



Bilawal rejects 'power-sharing formula' offered to PPP

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Sunday rejected the power-sharing formula he was offered wherein the prime minister's seat would be shared between two parties. "I was told that let us be the prime minister for three years and then you can take the premiership for the remaining two years, but I refused. We don't work for ourselves but for the people", the PPP Chairman said. (Details on Page 8)



X, formerly twitter, down in Pakistan for second time in more than 24 hours

Social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, was reportedly down in Pakistan on Sunday after being restored briefly in the morning. The outage in the country started on Saturday night amid electoral fraud allegations. The microblogging site became inaccessible to hundreds of users, for the second time in a day, as intermittent issues while loading X had been reported since yesterday (Saturday).

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Martyrdom

Dozens of Palestinian civilians were martyred and injured in Israeli airstrikes.



Civilians martyred and injured in Israeli airstrikes

GAZA: Dozens of Palestinian civilians were killed and injured today after the Israeli occupation warplanes targeted citizens' homes in Deir al-Balah and al-Zawaida in the central Gaza Strip, and Khan Yunis in the south. Local sources said that the occupation warplanes bombed the home of Al-Baraka family in the Al-Brook area in the city of Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip, leading to the killing of seven citizens, including three children. Five citizens were killed and others were injured after the occupation forces targeted a group of citizens near the Kuwait Roundabout, south of Gaza City. Medical sources reported that 17 slain Palestinian civilians were retrieved from under the rubble of Hamad family's home, which was bombed by occupation aircraft at dawn today in the town of Al-Zawaida. In the northern Gaza Strip, a number of citizens were injured after the occupation targeted Al-Dhabous family home near the Beit Lahia cemetery. In the south, the Israeli warplanes launched raids west of the city of Khan Yunis, where two people were killed and others injured, after the vicinity of a school housing displaced people in the town of Al-Qarara, northeast of Khan Yunis, was targeted. Medical sources pointed out that an eighth patient was killed in Nasser Medical Complex as a result of the electrical generator stopping and the oxygen being stopped. In a preliminary toll, the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip since October 7th has resulted in a documented 28,858 fatalities, with 68,677 others injured, according to the Ministry of Health.

Omar Ayub will become PM if ECP releases form 45 results: Barrister Gohar

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: PTI leader Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said that Omar Ayub Khan would become Prime Minister if the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) releases results on the base of Form 45. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Barrister Gohar demanded an immediate inquiry of rigging allegations claimed by the Commissioner Rawalpindi division. It is to be mentioned here that Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaqat Ali Chatha has resigned from his post over accepting responsibility of alleged rigging



in elections 2024. Chatha admitted that the rigging took place in election and candidates who were leading in their constituencies with over 70,000 votes were converted to losers with the help of fake seals under his watch. Barrister Gohar said the Commissioner when saying

that the winning candidates were defeated, he must tell, which candidates were winning. "We were winning the election according to form 45 but later our candidates were defeated with form 47," PTI leader said. Barrister Gohar said that the Commissioner's statement is very serious. "We have to open the Pandora's Box if we move towards a new election," he added. It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder named the party's secretary general Omar Ayub Khan as a candidate for the Prime Minister (PM) slot. Talking to newsmen outside Adiala Jail after meeting the incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, Asad Qaiser said Omar Ayub Khan will be the party's candidate for the PM slot. Omar Ayub Khan, an independent candidate backed by PTI won the election for National Assembly constituency NA-18, Hariipur by securing 192,948 votes. According to the unofficial result issued by the Returning Officer/ECP, his runner-up was Pakistan Muslim League (N) candidate, Babar Nawaz Khan who bagged 112,389 votes. The voters' turn-out remained 49.88%.

ECP likely to register case against ex-Rawalpindi commissioner

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The former Rawalpindi commissioner, Liaqat Ali Chatha, is set to face legal action as the ECP is likely to initiate proceedings against him, citing sources. Sources claimed that the electoral watchdog is likely to file a case against the former commissioner of Rawalpindi under the criminal code of ECP rules violation. Sources reveal that the case will be registered in the complaint of Additional Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi. Earlier, the former Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaqat Ali Chatha resigned from his post over alleged rigging in elections 2024. Addressing a press conference the Rawalpindi commissioner surrendered to police saying "I accept responsibility for rigging the election 2024". Chatha admitted that the rigging took place in election and candidates who were leading in their constituencies with over 70,000 votes were converted to losers with



the help of fake seals under his watch. He apologized to his subordinates for compelling them to rig elections saying that they were crying when they were directed to carry out the rigging. Commissioner Rawalpindi claimed that Chief Election Commissioner Sikkandar Sultan Raja was also involved in carrying out rigging in election 2024 and everyone involved in the wrongdoings must be convicted. Chatha revealed that on Saturday morning he thought of committing suicide but then he decided to 'expose' the entire rigging fiasco. "I want to die a peaceful death" he added. Following his press conference, police arrested Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaqat Ali Chatha and was taken to the commissioner's office.

PML-N hopes 'important breakthrough' in talks with PPP today

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Former finance minister Ishaq Dar on Sunday asserted that an "important development" was expected during a meeting between the coordination committees of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) today (Monday). Talking to X (formerly Twitter), Ishaq Dar pointed out that PML-N and PPP leaders were required to follow the prescribed rules during the coalition talks. "It was decided that no member or leader of the coordination committees formed by both sides would comment on the progress of the ongoing discussions or the points discussed," the PML-N Senator said.

Ji calls all parties conference to 'save democracy'

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a recent political development, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has called an All-Party Conference (APC) on February 25. The JI spokesperson asserted that in an effort to save democracy, the official invitations for the APC have been dispatched to the representatives of all political parties in Pakistan. The former JI chief, Sirajul Haq, urged the leaders of all political parties to unite for the establishment of 'true democracy', and termed the general election 2024 as the 'most controversial' in the history of Pakistan. "Engaging with various affected political parties, including the PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf)," Sirajul Haq added. He further said, "The revelations by ex-Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaqat Ali Chatha added support to our position related to the general election 2024." He warned those who remain indifferent to the impending threat to democracy, urging them to reconsider their stance before it is too late. Following the defeat in the February 8 general elections in 2024, Sirajul Haq announced to resign from his party position as JI ameer.

Murad Ali Shah poised to reclaim role of CM Sindh: Sources

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) leadership on Sunday reached a pivotal decision as Murad Ali Shah is once again nominated to assume the role of the Chief Minister of Sindh, citing well-informed sources. Sources within the PPP claimed that the former Chief Minister of Sindh Murad Ali Shah is set to assume the charge of CM Sindh. Meanwhile, directives have been issued for the recently elected members of the Sindh Assembly to promptly reach Karachi for party-related discussions. However, sources suggest that the formal announcement of Murad Ali Shah's nomination for the position of Chief Minister of Sindh will be made in the coming days. Earlier in the day, Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) leaders established a committee to contact independent MPs of Balochistan to form a government in the province. Sources close to the development claimed that the PPP's two-member committee contacted the independent MPs of Balochistan, and reportedly 'settled' the matter with three MPs elected during the general election.

Abbasi urges PTI inclusion in coalition for stability in Pakistan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Expressing his views on the current political landscape, the former Prime Minister, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi proposed that a coalition government including PTI is the need of the time for Pakistan. Abbasi emphasized the necessity of including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in this coalition, highlighting the importance of putting aside individual political interests for the greater good of the nation. In an exclusive interview in the ARY News program, Sawal Yeh Hai, the former PM stated that the government formed through the mandate of the people would pave the way for a more transparent and accountable administration. He drew attention to the unique circumstances of recent elections, stating that the environment and results were witnessed firsthand by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, urging a reevaluation of the political situation. Abbasi acknowledged the disillusionment among the youth, questioning the validity of their votes and emphasizing the need for a government based on an untainted mandate.

Fazlur Rehman is telling the truth about VONC, says Raja Riaz

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Former Opposition Leader in National Assembly Raja Riaz has backed JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman's claims regarding no-confidence vote against former Prime Minister Imran Khan, saying that the latter was telling the truth. Raja Riaz said that the JUI-F chief held a meeting with him and apprised him of support on no-confidence motion against Imran Khan from several quarters. "Now he [Fazlur Rehman] revealed that [ex-COAS] Qamar Bajwa was behind the ouster of Imran Khan so he was telling the truth," the former PTI leader said. Raja Riaz claimed that Maulana Fazlur was taken aback by the injustice and his party's seats were 'snatched away'.

Maryam Nawaz says those threatening bureaucracy to be dealt as per law

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Maryam Nawaz, the PML-N's nominee for the Punjab chief minister, has vowed legal action against those who incite the bureaucracy to break the law. Talking to X (formerly Twitter), the PML-N chief organizer said that those who incite the bureaucracy to break the law would be dealt with according to the law. "Threatening the bureaucracy was equivalent to creating chaos within the state machinery," Maryam Nawaz said, urging the officers not to be intimidated by threats and perform their duties as per the law. Earlier on Feb 13, PML-N Spokesperson Mariyum Aurangzaib said that the party supreme Nawaz Sharif has nominated Shahbaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz for prime minister and chief minister Punjab slots respectively.

PTI decides to ally with Sunni Ittehad Council

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), whose candidates contested the February 8 general elections 'independently', has decided to form an alliance with Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) for reserved seats. Sources told that PTI independent members will join the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) - a religio-political party, after submitting affidavits. Earlier, the PTI announced to form a coalition in Centre and Punjab with the Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen (MWM) - a move that faced backlash by some party members. "Imran Khan approved of a coalition with two parties. We will form a coalition with the MWM in the Centre and Punjab and a coalition with the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) in KP for the reserved seats," party's Central Information Secretary Raouf Hasan had said.

# JKLF is optimistic about the acquittal of its jailed supremo, Yasin Malik

## Spokesman Report

MIRPUR: The US-based acting central chairman of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Raja Muzaffar expressed optimism on Wednesday about the decision to transfer Yasin Malik to AIIMS Hospital in New Delhi for treatment. Yasin Malik, who symbolizes political freedom struggle in the occupied State of Jammu and Kashmir, will be acquitted by the Indian apex court soon. Raja Muzaffar said in a statement issued on Wednesday

that during the recent hearing of the case against Yasin Malik, the Indian Supreme Court has set the date for the next hearing after today's session to be on May 13, JKLF said in a press release issued on Wednesday.

As reported earlier, the pro-freedom Kashmiri leader and chairman of his own faction of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Mohammed Yasin Malik, who is serving a life sentence in Delhi's Tihar Jail, was shifted on Wednesday to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi for treatment on a



court order. According to US-based

Kashmiri leader and senior vice chairman of the JKLF (Yasin Malik group), Raja Muzaffar, a 6-page handwritten letter by Yasin Malik has drawn the court's attention to his deteriorating health and the lack of proper medical treatment. "It should be noted that an appeal for review was made by India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) regarding the ongoing case against Yasin Malik. Today, in the Indian Supreme Court, Yasin Malik's video link presentation and discussion on the appeal for review took place," the Press Release further added.

