



**Iranian President felicitates new Pakistani PM on election**

H. E. Seyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of Islamic Republic of Iran congratulate to Mr. Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on his election as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan, and expressed hope that the forthcoming path would lead to the co-operation between the two countries reaching the desired level of the two great nations of Iran and Pakistan. (Details on Page 5)



**Economic revival top priority of PML-N: Ahsan Iqbal**

Secretary General and senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Ahsan Iqbal said on Sunday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif saved the country from default during the last Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) led government. Talking to the official news channel, he said PML-N has a comprehensive plan to get the country out of this quagmire, increase the country's resources, production and tax collection. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Sha'aban 24, Monday, March 4, 2024

www.dailyspokesman.net

@daily\_spokesman

f

Daily Spokesman Vol: 17, Issue: 324 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

**New era begins**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar view of debris of the demolished Chambers of Lawyers at F-8 Football ground after the Supreme Court ultimatum, which was till 01-05-2021, as the Workers of Anti encroachments.



Photo: Online

**Omar Ayub criticises Shehbaz's 'fake mandate', demands inquiry into May 9**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Sunni Ittehad Council's candidate for PM Omar Ayub Khan said that Shehbaz Sharif's government was formed on a "fake mandate". He said that the government was based on Form 47 not Form 45. He also said that the PTI had won 180 seats which would have crossed 200 with the addition of reserved seats, which are still being denied to the party. Khan said that the parties in the coalition government looked as if they were attending a 'funeral' and there was no jubilation at forming a government because they knew it was based on a 'fake mandate'.



He demanded an impartial inquiry into the events of May 9, which he said had been used to crackdown on his party. He added that PTI workers were shot and killed during the protests. The PTI leader also said Imran Khan and other political leaders were political prisoners and were being victimised by the state. He added that the party would stand firm until Imran Khan was ready to return as prime minister. He also referred to the arrests of Imran Riaz Khan and Asad Toor and said that the new government was already trying to control the media. Responding to Shehbaz Sharif's plans for bringing investment, he said that it was imperative to bring the rule of law in the country first. The PTI leader also got into an argument Deputy Speaker Ghulam Mustafa Shah over the live broadcast of his speech being taken off air. However, Shah assured him that the speech had been resumed.

Shehbaz Sharif received 201 votes to become PM while Omar Ayub received only 92 votes.

**PM-elect Shehbaz Sharif invites opposition for 'Charter of Reconciliation'**

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Shehbaz Sharif was elected the prime minister of Pakistan on Sunday. He secured 201 votes after the polling process ended in the newly-elected National Assembly.

Sunni Ittehad Council's candidate Omar Ayub Khan secured 92 votes. This is Sharif's second consecutive term in the Prime Minister's Office. He was selected as the PM after former Prime Minister Imran Khan was ousted through a no-confidence vote in 2022. He managed a 13-party coalition during his 16 months in power. He was elected with the support of a coalition including the Paki-

stan Peoples Party, which said it would support him but not be part of the government.

The Assembly session began at noon, after a delay of almost an hour. Voting was carried out through division.

**Victory speech**  
In his victory speech, he thanked the allied parties for voting him to the PM Office as PTI-backed lawmakers chanted slogans of 'chor'. Members from PMLN chanted their own slogans back at them.

Sharif also thanked his elder brother Nawaz Sharif for nominating him for the post. He called Nawaz the 'mamaar' (builder) of Pakistan, referring to his multiple stints in power. Recalling the May 9 riots, the

newly-elected PM said that the PML-N and PPP never attacked institutions despite their leadership being persecuted and jailed in several cases in the past. He added that martyrs had been disrespected in the riots and immense grief had been caused to their families. On the country's economic challenges, Sharif said that the government faces a whopping Rs700 billion deficit as out of the Rs12,300 billion generated by the country, Rs7,300 billion is given to the provinces while the services charges are worth up to Rs8,000 billion. He said that the development, health, and education sectors are being paid through loans. "All this is being afforded via loans throughout the years. This

is the biggest challenge faced by the country today," he added.

Shehbaz also said that his party had wiped out terrorism from the country but the previous government had not only allowed it to come back but had also released some highly-wanted terrorists. He added that the coalition parties have agreed that terrorism will have to end in the country. He also called on the PTI to drop the politics of agitation and said that they should sit together to discuss election reforms.

Shehbaz also called on the opposition to sit with him for a charter of economy. Shehbaz, who is the president of the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz, has the support of the Pakistan Peoples Party, Muttahi-

da Qaumi Movement, Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid and Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party.

His name was put forward by the party alliance as part of a power-sharing formula concluded between the PMLN and PPP after the elections. Independents, including those backed by the PTI, had emerged as the largest group in the NA with 101 seats in the general elections. They were followed by PMLN with 75 seats and PPP with 54 seats.

Most PTI candidates that were elected to the house have chosen to join the SIC in an attempt to be recognised as a party in the Assembly. The party hopes it can receive reserved seats through this strategy.

**Xi congratulates Shehbaz Sharif on election as Pakistani PM**

Xinhua

BELJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sunday congratulated Shehbaz Sharif on his election as prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.



Xi noted he believes that under the leadership of Sharif and the new Pakistani government, and with the united efforts of all walks of life in Pakistan, the country will definitely achieve new and greater accomplishments in the cause of national development and progress. Xi stressed that China and Pakistan should continue their traditional friendship, strengthen exchanges and cooperation in all fields, jointly

build an upgraded version of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, continue to deepen the China-Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, and build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era, so as to bring more benefits for the people of the two countries. On the same day, Chinese Premier Li Qiang sent a congratulatory message to Sharif.

**Speaker Sadiq extends warm felicitation to PM-elect on successful election**

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: NA Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq extends warm felicitation to Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif on his successful election as Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Islamabad, March 3, 2024; Honourable Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan Sardar Ayaz Sadiq extended warm felicitation to President of PML(N) Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on his successful election as Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said, "Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif's successful election as the Prime Minister of Pakistan for the 2nd time reflects confidence of the leaders of the coalition political parties and the Members of the National Assembly reposed on his leadership abilities."



**Who did not participate in polling process for prime minister election?**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: PML-N leader Shehbaz Sharif was elected the 24th prime minister of Pakistan after he secured 201 votes in the House of 293 on Sunday.

Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) candidate for the top slot secured 92 votes. As many as 15 votes could not be polled as some lawmakers boycotted or abstained from the election while a few additional seats were vacated by lawmakers.

Balochistan National Party (BNP-M) President Sardar Akhtar Mengal and Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party chief Mahmood Khan Achakzai abstained from voting along with a lawmaker from the National Party. Sharif could not get three of the party votes as he vacated his additional seat in the National Assembly while NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq could not vote in the election. Maryam Nawaz, who was elected the Punjab CM also vacated her NA seat. Similarly, the newly-elected chief minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur also vacated his NA seat.

Meanwhile, the Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) boycotted the election and eight of the party's lawmakers including those on reserved seats did not cast their vote in the polling process.

**JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman decides to be part of opposition**



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl's chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has decided to sit in the opposition benches in Parliament, which he alleges is not the public's representative. "This Parliament is a by-product of rigged elections," the religio-political leader said at a press conference in Karachi on Sunday.

His announcement comes six days before the presidential election where SIC backed Mahmood Akhan Achakzai will face PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari. In the run-up to the poll, members from both sides have reached out to Fazl to seek support for the vote. "We have decided to enter Parliament with reservations. The rigging in 2024 elections broke the record of rigging in 2018 elections," he said and claimed that democracy was at stake in the country and Parliament was losing its value.

**PML-N saves country from default, opposition needs to play constructive role: Marriyum**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Information Secretary Marriyum Aurangzeb Sunday lauded Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's role to save the country from default in previous PDM government besides taking bold economic decisions for Pakistan and asked opposition parties to play constructive role for strengthening democracy. Talking to Media outside National Assembly she said that both government and opposition parties should work in tandem in the interests of their country and people as country was facing current economic challenges where Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz leadership can only combat the recent challenges amicably.

She said instead of protests and sit-ins PTI leaders should spend their time for the welfare of the public, adding, the opposition party should act in such a way as to expose the weaknesses, if any of the government so that the government can rectify and build upon such weaknesses. The government always has its duties and obligations toward the country and people, she said, adding, in this regard, the opposition party can play a big role.

**More than 30 including children killed in heavy rain in Pakistan**



AFP

ISLAMABAD: More than 30 people have died in rain-related incidents in Pakistan during days of heavy downpours, with thousands of schools closed, officials said Sunday. Widespread heavy rain since Thursday has caused severe disruption in some areas of the country, including the closure of all schools in Balochistan province until Thursday.

Eighteen children were among 26 killed in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a result of collapsed buildings. "As a result of continuous rainfall over the past four days in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a total of 27 individuals have lost their lives," said Taimur Ali Khan, the spokesperson for the Provincial Disaster Management Authority in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Another person was killed in a landslide and more than 150 houses were also damaged. In southern Balochistan province, five people were killed when buildings collapsed on Thursday and Friday, said Jahanzain Khan, head of the disaster management agency.

