a secret deal with the French. As soon as the Ottoman Empire fell after WWI, Britain and France divided the Middle East Area between themselves. The British took over the control of the Palestine region. From 1918-1948 the entire Palestine area was under the control of the British Government.

At this time in Germany, Hitler gets political power. And the Jews are massacred in millions in a genocide. The Jews flee from Hitler Controlled Europe to different countries to save themselves. Some get refuge in America, but many of these Jews go to Palestine. Britain allows them to enter Palestine initially, but later they start stopping them from coming to Palestine.

Because of this, an Israeli Nationalist Movement started in Pakistan. At the same time, around the 1940’s, the Palestine Nationalist movement had also begun. And the Palestinians were also demanding their own country. In 1948 the British government realized that enough enough and they cannot remain there longer. They left the Jewish to form a Jewish country and the Palestinians to form their own country. They accepted that they couldn’t do that and ceded the responsibility to the UN. The British then leave Palestine.

The United Nations then came up with a partition plan. About the area to be allotted for creating a Jewish country and a Palestinian country. In 1947, the UN partition plan was released. In the plan, the United Nations keeps 57 percent of the area for the Jewish country and 43 percent of the Arab Palestinian country. Jerusalem is a very historically important area for three religions Muslims, Christians and Jews. So, the UN decided that Jerusalem would be under international control. The Jews accept this plan and name their Country Israel. Here Israel Country was born on May 14, 1948.

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Xi Focus

Xi extends Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese, urging efforts to write new chapter in advancing Chinese modernization

Xinhua

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping, on behalf of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council, extended Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese Thursday at a reception in Beijing.

Xi, also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivered a speech at the gathering at the Great Hall of the People, greeting Chinese people of all ethnic groups, compatriots in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and overseas Chinese.

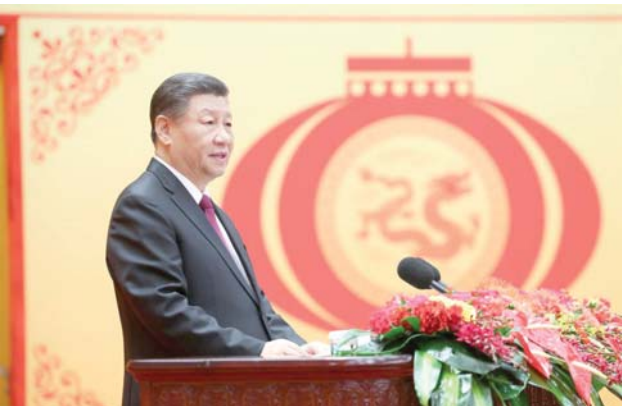
The outgoing Year of the Rabbit marked the beginning of the full implementation of the guiding principles of the 20th CPC National Congress on all fronts, Xi said, noting that the country faced an exceptionally complicated international environment and arduous tasks of reform, development, and maintaining stability.

"We pooled strength from Chinese modernization, kept in mind both domestic and international imperatives, overcame multiple difficulties and challenges, and made solid progress on a new journey toward building China into a modern socialist country in all respects," Xi said.

Li Qiang presided over the reception. Zhao Leji, Wang Huning, Cai Qi, Ding Xuexiang, Li Xi and Han Zheng were also present at the event.

Over the past year, China adhered to the general principle of seeking progress while maintaining stability and promoted economic recovery, Xi said.

Listing the progress made, Xi said the country's total grain output reached a new high,



Chinese President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivers a speech at a Spring Festival reception at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, Feb. 8, 2024. The CPC Central Committee and the State Council held the reception on Thursday in Beijing. (Xinhua/Ju Peng)



employment and prices have been kept generally stable, and breakthroughs were made in scientific and technological innovation.

Reform and opening up continued to deepen in China, a new round of reform of Party and

state institutions has been basically completed, the country's ecological environment continued to improve, and new steps have been taken on modernizing national defense and the armed forces, he said.



Xi also praised deepened efforts on exercising full and rigorous Party self-governance and fighting corruption.

By putting the people first, authorities worked hard to address the pressing difficulties and problems that concerned people most, and made all-out efforts in responding to natural disasters and advancing post-disaster recovery and reconstruction, thus maintaining overall social stability, Xi said.

"We actively support Hong Kong and Macao in better integrating into the overall situation of national development, firmly oppose separatist acts of 'Taiwan independence' and interference by external forces, and vigorously defend our country's sovereignty, security and development inter-

ests," Xi said.

Lauding China's solid efforts on advancing major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, Xi said the country has added certainty and positive energy to a world of change and disorder.

Xi said that looking back at all the hard work over the past year, we have more deeply realized that building a strong country and realizing national rejuvenation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization is not only a bright road for the Chinese people to pursue a better and happy life, but also a just way to promote world peace and development.

Xi pointed out that the year 2024 marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, and is a key

year for achieving the goals and tasks in the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025).

He stressed the need to adhere to the general tone of the work that seeks progress while maintaining stability, effectively enhance economic vitality, prevent and resolve risks, improve social expectations, consolidate and enhance the positive trend of economic recovery, continue to improve people's livelihood and well-being, as well as maintain overall social harmony and stability.

Underscoring the need to deepen reform across the board, Xi said efforts must be made to encourage entrepreneurship and creativity among all members of society, injecting great vigor into Chinese modernization.

As the totem of the Chinese

nation, dragon is deemed strong, fearless and benevolent, Xi noted.

Xi highlighted that dragon not only embodies the spirit of ceaselessly pursuing self-improvement, hard work and enterprise of the Chinese nation for 5,000 years, but also demonstrates the determination and aspiration of hundreds of millions of Chinese people to build China into a strong country and realize national rejuvenation.