## Pakistan People's Party chief says 'conspiracies' against Pakistan are at its peak



Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: President of Pakistan People's Party Azad Kashmir and Senior Parliamentarian Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin has said that what is happening in the country right now is a conspiracy to spread chaos and anarchy. If a fine of more than 350 million dollars is imposed on Mr. Trust in America, then it is justice and if action is taken against the accused of May 9 in Pakistan, it is political revenge. The American visa of Commissioner Rawalpindi is also a question mark. The political leadership of Pakistan should follow the footsteps of the leadership of Pakistan People's Party and thwart the conspiracies against Pakistan. He expressed this while talking to journalists on the occasion of Thanksgiving Day yesterday. He said that the series of conspiracies to destabilize Pakistan has been going on for a long time and at this time this series is at its peak by a certain party. Targeting Pakistan forces under the guise of politics shows a lot and these people are using innocent citizens sitting in self-protected shelters. Action should be taken, he said that there is no one ahead of the state. Despite the martyrdom of the female Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto, the slogan of Pakistan Khape was raised. The leadership of other political parties should show some sacrifice for Pakistan and democracy. These experiences are overwhelming.

## Midland Int'l Trust in Azad Kashmir seeks to end plastic pollution & climate change

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MIRPUR: Chief Executive of Midland International Trust (UK) Professor Rashid Gartrad and Miss Pakistan Shafina Shah Patel said that the world is currently facing the challenges of environmental pollution and climate change if every member of the society has a common plan to deal with these challenges. If we don't take action, it can make our future dark. It is necessary to prevent all the small and big factors that lead to pollution and climate change. Be safe. Plastic items including plastic shopping bags, bottles and other plastic products that have negative effects on human health and cause pollution and dirt should be completely abandoned. Midland International Trust World In many countries including Pakistan and Azad Kashmir, is involved in human welfare works in many other fields including health, environmental pollution elimination, which helps the poor and helpless people and also provides them with free treatment. Facilities are being provided. Our organization has also played its role in the resettlement of the victims of the earthquake in Mirpur and the construction of school buildings with the support of various social organizations.

He expressed these views while addressing the press briefing given to the media representatives during his visit to Mirpur. Ex DGPR AJK Raja Azhar Iqbal Naveed Goga Chairman District Council Mirpur, Deputy Mayor Muhammad Ramzan Chaghatay, Dr. Lawn Charles Robertson, Chairman Kishgamah Health and Welfare Trust Chaudhry Muhammad Mustafa, General Secretary Rabnawaz Khan and print and electronic media representatives were present on the occasion.

Midland International Trust Chief Executive Prof. Rashid Gartrad and Miss Pakistan Shafina Shah Patel said that their charity has provided lip augmentation and free treatment for poor children at Clifton Hospital in Pakistan. They said that the main purpose of their visit was the aim is to raise awareness among the public to prevent environmental pollution, especially plastic products, which have negative effects on human health, and to eliminate pollution. Prevention of this should be ensured. Miss Pakistan Shafina Shah said that Professor Getrod is supporting thousands of people in Pakistan and Kashmir in humanitarian and welfare work. They are playing their role in better completion.

## Friends of Margalla Hills, civil society protests; demand CDA to de-seal visitors' info centers

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Friends of Margalla Hills National Park and members of the civil society on Sunday staged a peaceful protest outside the CDA-sealed visitors' information center at Trail-5 to condemn the civic agency's move that deprived many national and international tourists of credible knowledge on the wildlife and nature of the national park. The protestors held placards with slogans written on it particularly "Save Margalla Hills", "CDA Leave Margalla Hills", "STOP Destroying Margalla Hills" and chanted slogans "We will have to protect Margalla Hills".

A protestor requesting anonymity told APP that the demonstration and rally of Islamabad's civil society and friends of Margalla Hills at Trail-5 was against the sealing of visitor information centers by the Capital Development Authority (CDA). He said the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) staff was holding special awareness sessions for the masses visiting the national park. "After myriad of efforts, all the trails of the Margalla Hills were made plastic and littering free which was mainly due to the dedicated efforts of the Board staff and the members of the civil society supporting its nature preservation efforts," he added. He added that the protestors only demanded the federal capital's civic agency de-sealing of the Visitor Information Centres at Trail-5 & 6. "The CDA illegally sealed the visitor information centers on Trail-5 & 6, where many domestic and foreign tourists were educated on the national park's biodiversity and its protection."

The CDA's move has posed a threat to the Margalla Hills National Park and its wild animals, he alleged. It may be mentioned here that the CDA through its Board's decision has moved a summary to reclaim the old Islamabad Zoo from the IWMB and establish a modern Zoo for the federal capital residents. However, the Board in response had moved to the Supreme Court of Pakistan to seek its help for implementation of the Islamabad High Court's decision that mandated the Board to officially manage the Zoo as the civic agency's maltreatment of wild animals particularly the Asian Elephant, Kavaan and the pair of Brown Bears brought a bad name to the country. The CDA in strange effort sealed the visitors information centres at the Trail-5 & 6 stating the reason that its land use was only permissible for official purposes of the Board whereas the latter had violated the condition by allowing residence to its staff.

## Searching

MULTAN: Security official checking spectators during the PSL 9 T20 match between Multan Sultans and Karachi Kings at Multan Cricket Stadium.



Photo: APP

## Tunnel farming need of the hour & appreciated tomato crop of farmers

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Tunnel farming/ Vertical Net Farming is the need of the hour: Dr. Anwar Bittani said, on Sunday.

The Agriculture Department is doing its best to boost up agriculture in South Waziristan Lower and Upper.

Vertical net farming technology is one of the options to get maximum production per unit area.

Land holding is less in merged areas. Farmers should adopt modern agri techniques instead of traditional agricultural practices. Dr. Anwar

The efforts of the Agri Department in the area are commendable: Farmer Adam Khan Wazir

Mr. Adam Khan Wazir, a



progressive farmer of village Spin, Wana has cultivated a vertical tomato crop in a walk-in tunnel with the support of the Agriculture Extension Department South Waziristan.

The Agriculture Department has provided inputs under the AIP scheme, "inte-

grated Agriculture Development in merged areas. In addition, the field staff of the agri department is also providing technical support. Recently, on the direction of Dr. M. Anwar Bettani, District Director Agriculture South Waziristan, Mr. Habib ur Rehman Agriculture Officer Wana visited the said tunnel. He inspected the crop. The crop was in good condition. The Agri Officer gave useful instructions for obtaining good yield from the crop. Vertical net farming is a modern technique for vegetable cultivation especially tomatoes. In this technique production could be increased manifold. In addition, quality vegetables are obtained. It is worth mentioning that Mr. Adam Khan is a progressive farmer. He has been using modern agri techniques. At the end Mr. Adam Khan Wazir appreciated the efforts of the Agriculture Department especially Dr. M. Anwar Khan for his keen interest in the development of agriculture in the devastated area.

## Deep concern over the 67% increase in gas prices by the Caretaker Government

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: President of Multan Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry, Sheikh Faisal Saeed, has expressed deep concern over the 67% increase in gas prices by the caretaker government and said that after increasing the gas prices some time ago, the prices will be increased again.

A huge increase in not only bringing the country's economy to the brink of destruction but also similar to small scale industries and business closure planning. In one of his statements, he said that the recent increase in gas prices will seriously affect the process of business, trade and industrial development in the country, including the industrial and commercial sectors, while it is also extremely unfair to the poor people.

## Over 8.3m cotton bales reach ginneries across Pakistan till Feb 15

Asim Tanveer / Kiran Asim

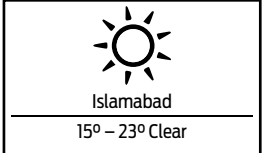
MULTAN: Pakistan Cotton Ginner Association (PCGA) has released the data of the arrival of cotton factories, according to which 83 lakh 78 thousand 179 bales of cotton have arrived in the ginning factories of the country till February 15, 2024. 42 lakh 64 thousand 507 bales of cotton have arrived in the factories of Punjab province. Sindh province. 41 lakh 13 thousand 672 bales of cotton in the factories offt has come to factories. Till February 15, 2024, 83 lakh 59 thousand 144 bales of cotton were produced from the cotton coming to the factories. 86 ginning factories are operational in the country. Exporters have purchased 292,726 bales of cotton this season, while the textile sector has purchased 77,85,668 bales of cotton. The Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) has not purchased cotton for the 2023-24 season. 79 ginning factories are opera-



tional in Punjab province and 42 lakh 47 thousand 811 bales of cotton are produced. 66 thousand 500 bales of cotton in Multan district, 94 thousand 115 bales of cotton in Lodhran district, 2 lakh 17 thousand 507 bales of cotton

in Khanewal district, 80 thousand 516 bales of cotton in Muzaffargarh district, 3 lakh 70 thousand 115 bales of cotton in Dera Ghazi Khan district, 31 thousand 825 bales of cotton in Rajanpur district. 2 lakhs and 30 lakhs in the

cotton district of Leh Thousand 972 bales of cotton, district 2 lakh 19 thousand 36 bales of cotton in Wahari, 2 lakh 574 bales of cotton in Sahiwal district, 6 lakh 21 thousand 288 bales of cotton in Rahim Yar Khan district, 5 lakh 73 thousand 876 bales of cotton in Bahawalpur district, 11 lakh 58 thousand 275 bales of cotton in Bahawalnagar district. 16 lakh 94 thousand 691 bales of cotton in Sanghar district, 1 lakh 35 thousand 900 bales of cotton in Mirpur Khas district, 1 lakh 78 thousand 615 bales of cotton in Nawab Shah district, 3 lakh 22 thousand 926 bales of cotton in Nav Shahr Feroze district, 3 lakh 58 thousand 414 bales of cotton in Khairpur district, 63 thousand 200 bales of cotton in Jamshoro district. 2 lakhs in cotton and Hyderabad district 30 thousand 167 bales of cotton and 1 lakh 87 thousand 221 bales have come to factories in Balochistan province. There is unsold stock of 299,785 bales of cotton and cotton.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**  
 Fajr ..... 5:26 am  
 Zohr ..... 12:22 pm  
 Asr ..... 4:15 pm  
 Maghrib ..... 5:54 pm  
 Isha ..... 7:18 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
 Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
 Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
 Emergency Ambulance ..... 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  
 Cantt Hospital ..... 561116  
 Cantt Hospital ..... 9270907-11  
 DHQ ..... 5556311-4  
 RGH ..... 9290301-7  
 Holy Family ..... 9290322-7

**“Celebration in of a Dehumanized Existence”**

# Ustad Bashir Ahmed inaugurated Jamal Shah’s set of works

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Acclaimed Miniature Painting Ustad Bashir Ahmed inaugurated Jamal Shah’s set of works titled “Celebration in of a Dehumanized Existence” at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts on Sunday.

The collection, which bears universal interpretation transcending peace, positivity, and harmony, was praised for its profound symbolism and message.

Mr. Jamal Shah, Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, is a renowned visual artist. He has used the Murgha symbolically in most paintings to create an ambience of lampooning, remorse, and mounting struggle.

The Minister believes that humanity’s salvation lies in making a positive contribution towards the well-being of the less fortunate, who are devoid of daily bread and healthcare.

Mr. Shah’s paintings and scul-

tures are about themes so inquisitorial, soul-searching, and heart-breaking that it seems almost trite to describe his subject matter. His work inserts itself into the viewer’s consciousness through the way he seems to fumble towards an understanding of how he should respond to the world he lives in. The return to painting reaffirms Shah’s belief in the permanence and intellectual nature of the medium, the sense that the painted image necessitates a singular, uncompromising confrontation between the viewer and the object.