# Shakeel Anjum Elected Unopposed president of Multan Press Club

**Kiran Asim**

According to The Chirman Multan Press Club Election Committee Zafar Aheer Said Shakeel Anjum Elected Unopposed president of Multan Press Club for the 14th time and Farhan Mulghani was elected finance secretary for the fourth time unopposed, while no panel came against the journalists group for the remaining positions. It is most likely that the journalists' group will sweep the final list of candidates on March 5. According to the list released by the Election Committee Of Multan Press Club, one candidate for the seat of President, Shakeel Anjum, two candidates for Vice Presidents, Khalid Chaudhry, Noman Khan Babar, Khalid Sheikh and Asad Ali Raghbi, two candidates for General Secretary, Nisar Awan and Amir Hussaini, Joint. Three candidates for two seats of secretary Hafiz Sarfraz Ali, Muhammad Sharif



Joyya and Mehboob Malik, only one candidate Farhan Anjum Mulghani has submitted papers for one seat of Finance Secretary. While a total of 26 candidates have submitted their papers for fourteen seats of Majlis-e-Amila. Among them Nawab Ejaz Khan Tareen, Rao Numan Ali, Khalid Sheikh, Furqan Nazar Bhatti, Asad Raghbi, Shahid Imran, Mehboob Chaugtai,

Adnan Khan, Aslam Javed, Mehboob Malik, Mehtab Haider, Adnan Akram Sheikh, Shoaib Iftikhar Joya, Junaid Malik, Ayaz Ali, Sheikh, Nadeem Haider, Tariq Ismail, Saleem Bhatti, Khawaja Ashraf Siddiqui, Rafiq Qureshi, Tariq Mehmoood Qureshi, Mazhar Javed, Mumtaz Khan Niazi, Salman Qureshi, Adeel Khachi and Asghar Nadeem Baig are included. After his success, President Shakeel Anjum in a conversation with media representatives said that 1,000 Multani journalists will get plots from the government Of Punjab to build houses. President Press Club said that all the paper work for the new MDA colony in Multan has been completed. Only the final approval process from the provincial cabinet is left. Inshallah this phase will also be completed soon. He also informed that these plots will be distributed among new and old sub-journalists. Apart from this, every step will be taken for

the welfare of the members. On the other hand, the spokesperson of Journalists Group has said in a statement that this year, for the first time in the history of Multan Press Club, Shakeel Anjum and Farhan Anjum Mulghani were elected unopposed for the positions of President and Finance Secretary and in front of an opposing panel compared to other candidates of the Journalists Group. Not coming has proved that President Shakeel Anjum and Journalists group is the trust of non-participating members. It is also a practical recognition of the continuous and tireless efforts of President Shakeel Anjum for the welfare of the members Of Multan Press Club. The Journalists Group is extremely grateful to the members for this unprecedented trust and love. We pray that Allah Ta'ala will grant us the ability to live up to the trust of our voters in the future as in the past.

## Women University hosts Int'l Conference on Inclusivity of Women in Islamabad



**Kiran Asim and Quratul Ain Asim**

MULTAN: A delegation of Women University under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Kalsoom Pracha participated in the four-day International Conference on Breaking Barriers through Diversity and Inclusivity in organized by USAID, in collaboration with NRSP and APWUC at Marriot Hotel Islamabad. Registrar Prof. Dr Mamoon Khan was nominated as focal person. The conference was attended by Dr. Asma Bashir (Department of Applied Psychology) and Dr. Shazia, (Department of Environmental Sciences). 250 participants from 18 women's universities participated in four days conference. Addressing a session Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Kalsoom Pracha emphasized the pivotal role education plays in reshaping societal norms, fostering inclusivity, and enabling women to become catalysts for positive change. She said empowerment of women is must for a national development. A literary stall was setup by the university the officials visited and discussed new research conducted in various fields, overall academic performance and milestones achieved by the university. While representing Women University on an international platform, Prof. Dr Mamoon Khan said, that educational collaboration has always remained a key plank of Pakistan-US relations and such initiative, especially catering to women would further cement bonds, facilitating them play a greater role in the nation-building process. The conference aimed to devise ways to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in Pakistan. We thanked USAID for its continued support towards education, women empowerment and skill development in Pakistan.

## Cleaning up

ISLAMABAD: Volunteers and IWMB staff busy in uprooting the invasive plants at Margallah Hills National Park in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

## Punjab launches Ramadan Nigehban Package to help underprivileged

**Maryam Khan**

MULTAN: According to Spokeswoman of Commissioner Multan Division Ms Iram Saleemi Said Government of Punjab has initiated the Ramadan Nigehban Package aimed at serving the underprivileged, marking a significant step towards addressing the needs of the vulnerable class. The distribution of Ramadan Nigehban Packages at doorsteps in Multan division elicited expressions of joy from the residents, who extended positive gestures to Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz. Citizens hailed the Ramadan Nigehban Package as a remarkable departure from conventional methods, showcasing a government that is truly people-centric and compassionate. This initiative has relieved them from the ordeal of standing in queues and waiting, as they now receive essential provisions directly at their doorstep. Commissioner Multan Division, Maryam Khan, assured that no stone will be left unturned in catering to the needs of the needy class, underscoring relentless efforts to translate governmental policies into tangible benefits for the public. Over 9 million underprivileged individuals in the division will receive ration bags, reflecting a commitment to inclusive growth and welfare, says Ms Khan.



## Sardar Attique congratulates Pakistan PM-elect on winning election:

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**



RAWALPINDI: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has congratulated Pakistan Muslim League-N President Mian Shehbaz Sharif for being elected as the Prime Minister of Pakistan by a large majority. In his felicitation statement

he said that

Pakistan is currently suffering from innumerable problems and facing many challenges on both internal and external fronts. Mian Mohammad Shehbaz Sharif and his allies have to reign from all these problems.

A major obstacle in the way of Pakistan's stability is the lack of coordination and coordination of institutions. Mian Shahbaz Sharif has proved in the recent past that he has the best ability to maintain coordination between all important institutions. The former prime minister said that

Since Pakistan is the last safe haven and destination of Kashmiris, every Kashmiri wants to see Pakistan ideologically, politically, economically, defensively and democratically stable and strong. A strong and stable Pakistan can be the best guarantor of the completion of Kashmir's freedom movement.

The people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir pray that Allah Ta'ala should make Shahbaz Sharif and his coalition government successful in every field, he said

Our heartfelt prayers and best wishes are with the newly elected government of Pakistan.

## Red Crescent sign memorandum of understanding on human rights in schools

MUZAFFARABAD:

An agreement according between Director of Social Welfare and Human Rights Organization for Youth Mr. Anas Razaq and Secretary Red Crescent Azad Kashmir Branch Ms. Gulzar Fatima yesterday in connection with raising awareness of human rights in educational institutions and collecting donations for poor and deserving people. A memorandum was signed in a ceremony in Muzaffarabad. According to this very important memorandum, charity work, STGS and the protection of the rights of different sections will be dealt with. On this occasion Ms. Tahira Kazmi, Director Youth, Youth and Volunteer Department was also present.



Expressing his views on this occasion, Director Youth Mr. Anas Razaq said that due to the lack of awareness of human rights in educational institutions, poor students are facing serious difficulties. There is a need for initiatives at the government and private level to provide relief facilities. Joint efforts are needed to tackle this challenge. In this regard, a memorandum of understanding has been signed between the Red Crescent and the Youth Human Rights Organization, which is a welcome initiative.

# Senator Sajid Mir says strong government needed for country's economic stability

**By Kiran Asim and Arshad Raza Zaidi**

MULTAN: Senator Professor Sajid Mir head of Central Jamiat Ahle Hadise has said that the results of the election have disappointed everyone, a strong government is needed for the country's economy and political stability. In the coalition government, colleagues have to walk together, which makes the government unable to take decisions openly, due to which the problems will increase. He expressed these views while talking to the media representatives at Jamia Makzar al-Haram, Multan yesterday.

On the occasion, Hafiz Salman Azam, Qari Saifullah Abid, Allama Abdul RahimGujjar, Allama Inayatullah Rahman, Maulana Aslam Muja-



hid, Maulana Abdul Ghafoor, Maulana Abdul Rahman Athar, Hafiz Muhammad Amin, Tahir Farooq Chatta, Maulana Nasrullah Hasan, Qari Hidayatullah Rahman, Maulana Ashfaq Salafi and others were also present on this occasion. It has also

been said that the biggest problem in the world is the issue of Palestine. The people of Palestine, IsraelMuslim countries could not help the Palestinians. Muslim countries have also failed in strong and effective diplomacy. The so-called pioneers of human rights are

silent and have the back of the Jews. We look at Kashmir. In the previous regime, India has assumed the separate constitutional status of Occupied Kashmir. If you can't fight with Israel, then you can defend. Pakistan has the power to attack Gaza. But despite this, it is silent. He has added that the results of the Multan election have disappointed everyone, Senator Sajid Mir, the country's economy. And a strong government was needed for political stability. Multan was a strong government then it is established when one party has the majority and has to carry its partners in the coalition government, which makes the government unable to make open decisions. Muslim countries have also failed. The so-called human rights'pioneers are silent and have the back of the Jews.

# All Parties Alliance demands urgent action to expedite construction of Wa di Lipa tunnel

**Bureau Report**

MUZAFFARABAD: All Parties Alliance has expressed concern over the serious travel difficulties faced by more than 80 thousand people of Wa di Lipa and after the death of Salim Awan, the brother of the political and social figure of Antlian village, Takdar Sakhi Awan during treatment in Islamabad, the difficult route from Reshiyan to Lipa Valley has been accelerated.

Dozens of people wrapped in shrouds at the service in the snow, carrying the dead body on their shoulders and walking twenty-five kilometers through the aura of death, strongly condemned the helplessness of the humanitarians and the indifference, negligence and callousness of the rulers. He strongly demanded to restore the construction mega project

and said that in the federal budget in 2014, the PML-N government had allocated seven billion rupees in the federal budget on the instructions of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the prime minister of the time, and Mian Shahbaz Sharif had allocated Rs. The Prime Minister-elect of Pakistan had promised to build the tunnel during the election public meeting at Wadi Lipa Syedpur Girls Inter College Ground. By providing funds of Rs., the Korean company was interested in preparing the feasibility, after which the PML-N federal government allocated seven billion rupees.