Xi expressed the hope that in the Year of the Dragon, all Chinese people will pioneer and forge ahead with great endeavor and dedication, collectively writing a new chapter in advancing Chinese modernization.

This year's Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, falls on Feb. 10.

Celebrating Year of the Dragon

2024 Happy Chinese New Year grand celebrations kicked off in Pakistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: China Cultural Center in Pakistan and the Cultural Office of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan have jointly launched a series of activities to grandly celebrate the '2024 Happy Chinese New Year - Year of the Dragon' in Pakistan.

Taikonauts at China's Tian-gong space station extended New Year's greetings for the Year of Dragon to audience and the global Chinese community via video message, officially launching 2024 Happy Chinese New Year activities throughout the world.

China Cultural Center in Pakistan has launched a wide range of exciting online events, such as cultural performances, exhibitions, documentaries on culture, arts, tourism, and more, to showcase rich celebrations of the Lunar Chinese New Year.

In order to celebrate Chinese New Year with the communi-



ty, China Cultural Center in Pakistan has joined hands with China Window in Peshawar, Silk Road Cultural Centre in Quetta as well as the well-known restaurant MONAL group. In this regard, the MONAL restaurant

would allow Islamabad locals to experience the joyous Chinese New Year ambience.

Through this activity, Chinese nationals residing in Pakistan will have the chance to enjoy and celebrate Chinese New Year in

Pakistan in addition to helping Pakistani citizens participate in the festivities.

Chinese New Year also known as 'Spring Festival' is the most important festival of the year for the Chinese nation. It is an



important opportunity for families and friends to get together and celebrate the New Year. The Chinese people strive to make this event as special as possible, often spending hours preparing food and decorations for the events of the festival.

Happy Chinese New Year is usually celebrated with loud

showcases of talents, fireworks, and the adornment of red on everything, each coming with their cultural symbolism. Behind the colorful idiosyncrasies lie a period of renewal and welcoming of the future, while inversely also harkening back to one's roots of community, familial bond, and self-reflection.

China Cultural Center in Pakistan will also launch more activities on various social media platforms.

Friends from Pakistan can visit our social media platforms including Facebook and Wechat to witness the festive celebration of 2024 Happy Chinese New Year.

New Kazakh Prime Minister Outlines Key Government Tasks

News Desk

ASTANA: Olzhas Bektenov, the newly appointed Kazakh Prime Minister, outlined primary tasks at a Feb. 9 meeting, in accordance with instructions given by President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev at an expanded government session on Wednesday.

The Prime Minister stressed the need to prioritize the budget expenditures with a focus on obtaining a total economic return while completely excluding unproductive spending.

He instructed the Finance Ministry to audit the national budget within 10 days and local ones - within a month significantly reducing non-essential expenditures.

Bektenov noted the need to rewrite the Tax Code considering the opinions of the expert and business community.

"It is necessary to create conditions favorable for businesses to grow, without fear of fiscal costs and administrative burdens," he said.

Industrial development



Bektenov instructed First Deputy Prime Minister Roman Sklyar to involve all major industrial enterprises, particularly in the extractive industries, to present specific plans for establishing production facilities of high conversion.

He emphasized that domestic industrial companies should increasingly purchase Kazakh goods, works, and services to conclude appropriate agreements.

Construction, energy, and water industries

The Prime Minister stressed the importance of using domestic building materials and conducting audits to address cost overestimation.

He necessitated reliable power supply to industrial enterprises, setting a target of introducing over 700 megawatts of additional generation this year.

Bektenov instructed the Water Resources and Irrigation Ministry to prepare a set of measures for rational water consumption and initiate a water conservation campaign.

Regarding the construction of plants for processing solid domestic waste, he demanded proposals to attract private investment within a month.

Social block

The Prime Minister called for reforms in the healthcare insurance system, emphasizing the importance of digitization and transparency.

He gave specific instructions on digital transformation, transportation, agriculture, implementation of the Comfortable School and Modernization



of Rural Healthcare national projects, and reforming mechanisms of social support of citizens, public procurement and

public-private partnership.

It is crucial to move away from stereotypes, completely eradicating formalism and red

tape, Bektenov said, noting that ministers should promptly solve sectoral issues at their level independently.

"Everyone needs to understand that the pace of work will be increased, and work will be demanding," he concluded.



Bull & Bears

PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
62,943.74	64,143.87
Day's High	Day's Low
63,305.70	61,781.76
Index Value	Change
10,168,609,922	-1200.13
Percentage	Time
-1.87%	9 Feb, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,572.58	-22.90
Percentage	Time
-0.30%	9 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,624.64	-101.69
Percentage	Time
-0.26%	9 Feb, 12:28 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
36,897.42	+34.14
Percentage	Time
+0.093%	9 Feb, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183	184.8
Bahrain Dinar	743.09	751.09
Canadian Dollar	206	208
China Yuan	39.09	39.49
Danish Krone	40.25	40.65
Euro	302.5	305.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.74	36.09
Indian Rupee	3.37	3.48
Japanese Yen	2.1	2.18
Kuwaiti Dinar	906.92	915.92
Malaysian Ringgit	58.61	59.21
NewZealand \$	169.12	171.12
Norwegians Krone	26.13	26.43
Omani Riyal	726.28	734.28
Qatari Riyal	76.76	77.46
Saudi Riyal	74.3	75.1
Singapore Dollar	207	209
Swedish Korona	26.55	26.85
Swiss Franc	321.35	323.85
Thai Bhat	7.78	7.93
U.A.E Dirham	76.5	77.3
UK Pound Sterling	355	358
US Dollar	278.9	281.4

Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan increase by 3.63% in 6 months

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's export of goods and services to Afghanistan witnessed an increase of 3.63 per cent during the first six months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. The overall exports to Afghanistan were recorded at US \$260.716 million during July-December (2023-24) against exports of US \$251.580 million during July-December (2022-23), SBP data revealed.