It is clear that these paintings, titled “Celebration of a Dehumanized Existence,” on show at PNCA National Art Gallery, Islamabad, are a response to a particular set of historical circumstances. This helps explain both the polemics and the urgency of the imagery. In the first instance, Shah has saturated the pictures with symbols, allusions, and questions. There are the recurring emblems of working-class struggle: the spade and the axe, the monkeys, and labor

cost as a murgha – a stress position used as corporal punishment.

In his welcome remarks, M. Ayoub Jamali, Director General PNCA, expressed his deep honor in hosting the first solo exhibition of Mr. Jamal Shah at the National Art Gallery. He described the show as amazing and emphasized the importance of showcasing Shah’s work in a national space.

In his speech Mr. Jamal Shah, said “As an artist, my work is a reflection of the society I live in. It is an attempt to engage in a dialogue with my fellow human beings, to explore and confront the contradictions and struggles that exist within our society.

Through my paintings, sculptures, and ceramic pieces, I hope to initiate a dialogue that can engage people towards the best possible path for our society. I believe that art has a responsibility to serve humanity, to contribute to the betterment of society.

Ultimately, the goal of any creative individual is to achieve a level of existence that can be called



aesthetic, where truth prevails over deception, and where there is total transparency. My work is a reflection of this struggle, and I hope that it can serve as a catalyst for positive change in our world.

Ustad Bashir Ahmed, renowned miniature artist of Pakistan and also the teacher of Mr. Jamal Shah was the Chief Guest while speaking at the occasion said that Jamal Shah’s expression harbors neither riddles nor mystery and is spiritedly deci-

pherable by almost any segment of society. The works portray the inherent urge of human beings to interact, notwithstanding differences and misgivings, creating crossroads between cultures, he added.

**Bilawal vows to steer country out of crisis**

**Kamran Khamiso Khawaja**

THATTA: Addressing a mammoth gathering at Maikli cricket stadium Thatta Chairman Pakistan People party expressed his gratitude to people of Thatta for casting vote to PPP candidates wholeheartedly in Thatta and Sujawal district. “I decided to take part in the elections because I was very concerned about the issues of Sindh,” claimed the PPP chairman, adding that the people of Pakistan proved that the Pakistan People, s party was a popular political party of the country. Pakistan Peoples Party he said had won without any rigging. Hitting out at Pakistan Tehreek-e—insaf he said that they lost despite rigging. Commenting on general elections, He said that those protesting over alleged rigging wanted to make the elections controversial. He said that his party would work for the development of the people of Sindh and Balochistan province because people of both the provinces had given his party the mandate to rule. Denouncing the approach of GDA and JUI-F he said that both leaders were making separate demands but they should accept the reality that the Jiayals of PPP had won with a landslide margin. He further said that the current chaos created by their political opponent would further push the country to crisis. “In order to save the federation and Pakistan we have taken the decision”; he revealed adding that they made all possible efforts to persuade “Khan Sahab” but failed to convince him. Those who had won general elections of 2013 through rigging are claiming that they had lost elections of 2024 due to rigging, he said.

**Beautiful views**

ISLAMABAD: Motorists on their way at a road during rain in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

## 25 students complete internship program with Islamabad Capital Police

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, 25 students from Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST) completed their internship with the Islamabad Capital Police traffic division, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, following the directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital police are acquainting citizens and students about traffic rules through various programs. Under one such program, a batch of students from CUST University completed their internship.

During the internship program, the students were briefed and given awareness about various tasks including



radio production, technical issues, live broadcasting, road safety workshops, road safety seminars, driving license issuing procedure and road duty.

A concluding ceremony was organized at Traffic office Faizabad, which was attended by Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad

as chief guest, while University program manager along with students and officials from Islamabad Capital Police were also present on this occasion.

The CTO Islamabad distributed certificates among the students and hoped that they would further educate and

brief their fellows and family members about road safety rules and play their role in the disciplinary traffic system.

Such programs aimed to promote public policing, develop the skills of the youth and bridge the gap between the public and the police.

**Quran Memorization Competition & Mehfil E Qirat Held at IIUI**



**PNP**

ISLAMABAD: International Islamic University’s Public Relations Department and Ittihad Al-Qura Pakistan Al-Alami organized the final of the All-Pakistan Memorization of the Qur’an (with Tajweed) competition and the international Mehfil e Qirat.

In this competition organized in the Faisal Mosque of IIUI, 15 huffaz participated who made it to the finals after the competition between 500 children from schools and madrasas across Pakistan.

In Mehfil e Husn e Qirat, famous Egyptian Qura Sheikh Samir Bilal and Sheikh Yasir Saraya as well as Pakistani Qurra including Yasir Sohail Tareen recited.

This competition was won by Hafiz Moeddullah of Pishin district of Balochistan who was given an Umrah ticket as a prize. The second position and 20,000 cash prize went to Hafiz Muhammad Nauman of Haripur, while the third position along with 10,000 cash prize was won by Muhammad Mujahid, a student of Lodhran.

In the closing ceremony, Nasir Farid, Head of Public Relations Department of International Islamic University, Chairman of Ittihad Al-Qura Qari Muhammad Zaman Usmani and Ulema distributed prizes to the winners.

Chief Judge Maulana Qari Mohammad Ibrahim Khalil, Azad Kashmir, Maulana Qari Abdul Sattar Shah, Abbottabad and Maulana Qari Abdul Qayyum Batalvi of Attock District performed the duties of judges.

Speaking on this occasion, Nasir Farid, Incharge of Public Relations, IIUI, said that the main objective of the International Islamic University is the promotion of Islamic teachings, free from sectarianism and purely focused on research.

He said affiliation with the Qur’an is the source of success in this world and the hereafter. He added that the Qur’an is a book of action and we can pay our respect and love to it only by practically including it in our lives. He said that Faisal Mosque is a gift from Saudi Arabia to the people of Pakistan and recently, with the personal interest of H. E. Nawaf Al-Maliki, the ambassador of Saudi Arabia, the Saudi government has announced funding for the renovation of Faisal Mosque. He said the entire Pakistani nation is grateful to him.

Qari Muhammad Zaman Usmani, Chairman of Ittihad Al-Qura Al almi, highlighted the details of the competition stages and the services of Ittihad Al-Qura platform for memorizing the Qur’an and good recitation.

# Millennial Olympiad 2024 kicks off at The Millennium Education One World Campus

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: The Millennium Education, One World Campus E-11/4, Islamabad, hosted a grand event showcasing the convergence of global cultures. The Global Village and Opening Ceremony of the Millennial Olympiad 2024 unfolded over four days, spotlighting the diverse talents and cultural heritage of students from across the globe, says a press release. The Millennial Olympiad serves as a platform for young Millennials to demonstrate their prowess across various co-curricular and extracurricular domains.

The Opening Ceremony was presided over by the Federal Minister for Education & Professional Training, honourable Mr. Madad Ali Sindhi, and His Excellency Khazar Farhadov, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to

Pakistan. Both esteemed dignitaries articulated the Olympiad’s objective to inspire youth towards shaping a world founded on principles of justice, solidarity, liberty, dignity, harmony, and prosperity for all. In their respective addresses, the Education Minister and Ambassador commended the students’ initiative and urged the youth of Pakistan to actively engage in national and international student endeavours as catalysts for positive change.

Learners from the Early Years to IGCSE-III adorned in traditional attire represented their respective nations with pride and enthusiasm, transforming each stall into a visual delight depicting the unique essence of their culture. From intricate decorations to mouth-watering cuisines, the Global Village was a feast for the senses, offering visitors a glimpse into the beauty of different corners of

the globe.

Amidst the festivities, students participated in a wide array of activities, including matches, games, and sports, fostering camaraderie and healthy competition. The atmosphere buzzed with excitement as participants immersed themselves in the diverse experiences offered by the event. Sports played a pivotal role, promoting teamwork, discipline, and a healthy lifestyle, while instilling valuable lessons in resilience and fair play.

Ms. Asma Imran, Principal of Roots Millennium Education One World Campus, underscored the significance of holistic student development, emphasizing the role of extracurricular activities in nurturing students’ talents and values. She reiterated that such experiences not only enrich students’ educational journey but also equip them with



essential skills for their future endeavours.

The Millennial Olympiad provided a remarkable platform for the school

community to unite, celebrate diversity, and forge lasting connections. With 17 country stalls captivating attendees with their cultural richness, the Glob-

al Village at The Millennium Education One World Campus E-11/4, Islamabad, truly embodied the spirit of unity in diversity.

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# PML-N; Beneficiary vs Victim of Rigging

**A**s Chairman of PML(N), faced with Mr. Chatta's startling confession of orchestrating rigging across Rawalpindi division, turning 13 winning candidates into losers, he may have tasked a team of PML(N) stalwarts to strategize response. Some may have advocated vehemently countering his statement while others may have advised against it.

Those in favor must have cited PML(N)'s alleged benefit from the rigging and to propose deploying time-tested strategies of character assassinations labeling Mr. Chatta as a lunatic, attributing his claims to a mental breakdown induced by impending retirement pressures. His role during polling and result compilation should be dismissed. Highlighting his affiliation with PTI to portray his statement as a desperate bid for future political relevance. Demanding scrutiny of his character and family, amplifying any moral or ethical lapses. Intensifying the scrutiny of his religious beliefs and finances, exposing any irregularities, investigating into his foreign connections and properties, challenge the absence of concrete evidence supporting his claims, appealing for verifiable proof, leveraging public skepticism by framing the confessions as a politically motivated ploy to discredit PML(N) and manipulate opinion. Portraying PML(N) as a victim of political persecution, emphasizing its commitment to fair elections and democratic principles to undermine the Mr. Chatta's credibility, create doubts about his confession, and reinforce PML(N)'s innocence in alleged election rigging. Concluding that by discrediting Mr. Chatta and casting doubt on his motives and credibility, PML(N) can effectively undermine his confession and protect the party's integrity.

In contrast to this knee jerk response, some sane members may have proposed to not counter the confession arguing that the party should emphasize that the conduct of elections falls primarily

under the jurisdiction of the Election Commission and the interim government, not the party. Therefore, engaging in a defense against Mr. Chatta's confession could inadvertently associate the party with the alleged rigging. Any attempt to discredit Mr. Chatta may backfire, as his role in the election process was substantial, as evidenced by his involvement in pre-election procedures and his control over logistical operations, as highlighted in a recent interview with GEO, Character assassination or personal attacks on Mr. Chatta could prove counterproductive, especially considering the attendance of interim government officials at his daughter's wedding, suggesting a level of camaraderie that may undermine our allegations against him. The party must consider the reactions of other political parties. If PML(N) stand alone in countering Mr. Chatta's statements, it may suggest to the public that we are attempting to protect our own interests rather than seek truth and justice. We should advocate for a fair and transparent inquiry to uncover the truth, distancing ourselves from any allegations of wrongdoing. This approach would not only demonstrate party's commitment to upholding democratic principles but also position it favorably in the event that Mr. Chatta provides irrefutable evidence of rigging, allowing us to shift the blame onto the establishment and safeguard our party's reputation.