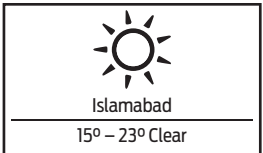
With conspiracies to keep Lipa's human lives sacrificed by the heartless politicians yesterday from Reshiyan to Lipa Antlian village by carrying the dead body of Salem Awan on their shoulders in the snow and taking



it to helplessness due to the oppression of the situation and humiliating the suffering humanity. And speaking to the media while strongly protesting the indifference of the rulers, Shaukat Javed Mir said that the mega project of construction of Lipa Valley Tunnel

will continue to be achieved because this is the remedy for the injustices of the past and the dignified future of the coming generations.

Khusht Aol Hai Shaukat Javed Mir paid tribute to the humanitarian and Islamic role of the Pakistan Armed Forces in raising the standard of living of the people of thirteen constituencies including Lipa Valley Pando Sector Neelam Valley Farood Kahota Hajira Nikyal Tatri Not, Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir. And thanked the national security agencies and the impregnable defenses, tourism promotion, strengthening the national exchequer by constructing hydraulic mineral projects and providing dignified employment to the population of the district division by removing obstacles in the construction of tunnels in Pakistan and Azad Kashmir.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	5:11 am
Zohr	12:20 pm
Asr	4:26 pm
Maghrib	6:06 pm
Isha	7:29 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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

**COMPLAINTS**

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

**Banning Muslim Conference on Occupied Kashmir is a blatant violation of freedom of expression and fundamental rights**

**Bureau Report**

RAWALPINDI: Leaders of Muslim Conference Sardar Asim Abbasi, Raja Latif Hasrat, Raja Mohammad Zareen, Dr. Abid Abbasi Zulfikar Ahmed Siddiqui Advocate, Syed Azhar Ali Shah and Sardar Yasir Abbasi in a joint statement on the Indian government's ban on Muslim Conference in Occupied Kashmir. Condemned in strong terms and said that this move by Modi government is a flagrant violation of freedom of opinion, fundamental rights and UN Charter. These leaders said that the voice of Kashmir's freedom movement cannot be suppressed by this move of Modi-fascist. It should be clear that earlier the Modi government has banned the political parties of Occupied Kashmir. We urge the United Nations, international powers and human rights organizations to take immediate notice of the Indian government's brutality and serious violations of human rights in Occupied Kashmir.

# Two days 'Fifth Multan Literary Festival'

Asim Tanver

MULTAN: Under the auspices of the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, the two-day "Fifth Multan Literary Festival" held at the Multan Arts Council concluded. The two-day event served as a nexus for literary enthusiasts, intellectuals, and artists from across the nation. During the closing ceremony, President Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, Muhammad Ahmed Shah, said that the youth need to take their culture seriously, there are very few intellectuals, our goal is not just to beat the drum, there is a vision behind it, we need to connect with each other, this is not a job for the army stationed at the border, it is the job of our intellectuals, it is necessary to translate and promote the culture of different nationalities residing in Pakistan to other parts of Pakistan through translations, he said that despite political turmoil, the organization of this festival is commendable, big intellectuals of Pakistan came to the festival, Shaker Shuja Abadi was seen, his message was conveyed through his children, Rafat Abbas is the big name in Saraiki Waseb, we have been divided on racial and political basis, we are not political people, three to four thousand years ago, the civilization of human-



ity progressed, this whole civilization is of writers and philosophers, they are the ones who worked, they transformed the world from an uncivilized, brute, living in caves to a civilized nation, Pakistan needs to give importance to literature, philosophy, science, art and culture, what should have been given importance in Pakistan was not found, he said that the Sufis brought about a revolution, Shah Latif, Data Ganj Bakhsh, Bahauddin Zakariya, Shah Farid Baba Farid, Ghulam Farid,

Bhalay Shah, Shah Hussain, Waris Shah, Mian Muhammad are still remembered by the whole world, our youth are moving away from the teachings of these Sufis. Shaker Shuja Abadi's poetry is a struggle for rights, Muhammad Ahmed Shah said that we have come from Sindh, this is also Sindh, Multan, Sarayki Waseb and Sindh should not consider them separate languages and cultures, you go all over Sindh, every person speaks and understands Saraiki.

## Called on

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal Syed Tariq Mahmood-ul-Hassan was called upon H.E. Hamid Abbas Lafta Ambassador Republic of Iraq in Pakistan.



# Coach360 Launches EdTech Platform to Empower Youth

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Coach360, a platform for mentoring and counseling young talent, has launched Skills360, one of the first privately owned EdTech institutes in Pakistan, focused on upskilling the country's existing and upcoming workforce. It aims to empower Pakistan's youth by providing it with essential IT skills for a secure financial future.

The platform adopts a structured approach to career advancement, offering a simple yet impactful process starting with the selection of a course aligned with an individual's career aspirations. Learning is facilitated by industry experts who impart relevant and current knowledge, followed by interactive assessments to test and refine acquired skills. The uniqueness of Skills360



lies in encouraging real-world application of learned skills, creating a pathway for individuals to start earning. At its launch, Skills360 is introducing courses in Graphic Design and CMS (Content Management System) Development to start with, with plans to expand its course offerings in the future.

Speaking at the occasion, Burhan Mirza, Co-Founder of Skills360, stated, "Skills360 is not just a learning platform; it is

a gateway to financial empowerment. Our focus is on equipping individuals with practical and in high demand skills that not only make them job-ready but set them on a path to secure financial futures."

Adding his views, Kashif Hussain Shah, Executive Director of Skills360, emphasized: "The significance of skill development in today's competitive landscape is profound. Our courses are designed to ensure

that our learners are ready to compete with the world's best. Our vision is that there is no need for the youth to migrate, as with the required skills, they remain in Pakistan, with their families, while earning online, and also contributing to Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings."

The launch event was attended by senior representatives from various organizations and influential personalities from the digital world, and the education sector, including Mr. Shahab Sarki, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of Pakistan. At the event a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between Skills360 and ProByte, one of the leading IT companies in Pakistan, underlining a commitment to advancing digital skills and fostering innovation in Pakistan's job market.

## World Obesity Day sheds light on Pakistan's battle against Trans-Fatty Acids

PNP

ISLAMABAD: "More than 50 per cent of the population in Pakistan is currently overweight, resulting in the incidence of several extremely harmful ailments." This was shared in a press release issued by the coalition partners of the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign on the eve of World Obesity Day.

Recent studies have shown a disturbing correlation between the increasing incidence of obesity in Pakistan and the widespread consumption of foods high in trans fats. These harmful iTFAs are commonly found in processed and fast foods, snacks, and cooking oils. Since last year, the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign has been at the forefront, advocating for the regulation of iTFAs to create a healthier and safer dietary landscape for all Pakistanis.

"Statistics from the World Health Organization reveal that 58.1% of Pakistanis are classified as overweight, and 43.9% fall into the category of obesity," said Afshar Iqbal, Director of Communications and Advocacy at Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA). "The estimated annual cost of managing obesity in Pakistan was a staggering PKR 428 billion in 2015."

The press statement emphasizes that to tackle the growing incidence of obesity in Pakistan, it is crucial to address the root causes triggering this epidemic. "There is a strong connection between rising obesity rates and the prevalence of industrially produced Trans-Fatty Acids (iTfAs) in Pakistani dietary sources," stated Dr Saba Amjad, the CEO of Heartfile. "These harmful substances have been linked to a range of health issues, including obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and other metabolic disorders," added Mr. Munawar Hussain, the In-country Coordinator of the Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI).

The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination (MoNHSR&C), also a patron of the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign, has been actively engaged with various stakeholders, including the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) to ensure that a government-led mandatory standard is soon put into place. "In 2023, Pakistan was successfully able to regulate iTFA content in several dietary sources including cooking oils, Vanaspati ghee, bakery shortenings and bakery wares," shared Dr. Khawaja Masood Ahmed, National Coordinator, Nutrition & National Fortification Alliance at MoNHSR&C. "We are, however, aware that many notable food items such as ultra-processed items, dairy products such as chocolates and ice-creams and street food still remain outside the ambit of this regulation. The MoNHSR&C is committed to ensuring that all food items across Pakistan soon come under one unified regulation to limit the prevalence of iTFAs in our dietary sources."

## Anti-polio campaign launched in Azamwarsak area of Wana



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: A five-day anti-polio campaign was launched on Sunday in the Azam Warsak area of birmal Tehsil of Lower South Waziristan under full proof security.

Under the supervision of DPO Lower South Waziristan Farmanullah, Circle DSP Tehsil Birmal Mohammad Amin Wazir, both SHOs of Azam Warsak Police Station Zabihullah Wazir and Usman Mehsud, the polio campaign is ongoing under the full proof security of the police.

Anti-polio campaign in different areas of Azamwarsak, Kalotai, Kalusha, Zalai, Lewa Kanda, Upper Daza Ghundai, Upper Dana, Lower Dana, Kazha Pangah, Khawaza Pangah, Landi Doag, Zerghoza, Azamwarsak, Ashraf Khel, Karabagh, Malik Khel and including Nargasai area. Police say that the polio campaign is going on in a peaceful manner and people are giving polio drops to their children.

Officials say that polio is a contagious disease and this will continue until its eradication.

## Karachi to face gas shortage, low-pressure for next 24 hours amid continued loadshedding

The residents of Karachi will experience a gas short supply and low-pressure issues for the next 24 hours due to a sudden shortage of gas from Naimat-Basal field, Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) announced on Sunday. "[The] SSGC is faced with a sudden shortage of 50 mmeftd gas from the upstream Naimat- Basal Gas Field," the gas utility wrote on its official X handle.

As a result of this curtailment, the SSGC said residents of Karachi will be faced with short supply or low-pressure issues for the next 24 hours.