On a year-to-year basis, the exports to Afghanistan decreased by 26.83 per cent from \$38.297 million in December 2022, against the exports of \$28.019 million in December 2023.

Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to Afghanistan also witnessed a decline of 46.02 per cent during December 2023 as compared to the exports of \$51.911 million in November 2023, the SBP data revealed. Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed an increase of 4.99 per cent in the first six months, from US \$14.222 billion to US \$15.288 billion, the SBP data revealed.

On the other hand, the imports from Afghanistan into the country during the months under review were recorded at US \$4.425 million against US \$13.253 million last year, showing a decline of 66.61 per cent in July- December (2023-24).

On a year-on-year basis, the imports for Afghanistan decreased by 28.39 per cent from US \$1.729 million in December 2022, against the imports of US \$1.238 million in December 2023.

On a month-on-month basis, the imports from Afghanistan into the country witnessed a nominal decrease of 3.95 per cent during December 2023, as compared to the imports of US \$1.289 million during November 2023, according to the data.

The overall imports into the country witnessed a decrease of 14.69 per cent, from \$29.588 billion to US \$25.241 billion, according to the data.

People hoping some economic relief: Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Friday that elections had been held, and the people are now waiting for the official results.

He said that when the new government is empowered, it must start preparing the budget and plan for debt repayments.

Mian Zahid Hussain said the government will need another IMF program for debt servicing as the current agreement will be completed by the end of next month.

Speaking to the business community, the

veteran business leader said that all the political parties have prioritized the economy in their manifestos, so the public hopes that the new government will take steps to provide some relief amid severe economic punishment.

The business leader said servicing local and foreign debt had become a major problem. The volume of these loans and their interest has increased so much that the government is forced to borrow even for operational spending.

The main reason for the increased debt is the tax system's weakness. In addition, large sums of money have been wasted on political agendas rather than improving the economy.

He said the resources have been wasted on many poorly designed projects, most of which have been completed for political benefits.



Mian Zahid Hussain said that the debt has reached 82 % of the GDP, 667 % higher than the government revenue, which equals 328 % of our exports.

He said the country's debt has doubled in the last seven years to \$ 124 billion, of which 22 % is to be paid in less than one year, which is a big challenge.

He noted that political leaders and the establishment have become convinced that the country can no longer be run as if it were going on. Many believe the situation will get out of hand without improvements and strong decisions.

He said that what the new government will do to provide relief to the masses remains to be seen.

Utilization

FAISALABAD: A boy is pulling his French fries stall along his motorcycle at a road in the city.



Photo: Online

SECP effectively enforces laws to promote compliance and transparency in corporate sector

PPA

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), aided by its in-house Adjudication Division, aims to promote compliance and transparency in the corporate sector. This quasi-judicial arm maintains independence and minimizes arbitrariness in decision making while adhering to laws and international best practices.

The Commission effectively enforced its laws in the first half of FY 2024-25, deciding 1,849 cases of violations and imposing penalties of approximately Rs.962 million for corrective measures.

From July to December 2023, the SECP primarily decided cases against companies alleged to violate Section 84 of the Companies Act, 2017, which prohibits companies from inviting, accepting, or renewing public deposits. A total of 11 orders were issued under Section 84, resulting in a penalty of Rs. 581.50 million. Directors of such companies were also disqualified from holding the office for five years using Commission's powers under Section 172 of the Companies Act, 2017.

Additionally, a penalty of Rs. 1.750 million was also imposed via 11 orders against listed companies for violating Section 199 of the companies Act, which only allows companies to invest in their associated companies or undertakings only through special resolution.

Another area of focus was digital lending.

The adjudication division passed 7 orders, imposing a penalty of Rs. 13.265 million under Section 282 of the Companies Ordinance, 1984, based on observations of various non-compliances with relevant laws.

Moreover, 21 orders were issued under SECP AML/CFT Regulations 2020 for alleged contraventions of mandatory AML/CFT regulations, including deficiencies in KYC/CDD processes, customer identity verification, risk categorization.



tion, unapproved AML policy documents, and Targeted Financial Sanctions obligations. The total penalty imposed was Rs. 14.66 million.

Five orders were issued for non-disclosure of substantial acquisition in voting shares of listed companies, and a penalty of Rs. 1.2 million was imposed under the Securities Act, 2015 for contraventions. Furthermore, a fine of Rs. 500,000 was levied for failing to disclose price-sensitive information in compliance with Section 96 of the Securities Act, 2015.

Moreover, 45 orders were issued for

filing substantial shareholding and directorship changes in listed companies under the Reporting and Disclosure (of Shareholding by Directors, Executive Officers and Substantial Shareholders in Listed Companies) Regulations, 2015, and a penalty of Rs. 737,500 was imposed under the Securities Act, 2015.

Adjudication proceedings in respect of 8 cases were initiated against insurance companies/takaful operators. Amongst the main violations of the insurance regulatory framework were failure in maintaining proper books of accounts in violation of section 34 and 45 of the Insurance Ordinance, 2000, inadequate amount of collateral in respect of insurance guarantees in contravention of the Credit & Suretyship (Conduct of Business) Rules, 2018 and non-payment of annual supervision fee in violation of Section 11(3) of the Insurance Ordinance, 2000.

The SECP remains committed towards an effective, transparent & rigorous enforcement of its administered laws in the future while simultaneously continuing on the path towards digitization & promoting an enabling environment for the businesses.