After hearing the arguments from both sides, the chairman of PML(N) who is visionary, principled and upright, would have made his decision in favor of justice and fairplay and ethical leadership arguing that countering Mr. Chatta's statements may appear politically expedient in the short term, it risks compromising the party's integrity and commitment to upholding democratic values. Therefore, he would lean towards advo-

ating for a fair and transparent inquiry to uncover the truth behind Mr. Chatta's confession. This decision aligns with the party's core values of accountability and fairness, demonstrating the public party's unwavering dedication to ensuring free and fair elections. Opting for an impartial investigation, the party would uphold the principles of democracy and rule of law, regardless of the potential short-term political implications this decision would reinforce the party's moral standing, serve the best interests of the nation and promote transparency and integrity in the electoral process. Expressing his commitment to fostering a political environment where truth and justice prevail, even if it means facing temporary challenges or setbacks. Acknowledging

that most of the parties are protesting against rigging and even PPP has adopted a cautious approach, which would leave PML(N) as the only party countering the confession and therefore would be termed as the beneficiary. Therefore, his decision would prioritize the long-term integrity and credibility of the party, paving the way for a stronger and more accountable democracy in Pakistan.

In contrast, the PML(N) leader, who was a beneficiary of the alleged rigging and stand to lose significant political capital and power if an independent inquiry reveals the truth, his decision would likely lean towards countering Mr. Chatta's statement saying that party's decision to counter Mr. Chatta's statement would be driven by a strategic imperative to protect the party's political interests, preserve its power, mitigate reputational damage, and uphold party unity in the face of mounting challenges.

He would argue that; the party's primary concern would be to safeguard the party's political interests, and maintain a majority in Punjab and the center. Losing

13 seats as a result of genuine inquiry would pave the way to lose many more seats elsewhere in the country which were won by PML(N) due to rigging. This, he would argue, will significantly weaken the party's position in both Punjab and the center, paving the way for PTI to form governments in these key regions. The party would be able to prevent any independent inquiry which would protect the party's grip on power, any political upheaval and forestall tarnishing the party's reputation and credibility. It would preserve public trust, maintain the party's image as a legitimate political force, avoid the repercussions of being implicated in electoral fraud and to weather off any potential political storm and maintain the party's position of influence.

The stark irony lies in the PML(N) leadership's vehement decision to counter the confession, paradoxically ensnaring themselves as the prime beneficiaries of the alleged electoral wrongdoing they so ardently dispute. In a frenzied attempt to counter the confession, the entire echelon of PML(N) inadvertently spotlights itself as the sole profiteer, tarnishing its own integrity. This zealous, impulsive rebuttal not only erodes the party's once-stalwart image of justice, fairness, and transparency but also paints it as a defender of the very rigging it purports to condemn. Caught in a desperate struggle for power, PML(N) appears to forsake political, economic, and financial stability, overshadowing the electorate's will with its own ambitions. Contrary to its proclaimed values, PML(N) sidestepped the demand for truth through an independent investigation led by a globally recognized figure and inclusive of nominees from all contesting parties, a step that could restore faith, ensure impartiality, and guide the nation back to a path of stability and integrity.

*Writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former MD, SRBC.*

## Barely functional

**T**he largest remaining hospital in southern Gaza is "barely functional", the UN World Health Organization (WHO) warned on Friday, amid reports of intense attacks by Israeli forces. There have been reports of damage to Nasser Hospital's orthopaedic unit, reducing its ability to provide urgent medical care, WHO spokesperson Tarik Jasarevic, told reporters at a press briefing in Geneva.

"More degradation to the hospital means more lives being lost," he said. According to the UN agency, of the 36 hospitals in the war-ravaged enclave, only 11 are functioning. There are also reports that several patients have died during the Israeli operation. The Israeli military has alleged that Hamas was holding hostages or withholding the bodies of Israelis within the Al Nasser compound, situated in Khan Younis. The hospital has been providing lifesaving services to the most critically ill and has been a refuge to countless civilians displaced from elsewhere in the Gaza Strip, it was pointed out. Jasarevic added that WHO was trying to gain urgent access to the complex. "We really need to get there to bring fuel so [the] hospital can continue to function and those patients who are still there can continue to receive medical care," he said, also stressing the need to assess the conditions of patients and for their safe referral to other facilities. "We have been saying all this time...that patients, health workers, and civilians who are seeking refuge in hospitals deserve safety and not a burial in those places of healing," he added. Meanwhile, intense Israeli bombardment from air, land and sea continues to be reported across much of the Gaza Strip, resulting in further civilian casualties, displacement and infrastructure damage, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said. "Widespread ground operations and heavy fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups also continue to be reported, especially in the centre of Khan Younis and east of Deir al Balah," OCHA noted in a flash update issued on Friday. Between the afternoon of 15 February and 11:00 AM on 16 February (local times), according to the Ministry of Health in Gaza, 112 Palestinians were killed, and 157 Palestinians were injured; and since 7 October, at least 28,775 Palestinians were killed in Gaza and a further 68,552 reported injured. OCHA also relayed reports that intensified airstrikes on Rafah and statements by Israeli officials of a ground operation, have led to the movement of people sheltering there towards the town of Deir Al-Balah in central Gaza. Over half of Gaza's population is crammed into Rafah, which is located at the southern end of the strip, in an area that represents just a fifth of the enclave's land area.



**Qamar Bashir**



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

## Political Engineering: The Controversial Practice at the Heart of Modern Politics

**T**he PTI's virtual dismemberment was part of a new wave of political engineering, a game that has been played by the powerful and ubiquitous security establishment on a regular basis. What we're seeing is a re-imagining of the old game of political engineering.

The term "political engineering" has gained prominence in discussions about modern politics and elections. Political engineering is political buildings in a society, which frequently involves the use of paper decrees, be they rules, referendums, rules, or otherwise, to acquire some preferred effect. This controversial practice involves the deliberate manipulation of political systems, electoral processes, and public opinion to achieve specific outcomes. As political parties and organizations around the world increasingly employ sophisticated tactics to influence voter behaviour and shape the political landscape, the ethical implications of political engineering have come under scrutiny.

The mechanics of political engineering can involve various strategies and tactics, such as: Manipulating the laws governing elections to favour certain outcomes or groups. This could involve gerrymandering, modifying voting methods, or setting thresholds for representation. Creating or updating constitutions and other legislative structures to divide authority, eliminate checks and balances, or create specific political structures that serve specific purposes. To shape public opinion and influence the narrative around political figures or figures, utilizing propaganda, censorship, or media manipulation. Creating alliances of patronage or clientelism in order to distribute favours, services, and benefits in exchange for political support. Opposition forces can be co-opted by

means of incentives or by repressing opposition by means of authoritarian means such as censorship, arrests, or violence.

By manipulating the delineation of electoral districts, political parties can effectively tip the scales in their favour, consolidating their power and diluting the influence of opposing voices. While gerrymandering has a long history in the United States and other countries, the advent

of powerful mapping software and demographic data has made the practice more insidious and precise than ever before.

The spread of disinformation and fake news represents a form of political engineering aimed at sowing confusion and distrust among voters. Through the targeted dissemination of false or misleading information, malign actors seek to undermine public faith in the electoral process, polarize society, and shape perceptions of political candidates and issues. The proliferation of online echo chambers and the algorithmic reinforcement of partisan narratives have further exacerbated the impact of disinformation on public discourse.

History has chastised the army generals who depose democratically elected governments and seize power, including four from Pakistan, Ayyub Khan, Yahya Khan, Zia ul Haq, and Pervez Musharraf. General Qamar Javed Bajwa, the current incumbent, may be treated differently, because he has tampered with the democratic system by orchestrating the ouster of one government and then supporting up a proxy who has ripped out of the military boots and bitten the hand that fed him. Since presiding over the country's dissolution in 1971, the Pakistan army is entering a moment of reckoning. It is perhaps the most dangerous thing to do, since it is unable to control

the forces that it has released and has given valuable ground to squabbling politicians involved in dogfights. The end result, as dawn newspaper put it editorially (November 7, 2022), is: "the system is imploding, spectacularly, under the weight of decades of political engineering, not to mention outright military takeovers." Given the way Pakistan is governed, general Bajwa isn't the first army chief to tinker with the system and may not be the last. On November 29, he will retire, the longest under a democratic framework that he and his much-needed agency facilitated, albeit with the help of the highest judiciary and bureaucracy that have always played ball with the military.

We are witnesses to the dismantling of a party by the same forces that had once backed it up. Tension had been building for a long time, but it came to a halt after the PTI supporters' assault on the "citadel" on May 9, 2023. The empire reacted with ferocity not seen in recent times. The group simply buckled under. Imran Khan grossly underestimated the cost of confronting the powerful establishment. The party may not be over, but it is difficult for the former Prime Minister to regain political clout. The PTI's virtual dismemberment was part of a new wave of political engineering, a game that has been played by the powerful and ubiquitous security establishment on a regular basis. What we're seeing is a re-imagining of the old game of political engineering. The protagonist of the previous act is now the new villain, and the baddies are now back in the lead role. In this ostensible power game orchestrated by the government, almost every political party has gone through this phase of ignominy at some point. The country has gone through various stages of direct military rule, with civilian democratic dispensations operating under the influence of big brother. The civil-military conflict has often resulted in a regime change. This is the story of 75 years of our political history. The country's basic power structure hasn't changed, which is surprising.



**M. Ameer Hamza**

## International Perspectives on Our Elections - I

**P**ositioned at the juncture of South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East, Pakistan occupies a crucial geopolitical position that deeply influences regional stability and global affairs. As a nation armed with nuclear capabilities and boasting a sizable population, Pakistan's significance extends well beyond its borders, encompassing diverse interests across various domains. From security imperatives to economic opportunities, Pakistan's role in global affairs is multifaceted and indispensable for comprehending the intricacies of international relations.

Pakistan's strategic location renders it a pivotal link between South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East, with shared borders with India, Afghanistan, Iran, and China, thereby cementing its status as a key player in regional geopolitics. Its proximity to major maritime routes, such as the Strait of Hormuz and the Arabian Sea, further amplifies its strategic importance for global trade and energy security. Moreover, Pakistan's contribution to the global fight against terrorism is paramount, given its frontline position in combating extremist factions within its territory. While Pakistan has collaborated extensively with the international community, particularly the United States, to disrupt terrorist networks.

Leveraging its substantial population and strategic location, Pakistan stands poised to capitalize on significant economic opportunities, exemplified by initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which aims to bolster connectivity and foster economic growth.

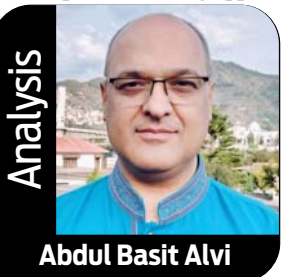
Furthermore, Pakistan's stability and prosperity are intricately linked to the stability of its neighbors and the broader South Asian region, with ongoing conflicts such as those in Afghan-

istan and the Kashmir dispute directly impacting Pakistan's security landscape. Hence, fostering dialogue, cooperation, and conflict resolution mechanisms are imperative for promoting peace and stability in the region. Ultimately, Pakistan's strategic importance emanates from its geostrategic location, counterterrorism efforts, nuclear deterrence capabilities, economic potential, and its role in regional stability, highlighting the need for sustained engagement on a spectrum of issues to advance mutual interests and bolster global peace and prosperity.

Pakistan, akin to numerous democracies worldwide, grapples with an array of electoral challenges that erode the integrity and inclusivity of its electoral procedures. Ranging from allegations of fraud and irregularities to issues of voter disenfranchisement and opacity, these hurdles present significant impediments to cultivating a more robust and representative democracy within the nation. Identifying and remedying these electoral dilemmas stands as imperative for fortifying democratic institutions, reinstating public confidence, and ensuring that every citizen holds a stake in shaping the nation's future.