Earlier this week, the SSGC had said it will shut down gas supplies to all industries and compressed natural gas (CNG) stations in Sindh for 48 hours starting from Saturday morning, citing low pressure and shortages in its system.

The gas utility had said that the decision was made in accordance with the gas sales agreement for industrial customers approved by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) and the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet, which allows the SSGC to manage gas load according to the sectoral priority order.

# Water, Sanitation sectors' climate resilience vital for achieving UN sustainable development goals

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ensuring that Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure and services are sustainable, safe and resilient to climate change impacts is critical for making communities in Pakistan climate-resilient. Thus, building climate resilience of the country's WASH sector is vital to achieve other UN sustainable goals that include goal-3 (good health and well-being), goal-4 (quality education), goal-6 (clean water and sanitation), goal-8 (decent work and economic growth) and goal-13 (climate change), said Muhammad Saleem Shaikh, spokesperson of the Ministry of Climate Change and environmental Coordination. However, "all-out efforts are being

taken at all levels to make the country's WASH-related facilities climate-resilient for achieving sustained delivery of the public service of safe water and sanitation, particularly during disaster situations," he said.

The ministry official, who is also involved in advocacy and public sensitization programmes and activities for the climate-resilient WASH sector in Pakistan, said that the climate impacts were already being felt everywhere, more severely in resource-poor developing countries including Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. What is astonishing to note is that these devastating impacts were being felt through water in the shape of unpredictable rainfall patterns, glacial melting, shrinking ice sheets, rising sea levels, plunging groundwater resources, floods and

droughts. In other situations, increased demand for water due to low rainfall could cause water sources (including boreholes and springs) to run dry. Conversely, heavy rainfall and flooding like recent urban flooding of flood-vulnerable Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi cities can damage water sources and sanitation facilities, carry runoff and waste into streams and lakes and contaminate the water supply, the climate change and environmental coordination ministry official added.

Muhammad Saleem emphasized, "Water scarcity through climate change and the consequent increase in the costs of water was prone to aggravate further issues of inequitable access to WASH-related public services, making people suffer from various negative health impacts. Because, this situation

of water shortages and damages to the WASH infrastructure often deprives households of opportunities to collect the amount of safe water for drinking, meeting sanitation and hygiene needs for proper hand washing, and particularly limiting children's ability to grow up healthy and strong. He said that addressing these challenges making the country's WASH sector climate-proof is a daunting task and calls for well-coordinated and unfailing concerted efforts by all relevant federal and provincial stakeholders as well as those with expertise in the sector. Identifying climate threats to WASH infrastructure, services and communities is the foremost coping measure, the official added. "However, the ministry has already engaged and coordinating with these all stakeholders

including Unicef, Wateraid-Pakistan and other non-governmental organisations not only to identify the risks posed to WASH services by climate change but also develop evidence-based solutions to deal with devastating impacts of climate change on the country's WASH infrastructure, facilities. So that services regarding water, sanitation and hygiene remain uninterrupted," Saleem Shaikh told this scribe.

Quoting from reports of Unicef, the ministry official said that around 450 million children live in areas marked as high or extremely high water vulnerability, where such a huge number of children do not have adequate water to meet their everyday needs for drinking, sanitation and hygiene. By 2040, almost 1 in 4 children would be living

in areas of extremely high water stress, he added, quoting the figures from the reports. "Thus, when disasters hit, they can destroy or contaminate entire water supplies in these high or extremely high water vulnerability areas, aggravating further the risk of the water-borne diseases, mainly diarrhea, cholera and typhoid to which children are particularly vulnerable," he told this scribe.

The spokesperson Saleem Shaikh highlighted that making water supply and sanitation systems that can withstand climate change impacts can help save lives of millions, particularly women, elderly people and children every year dying of various water-borne diseases like diarrhea, cholera, dysentery, typhoid fever, E. Coli infection, malaria and dengue.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**  
 Managing Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**  
 (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.  
 Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.  
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.  
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.  
 Email: **spokesmanislambad@gmail.com**  
 Whatsapp: **0346-5008408**

# Shahbaz Sharif, a Loyal and Steadfast Leader

**S**hahbaz Sharif, who today took oath for the second time as the country's 25th Prime Minister amid looming financial and economic challenges, stands out as a rare example of unwavering loyalty to his elder brother, Mr. Nawaz Sharif. Despite numerous offers of the premiership by various army chiefs, including Musharraf, in exchange for shifting his allegiance, Shahbaz Sharif's loyalty has remained steadfast. His resolve has never wavered, and no amount of wealth, power, or worldly riches has been able to weaken his deep-seated love, respect, and allegiance to his brother, though both are diametrically opposite on ideological considerations and philosophically bent of mind.

Shahbaz Sharif demonstrated his unwavering loyalty when he was directed by Nawaz Sharif to assume the role of Prime Minister in a coalition government in April 2022. Despite knowing that accepting the premiership at that tumultuous time, with the ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan enjoying immense popularity and leading widespread public protests against his removal, would be an immense challenge, Shahbaz Sharif did not falter. He held his fort amid long marches, large rallies, numerous sit-ins, drawing unprecedented crowds that exerted immense pressure on the country's administrations.

Furthermore, Shahbaz Sharif's administration appointed numerous military officers to sensitive civilian positions, including Chairman NADRA, Chairman NAB, and Chairman PTA. By October 2023, reports indicated that over 1,000 military officers, including 104 serving and retired Lieutenant Generals and Major Generals, had been placed in civilian roles across various ministries, divisions, and Pakistan's diplomatic missions abroad.

By capitulating critical and sensi-

tive positions of the country and granting unparalleled powers to the military, Shahbaz Sharif fulfilled his end of the deal. In return, the establishment facilitated Nawaz Sharif's return to Pakistan under VVIP status, despite being a declared abscorder and convicted criminal, previously disqualified from holding public office.

Upon Nawaz Sharif's return, the establishment swiftly resolved all legal cases against him, including the disappearance of his prison sentence and disqualification. The stage seemed set for Nawaz Sharif's potential fourth term as Prime Minister. However, it appears that either bringing Nawaz Sharif back to power was not part of the deal, or the establishment reneged on their agreement with the PML(N).

In Scenario C of the article titled "Will Nawaz's hopes die down soon?" published on December 10th, 2023, it was concluded that based on past bitter experiences with Nawaz, the Establishment would never bring back Nawaz Sharif as the Prime Minister. The scenario suggested that to navigate resistance and controversies surrounding Nawaz Sharif's leadership, the Establishment might orchestrate conditions during pre-poll and after poll 2024, where Nawaz will have no choice but to abdicate power in favor of his brother, Shahbaz Sharif.

In pursuit of this strategy, the results of the 2024 elections were orchestrated in a manner that significantly undermined Nawaz Sharif's electoral prospects. Nawaz suffered a decisive defeat, losing one seat by a significant margin and barely managing to secure a victory in Lahore, a stronghold contested fiercely by his rival candidate. In

contrast, Shahbaz Sharif emerged victorious in all his contested seats, clearly indicating the establishment's preference for him as the chosen candidate.

Nawaz Sharif, who had set securing a simple majority in the parliament as the single most important condition to assume the premiership for the fourth time, found himself demoralized and humiliated by the election outcome. His hopes, pinned on assurances from the establishment, were dashed, leaving him feeling betrayed and dejected.

As predicted in the article, Nawaz Sharif found himself with no choice but to relinquish the premiership in favor of his younger brother. This raises an important question: why did Nawaz Sharif believe that something unfavorable for himself would be beneficial for his brother? Upon closer examination, the answer lies in Nawaz's uncompromising nature, which, at times, becomes his biggest liability, and Shahbaz's compromising nature, which, conversely, becomes his biggest asset.

Nawaz Sharif is characterized by his unwavering commitment to freedom of thought and action, refusing to succumb to pressures and intimidation until his limit is reached. When pushed beyond this threshold, he responds with a vengeance, disregarding potential consequences. He possesses a strong vision and dedication to a specific ideology, particularly in promoting democratic values.

Since the 1990s, Nawaz Sharif has emerged as a formidable challenger to the dominance of the military establishment in Pakistan. He has actively pursued policies aimed at curbing the military's influence, including efforts to assert civilian

control over intelligence agencies and challenge the military's dominance in national security decision-making. Despite facing threats, intimidation, and periods of exile, Nawaz Sharif has remained steadfast in his commitment to advancing civilian authority and democratic principles. His resilience in the face of adversity underscores his determination to uphold fundamental values and principles in Pakistani politics.

In contrast, Shahbaz Sharif's pragmatic approach to governance, often necessitating compromises with various stakeholders, including the military establishment and coalition partners. He willingly engaged with the establishment leading to perceptions of accommodation and compromise with the military, especially during periods of political turbulence or when facing pressure from powerful institutions. He has at times adjusted his positions and policies to accommodate the demands of coalition partners, even if it meant making concessions on certain issues even at the expense of ideological purity and principles and the integrity of governance or undermined democratic norms.

Nawaz Sharif, as the elder brother, may have come to the realization more than anyone else that his prolonged periods of exile have disconnected him not only from his voter base but also from any lasting favor within the establishment. He may have recognized that his ideological and visionary approach to politics has been overshadowed by the tactical compromises of his younger brother, Shahbaz Sharif, and the theatrics orchestrated by his daughter, Maryam Nawaz, and her inner circle. In this political landscape, his close associates such as Khaqqan Abbasi, Mufta Ismael, Mohammad Zubair, Asif Kirmani, Danyal Aziz, Khawaja Asif, and Khawaja Saad Rafique find themselves marginalized, with little influence or rele-

## BRI cooperation provides huge opportunities for partner countries

**T**he high-quality Belt and Road cooperation provides huge opportunities for partner countries to achieve common development and improve people's well-being, Spokesperson for the second session of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Liu Jieyi said here on Sunday. The last decade of practice has fully demonstrated that building a community with a shared future for mankind conforms to the trend of human development and progress and serves the common interests of peoples of all countries, Liu made the remarks during a press conference held by the CPPCC National Committee, China's top political advisory body.