It is expected to improve tax administration, tax agricultural incomes, and boost industrial and agricultural sectors.

Taxing wholesalers and retailers and reducing the volume of the undocumented economy are necessary for the country's survival.

Emaar's profit increased by 70% and property sales increased by 15%



PPA

DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: During 2023, Emaar Properties PJSC (DFM: EMAAR) demonstrated sustained profitable growth with ongoing enhancements in property sales, a notable upswing in profitability, and remarkable progress in the performance of its recurring revenue sectors.

Emaar recorded revenues of AED 26.7 billion (US\$ 7.3 billion) and net profit of AED 11.6 billion (US\$ 3.2 billion) in 2023 achieving growth of 7% and 70% respectively compared to the same period last year. This performance was supported by growth in tourism, a continued upward trend in retail sales, and a consistent increase in real estate demand. Emaar also achieved 63% growth in EBITDA, reaching AED 16 billion (US\$ 4.4 billion) during 2023 as compared to 2022.

With a 15% year-over-year growth, Emaar achieved group property sales of AED 40.3 billion (US\$ 11 billion) in 2023. Enhanced by property sales during 2023, the

group's revenue backlog from property sales reached AED 71.8 billion (US\$ 19.5 billion) as of 31 December 2023, indicating positive outlook for revenue recognition in the forthcoming years.

Mohamed Alabbar, founder of Emaar, stated, "Following a prosperous 2023, our achievements are indeed gratifying. The strategic initiatives undertaken in the past two years, coupled with enhancements in consumer confidence and overall business dynamics, especially in the real estate and retail sector, have significantly influenced our company's operations throughout the previous year.

With these results, we look forward to a positive performance in our shopping centres, hotels, and property sales in 2024. We remain committed to unveiling innovative projects and unparalleled offerings across all our business divisions."

Emaar's long-standing reputation for customer focus, exceptional design, construction excellence, and innovation across all market segments continues to attract both domestic and international investors.

Rupee gains 06 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday gained 06 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 279.28 against the previous day's closing of Rs 279.34. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 278.9 and Rs 281.4, respectively. The price of the Euro

increased by 27 paise to close at Rs300.86 against the last day's closing of Rs300.59, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen lost 02 paise to close at Rs1.86, whereas a decrease of 20 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 352.32 compared to the last closing of Rs 352.52.

ICCI and FPCCI to work closely to address key issues of the business community

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) called on Atif Ikram Sheikh, President, Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), and discussed with him the ways and means to work closely to address the key issues of the business community.

Talking to President ICCI, Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI said that the business community is the backbone of the economy and FPCCI would take all possible measures to

resolve their issues and facilitate them in business development. He said that the FPCCI would work with the newly elected government to address the economic challenges, tackle the issue of rising inflation, reduce high policy interest rate, improve exports, enhance forex reserves, and revive the economy. He said that he would take all chambers of commerce and trade associations on board on important matters of the economy to present a consensus voice of the business community to the government. He said that he would work closely with the newly elected government to

promote ease of doing business in the country and improve the economy. He said that ICCI is doing good work for the business community and he would always cooperate with it in efforts to promote a business-friendly environment and facilitate the better growth of trade and industry.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the economy of Pakistan is facing multiple challenges and the President FPCCI should cooperate with the newly elected government to steer the country out



of economic crisis and put it on the path of sustainable economic development. He said that Pakistan has good potential to boost exports of IT, pharmaceutical, textiles, and other sectors and FPCCI should work with the government to address the issues of the export sector and create a conducive environment for export promotion.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that the

FPCCI should start working on budget proposals in consultation with all chambers of commerce and trade associations to present a comprehensive document of proposals based on the input of the business community for the forthcoming budget to the government. He assured that ICCI would fully cooperate with FPCCI in promoting the business and economic activities in the country.



# Lahore Qalandars Gearing Up for Ninth Edition of HBL PSL: Atif Rana

Arshad Raza Zaidi

MULTAN: HBL Pakistan Super League (PSL), a marquee fixture in Pakistan's cricketing calendar, has captured the hearts of millions of dedicated fans globally over the course of eight editions of the league.

Since HBL PSL's inauguration in 2016, Lahore Qalandars has carved a niche for itself, not just for its vibrant team combination but also for a compelling journey marked by highs, lows, and an unwavering commitment to excellence by developing their own talent.

Lahore Qalandars swiftly ascended to prominence, cultivating a passionate fan base and a reputation for nurturing local talent. They established themselves as a team that not only embraced flair and entertainment on the field but also displayed vibrancy and commitment off it through their initiatives to hone local talent and bring it into limelight.

The current back-to-back champions grappled with inconsistent performances in early seasons as they struggled to find a combination that can win them trophies. Despite the presence of stellar individual performers, the challenge remained in transforming individual brilliance into collective success.

First four years were very challenging with lots of disappointment and criticism, there were times when one would even start doubting oneself, but it was important for us to learn from those experiences from our mistakes, and it helped us improve in later stages of the league, where we won back to back titles," said Sameen Rana, who serves as the COO and team manager for Lahore Qalandars. Sameen also co-owns the franchise with his brother Atif Rana, who serves as the CEO.

Undeterred by these early setbacks, the management of Lahore Qalandars remained resolute in their vision, and persistently worked towards transforming challenges into opportunities.

Lahore Qalandars' unwavering commitment to develop talent saw them travel from the North to South of Pakistan. This dedication was crucial to their journey towards becoming the first side to clinch back-to-back HBL PSL trophies.