Among the foremost and enduring obstacles confronting Pakistan's electoral framework is the widespread allegations of occurrence of electoral fraud and irregularities. Instances of vote manipulation, ballot stuffing, and result manipulation have tarnished the credibility of past elections and fueled public skepticism toward the electoral mechanism. The deficiency in transparency and accountability during election conduct, compounded by feeble oversight mechanisms, exacerbates the issue and undermines the legitimacy of elected representatives.

*To be continued*



**Abdul Basit Alvi**

## IS Vietnamese Tet

# Vietnam Embassy celebrates Lunar New Year in Islamabad

By Naveed Ahmad Khan

Vietnamese Tet, also known as Tet Nguyen Dan or simply Tet, is the most important festival in Vietnamese culture. It is the Vietnamese New Year, and it marks the beginning of the lunar calendar.

Lunar New Year is celebrated with great enthusiasm all over the world. Mr. & Mrs. Nguyen Tien Phong Ambassador of Vietnam hosted a reception on the occasion of the beginning of spring, the 2024 Lunar New Year of Dragon at "Homeland Spring" event in Islamabad. The colors of traditional dresses, songs sung by the kids of the Ambassador and staff, and the taste of Vietnamese food, especially cooked by the staff were enthralling, fascinating and mouthwatering. Viet Nam is a beautiful country, always rich in humanistic history and heroic traditions.

H. E. Mr. Tariq Osman Hyder, a very senior diplomat who went to Hanoi in 1973 for firstly setting up of the Embassy of Pakistan in Viet Nam, H. E. Mr. Salahuddin Chaudhry, former Ambassador of Pakistan to Viet Nam, H. E. Mr. Zaigham Uddin Azam, former Ambassador of Pakistan to Viet Nam, Mr. Shakil Ahmed, a great friend of the Embassy and also friends of Vietnams were also attend the event and enjoyed

Ambassador Nguyen Tien Phong in his keynote address at the occasion shed light on what Lunar Year and Homeland Spring are for his compatriots. He shared the development Viet Nam has achieved in previous years through all challenges including COVID-19. H. E. also expressed his views on Pakistan Vietnam Relations.

H. E. said, "The presence of Vietnamese overseas today, together with us at the Embassy is a return to our origin, our roots when Tet and Spring come, it is the return and convergence of all our beloved homeland's people, including me and the Embassy's officials and family, it is the return to Vietnamese history, traditions, identities, and cultures for all of us."

The Ambassador said that "Today's event is also an opportunity for all of us to celebrate the Lunar New Year of Dragon 2024 with Pakistani friends, with the expectation that a Lunar New Year will witness development, prosperity, and happiness for all

Vietnamese people as well as our dear Pakistani friends".

On behalf of the Party and State of Viet Nam, of the Viet Nam's Embassy in Pakistan, with personal affection, I would like to send a message of kind regards, close feelings and best wishes for the Lunar New Year of Dragon 2024 to the beloved sons and daughters of motherland Viet Nam, to all distinguished guests.

"As we already knew, the year 2023 ended with many major, complex, unpredictable changes, increased uncertainty, prolonged conflicts, local wars taking place in many areas, and weather becoming more and more extreme and fierce natural disasters; The world economy is slow to recover, negatively affecting every country, including ours. In that context, we have the right to be proud that, under the wise leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, with the efforts of the entire nation, including significant contributions from our compatriots abroad, of which oversea Vietnamese community in Pakistan is an important part, the country has achieved great achievements in all fields: Political – social stability; Defense and security is maintained; Foreign relations have continuously expanded and deepened; High and sustainable economic growth."

Specifically in the economic field: In the 3 years after the 13th Party Congress, GDP growth in 2021 reached 2.56%, in 2022 reached 8.02%, much higher than the 6 – 6.5% plan in the unfavorable context of Covid-19 (2021-2022). In 2023, GDP growth reached more than 5%, a high rate compared to other countries in the region and the world. For the first time, our country's GDP reached 430 billion USD, ranking 3rd in ASEAN and among the 40 largest economies in the world, top 20 economies in terms of trade and attracting foreign investment.

The economy witnessed very positive and stable macroeconomic indicators such as: inflation below 4%, local currency devaluation below 2.5%; Exports increase by an average of 9%, reaching a record of 371 billion USD in 2022, foreign exchange reserves reach 100 billion USD in 2023; GDP per capita in 2023 reaches 4,284 USD, an increase of nearly 4% compared to 2022, FDI inflows in 2023 reach an all-time high of 36.6 billion USD,



an increase of 32% compared to 2022.

The results of 2023 have contributed to deepening the country's great achievements of historical significance after nearly 50 years of national unification and nearly 40 years of implementing the Reform process.

From a poor country, going through wars with many losses and pain that need to be healed; A country that was once besieged and embargoed, today, Vietnam has established diplomatic relations with 193 countries and territories; is a member of 70 regional and global organizations, taking on important international roles

and responsibilities; Actively contribute to peace, stability and development in the world.

Ambassador H. E. Nguyen Tien Phong said that "Vietnam has affirmed its image and position as an independent, self-reliant, dynamically developing country, a loyal and sincere friend, a reliable partner, and an active, responsible member of the community, international copper; is a country of peace, friendship, cooperation and development; is a beautiful, safe, friendly, hospitable destination."

We cannot achieve the above achievements without promoting the strength of great national

unity, resilient will and courage, spirit of determination, self-reliance, and strong desire for independence, freedom, peace, and happiness of our nation, including the valuable and very important contributions of aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews presenting here in particular and of the Vietnamese community abroad in general.

Vietnamese people abroad, no matter what generation, wherever they are, are Lac children – Hong children are always a part of flesh and blood, an inseparable part of the Fatherland, always present in the heart and feelings of the country and people of Vietnam.

And no matter where you are, under what conditions, what age group, what nationality, if you have Vietnamese blood, if you are a Vietnamese patriot, you can contribute to the Fatherland in your own way. Because love for the Fatherland is a simple, close and natural and intrinsic thing, a natural and legitimate need and desire of us all.

It is always very special and spiritually sacred for Vietnamese people. This is an opportunity for children who have gone far away to return and go home, to reunite in the love of family, homeland, and joyfully welcome the Lunar New Year. Like me and all Vietnamese here today, those who cannot return will still turn their hearts to their ancestral homeland, to the Tet with deep and sacred emotions.

According to tradition of our ancestors, Tet is an opportunity for us to respectfully report to Heaven and Earth, to our Ancestors about the past year, repair and clean up the house, and leave behind old and negative things, open your heart to prepare to welcome a new year with new energies, new hopes for a good future, and all prosperity.

Notably, in December 2023, the United Nations passed a decision to consider January 1 of the lunar calendar every year as one of the 10 United Nations holidays. The special thing about this

Lunar New Year is the Year of the Dragon, while the origin of the Vietnamese people as "Children of the Dragon – Grandchildren of the Fairy", you will completely agree with me that the Year of the Dragon 2024 will bring many new opportunities for Vietnam to fly higher and farther.

Today's Xuan Que Huong – Homeland Spring event, with exchanges and meetings, with peach blossoms, apricot blossoms and special dishes and traditions during the Vietnamese Lunar New Year, I believe and hope that the flavors of Tet, even yet full, will be shared, spread to all our Vietnamese and esteemed Pakistani friends.

"The longing and desire to celebrate a real Tet in the Fatherland will be filled with the accumulation of great successes in studying and working, then to be unbounded in joys and happiness when we immerse ourselves in Tet with family in Viet Nam in the near future," the Ambassador concluded.

H. E. wished compatriots abroad and our comrades and delegates a new year of good health, happiness and success. Great solidarity of the entire Vietnamese nation to be continuously developed. Fatherland Vietnam is ever more prosperous and happy.

Ambassador wished Viet Nam, Pakistan further friendship and comprehensive – effective cooperation.

Former Ambassadors of Pakistan to Viet Nam, Mr. Tariq Osman Hyder, Salahuddin Chaudhry, Zaigham Uddin Azam was also present. Tariq Osman Hyder went to Hanoi in 1973 for firstly setting up of the Embassy of Pakistan in Viet Nam, Mr. Shakil Ahmed of Shakil Express also graced the event with his presence. The Ambassador called him a great friend of the Embassy, of his as well as of previous Vietnamese Ambassadors.

### Good Luck Tree

A wonderful part of the event was to pick an envelope from a beautifully decorated tree to see your luck in the year. Small red envelopes with a Pakistani Currency note inside were lying on the branches. Every guest was taken to the tree by the Ambassador to pick one. It is a tradition in Viet Nam that resembles Pakistani tradition as well. In Pakistan as well, many people have something sacred read on a currency note and keep it, not spend it as a symbol of good luck. Same was shared by the Ambassador. The guest took keen interest in this tradition and appreciated it a lot.



## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
59,872.96	-1147.09
Day's High	Day's Low
62,394.25	60,926.85
Index Value	Change
8,125,807,060	-1133.79
Percentage	Time
-1.88%	16 Feb, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,711.71	+114.18
Percentage	Time
+1.50%	16 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
38,775.36	+2.24
Percentage	Time
+0.0058%	16 Feb, 12:29 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
38,487.24	+329.30
Percentage	Time
-0.86%	16 Feb, 3:15 pm GMT+9

## Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	180	182
Bahrain Dinar	743.12	751.12
Canadian Dollar	206.5	208.5
China Yuan	38.84	39.24
Danish Krone	40.24	40.64
Euro	301	304
Hong Kong Dollar	35.74	36.09
Indian Rupee	3.48	3.59
Japanese Yen	2.1	2.18
Kuwaiti Dinar	906.33	915.33
Malaysian Ringgit	58.6	59.2
New Zealand \$	170.1	172.1
Norwegians Krone	26.43	26.73
Omani Riyal	725.75	733.75
Qatari Riyal	76.76	77.46
Saudi Riyal	74.2	75
Singapore Dollar	207	209
Swedish Korona	26.85	27.15
Swiss Franc	315.64	318.14
Thai Bhat	7.93	8.08
U.A.E Dirham	76.55	77.25
UK Pound Sterling	352.4	355.4
US Dollar	279.15	281.95

## PPIF to enhance family planning services



PPA

LAHORE: Chief Executive Officer PPIF and Director General Population Welfare Department Saman Roy have said that PPIF in Punjab province is based on improving family planning resources and reducing population growth through its use. She expressed this while addressing the meeting held in the committee room.

She said 600 teachers and more than 10000 students have been provided high-level training related to family planning and reproductive health in 30 educational institutions in Punjab province.

A target has been set to reach 55000 youths and married couples in the three districts of Attock, Khushab, and Lodhran in providing family planning, gender equality information, and services. Through this program providing free access to quality family planning services to the people of the province and institutionalizing quality of care in family planning services. PPIF delivery system and awareness among the people and Focusing on providing better health-related facilities.

Coordination of family planning service providers is also being improved through the World Bank program. She said that the Department of Population Welfare Punjab is currently implementing several initiatives that will strengthen its capacity as a whole and the expected results of the strategy will be to create a healthy and productive environment for the promotion of family planning in the province.

It will help in formation. Director General Population Welfare Department Saman Roy said that the Punjab Population Welfare Department is providing access to quality information to the youth thanks to modern means of communication, and quick awareness of the changing needs of the youth with the help of educational programs.