Mentioning the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the China-Laos Railway and the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway, he said various livelihood projects have helped Africa, Asia, the South Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean to improve medical infrastructure and promote rural poverty alleviation. Over the past 10 years, the Chinese government has signed more than 240 documents on Belt and Road cooperation with more than 150 countries and more than 30 international organizations, he noted. The CPPCC National Committee has communicated with more than 200 institutions in 50 countries and established new ties with 41 foreign think tanks and 12 civil organizations, building consensus to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, he said. The CPPCC National Committee also conducted in-depth research and put forward opinions and suggestions on green, low-carbon and sustainable development, as well as solidarity and cooperation between China and other developing countries, added Liu. He said, China's national political advisors believe that the long-term positive trend of the country's economy, which is resilient with great potential and vitality, will continue to be consolidated and strengthened in the future. China's economy picked up on the whole in the past year as the country has withstood external pressure and overcome internal difficulties. The main targets for economic and social development were achieved, and high-quality development showed solid progress, Liu added. He said, this year, the CPPCC National Committee will continue making contributions and providing suggestions for realizing the goal of Chinese modernization. The committee conducted in-depth research and investigation and provided in-depth consultation on political affairs to fulfill its responsibilities in 2023. He said the 14th CPPCC National Committee has focused on making suggestions on the Chinese path to modernization in a wide range of fields, including China's rural revitalization, development for private enterprises, building the country's ecological civilization, enhancing the influence of Chinese civilization and improving policy systems to boost birth rates.



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

## 'Halwah' Dress Stress Addressed Rightly? May Be Not

**M**ushtaq Yousufi is a renowned comic writer on Urdu readers in the world. He writes, "I met an Arab who said to me, Mr. Yousufi! We too believe in 'La Ilaha Illallah' but your people have gone mad after reading Kalimah e Tayyabah." The situation is exactly the same as expressed in above excerpt. The demonstration we saw in Mardan where a student was tortured to death, in Sialkot when Sri Lankan manager was lynched to death and latest in Lahore on 26 February 2024 where a girl wearing a dress with just an Arabic language word was about to be "Sent to Hell" by the most pious believers but a police officer, a lady Sheharbano saved the girl not only but the angry mob as well from committing another sin against humanity.

ASP Sheharbano Naqvi's role was laudable and that is why COAS General Syed Asim Munir received her at General Headquarters after few days of the unfortunate incident. COAS rightly lauded ASP for her selfless devotion to duty and professionalism in diffusing a volatile situation. The fearless officer extricated the woman from the difficult milieu of Ichhra Bazaar in Lahore. COAS also underscored the importance of social harmony and the need for nationwide consensus on curbing intolerance. He emphasized upon the rule of law and advised against taking the law in one's hands when legal avenues are available for addressing concerns and grievances.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf Bin Saeed Al Malki also had a meeting with ASP Sheharbano Naqvi. He invited the lady officer and family to be royal guests in Riyadh. He paid tributes to ASP Sheharbano Naqvi's resilience in the Lahore incident said that the ASP showed great courage and bravery against all odds. Ambassador has ordered to

organize the visit of Sheharbano and her family to Riyadh as royal guests.

### Saudi Model & Woman of Lahore

Here comes another side of story that needs more work than appreciating the officer who was duty bound to save a citizen surrounded by the savage mob. There are two points that can help understand the situation correctly if someone is sincere to address it.

Transformation of Saudi Arabia into a modern country with fashion shows, musical evenings and beauty pageants is not only astonishing for a large number of Pakistanis but religiously and traditionally disturbing as well.

One can deny any connection between the dresses of Saudi models and dress of Pakistani women in Lahore but the timing of wrath on Saudi model's pictures on social media and the incident in Lahore can not be ignored.

The woman was surrounded by the crowd in Ichhra Lahore by a charged mob because they thought she was wearing a dress with Quranic verses on it and if the police had not reached the spot, they would have killed the woman. They failed to understand that the suit is not actually Quranic verses but an Arabic calligraphy design common in middle east with the Arabic word "الحلوة" written on it which means sweet woman. But the sweet woman had a very bitter experience.

Pakistani people are now seeing the pictures of Saudi model who wear or stand with Saudi flag that has Kalma e Tayyaba engraved on it. One can imagine what will be the feelings of Pakistanis here. Saudi diplomats in Pakistan know very well that a large number of Pakistanis hold Saudi Arabia responsible for religious extremism in Pakistan. Our conformity is not necessary with them but they believe that so called religious leaders and organi-

zations are beneficiaries of Saudi Arabia. They are taking welcome of ASP Naqvi by Saudi Ambassador as the result of guilt more than appreciation.

### Duty Bound Officer & Real Hero—Difference is Clear

ASP Sheharbano's appreciation is good but anyone has asked her why the religious leaders were invited to Police Station in front of who, the woman was asked to beg for pardon? Pardon for what? It means the others will decide what to wear and what not? And others can issue a verdict that this dress is anti Islam and the person wearing should be killed by a mob? What else can one get from the pardon of the woman with two clerics sitting left right of her in Police Station?

It is the duty of any police personnel to save the life of innocent from outlaws. ASP has done her duty only. Has anyone asked ASP how did you reach the spot? Who informed you? Who held the mob away from the woman risking his own life and property? He was the real hero. The owner of the restaurant who downed the shutter and saved the woman. The mob could have burnt his restaurant and punished him. No one has appreciated him because he is not government or uniform person. He is a commoner.

### Conclusion

The question is not about the woman has been saved. Problem still exists because the savages are still at large to hunt any other. Their minds are still filled with anger and extremism. We can not bring ASP Naqvi everywhere and ASP Naqvi can not save everyone caught in such a situation. During General Musharraf government, a same savage mind shot a provincial minister Zill e Huma in the head only because she was not having hijab (Daupatta). We have to solve this menace of polluted minds if we want a society of humans and not the self-styled executioners.

Writer is senior analyst, Broadcaster, He is also Editor Daily Azkar and Magazine Pakistan in the world

## Operation Swift Retord, A lesson to India - I

**I**n the grand theater of human existence, truth serves as a constant guiding light, shaping the course of history and the fate of nations. Despite the noise of falsehoods, deceit, and manipulation that often cloud its brilliance, truth possesses an inherent strength—a resilience that surpasses temporary falsehoods and ultimately prevails. Whether found in ancient wisdom or amidst the complexities of modern society, the timeless belief that "truth prevails" echoes as a testament to its enduring influence.

Fundamentally, truth embodies the principle of integrity—a steadfast dedication to honesty, transparency, and authenticity. It forms the foundation upon which trust is established, relationships flourish, and societies prosper. The pursuit of truth compels individuals and institutions to confront uncomfortable truths, challenge entrenched beliefs, and uphold the importance of factual accuracy in an era marked by misinformation and distortion. Throughout history, truth has been a potent tool against tyranny, oppression, and injustice. From the courageous actions of whistleblowers uncovering corruption to the relentless efforts of activists demanding accountability, the pursuit of truth has brought down dictators, shattered illusions, and liberated minds trapped by falsehoods.

The unwavering resolve of truth seekers, from figures like Quaid e Azam to Mandela, demonstrates the transformative power of courage, conviction, and moral clarity in the face of adversity. In times of hardship, truth remains a steadfast ally, providing comfort to the weary, empowerment to the oppressed, and inspiration to the downtrodden. Despite attempts to obscure its radiance through propaganda, censorship, and disinformation, truth endures—resilient

and indomitable. Its echoes transcend time and space, dispelling the fleeting illusions of falsehood and guiding humanity towards enlightenment and freedom. At the core of every revolution, reform, and resurgence lies the transformative force of truth. Whether challenging established power dynamics, uncovering systemic injustices, or inspiring collective action, truth acts as a powerful force for change—a force that sparks righteous anger and motivates individuals to move beyond complacency and indifference.

From the civil rights movements to the #MeToo movement, the relentless pursuit of truth has driven social change, shattered norms, and reshaped history. In an era marked by uncertainty, ambiguity, and division, the importance of upholding truth has never been more pressing or compelling. It demands a shared dedication to cultivating a culture of critical thinking, humility, and open discourse—a culture that prioritizes evidence over ideology, logic over rhetoric, and empathy over hostility. Embracing the call of truth means confronting uncomfortable realities, acknowledging inconvenient truths, and embracing the complexities of human existence.

In the fabric of human life, truth stands as an enduring symbol of resilience—a symbol of the human spirit's refusal to be silenced, oppressed, or subdued. From academic institutions to the tumultuous arenas of politics and society, the call for truth resounds as a source of hope, a herald of justice, and a catalyst for progress. In the ongoing struggle between darkness and light, falsehood and truth, let us remember the timeless wisdom that truth ultimately triumphs—a truth that transcends boundaries of time, space, and circumstance, guiding us toward a more enlightened, just, and compassionate world.

To be continued

# Iranian President felicitates new Pakistani PM on election

Spokesman Report

TEHRAN: H. E. Seyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of Islamic Republic of Iran congratulate to Mr. Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on his election as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan, and expressed hope that the forthcoming path would lead to the cooperation between the two countries reaching the desired level of the two great nations of Iran and Pakistan.

In his congratulatory message on the occasion of the election of the new Prime Minister of Pakistan, the President stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran is always ready to enhance cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in all aspects, including in the new term.