The iconic and globally acclaimed Player Development Program (PDP) goes beyond mere talent scouting; it identifies and nurtures young cricketing talent and also offers comprehensive programs aimed at developing this talent, providing them with opportunities to showcase their skills at interna-



tional venues in countries like Australia, UAE, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. Moreover, their distinguished high-performance centre creates a nurturing environment for emerging talents.

The PDP was my brother Atif [Rana]'s vision, he wanted to engage the youth with the franchise," said Sameen.

We had a very detailed discussion on this project, he was very passionate about developing talent, and the project was very close to his heart, and he is the one who deserves the credit for success of PDP," he added.

The turning point came during the COVID-affected 2020 season when

Lahore Qalandars, under the leadership of Sohail Akhtar, reached the final for the first time of the HBL PSL. Although the title remained elusive, the team's impressive run signaled a significant shift, highlighting the fact that success in cricket is an evolutionary process and the team had the grind it needed for evolution.

This momentum carried into the first part of the sixth edition of HBL PSL before the league relocated to the UAE due to a COVID outbreak. Despite their success during the Pakistan leg of the season, Lahore Qalandars ended with five of their ten games, finishing fifth in the six-team tournament to disappoint

the fans, once again.

After that the tide changed for Lahore Qalandars as in the 2022 edition, under the leadership of new captain Shaheen Shah Afridi, they emerged as a transformed team. Stellar contributions from Rashid Khan, Fakhar Zaman, David Wiese, Harry Brook, Zaman Khan, Haris Rauf and the captain himself, propelled the team to their maiden HBL PSL title in Lahore.

In 2023, Lahore Qalandars claimed a historic feat when it became the first team in HBL PSL history to successfully defend their title, securing their second HBL PSL trophy with a victory over Multan Sultans.

Shaheen's all-round brilliance and Zaman Khan's composure under pressure were pivotal to this triumph.

As the team gears up for the upcoming season, the absence of their lead spinner Rashid Khan – due to injury – can be impact Lahore Qalandars. Nevertheless, the team appears well-prepared, with an arsenal of new talents poised to surprise opponents.

I am very hopeful from this squad, which is very much balanced, though we know other teams are also strong, but we are prepared. I am confident that Qalandars are very much capable of defending the title and creating histo-

ry," said Sameen.

As Lahore Qalandars persist in their pursuit of excellence, they stand as an integral part of the HBL PSL family, personifying the essence of cricketing passion and determination. Their commitment to talent development and the resilience displayed in overcoming challenges confirms their status as a force to be reckoned with in the landscape of T20 cricket, as exemplified by the remarkable path the franchise took to securing consecutive titles despite their early struggles.

**Lahore Qalandars fixtures for HBL PSL 9**

17 February v Islamabad United, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore

19 February v Quetta Gladiators, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore

21 February v Multan Sultans, Multan Cricket Stadium

24 February v Karachi Kings, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore

25 February v Peshawar Zalmi, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore

27 February v Multan Sultans, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore

2 March v Peshawar Zalmi, Pindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi

6 March v Islamabad United, Pindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi

9 March v Karachi Kings, National Bank Stadium, Karachi

## Son and Bissouma ready for Spurs game with Brighton

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Son Heung-min and Yves Bissouma returned to Tottenham Hotspur this week from international duty, and both are ready for Spurs' game with Brighton & Hove Albion, manager Ange Postecoglou said on Friday.

Son was involved with South Korea at the Asian Cup where they lost to Jordan in the semi-final on Tuesday while Bissouma's Mali exited the Africa Cup of Nations last weekend at the quarter-final stage.

Spurs, fifth in the standings on 44 points, host Brighton on Saturday, with Roberto De Zerbi's side in eighth place on 35 points.

"Sonny and Biss were trained well. Sonny did recovery on Thursday and trained today," Postecoglou told a press conference.

"He is very disappointed for Korea's exit, at the



semi-final stage you feel so close. But he gave everything for his nation, no-one could question his commitment.

"I spoke to him after and he was keen to be back, so no surprise he was back training straight away."

The manager also played down concerns over Bissouma, after media reports that he had played through the illness with malaria at the tournament.

"No, that's not right. He had a slight form of malaria

before the tournament, but it cleared up by the start of tournament. He's 100 percent now."

Manor Solomon hasn't played since September and Postecoglou confirmed that the winger had another procedure on his knee earlier this week and is still another two or three weeks away from a return.

Another injury concern was Giovanni Lo Celso who missed the last three league games for Spurs.

"Lo Celso trained all week but he's missed a fair bit of football so we'll see whether he needs another week or not," the manager said.

"It's probably, for want of a better word, the healthiest squad we've had for quite a while anyway."

Spurs conceded an added-time equaliser at Everton last weekend and lost to a late Nathan Ake goal against Manchester City in the FA Cup, but conceding late is not something that overly concerns their manager.

"It's disappointing to concede goals at any point. People will want to analyse it," Postecoglou said.

"I'm sorry but we're going to be a team that will score or concede goals late. The way we want to close out games is by trying to score goals late on.

"One thing we're not going to do is jump at shadows and try to fix the latest thing being analysed."

## Hangzhou cancels Argentina friendly as Messi fallout grows in China

HONG KONG: (Reuters) Chinese sporting authorities have cancelled next month's friendly international between Argentina and Nigeria amid a growing backlash against Lionel Messi's failure to play in an Inter Miami match in Hong Kong last week.

Argentina were scheduled to play Nigeria in the Chinese city of Hangzhou next month before facing the Ivory Coast in Beijing, but Messi's failure to take the field for Inter Miami in Hong Kong on Sunday caused widespread anger among fans. The organiser of the Hong Kong match said they would give fans a 50% refund for tickets after the Argentine did not take the field due to injury, but played in Japan days later.