# Govt achieves 13 goals, out of 15, set to promote IT sector within brief period: Dr. Saif

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif has said the caretaker government had successfully achieved 13 goals, out of 15, set to promote the IT sector and increase its exports within a brief period of 5 months under the caretaker setup.

In a video message, he said, "We have achieved 13 out of 15 important targets for the promotion of the IT & telecom sector in a short period of 5 months in the caretaker set-up. The forum of SIFC will prove to be a great support for the upcoming elected government in the process of building and developing the country, and the elected government will also reap the benefits of the measures we have taken during the caretaker period."

"We worked with the SIFC and the State Bank to make a significant policy intervention, allowing IT companies to keep 50% of their export revenue in dollars in an account in Pakistan and make their international expenses without any restrictions from this amount," he further explained. He said that with this decision, allowing the retention of 50 percent in dollars, the country's IT exports have increased by 32 percent in the last 60 days.

He said, "The effective implementation of the Right of Way Policy, the Special Investment Council has removed all departmental hurdles, and all decisions in the interest of the country and the nation have been approved without delay."



He said that the ministry is concurrently establishing a research and development fund to support mobile phone manufacturing companies and facilitate the growth of the mobile phone manufacturing sector.

Dr. Umar Saif said that the first standardized quality test for the 75,000 information technology graduates will be conducted soon.

He highlighted significant decisions made to revamp IT education in collaboration with various entities, including HEC, the National Computing Accreditation Council, the Examination Testing Council, the Pakistan Software

Export Board, and the Pakistan Software Houses Association.

He said that freelancers would now receive their payments through PayPal, addressing a longstanding demand. The minister clarified, "While PayPal itself is not coming to Pakistan, an agreement has been reached where remittances would be channeled through PayPal via a third party."

"Under the newly devised program, freelancers will not need to open a PayPal account. Instead, individuals outside the country will make payments from their PayPal accounts,

and the funds will be promptly deposited into the freelancers' accounts," the minister explained.

He said that under the nation's first space policy approved by the federal cabinet, international companies would be allowed to provide communication services through low-orbit communication satellites.

Dr. Saif said that satellite communication technology was advancing rapidly, and many private companies in the world wanted to provide communication services through low-orbit satellites.

"Satellites used to be geostationary, far away from the land. They are useful for broadcasting TV signals but communicating is difficult because there is latency," he said.

Dr. Saif said that communication services and internet services could be offered through low-orbit satellites, which were relatively closer. He said that there had been a lot of development in this regard in the private sector.

"So now it has become possible for communication services in Pakistan to be provided through satellites and the private sector has this technology," he said.

He expressed confidence that 5G services in the country would be launched by July-August current year, and 300MHz spectrum would be offered for auction.

He said that before the launch of 5G services, the optic fiber network had to be enhanced. Currently, only 6,000 mobile towers relate to optic fiber cables (OFC) of around 56,000 towers across the country.

## Pak products to EU markets

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg H. E. Amna Baloch has visited the Exotic City, Belgium, which is a major supplier of Pakistani food products to Europe. On the occasion, she appreciated the efforts made by the company in introducing Pakistani products to the European markets, Pakistan Embassy on Sunday, posted on X account.



## Fly Jinnah inaugurates first international flight connecting Islamabad and Sharjah



PPA

KARACHI: Fly Jinnah, Pakistan's low-cost carrier, celebrated the inaugural flight of its first international route from Islamabad, Pakistan, to Sharjah, UAE with a dual ceremony at Islamabad International Airport before departure and at Sharjah International Airport, where the aircraft received a warm welcome upon arrival.

The inaugural flight carried onboard Fly Jinnah's senior leadership along with a group of travel agents, media, and social media personalities among others. The inaugural ceremony at Sharjah International Airport was welcomed with a traditional water cannon salute and followed by a welcome ceremony at Sharjah Airport attended by His Excellency Mr. Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Pakistan's Ambassador in the UAE, in addition to senior management representing Sharjah International Airport and Air Arabia.

With its modern fleet of five Airbus A320 aircraft, the airline currently connects five major cities in Pakistan, namely Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, and Quetta, in addition to the newly launched international destination to Sharjah in the UAE. In addition to the extra comfort provided by the most generous seat-pitch of any economy cabin, the carrier offers affordable and value-driven travel experiences through "SkyCafe" onboard menu where passengers can enjoy a wide variety of delicacies between snacks, sandwiches, and meals at affordable prices. The aircraft is also equipped with "SkyTime", a free in-flight streaming service that allows passengers to stream a wide selection of entertainment directly to their devices.

## Launch of industry first co-branded/affinity credit Card with Lahore Qalandars

PPA

LAHORE: The Bank of Punjab (BOP), one of the leading financial institutions with a network of 800 plus branches across Pakistan, had signed a partnership agreement with PSL franchise Lahore Qalandars in January 2022 where BOP is an exclusive banking partner during the 3 years term of the agreement. As a part of the agreement, new joint products were planned to be launched that will be beneficial for both organizations and the customers.

BOP Lahore Qalandars Credit Card (LQCC) is part of planned launch of products developed under the umbrella of the partnership to complete our Digital Banking menu.

A launch event was held at Pearl Continental Lahore on 16th February 2022 where the LQCC was unveiled by the President & CEO of Bank of Punjab, Mr. Zafar Masud



and CEO of Lahore Qalandars, Mr. Atif Rana.

Speaking on the occasion, BOP President and CEO Zafar Masud said, "At The Bank of Punjab, our customer is at heart of everything we do. Since cricket is part of our culture and PSL encourages healthy activities among the youth, we have developed Lahore Qalandars Credit Card to especially cater to the needs of Cricket fans in general and Lahore Qalandars fans in particular. We continue with an objective to add value

in whatever we put our hand in. LQCC is one such initiative on our part and we expect the industry will follow suit with coming out with new and unique product offering for their customers and the formation of healthy and economically important activities for the country. Cricket economy is something that we recognize and position ourselves.

Existing customers of BOP can book their LQCC by visiting respective branch or registering a request at the Helpline number 042-111-267-200.

Speaking on the occasion, Lahore Qalandars CEO Atif Rana said: "We are excited about this partnership with Bank of Punjab. Lahore Qalandars Credit Card is going to strengthen the bond of fans with Lahore Qalandars through BOP. We believe in developing the infrastructure for Cricket and expect that other franchises will follow this Co-branded/ Affinity card launch with their banking partners in future."

## Furniture industry direly needs skilled workforce

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Pakistan's furniture industry is grappling with a severe shortage of skilled woodworkers that has triggered significant delays in the timely shipment of export consignments, posing challenges to the industry's efficiency, repute and profitability.

Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq stated this while talking to a delegation of furniture manufacturers led by Faryad Ahmed Raza here Sunday.

He said, woodworking skills are fundamental in the furniture manufacturing process, from crafting intricate designs to ensuring the structural integrity of pieces. However, the demand for skilled woodworkers in Pakistan exceeds the available workforce. This shortage can be attributed



to various factors including limited vocational training programmes, low wages and a lack of interest among the young generation in pursuing careers in woodworking, he added.

The PFC chief said that one of the primary consequences of this shortage is the delay in fulfilling export orders. Export-oriented furniture manufacturers heavily rely on timely deliveries to maintain customer satisfaction and uphold their reputa-

tion in the global market. However, the scarcity of skilled woodworkers leads to production bottlenecks, prolonging lead times and jeopardizing shipment schedules, he mentioned.

By addressing the shortage, he claimed, Pakistan furniture industry can overcome production challenges; meet export demands; and sustain its growth trajectory in the global market. Time-sensitive actions and long-term strategies are essential to navigate through this critical juncture and unlock the industry's full potential. Fostering partnerships among educational institutions, industry associations, and businesses can facilitate knowledge transfer and skill development initiatives. Collaborative efforts to modernize production techniques and adopt innovative technologies can also enhance efficiency and productivity in the woodworking sector, he concluded.

## Pakistan's earns \$1,454 million from IT services' export in 6 months

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan earned US \$1,454.881 million by providing different Information Technology (IT) services to various countries during the first six months of the current fiscal year 2023-24.

This shows a growth of 8.98 per cent as compared with the US \$1,334.969 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding months of the last fiscal year 2022-23, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During the months under review, the export of computer services grew by 10.32 per cent as it surged from US \$1,064.579 million last year to US \$1,174.481 million during July-December 2023-24.

Among the computer services, the exports of software consultancy services witnessed a nominal decrease of 180 per cent, from US \$3.394 million to

US \$3.333 million this year while the export of hardware consultancy services surged by 3.401 per cent, from US \$391.570 million to US \$404.875 million.

The export of repair and maintenance services however decreased by 39.15 per cent from US \$1.530 million to US \$0.930 million whereas the export and imports of computer software services surged by 2.79 per cent, from \$302.376 million to \$310.807 million.

Meanwhile, the export of information services during the months under review dipped by 19.72 per cent from US \$2.180 million to US \$1.750 million.

Among the information services, the exports of information-related services increased by 3.64 per cent, from US \$0.687 million to US \$0.712 million whereas the exports of news agency services however decreased by 30.48 per cent, from US \$1.493 million to US \$1.038 million.

# Multan Sultans beat Karachi Kings to script winning start to PSL 9

## A Sports

MULTAN: Dawid Malan and Reeza Hendricks' brisk half-centuries, followed by a combined bowling effort led Multan Sultans to a 55-run victory over Karachi Kings in their Pakistan Super League (PSL) 9 campaign opener here on Sunday.

Set to chase 186 on the tricky surface of the Multan Cricket Stadium, the Kings could amass 130/8 runs in the allotted overs despite Shoaib Malik's gutsy half-century.

The visitors had a shaky start to the pursuit, courtesy of David Willey's back-to-back wickets — James Vince (5) and Saad Baig (0) — in the third over of the innings.

Following the slump, skipper Shan Masood joined forces with experienced Malik and began to launch a recovery.

The pair added 52 runs for the third wicket before Usama Mir dismissed Masood in the ninth over. The Kings' captain scored 30 off 31 balls, hitting four boundaries and a six.

Malik then put together a one-sided partnership with Mohammad Nawaz which yielded 37 runs.

The experienced, aware of the mounting required run rate switched

gears in the 12th over of the innings when he hit Iftikhar Ahmed for a six and two boundaries.

He brought up his 15th PSL half-century on the first delivery of the 13th over by smashing Abbas Afridi for a boundary with an elegant cover drive.

But Abbas hit back on the next delivery and dismissed Malik, who remained the top-scorer for the Kings with 53 off 35 deliveries, peppered with five boundaries and two sixes.

Abbas then struck again in the same over, removing Mohammad Nawaz (seven) and igniting a collapse in the Kings' batting lineup.

The visitors lost three more wickets in quick succession and consequently slipped to 113/8 in 17 overs.

Experienced all-rounder Kieron Pollard waged a lone battle at the end with a gutsy cameo but his efforts went in vain as the Kings fell short by 55 runs.

He remained unbeaten on 28 off 29 deliveries, which featured four boundaries and a six.

Mohammad Ali led the bowling charge for the Sultans with 3/23, followed by Willey and Abbas, picking up two wickets each.

Mir, on the other hand, could only take one wicket but was economical,

leaving just 14 runs in his four-over spell.

Put into bat first, the Sultans registered a commendable total on the board in their first PSL 9 fixture, courtesy of a marathon second-wicket partnership between Malan and Hendricks.