Meanwhile: The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Amirabdollahian, extended his heartfelt congratulations to Sheh-



baz Sharif for his recent election as the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

In a statement issued today, Minister Amirabdollahian expressed his optimism for the strengthening of bilateral relations between Iran and

Pakistan under Prime Minister Shehbaz's leadership.

The Iran's ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghaddam felicitated the election of "Shahbaz Sharif" as the new prime minister of this country. Amiri Moghaddam in a message

on his X social account congratulated the election of "Shahbaz Sharif" as the new prime minister of Pakistan with the majority of the votes of the National Assembly members.

He said "I would like to express my warmest congrats on the election of Shahbaz Sharif as the 24th Pakistan PM following a successful election".

He added that Iran declares its readiness to expand all-out relations and bilateral cooperation with Pakistan.

"I wish peace, security & stability for the years to come for our brotherly country of Pakistan," he further wrote Sharif who was the consensus candidate of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) was elected as the Prime Minister of Pakistan for the second time in a row by the majority vote of the new parliament members of this country.

## India navy to open strategic base near Maldives

AFF

India's navy has said it is bolstering forces on "strategically important" islands close to the Maldives, with a new base set to open just days before Male starts sending home Indian forces.

Relations between India and the Maldives have soured since pro-China President Mohamed Muizzu won elections last year after promising to expel Indian forces.

India is suspicious of China's growing presence in the archipelago nation, which straddles key east-west international shipping routes, and the new base will extend New Delhi's "operational surveillance" of the area, the navy said in a statement on Saturday.

Muizzu has asked India to withdraw 89 security personnel based in the Maldives to operate reconnaissance aircraft, with the first batch due to leave by March 10 and all to depart within two months.

The new base, opening March 6 on India's Lakshadweep islands, will turn an existing small detachment into an "independent naval unit", according to the navy's statement.

India's Lakshadweep islands lie about 130 kilometres (80 miles) north of the Maldives, with the new naval base on the island of Minicoy situated at their closest point.

India's navy already has a base on the Lakshadweep island of Kavaratti, but the new base will be about 258 kilometres (160 miles) closer to the Maldives. "Minicoy is the southernmost island of Lakshadweep which straddles the vital sea lines of communications," the navy said.

It said the base will boost anti-piracy and anti-narcotic operations, and was part of a policy to "incrementally augment security infrastructure at the strategically important" islands.

## 10Pearls University holds Women Tech Quest 2024

PPA

KARACHI: Women Tech Quest 2024, an initiative of 10Pearls University, is a platform for women to compete, learn, network and showcase their tech talents. The 8th edition of Women Tech Quest (WTQ) took place on March 2, 2024, and was held in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad. Over 1200 women in technology from across the three cities took part in the event.

Launched in 2017, WTQ is a competition aimed at supporting women in evaluating and displaying their tech skills, gaining acknowledgment, and competing for substantial cash prizes and exposure. Moreover, it features inspirational speaker sessions and workshops where accomplished female professionals impart their insights to assist aspiring individuals in their growth and success journey.

According to Syeda Sana Hussain, Head of People & Programs - EMEA at 10Pearls, "This marks our 8th consecutive year of successfully hosting Women Tech Quest. As one of our flagship initiatives for women's empowerment, WTQ has initiated and propelled the careers of over 6000 women, bolstered Pakistan's talent pool, and provided women with a platform to enhance their visibility."

The competition consisted of three categories: Coding, Testing, and Design. In the Coding segment, participants were presented with a series of problems and could employ any programming language to solve them. The Testing category involved assessing contestants on database and automation concepts through a set of objectives. The Design Competition tasked participants with addressing a UI/UX challenge, evaluating their approach to user research, persona creation, and user flow design.

There were two categories, Professional and Student, for each stream in every city. Each city produced six winners, resulting in 18 winners. Winners were awarded significant cash prizes and shields, while all participants received swag kits and certificates of participation.

Apart from the Competition, WTQ also featured inspirational speaker sessions by esteemed women such as Honey Cantrell, EVP, Agency Operations, 10Pearls Studio; Jehan Ara, Founder & CEO, Katalyst Labs; Sam Ali Dada, Advisor to SAPM on Gender Inclusivity Ministry of Human Rights & Women Empowerment; Ayesha Zaman, CEO Skills Todo & Co-Founder, Pakistan Tech Forum; Tara Uzra Dawood, President, LADIESFUND; Sadia Bashir, Founder, PixelArt Games Academy; Monica Peter, Group Director, Learning and Culture, PTCL Group; Meher Nigar Khawaja, SVP & Program Delivery, Techlogix; Tania Aidrus, Co-Founder & CEO, DGlobal; and Maha Shahzad, Founder & CEO, Buscaro.

As the event of the year for tech women, WTQ 2024 was endorsed by top names in technology and other industries. This time, the event partners included reputed names such as NASTP, AshreiTech, P@SHA, WomeninTechPK, Byte-wise Ltd, Testworthy, Vector, Ultimate Tech Crew, Cohort Max and Bonanza Satrangi. Event Giveaways were powered by Martyotland, Bogo and Bonanza Satrangi.

## Donald Trump, Nikki Haley head-to-head for Republican primary in Washington

The Republican primary is set to take place on Sunday in Washington, DC, where presidential contenders Donald Trump and Nikki Haley will face off against each other.

Although this is a small-stakes contest, it could represent one of Haley's best chances to score a win over the former president.

Although the United States capital city only sends 19 out of 2,429 delegates to the Republican National Convention in July, where the nominee is formally selected, the results of the DC primary could be significant, Reuters reported.

According to a high-ranking official at SFA Fund, the main super PAC supporting Haley's bid, DC could be unusually fertile territory for her. Despite Trump's apparent lead in the previous nominating contests, this race could be anyone's game.

It will be interesting to see how things unfold on Sunday and what impact the results may have on the trajectory of the race.

# Pakistan's growing startup ecosystem driving innovation, entrepreneurship: Envoy

APP

PRAGUE: Ambassador of Pakistan in Czech Republic Ayesha Ali has said that Pakistan's growing startup ecosystem was driving innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in areas of e-commerce, fintech, and health technology.

The ambassador, in her address at a webinar on "IT Landscape of Pakistan" said that Pakistan was known for its vibrant IT outsourcing industry, offering cost-effective solutions in software development, digital marketing, and customer support, said a press release received on Friday.

The webinar was organised by the Embassy of Pakistan in Prague in collaboration with Czech Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Code District, a Lahore-based private software house, and attended by more than 50 companies, both from Pakistan and Czech Republic.



Pakistan's growing startup ecosystem driving innovation, entrepreneurship: Envoy

The ambassador said that Pakistan had become a preferred destination for IT outsourcing services.

Ambassador Ayesha said that on the other hand, the Czech Republic was renowned for its advanced IT infrastructure, research and development capabilities, and expertise in areas such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and data analytics.

By leveraging their respec-

tive strengths, Pakistan and the Czech Republic can explore opportunities for collaboration in several key areas, the envoy emphasised.

Pakistan's growing startup ecosystem driving innovation, entrepreneurship: Envoy

On behalf of software houses from Pakistan, a presentation highlighting product and service range being offered to outsiders was given by CEO Code District, Ashar Samdani.

From the Czech side, presentations were delivered by Miroslav Hazer, Director

External Relations, Czech Confederation of Industries, Eva Rybkova, Chairperson of Czech Pakistan Business Council at the Czech Chambers of Commerce and Ahsan Aslam, Czech - Pakistan Chambers of Commerce. The dominant theme of these presentations was to introduce about economic opportunities in the Czech Republic.

Pakistan's growing startup ecosystem driving innovation, entrepreneurship: Envoy

The overall aim of the webinar was to showcase Pakistan's IT potential to the central and Eastern European markets, in particular Czech Republic, while ensuring significant B2B engagement between interested companies.

It also helped in educating Pakistani companies about the scope, potential bottlenecks and local regulations with regard to doing business in the Czech Republic.

# BRI cooperation provides huge opportunities for partner countries: China's

News Desk

BELJING: The high-quality Belt and Road cooperation provides huge opportunities for partner countries to achieve common development and improve people's well-being, Spokesperson for the second session of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Liu Jieyi said here on Sunday. The last decade of practice has fully demonstrated that building a community with a shared future for mankind conforms to the trend of human development and progress and serves the common interests of peoples of all countries, Liu made the remarks during a press conference held by the CPPCC National Committee, China's top political advisory body.



Mentioning the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the China-Laos Railway and the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway, he said various livelihood projects have helped Africa, Asia, the South Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean to improve medical infrastructure and promote rural poverty alleviation.

Over the past 10 years, the Chinese government has signed more than 240 documents on Belt and Road cooperation with more than 150 countries and more than 30 international organizations, he noted. The CPPCC National Committee has communicated with more than 200 institutions in 50 countries and established new ties with 41 foreign think tanks and 12 civil organizations, building consensus to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, he said.

# Ethiopia to start direct flights to Lahore soon: envoy

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Ethiopia, H. E. Jemal Beker Abdullah has given another good news of starting direct flights between Addis Ababa and Lahore Islamabad soon. Ethiopian Airlines is already operating 4 direct flights in a week for Karachi connecting Pakistan to not with Ethiopia only but with whole Africa. Ethiopian Airline is the largest airline in Africa that connects the capitals of Africa more than any other airline in the region.

Ambassador shared this in his keynote address that he delivered to the English Speaking Union at the residence of President ESU Mr. Khalid Malik. H. E. was chief guest in the event "Ethiopia Pakistan Relations and Impact on the Economy of both Countries". The event is a continuous program arranged by ESU with

the ambassadors serving in Islamabad. Ambassador of Yemen, H. E. Mohammed Motaaher Alashabi, Ms Oksana from Ukraine Embassy, Brig R. Sardar Sajjad, Zia ur Rahman Zabeeh, Chairman Zabeeh Group, Ambassador R. Fauzia Nasreen, Dr Ibrar Ahmad were also present.