The backlash grew on Friday, with Hangzhou sports authorities saying that Argentina's friendly against Nigeria would no longer take place.

"As a commercial event, a company and the Argentinean soccer team negotiated that the team would play a friendly match in March this year in the city of Hangzhou," the Hangzhou authorities said in a statement, opens new tab. "In view of the current well-known reasons, according to the competent authorities, conditions to hold the friendly match are not mature, therefore (we) have decided to cancel it."

## Women's sport draws record viewership in 2023-UK research

Sports Desk

LAHORE: A record 46.7 million viewers in Britain tuned in to watch women's sport on TV in 2023, eclipsing 2019's mark by almost a million, according to research published by the Women's Sport Trust on Tuesday.

The FIFA Women's World Cup final, which England lost 1-0 to Spain at Stadium Australia, was 2023's most-watched women's sport event on TV with 38.4 million viewing hours.

The figures, which reflected viewers tuning in for at least one minute of women's sport on linear TV, showed the average viewing time increased by 16% to 10 hours and seven minutes per person, compared with eight hours and 44 minutes in 2022.

"The industry needs to capitalise on these opportunities to drive further awareness and engagement, so we can



continue to broaden the audience for women's sports, and reach the fans where they are," CEO of Women's Sport Trust

Tammy Parlour said.

"Women's sport is attracting more young, female fans which is great news

for the industry as it shows we are starting to attract a distinctive fanbase."

For pay-TV, day three of the Solheim Cup, which was retained by Europe after a 14-14 draw against Team USA in September, was the most watched women's sports event with 3.1 million viewing hours.

The research also showed that the Women's World Cup generated 25.7 million streams on digital platform BBC iPlayer, an increase of 75% from the 2019 edition.

While domestic sport consumption on TV declined by 5%, the Women's Sport Trust said social media platform TikTok played a key role in increasing Women's Super League video views by 268% over 2022's figure to 150 million views.

It added that football remained the most-watched sport with 74% of viewing hours, followed by cricket (15%), rugby union (5%) and golf (3%).

## Three SNGPL batters score centuries on first day of President's Trophy final

Sports Desk

RAWALPINDI: Kamran Ghulam, Sahibzada Farhan and Saud Shakeel struck centuries for SNGPL against WAPDA on day one of the final of the President's Trophy Grade-I here at the Pindi Cricket Stadium. After being put into bat, SNGPL scored 479 for seven in 80 overs. After losing Test cricketer Abid Ali for no score, right-handed batters Sahibzada Farhan and Kamran Ghulam got together and knitted a 214-run partnership for the second wicket.

Sahibzada, who has featured in five T20Is for Pakistan, top-scored for the side, scoring 161 off 206 balls, hitting 22 fours and two sixes. While the 28-year-old Kamran was the second centurion



for his side in the first innings. He scored a 136-ball 101, which included 16 fours.

Saud Shakeel, who has featured in 10 Test matches, and was also part of the Pakistan

squad against Australia recently, returned undefeated on 123 off 81 balls, smashing 12 fours and four sixes. That SNGPL managed to score around six an over in 80 overs was largely due to a quick-fire 44 off 20 balls from Mubasir Khan. The right-handed batter, coming to bat at number seven, struck four sixes and two fours over the course of his innings. For WAPDA, captain Iftikhar Ahmed and Tahir Hussain bagged two wickets apiece.

**Scores in brief:**

SNGPL 479-7, 80 overs (Sahibzada Farhan 161, Saud Shakeel 123 not out, Kamran Ghulam 101, Mubasir Khan 44; Tahir Hussain 2-78, Iftikhar Ahmed 2-105)

WAPDA 5-0 (awarded five runs after SNGPL were penalised for a short-run)

## Trials announced for men's and women's Karachi Hockey teams for the 18th Sindh Games

Sports Desk

KARACHI: The Karachi Hockey Association has announced trials for the men's and women's teams to participate in the 18th Sindh Games 2024, which are scheduled to start on February 18, 2024.

The selection team committee consists of Olympian Hanif Khan (Chairman), Olympian Nasir Ali (Member), International Khalid Junior (Member), and International Asad Qureshi (Member).

Trials will be conducted at the KHA ground. For men, trials will be held at 3:00 pm on February 10, 2024, and for women, trials will be held at 3:00 pm on February 11, 2024.

## Karachi Shooting Ball Team selection committee announced



Sports Desk

KARACHI: The Karachi Division Shooting Ball Association, gearing up for the Sindh Games 2024, has unveiled its selection committee entrusted with the task of forming the Karachi Shooting Ball Team. Comprising Qamar-ul-Salam Pyare, Abdul Manan Baloch, and Syed Iftikhar Zaidi, the committee is set to conduct trials at the Wahid Sports Shooting Ball Court Korangi on February 11 from 3 pm to 6:30 pm.

Aspiring players are required to bring along a copy of their National Identity Card and two passport-size photographs for the trials.

## Djokovic to play Indian Wells for first time since 2019

Sports Desk

LAHORE: featured in the men's lineup is three-times Indian Wells champion Rafa Nadal, who missed last month's Australian Open due to a muscle tear but has since been included on the entry list for a Feb. 19-24 ATP 250 event in Doha.

World number one Djokovic, whose last appearance at Indian Wells in 2019 ended with a third-round exit, will be seeking an unprecedented sixth title at what is regarded the biggest tennis tournament outside of the four Grand Slam events.

The 2020 BNP Paribas Open was cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak and Djokovic missed the next three editions as the United States did not allow unvaccinated foreigners to enter the country.