The home side, however, had a contrasting start to their innings as Mir Hamza trapped their skipper Mohammad Rizwan (11) lbw on the first delivery of the third over with just 17 runs on the board.

The Sultans were unfazed by the early blow as Hendricks joined Malan in the middle to give them a steady start.

The duo batted with great determination to keep the scoreboard ticking and registered half-centuries at a decent strike rate.

Their 121-run partnership finally lasted in the 17th over when Dawid Malan misjudged Daniel Sams' slower delivery and launched the ball straight to substitute fielder Irfan Khan at deep midwicket.

Malan smashed four boundaries and a six on his way to a 41-ball 52.

Hendricks, on the other hand, stood his ground firm and carried his bat all the way through with an unbeaten 79 off 54 deliveries, laced up seven bound-



aries and three sixes.

He was involved in yet another crucial partnership for the Sultans when he added 47 runs for the third

wicket alongside Khushdil Shah, who played an important cameo at the back-end.

Khushdil scored 28 off 13, hitting

four boundaries, to help Hendricks bolster the Sultans' total.

For the Kings, Mir Hamza and Daniel Sams bagged one wicket apiece.

## Malan and pacers help Multan Sultans Secure a Solid Start to HBL PSL 9

### Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Multan Sultans, previous edition's runners-up, have started HBL PSL 9 on a high note after they defeated Karachi Kings by a healthy margin of 55 runs at their home ground, Multan Cricket Stadium. Reeza Hendricks and Dawid Malan scored half-centuries to take the team to 185 in the first innings.

In reply, Karachi Kings could only manage 130-8 in the allotted 20 overs.

After winning the toss, Karachi Kings skipper Shan Masood invited Multan Sultans to bat first. Sultans found themselves in trouble as left-arm pacer Mir Hamza struck on the first ball of the third over to take out captain Mohammad Rizwan, who walked back for a measly 11-ball 12 which included two boundaries.

Hendricks, on his HBL PSL debut, took charge from the get-go as he looked to capitalise in the powerplay. After joining opening batter Malan on the crease, the South African top-order batter helped stitch a 121-run second-wicket partnership to power the innings.

Malan completed his half-centu-

ry before he fell to HBL PSL debutant Daniel Sams in the 17th over. The left-handed batter returned to the pavilion after scoring 52 on 41, with four boundaries and one maximum.

Khushdil Shah, next batter in, entertained the crowd with an unbeaten quick-fire 13-ball 28 on the back of four boundaries. An unbroken 47-run partnership between Khushdil and Hendricks took Multan Sultans to 185 in 20 overs.

Hendricks, who contributed an undefeated 79 on 54 while showcasing seven fours and three sixes, was adjudged player of the match after he finished as the top run-getter of the game.

Sams and Hamza were the only two wicket-takers for Karachi Kings.

Chasing 186, Karachi Kings got off to a stuttering start. Opening batter James Vince (5, 4b, 1x4) was caught by Mohammad Ali at third man after David Willey managed to draw a thick outside edge on the second ball of the third over.

On the subsequent ball, Pakistan U19 captain Saad Baig copped a golden duck as Karachi Kings were reduced to 10-2 courtesy of Willey. The left-arm pacer's lethal stint with the new ball justified

Multan Sultans' decision to choose the English bowler as the first pick of HBL PSL 9 player draft.

A 52-run third-wicket partnership between Shan and veteran Shoaib Malik allowed a semblance of stability in the innings. However, it was cut short in the ninth over when Shan (30, 31b, 4x4s, 1x6) was caught by Willey off leg-spinner Usama Mir.

Mohammad Nawaz joined Malik in the middle. The two batted together to add 37 to the total before right-arm pacer Abbas Afridi removed the latter in the 14th over. Malik had to walk back after hitting his 83rd T20 fifty making 53 on 35, on the back of five fours and two sixes.

In the same over, Nawaz was caught at extra cover by Hendricks for just seven runs as Karachi Kings slipped further into disarray.

The equation worsened for Karachi Kings in the 15th over as right-arm pacer Mohammad Ali, making his debut for Multan Sultans, returned with two wickets and just a run. In his subsequent over, he got Hamza out for a duck.

Keiron Pollard cleared the rope twice in the penultimate over aiming to reduce

the deficit, however, with 67 required in the final two overs, the game had completely slipped out of Karachi Kings' grasp.

Ali was the pick of the bowlers for Multan, as he grabbed three wickets while giving just 23 in his four overs as Multan Sultans registered a comprehensive win over Karachi Kings. Abbas — who picked up two for 16 in three overs — and Willey — giving 22 for two in four overs — supported Ali's efforts. Usama also dismissed one batter.

### Scores in brief:

Multan Sultans beat Karachi Kings by 55 runs

Multan Sultans 185-2, 20 overs (Reeza Hendricks 79 not out, Dawid Malan 52, Khushdil Shah 28 not out; Mir Hamza 1-30, Daniel Sams 1-37)

Karachi Kings 130-8, 20 overs (Shoaib Malik 53, Shan Masood 30, Kieron Pollard 28 not out; Mohammad Ali 3-23, Abbas Afridi 2-16, David Willey 2-22)

Player of the match — Reeza Hendricks (Multan Sultans)

Tomorrow's fixture: Lahore Qalandars vs Quetta Gladiators, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore (1900 PKT)

## Govt Women's College Vihari won the First Volleyball Championship



### Sports desk

LAHORE: Under the auspices of Higher Education Department, Secondary Higher Education Volleyball Champion Ship Inter Division Multan Government Graduate College for Women Khanewal was held at Shiber Stadium Khanewal. In Second Higher Education Volleyball, Govt Women's College Vihari won the first position. The first match was played between Govt Women's College Vihari and Govt Women's College Khanewal which Govt Women's College Vihari won in the second half and qualified for the final. Volleyball Final Government Women College Vihari OrIt was played between Govt Women's College Chongli No.14 Multan which was won by Govt Women's College Wahari in the second half and qualified for the provincial level. Director Colleges Multan Division Ahmed Rauf and Deputy Director Colleges Khaniwal also participated in the event.

## PSL 9: Karachi Kings win toss elect to bowl first against Multan Sultans

### A Sports

MULTAN: Karachi Kings won the toss and elected to bowl first against home side Multan Sultans in their Pakistan Super League (PSL) 9 campaign opener here on Sunday.

### PLAYING XI

KARACHI KINGS: Shan Masood (c), James Vince, Saad Baig, Mohammad Nawaz, Shoaib Malik, Kieron Pollard, Daniel Sams, Hasan Ali, Tabraiz Shamsi, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Amir Khan.

MULTAN SULTANS: Mohammad Rizwan, Dawid Malan, Reeza Hendricks, Yasir Khan, Iftikhar Ahmed, Khushdil Shah, David Willey, Usama Mir, Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Ali, Shah Nawaz Dahani.

### Head To Head

Matches 21, Karachi Kings 5, Multan Sultans 5, Tied 1, No Result 2

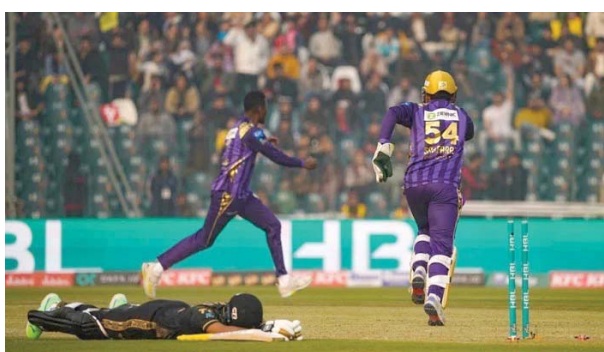
## PSL 9: Gladiators emerge victorious in thriller against Peshawar Zalmi

LAHORE: Quetta Gladiators emerged victorious in a humdinger of a game against Peshawar Zalmi at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium on Sunday, as the Babar Azam-led side fell short of 16 runs to reach the massive, 207-run target.

PSL 9: Gladiators emerge victorious in thriller against Peshawar Zalmi

Thanks to the stellar 157-run stand between Saud Shakeel and Jason Roy, Gladiators had good runs on the board and despite losing wickets, the side did manage to get past the 200-run mark.

Though the Zalmi started off with a bang but failed to chase the target as Quetta bowlers put in a remarkable effort in the death overs.



Azam top scored for his side by scoring 68 runs on 42 balls courtesy of eight boundaries but his efforts went in vain as his side fell 17 runs short of the total target set by the Gladiators.

Zalmi had a thrilling start, Saim Ayub and Azam were well set on the crease as they were

heading towards 100 for no loss. However, in the ninth over, a misunderstanding between the two batters cost them a big blow.

Saim lost his wicket after scoring 42 runs after getting run out leaving his side 91-1 in 8.4 overs.

Mohammad Haris came in after the left-handed batter's depar-

ture but he too walked back to the pavilion shortly after scoring just 7 runs.

Azam stayed on the crease as he continued to score for his side, but the Zalmi skipper mistimed his shot on mystery spinner's Abrar Ahmed ball and was caught by Mohammad Wasim Jr.

The wickets kept falling and the outstanding effort by the Gladiators' bowlers restricted Zalmi to 190 for six wickets, winning the match by 16 runs.

Earlier in the first innings, Jason Roy and Saud Shakeel wreaked havoc as they thrashed Zalmi's bowler all over the ground and built a 157-run partnership.

Shakeel departed after scoring a brilliant 74 off 47, laced with ten boundaries, which included four

sixes as well.

Gladiators' skipper Rilee Rossouw joined the party and hit the six off the first ball, followed by a boundary two balls later, but Mohammad Zeeshan castled him in the next over to end his brief stay.

Roy was departed by Salman Irshad in the 18th over with 185 runs on the board after playing a clinical knock of 75 runs from 48 balls, featuring nine boundaries and two sixes.

Sherfane Rutherford played a 20-run cameo off 13 balls before getting out in the last over, followed by Mohammad Wasim who scored a boundary and departed on the next ball.

Khawaja Nafay (6) hit the last ball for four to lift the team's total to 206 in their allocated 20 overs.

## Mohammad Amir reveals his mid-match conversation with Babar Azam

### A Sports

LAHORE: Quetta Gladiators' left-arm pacer Mohammad Amir disclosed his brief conversation with Peshawar Zalmi captain Babar Azam during their sides' Pakistan Super League (PSL) 9 clash on Sunday.

The incident occurred in the third over of Peshawar Zalmi's run chase when Amir bowled a short-pitched delivery to Babar, who failed to get any bat on it and went to wicketkeeper Sarfaraz Ahmed.

Meanwhile, while speaking at the post-match press conference, Amir was asked to share his conversation with Babar after the steamy bouncer.

"The instance you highlighted was regarding the bouncer

which he said that it went quickly and couldn't understand," Amir replied to the question.

"He is a good player but my role has always been to pick wickets of the top batter," stated Amir.

For the unversed, Mohammad Amir delivered a commendable performance with the ball, returning splendid figures of 1/29 in his spell of four overs in a high-scoring clash.

Babar Azam, on the other hand, was equally impressive, top-scoring for the Zalmi with a 42-ball 68. But his heroics went in vain as the Gladiators emerged victorious by 16 runs.

Set to chase 207, Peshawar Zalmi's captain Babar Azam and Saim Ayub came out all guns blazing as they raised 70 runs

in the powerplay.