The Ambassador said, Pakistanis are loving and caring people. They believe in harmony, connectivity and universality that pave the way to building strong relations. Ethiopia respects Pakistani efforts for peace in the world. Both countries enjoy strategic partnership.

Recalling his arrival in Pakistan a year ago, Ambassador shared Ethiopia contribution in relief assistance to the victims of flood. He shared his observations during his visits to flood hit areas in Sindh. H. E. appreciated the spirit of Pakistanis which they express in helping the needy and

victims of calamities.

Mr. Jemal welcomed the election in Pakistan and termed it in accordance with the aspirations of the public, especially the youth and women. He said Ethiopia is looking forward to working with the new government. Both countries had political consultation and developed consensus on different agreements. We expect the agreements would be signed when the elected government assumes the charge. Ambassador referred to migration of Muslims from Arab to Habshah (present Ethiopia) when Najashi was king there and he was kind to Muslims. The last prophet Hazrat Mohammad (PBUH) directed Muslims to migrate to Habshah to avoid the cruelties of infidels.

H. E. Jemal said, both countries have many common factors including history of Islam as well as history of civilizations. Ethiopia

is one of the oldest civilizations in Africa. Both countries have strategic geographical locations in Africa and Asia. Almost half of the world population is linked with or around these two states. We have a federal system of governance. Both countries are torch bearers of world peace. Mr. Jemal Beker said, Ethiopia is the gateway to Africa that has a population of 1.4 Billion. Pakistan is following Look Africa and Engage Africa policies. We provide you access to the whole Africa. We need to bridge the gaps that are present at the institutional level to harness the opportunities on both sides. Both countries need to develop contacts at P-to-P, B-to-B, Military, Intelligence and Academia levels.

He stressed, this is the age of economic diplomacy. The two sides should be cognizant of their requirements and the road maps should be evolved to the achieve-



ment of the targets. Ethiopia has the largest intergovernmental agreement in Africa. We are actively engaged with the African Union. We offer the gateway. Pakistan can export technology, sports and surgical items, textile etc. Ethiopia can provide coffee that is the best in the world but our tea is also good. Ethiopia is the land of

tourism with global standardized tourism. We have safaris that are worth visiting. We welcome Pakistani tourists.

Ambassador, on a lighter note, attracted the participants to go to Ethiopia for becoming younger than their actual age. He shared that according to the Ethiopian calendar, you will be less than 7

years of your age because our year is longer than the Gregorian calendar. On this, Editor Tazeen Akhtar added, in that case, the number of women tourists to Ethiopia will always be higher than the men because women are more sensitive to age as compared to men. The guests enjoyed this conversation a lot.

## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
65,325.68	64,578.52
Day's High	Day's Low
65,486.45	64,530.20
Index Value	Change
8,951,705,716	+747.16
Percentage	Time
+1.16%	1 Mar, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,682.50	+52.48
Percentage	Time
+0.69%	1 Mar, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
39,044.35	+47.96
Percentage	Time
+0.12%	1 Mar, 1:10 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
39,910.82	+744.63
Percentage	Time
+1.90%	1 Mar, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	181	183
Bahrain Dinar	737.97	745.97
Canadian Dollar	207	209.2
China Yuan	38.82	39.22
Danish Krone	40.23	40.63
Euro	302.5	305.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.7	36.05
Indian Rupee	3.37	3.48
Japanese Yen	2.1	2.18
Kuwaiti Dinar	901.62	910.62
Malaysian Ringgit	58.49	59.09
New Zealand \$	168.97	170.97
Norwegians Krone	26.54	26.84
Omani Riyal	725.68	733.68
Qatari Riyal	76.74	77.44
Saudi Riyal	74.5	75.3
Singapore Dollar	207	209
Swedish Korona	27.13	27.43
Swiss Franc	314.07	316.57
Thai Bhat	7.74	7.89
U.A.E Dirham	76.3	77
UK Pound Sterling	354	359
US Dollar	279.4	282.3

## TiE Islamabad in Partnership with the U.S Embassy Celebrates a decade of fostering Entrepreneurship in Pakistan

PPA

KARACHI: TiE Islamabad and the U.S. Embassy celebrate the 10-year milestone of the Pakistan Startup Cup, Pakistan's biggest startup competition with a capstone event. The event marked a decade of U.S. and Pakistan partnership fostering innovation, growth, and success in the entrepreneurial landscape of Pakistan. The first ever all-inclusive event for persons with disabilities, served as a pivotal moment, bringing together representatives from the government, corporate sector, investors, Entrepreneur Support Organizations (ESOs), startups and winners of the Pakistan Startup Cup, and diverse stakeholders in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The event was attended by Mr. Naeem Zamindar, Former Minister of State & Chairman Board of Investments as the Chief Guest along with Deputy Counselor for Public Affairs Valerie O'Brien of U.S. Embassy, President TiE Islamabad Mr. Saqib Ahmed, along with key figures in the entrepreneurial community.

"We are thrilled to mark this significant milestone with the capstone event, bringing together the brightest minds and key players in Pakistan's startup ecosystem," said Naeem Zamindar. "This event is not just a celebration but a reflection of the incredible journey, impact, and success stories that have emerged over the past 10 years."

The capstone event featured a diverse range of activities, including an Investor's Roundtable, success stories by top startups, interactive discussions, and networking opportunities. The day also included the screening of a short documentary capturing the essence of the Pakistan Startup Cup's 10-year journey.

Valerie O'Brien said "The U.S. Mission in Pakistan is proud of our role supporting a vibrant ecosystem of entrepreneurship in Pakistan. We are committed to empowering young people to dream big, take risks, and become the job creators and change-makers that Pakistan needs."

## Cheating masses and evading taxes

# Rs98 billion tax fraud by a cellular company is unacceptable

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Brigadier (R) Aslam Khan, Chairman of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), said on Sunday that some telecom companies are cheating consumers by employing different tactics. At the same time, the government is being defrauded by evading taxes to the tune of billions of rupees.

The masses are tired of inflation, and the country is on the verge of bankruptcy. Still, some greedy corporations are not ready to fulfill their commitments and discharge national obligations by paying due taxes.

Brigadier (ret) Aslam Khan said in a statement issued today that some mobile phone operators deduct more taxes from consumers than they transfer to the government, and there seems to be no end to this practice as authorities prefer to go soft on the telecom sector for obvious reasons.

Mobile phone operators also overcharge subscribers, who end up paying more money

for less talk time, and other tactics are also employed to fleece consumers, he said, adding that one reason for this continued trend of economic crime is the lack of capacity of the tax collectors to monitor the cellular companies.

There are some underdeveloped areas in the country where some taxes are not applicable. However, few companies use this opportunity to tax consumers residing in the said areas and illegally earn hundreds of millions of rupees.

He said that in 2012, NAB took action against five cellular companies, alleging their involvement in massive sales tax evasion and federal excise duty worth Rs 47 billion.

During the same year, it was reported that a leading company was earning Rs 80 billion to Rs 85 billion annually and had paid only Rs 2.5 billion in tax during the last five years.

He informed that some telecom companies were involved in massive tax evasion through 'transfer pricing' and by inflating their imports of machinery and other strategies.

Similarly, in October 2020, he said, the



Federal Board of Revenue in Islamabad sealed the main business premises of cellular company Jazz, alleging non-payment of Rs 25.393 billion in income tax. Still, the company claimed that

there was nothing wrong on their part.

He informed that a company charged with tax evasion of Rs 300 million in 2016 on account of misdeclaration in the import of equipment has recently been found to be evading taxes to the tune of Rs 98 billion.

Aslam Khan said that it is yet to be seen whether this influential company, which claims to be among the largest foreign investors and taxpayers in the country's corporate sector, is dealt with according to the law or given leniency as usual.

He added that foreign investors are welcome to invest in Pakistan for their positive contribution to society and the economy. Still, robbery in the business's name shouldn't be allowed when the country is crumbling due to the economic downturn.

All companies must learn about corporate ethics and integrity, as they make hundreds of billions of rupees annually in Pakistan but evade taxes. When caught, they try to avoid handing over records to authorities.

## Price hike

ISLAMABAD: Ahead of Ramadan, a Vendor in Sunday Bazar in Federal Capital decorating different kinds of dates for the customers.



Photo: Online

## Rupee stable for months, exports rising and inflation is coming down

PPA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Sunday that the nation is gradually approaching political stability.

He said that the rupee's value has been stable for several months, exports are increasing, and inflation is declining, which is encouraging.

He demanded that the incoming government should immediately sign a five-year deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to improve the overall economic situation.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that the general situation is improving, which has given some hope to the masses and the business community.

He said that the new government should ensure the success of the IMF's review, after which it must sign a five-year agreement with the IMF to improve the situation.

He observed that a three-year or four-year program with the lender could not help achieve the required objectives, so a



five-year agreement with the IMF can be made to stop the draining of the country's resources for some time.

The IMF preconditions must include a reduction in the size of the government, sale of loss-making state-owned companies, complete restoration of the electricity and gas sector, increase in the tax net, and undertaking other necessary reforms.

Shahid Rashid Butt said that the IMF's new program should also be subject to proper taxes on wholesale, retail, property,

agricultural income and transport sectors.

According to official data, he said, the inflation rate fell to 23.1 percent in February from 28.3 percent in January. It was 38 percent in May.

However, he said, interest rates should not be reduced because of the fall in inflation, as this may not be acceptable to the IMF.