Among the other names in the star-studded field are reigning champion Carlos Alcaraz, Australian Open winner Jannik Sinner and Taylor Fritz, who in 2022 became the first American man since Andre Agassi in 2001 to win the Indian Wells title.

On the women's side, world number one Iga Swiatek will be joined by 2023 Indian Wells champion Elena Rybakina, Australian Open winner Aryna Sabalenka and Americans Coco Gauff and Jessica Pegula.

Naomi Osaka, an Indian Wells champion in 2018, and 2019 finalist Angelique Kerber, are also expected to return for the first time since 2022 following maternity leave.

This year's BNP Paribas Open runs from March 3-17.





Aaddressed

LAHORE: Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and leader of the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) party waves to supporters next to with his younger brother and former Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his daughter Maryam Nawaz in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

# Nawaz Sharif hints at forming coalition govt in first speech after elections

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Calling his party 'biggest' in the elections 2024, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif has invited all the political parties to sit together and form a government to pull Pakistan out of the difficulties. "We can't hold elections again and again; every one should together play a positive role in bringing Pakistan out of this crisis," the former prime minister said in a pre-mature victory speech as the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is yet to release all the results of the Feb 8 elections. "I can see the light and sparkle in your eyes today," Nawaz

Sharif said, congratulating the party workers because he claimed in these elections PML-N has emerged as the largest party in the country. The PML-N supremo said his party respects the mandate of all parties, including the independents. "We are inviting everyone today to rebuild this wounded Pakistan and sit with us," he said. "Our [PML-N] agenda is only a happy Pakistan and you know what we have done before," he said, highlighting the party's past performance. He stressed that there was a need for all the political parties to sit together and form a government to pull Pakistan out of the difficulties. "This is

everyone's Pakistan. Everyone should sit in harmony and bring Pakistan out of the difficulties," he added. Furthermore, the former premier said the PML-N did not want to fight because Pakistan could not afford it. "Given the situation right now, Pakistan needs at least 10 years of stability," he emphasised. Nawaz Sharif further said that he has told his younger brother Shehbaz Sharif to reach out to the PPP's Asif Ali Zardari, JUI-F's Fazlur Rehman and MQM-P's Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui for the formation of a coalition government. "Shehbaz Sharif and Ishaq Dar will hold meetings today," he added.

The PML-N supremo noted that not only at the Centre, his party had also taken a majority vote in Punjab as well. "We will serve at the Centre as well as in Punjab," he added. Nawaz Sharif added that his government would want good relations with the entire world, in particular Pakistan's immediate neighbours. The vote count is underway after millions of Pakistanis exercised their right to vote to elect their representatives for five-year term amid the countrywide internet and mobile shutdown, political violence, and terror attacks. As many as 17,816 independent and party-affiliated candidates contested for 265 Nation-

al Assembly, 296 Punjab Assembly, 130 Sindh Assembly, 113 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and 51 Balochistan seats. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has so far released unofficial results of 212 NA seats out of 265. According to the unofficial results received from electoral watchdog, independent candidates were leading with 90 seats followed by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz' (PML-N) 60 seats. Meanwhile, Pakistan People's Party managed to secure 48 NA seats so far. Furthermore, MQM-P clinched eight NA seats and IPP and PML-Q got two seats each.

# Triumph of hope and resilience

Ahad Khan

The trumpeted general election in Pakistan are over and results from the length and breadth of the country continue to trickle in. Barring few places, the contestants in most constituencies are at variance about the outcome and pledge to slug it out at all possible fora. After all, the stakes are high in what can be described as the 'fate-changing' event of the country. The success trajectory of independent candidates, especially those backed by the embattled PTI, comes as a surprise for the voters. One can look at the election from various angles but the most heartening aspect is public enthusiasm, which can be borne out by high turnout, and the level of commitment and resilience some of the aspirants showed. Those who campaigned and contested on the proverbial sticky wicket actually "fought till the last ball". Let's have a glimpse of the results of some of these candidates – something which instils hope among the masses and restores their confidence in the political system.

**Yasmin Rashid**  
Take the example of iron-willed former Punjab health minister Dr Yasmin Rashid who, as expected, gave PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif a run for his 'votes' in NA-130 Lahore. Although Nawaz Sharif has won by taking 171,024 votes, Dr Rashid chipped in with 115,043 votes despite being incarcerated and reports of ill health. Nawaz Sharif, again contrary to expectations, has been defeated in his second home, NA-15 Mansehra where he has faced drubbing by a lesser known but locally active PTI-backed candidate, Gastasab Khan, who bagged 105,249 votes. Sharif could get 80,382 votes.



Aliya Hamza

Aliya Hamza, another PTI-backed lady from NA-118 Lahore, sprang a surprise by taking 100,803 votes against an astute political operator, Hamza Shehbaz, who managed to win by a slim margin of almost 5,000 votes. Hamza bagged 105,960 votes but Aliya's supporters see a clear moral victory for her amid a sea of challenges. **Sardar Latif Khosa**  
Sardar Latif Khosa, a seasoned lawyer who joined the PTI just a few months back, has come up as a classic case of triumph of hope and resilience. Khosa seems to have never aspired to become an MNA in his political career, yet he romped home against firebrand PML-N leader Saad Rafique who is very well connected with locals in his constituency. His elders' decades-long political affiliation in NA-122 couldn't win him the seat this time round. **Rehana Dar**  
Septuagenarian Rehana Dar from Sialkot deserves credit for fighting tooth and nail against PML-N's Khawaja Asif

who eventually won the contest. She lost to the PML-N veteran politician but showed grit at an advanced age. **Salman Akram Raja**  
The erudite Salman Akram Raja, one of the finest legal brains of the country, contested in Lahore's key NA-128 constituency. Initially, he emerged as a clear winner but his rival Awn Chaudhry, a candidate of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan party supported by the House of Sharifs, was declared victorious according to unofficial results. Raja contested the outcome and immediately challenged the 'anomalies' in the Lahore High Court (LHC) which has now stopped results of the constituency. What goes beyond the shadow of doubt is the public support for him. The PTI remained successful in the constituency in 2013 and 2018. **Barrister Gohar Ali Khan**  
PTI's moving spirit Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has won with a heavy majority in his native constituency of Buner (NA-10). The road to his success remained paved with obstacles.