However, their progress was halted by a mixup between the batters in the ninth over, resulting in Ayub's run-out, which proved to be the turning point.

Ayub scored a quick 42 runs from 26 balls, which featured three sixes and two boundaries. Akeal Hosein then removed Mohammad Haris to reduce Zalmi to 108-2 in 10.2 overs before Tom Kohler-Cadmore joined hands with Azam for a 39-run stand.

Azam played a 68-run knock in 42 balls with the help of four boundaries and four sixes. He fell prey to Abrar Ahmed in the 16th over with 147 runs on the board.

Kohler-Cadmore also fell in the same over after scoring run-a-ball 18 runs, leaving

Zalmi to chase 57 off 26.

Quetta Gladiators' bowlers did not allow the batters to regain momentum and reduced them to 182-5 in 19 overs, requiring 25 off the last over.

Mohammad Wasim's last over went for only seven runs, handing the Gladiators a 16-run win, with Abrar Ahmed leading the bowling with 2-29.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Amir, Hosein and Wasim bagged one wicket each.

Prior to that, Quetta Gladiators posted a mammoth total of 206/5 on the board, courtesy of Saud Shakeel and Jason Roy's marathon opening stand.



## Protest

QUETTA: Supporters of various political parties chant slogans during the protest against alleged election rigging in front of the deputy commissioner office.



Photo: AFP

## Bilawal Bhutto rejects 'power-sharing formula' offered to PPP

Imtiaz Solangi

LARKANA: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Sunday rejected the power-sharing formula he was offered wherein the prime minister's seat would be shared between two parties.

"I was told that let us be the prime minister for three years and then you can take the premiership for the remaining two years, but I refused. We don't work for ourselves but for the people," the PPP Chairman said while addressing a public rally in Thatta.

Bilawal Bhutto said that the party had decided that it would move forward with "those who has asked for its votes" and would not seek any ministries.

"I had no stubbornness to sit on the prime minister's chair. I contested for you, for my

people," Bilawal Bhutto stated, highlighting the challenges Pakistan faces, including inflation and the prevalence of divisive politics.

Bilawal said that the country needed a political party that talked about the people's problems, noting that the brewing economic and political crisis had divided society. "What should happen is that politicians and all political parties, rather than focusing on their personal benefit, should think about the people of this country," he stressed.

He also urged fellow politicians to prioritise the interests of the people over their own, lamenting the detrimental impact of self-serving politics on the federation and its provinces.

"All political parties should ponder over Pakistan's future rather than their individual



gains," he remarked, addressing the ongoing protests against election results and the prevalence of rigging allegations.

Bilawal claimed that a PTT-backed candidate was made to win against a PPP leader. He said that he also had all the Form 45s available with him and would approach the appropriate forum but

"wouldn't burn his own house down or divide the country".

Bilawal Bhutto declared that former president and party co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari would be the PPP's nominee for the presidency, vowing that Zardari would bring unity to the country and address the pressing issues facing its citizens.

"To control the fire spread-

ing in the country, we have decided that Zardari will be our candidate for the presidential election. And when he takes up the post, he will put out this fire, and will save the Centre and the provinces," he added.

Meanwhile, the PPP chairman also challenged protesting political leaders – Pir Pagara and Maulana Fazlur Rehman – to bring all their Form 45s to him and if proven wrong, he would contest polls against them the next day.

"I have won two seats out of which I will vacate a seat for by-elections," he said. "How about you come and contest against us on that seat? Let's see what your worth is."

He also said that PPP will resist any efforts to bring dictatorship back to the country, reiterating his party's commitment to the slogan "Pakistan khappy".

## Khawaja Asif says no role of commissioners in holding elections

Bureau Report

SIALKOT: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader and former defence minister Khawaja Asif said that commissioners have no role in holding elections in the country.

Addressing a press conference in Sialkot, Khawaja Asif said that it is inappropriate to comment on the allegations leveled by Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaquat Ali Chatha as the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has already formed a committee



to conduct an inquiry. He said that efforts are

being made to form government in Punjab as PML-N

gained a majority in election 2024 and is in a position to rule in Punjab.

Asif reiterated that political stability is vital for the economic stability of the country however political leadership need to think of the people of Pakistan and set aside their personal interests.

It is pertinent to mention here that yesterday Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaquat Ali Chatha resigned from his post over alleged rigging in elections 2024.

Addressing a press conference the Rawalpindi

commissioner surrendered to police saying "I accept responsibility for rigging election 2024".

Chattha admitted that the rigging took place in election and candidates who were leading in their constituencies with over 70,000 votes were converted to losers with the help of fake seals under his watch.

He apologized to his subordinates for compelling them to rig elections saying that they were crying when they were directed to carry out the rigging.

## CM Chairs the 41st Provincial Cabinet Meeting at CMO

PPA

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi presided over the 41st Provincial Cabinet meeting at CM Office today. The Punjab Cabinet granted an approval to amend the Punjab Highway Patrolling Police rules. The decisions of the 39th meeting of the Caretaker Punjab Cabinet were endorsed in the meeting. The Punjab Cabinet reviewed law & order situation in the province. IG Police Doctor Usman Anwar gave a briefing about the law & order situation in the province. CM directed to undertake all essential measures for the protection of the life and property of the people across the province. Mohsin Naqvi asserted that no compromise will be made on upholding the rule of law. PSL-9 security plan was also reviewed in the meeting. CM directed to ensure 100 percent implementation on the security plan SOPs of PSL-9. Provincial Ministers, Advisers, Chief Secretary, and Secretaries of concerned departments were also present.

## FAFEN proposes three-stage methodology to audit 2024 election results

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) has proposed a three-stage methodology for the audit of election results 2024 amid allegations of rigging, ARY News reported on Sunday.

According to a press statement issued today, the non-government poll observer urged the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to scrutinise the results of constituencies that have been duly challenged by political parties and candidates at the appropriate legal fora using data analytics and forensics to establish the "legitimacy of the outcome of General Election 2024".

"Such an audit must include representatives nominated by the political parties concerned as well as independent observers to ensure the transparency and credibility of the process," the statement added.

"FAFEN has been advocating since

2013 for the Election Commission to conduct scrutiny of results of all constituencies before the notification of winners in an effort to strengthen the integrity of election outcomes and to minimize the post-election disputes that linger on in election tribunals beyond legally stipulated deadlines," it stated.

The watchdog noted that post-election situation warrants an urgent and prompt response by the Election Commission to ascertain the veracity of the claims of illegalities and irregularities by political parties and candidates, and as a prerequisite to establish that the GE-2024 results truly reflect the will of the people.

"Fafen's proposed audit is a technical investigation that is purely based on the physical evidence i.e. official election documentation available with the election commission under Section 99 of the Elections Act, 2017," it read.

These documents include:

tamper-evident bags containing (a) the packets containing the ballot papers each of which shall be sealed with the seal of the presiding officer or, if opened by the returning officer, with the seal of the returning officer; (b) the packets containing the counterfoils of issued ballot papers; (c) the packets containing the marked copies of the electoral rolls used in the poll; (d) the packets containing the Ballot Paper Account; (e) the packets containing results of the count, provisional and final consolidated statement of results of the count and final consolidated results; (f) the packets containing the Tended Ballot Papers included in the count; the Tended Ballot Papers excluded from the count; the Challenged Ballot Papers included in the count; the Challenged Ballot Papers excluded from the count; the Challenged Votes List; and the Spoilt Ballot Papers; and (g) such other papers as the commission may direct.

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## Four Parties Alliance block roads in Balochistan to protest election results

Bureau Report

QUETTA: A four parties alliance blocked roads in Balochistan as protest against alleged rigging in elections.

A wheel-jam strike and protest has been underway in Quetta and other cities of Balochistan on the call of a four-party alliance, comprises of BNP-Mengal, Pashtunkhwa MAP, the National Party and Hazara Democratic Party.

Protesters blocked the National Highway with hurdles at N-65 Naari against alleged election rigging. The highway also blocked in Sohatpur as protest.

The protesters closed the Quetta-Karachi National Highway at Mughal Chowk in Kalat for traffic during the protest.

The protesters also blocked road on the protest call against election results in Khuzdar. In Mastung the workers of the National Party staged protest at Shams Abad crossing and BNP workers blocked road at Dasht 13-Mile.

In Jaffarabad protesters staged sit-in at Shahi Chowki point and blocked N-65 highway.

Protesters also closed Harnai to Quetta and Harnai to Punjab highway.

The vehicular traffic was closed in Chaman during protest at Garang point of Quetta-Chaman highway.

Pashtunkhwa MAP workers staged protest and blocked Quetta and D. I. Khan highways in Zhob.

A protest has also been staged in Gwadar at Sar Bandar Cross and blocked Makran Coastal Highway.

## MoHR launches an awareness campaign to prevent child abuse



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) has launched an awareness campaign to prevent child abuse through social media.

An official MoHR talking to APP here on Sunday said that social media is an outstanding tool in the fight against child abuse.

"We believe social media is effective in raising public awareness about social issues, including child abuse," he added.

He added that at least half of the adult population uses social media.

In other words, by posting child abuse prevention messages, the chances of reaching the adults who

need these messages are much higher. He further added that media can play a vital role among people, adding that "our voices are stronger when we speak as one."

He further added that "in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the dignity of children and their right to live free from violence is placed as a priority of the international development agenda through the implementation of the range of goals and targets of the 2024 Agenda relevant to ending exploitation, abuse, trafficking, torture, and all forms of violence against children, as well as eliminating all harmful practices, such as child labor, early marriage, and forced marriage."

## Murree admin urges tourists to get weather updates before visiting 'Queen of Hills'

City Desk

RAWALPINDI: The Murree district administration has urged the tourists to get weather updates and traffic-related information prior to traveling to Murree and also advised the tourists to take all due precautions in Murree, Galiyat and surrounding areas.

According to a Murree district administration spokesman, the administration on the special directives of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Murree, Zaheer Abbas Sherazi had finalized all arrangements for snowfall season. The tourists were being given information about weather updates and travel advisories at all entry points of Murree, he added.

The tourists had also been requested to follow the instructions being given at the entry points, he said adding, that strict action by the law was also being



taken against parking rules violators.

Murree District Administration had set up a special control room to facilitate the people, particularly tourists, he added.

The control room was working round the clock under the supervision of senior officers.

In case of any difficulty, the tourists could get help and guidance from the tourist facilitation centers. The citizens were also advised to follow the traffic rules to ensure the flow of traffic on the roads.

## Javed Miandad calls on CM Punjab

PPA

LAHORE: A former cricket star Javed Miandad met with the Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi at CM Office. Former Cricketer Javed Miandad felicitated CM Mohsin Naqvi on being elected as Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board. Matters pertaining to the promotion of cricket and putting the Pakistani Cricket on sustainable basis were discussed. Javed Miandad paid tributes to the CM on the successful launching of PSL-9. Javed Miandad remarked that hopefully, CM will

elevate Pakistani cricket to the new heights. He offered his services for the betterment of cricket. Mohsin Naqvi acknowledged that Javed Miandad is a cricket legend and we want to utilise from his invaluable experience in the field of cricket.

We have to redeem the real status of Pakistani team in the arena of international cricket. I believe in the teamwork and consultations are being conducted so as to further strengthen the Pakistan's cricket team. The domestic cricket will be promoted so that the talent of promising players can come to fore.