Dr Nisar Jutt

The story can't be complete without Jutt's mention as he has defeated Rana Sanaullah in his hometown Faisalabad. It was one of the seats where the PML-N seemed to have a clear edge but Dr Nisar Jutt sprang a surprise. **Jamal Ahsan Khan**  
Jamal Ahsan Khan, the covering candidate for PTI founder in his native NA-89 constituency, has clinched 217,427 votes – the highest number of votes any candidate has got all over the country. He has won by a massive margin of 183,359 votes. **Mian Muhammad Azhar**  
Octogenarian Mian Azhar, who appeared as the covering candidate for his son Hammad Azhar, mounted a rearguard action against odds and emerged successful in NA-129. **Qaisra Elahi**  
The wife of incarcerated Parvez Elahi, who once ruled Punjab and remained the deputy prime minister, contested in Gujrat's NA-64 and lost to her nephew Salik Hussain but still showed a great deal of vigour.

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# Zardari, Bilawal reach Lahore for 'post-election meetings'

Bureau Report

LAHORE: In the aftermath of the general elections in 2024, former President Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto reached Lahore for a 'crucial post-election meeting'. The PPP leaders are expected to hold a meeting with Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Supremo Nawaz Sharif during their visit to Lahore for an emergency meeting with party leaders to consult on challenging the election results in NA-127.



The PPP leadership is also expected to adopt a stance on their reservations regarding election results in the Punjab region. Furthermore, there is a potential chance of a post-election meeting between the leadership of PPP and PML-N in Punjab.

# PM AJK hails Afzal Guru as 'true hero of Kashmir'

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar Ul Haq, while paying eulogizing tributes to Shaheed Afzal Guru has said that Guru is a true hero of Kashmiris who played an important role in the freedom movement. Terming death sentence against Guru as murder of justice, the PM said, "The Indian Supreme Court awarded death sentence to Afzal Guru to satisfy the collective conscience of Indian society". He said that charges levelled against Guru were never proved in the court of law but despite that Guru was awarded capital punishment. He said that it was unfortunate that Afzal Guru was buried in the prem-



ises of the notorious jail soon after his execution."The Indian authorities didn't hand over the mortal remains of Guru to his heirs", he said, adding that Afzal Guru's supreme sacrifices would be remembered for a long time in the annals of Kashmir history. "He is a hero of Kashmiris and will remain a hero", the PM said. The PM expressed the optimism that the day was not far away when the people of the Indian occupied Kashmir achieve their cherished goal of freedom.

# Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui secures victory in Karachi's NA-248 seat

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Muttahida Qaumi Movement – Pakistan (MQM-P) secured another seat in Karachi's National Assembly constituency (NA-248) in the general election 2024, ARY News reported. According to unofficial results received from all 361 polling stations of NA-248, the MQM-P candidate Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui won the NA-248 seat by securing 71,536

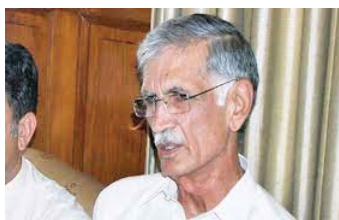


votes having a lead of 13,290 votes over Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed independent candidate Arsalan Khalid, who came in second position with 58,246 votes.

# Pervez Khattak loses Nowshera's NA-33 seat

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians (PTI-P) president Pervez Khattak, who parted ways from Imran Khan-led party, has lost from Nowshera's NA-33 seat. According to unofficial results received from all polling stations, PTI-backed independent candidate Shahid Ahd Khattak won NA-33 seat by securing 90,145 votes. Meanwhile, Pervez Khattak managed to get just 25,258 – showing a major difference in votes. It is pertinent to mention here that former defence minister Pervez Khattak launched a new political party under the name of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Parliamentarians. Khattak who was expelled from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) over his statement against the party chief,



announced his new political party. A daylong polling process concluded on Thursday for the General Election 2024 overall in a peaceful manner, with active participation from all age group voters who came out in droves to elect candidates of their choice. The polling started simultaneously across the country at 8 am and continued till 5 pm without any break to provide maximum time to citizens to exercise their right to vote enshrined in the constitution.

# IPP's Jahangir Tareen loses lock, stock and barrel

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Jahangir Tareen, the chairman of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP), faced defeat in both constituencies of the National Assembly in the Feb 8 polls. Tareen contested from NA-149 and NA-155 Lodhran-2 but was unable to clinch victory as per unofficial results. The results from 369 polling stations in Lodhran revealed that PML-N candidate Sadique Khan Baloch emerged victorious in NA-155 with 117,671 votes, while Tareen garnered only 71,128 votes. Similarly, Tareen suffered defeat in NA-149 Multan where he secured 50,166 votes. PTI-backed independ-



ent candidate Malik Amir Dogar triumphed in NA-149 with 143,613 votes. Rizwan Hans, the PPP candidate, secured the third position in NA-149 with 14,625 votes, according to unofficial results. Jahangir Tareen's defeat in both constituencies marks a significant setback for his party and raises questions about his future political endeavors.