The business leader said that some export increase has been observed, which is reassuring. There has been no reduction in the value of the rupee for several months, but some black sheep are spreading rumors of the possibility of a reduction in its value against the dollar.

The currency mafia plans to earn billions of rupees by artificially appreciating the dollar's value in the country. He said that an artificial shortage of dollars is also being planned for the purpose, adding that these elements should be treated according to the law with no leniency.

He added that social media is being misused, which has become a big problem for which a permanent solution should be found as it damages society and the economy.

## Month long clean Rawalpindi drive kicked off under Suthra Punjab vision: Saqib Rafiq

PPA

RAWALPINDI: President Chamber of Commerce and Industry Rawalpindi and Chairman Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) Saqib Rafiq has said that on the directions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif a comprehensive cleaning operation plan has been launched. Month long clean Rawalpindi drive has been kicked off under Suthra Punjab vision.

Saqib Rafiq further added that he personally reviewed the cleanliness drive at Committee Chowk, Waris Khan and Gwalmandi Bridge in different areas of the city. It is appreciable that RWMC workers were engaged in the cleaning drive despite the rain. The daily target is to make Rawal-



pindi completely zero waste.

Saqib Rafiq said that RWMC has started the cleaning campaign from March 1 as per the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif which will continue

till March 31. Mechanical sweeping, road washing, street cleaning of the important roads of the city including vegetable market, bus terminals and graveyards are being given top priority. He said to establish more transfer stations in the city and widening the scope of RWMC the recommendations and suggestions have been passed to the Commissioner's Office and the Government of Punjab. "Our mission is to make Rawalpindi clean and a model city under the Suthra Punjab vision."

He said special attention is being paid to the cleanliness campaign, and the complaints received will be resolved immediately. "Awareness camps will be set up at union council level across Rawalpindi Division. People will be encouraged to take an active part in this campaign, he added.

## Dubai Business Conference will be a milestone to bring investment in the country, Ahsan Bakhtawari

PPA

DUBAI: A dinner was hosted by President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Bakhtawari in honor of the participants of the ICCI Business Conference. More than 180 delegates attended the dinner.

Addressing the participants, President ICCI Ahsan Bakhtawari said that Pakistan, with a large market of 240 million people and located between the world's two largest economies, is a paradise for investors. The government is focusing on providing a conducive environment for domestic and foreign investors. There are attractive investment opportunities in Pakistan in sectors such as power, oil and gas, information technology, infrastructure, and services.

Meeting the housing needs of Pakistan's large population is a challenge. The real estate and development sector has done a great job in the last two decades. Pakistan's real estate sector is waiting for foreign investment.

The ICCI President said that he hopes that the new



government will work with new determination and continuity of policies and continue the series of measures to attract foreign investment to the country. He said that the newly elected Prime Minister offered a charter of economy to all political parties in his first address. The political leadership should respond positively to this and demonstrate national unity on the economy.

ICCI Dubai Business Conference will be held in Dubai today. Investors from all over the world, including Pakistan, will participate in the conference. Pakistani diplomatic mission in Dubai and officials of National Investment Facilitation Council will brief the investors. B2B meetings and panel discussions are also scheduled in the conference.

## Another 160 MVA transformer energized at 220 kV Daud Khel grid station

PPA

LAHORE: In its commitment to ensure smooth power supply, the National Transmission and Despatch Company Limited (NTDC) has achieved a significant milestone by enhancing the capacity of its transmission network through the System Constraints Removal

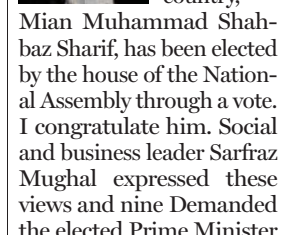
Program. In a latest development, the NTDC teams have successfully installed/added 160 MVA 220/132kV auto-transformer (T-4), make Jiangsu Hupang China, along with complete 220 kV Dia at 220 kV grid station Daud Khel. The said 160 MVA auto transformer has been energized.

## Welcome to the new prime minister: Sarfraz Mughal

PNP

ISLAMABAD: Today the Prime Minister of the new government in the country, Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, has been elected by the house of the National Assembly through a vote. I congratulate him. Social and business leader Sarfraz Mughal expressed these views and nine Demanded the elected Prime Minister of Pakistan that the internal conditions of the country have become very bad. Inflation has broken the back of the people. The prices of electricity, gas, petrole-

um products and medicines have taken away the livelihood of the poor. It is time to resolve these situations on an emergency basis. Sarfraz Mughal has also demanded the new Prime Minister to stabilize the national treasury by controlling the privileges and luxuries of the new cabinet in view of the country's economic situation and the problems arising from the heavy debt burden of the IMF. Its benefits should be conveyed to the people. The rulers hold the former rulers responsible for the IMF debts and inflation, while the people have to suffer its effects. They are extremely worried that their problems should be resolved for the welfare of whom they have taken an oath.



# PSL Rawalpindi match washout complete refund of match tickets value: PCB

Asim Tanveer

RAWALPINDI: Following Saturday's complete washout of HBL Pakistan Super League 9 matches in Rawalpindi, the Pakistan Cricket Board has provided an update on the complete refund of tickets value

Tickets purchased through Express Centers  
Ticket-buyers can apply for refunds

from Tuesday, 12 March through designated centres (details will be posted on the corporate and event websites during the course of the week).

Ticket-buyers will have to present the original CNICs that were used for purchasing tickets along with physical tickets.

Tickets purchased online: The process will commence on Tuesday, 12 March and the reimbursements will be cred-

ited directly into the buyers' booking bank accounts.

Corporate purchases: Tickets purchased through corporate transactions will only be refunded to the corporate entity. To avoid duplication in the credited amount, NO individual refund requests will be entertained.

As per Clause 2.1 of the Ticket Refund Policy (available here) the PCB will provide a complete refund of the tick-

et value for Saturday's matches. Clause 2.1 of the policy reads: "If a Match is canceled for any reason, including adverse weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances, prior to the toss for such Match taking place, ticket holders will be eligible for a full refund of the ticket price."

As per Clause 3.3 of the policy, refunds will be processed within 10 business days of receiving a valid request.

## Horse races

LAHORE: Jockeys striving to outdo each other in the Pakistan Derby 2024 at the Race Club in the provincial capital.



Photo: Online

## Government Graduate College wins Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan Boxing Championship



Waqar Paracha

KHANEWAL: Government Graduate Civil Line College Khanewal won the Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan Boxing Championship. Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan Second and Government Commerce College Khanewal 3rd Position.

According to details Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan Boxing Championship organized by Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan Played at the sports ground of Government Graduate College Civil Line Khanewal, Government Graduate College Civil Line Khanewal won the trophy with 170 points while Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan came second with 120 points and Government Commerce College Khanewal came third with 75 points.

Education Maher Ghulam Murtaza Mahni Syal, Director of Sports Bahauddin Zakaria University, Multan Tars Mohiuddin and Principal Government Graduate Degree College Khanewal, Syed Sajjad Hussain Shah, introduced the players and technical officials. The doers From Khanewal 48kg Muhammad Asif 51kg Muhammad Shakeel 54kg Sanul Hayat 57kg Amar Hussain Jafri 63.5 Zainul Abedin 71kg Abrar 75kg Kaleemullah 91kg Hasnain +91 from Multan 60kg Muhammad Owais 67kg Talha 80 kg Sagheer Ahmed 86 kg Muhammad Hamid + 91 Ali Hasnain Dogar Silver Medalist from Khanewal 60 kg Muhammad Aqib 67 KG Muhammad Junaid 80 KG Ali Ahmed 86 KG Yusuf Khan +91 KG Muhammad Sajjad from Multan 57 KG Mujtaba 90 KG Abubakar Siddique from Commerce College Khanewal 48 KG Asif Hussain 51 KG Usman Qureshi 54 KG Abdul Rahman 71 KG Muhammad Aslam 75 KG Adil Rahe At the end of the competition, Professor Maher Ghulam Murtaza Mahni Sial and National Boxing Technical Officer Afshal Mohammad Pervaiz Pracha highlighted the sport of boxing. Finally, Director Sports Bahauddin Zakaria University Multan Tars Mohiuddin and Principal Government Graduate Degree College Khanewal Syed Sajjad Hussain Shah also distributed sports kits and uniforms among the players.

# 10th J. A. Zaman Memorial Open Golf Championship

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The 10th J. A. Zaman Memorial Open Golf Championship presented by the Zaman Family came to a resonant conclusion at the par-72, Lahore Gymkhana Golf Course bringing a spell of enchantment for the high spirited Ahmed Baig of Royal Palm Golf Club who had a flourishing time on the last three concluding holes of this resplendent open golf championship which was contested over four days and 74 holes in the Professional segment. This J. A. Zaman Open Event had offered a prize money of Rs 7.5 million besides a Haval for a hole in one.

In this championship there was diversity of participation and besides 103 top golf professionals, there were seven other segments that engaged veteran golfers above seventy years of age, senior amateurs above 50 years of age, senior professionals, junior professionals, junior golfers, esteemed amateur golf players and lady golfers from all over the country.



The final round of Professional section was fought out on Sunday at the Lahore Gymkhana Golf Course and razor sharp unnerving heated bout was noticed as champions Shabbir Iqbal, Ahmed Baig, Minhaj Maqsood and Muhammad Nazir remained steadfast and resolute in pursuit of ultimate success. And then came the 16th hole and discernible was Destiny

in action. Ahmed Baig had hit his second shot on to the green on the par-5, 16th hole and was lying 25feet from the hole. Backed by a wild intent he stroked the ball to best of his golfing ability and cheers went up as the ball ended right in the hole. The rewarding eagle was a GOD sent pat and the eagle made Ahmed Baig the front runner leaving competi-

tion adversaries like Shabbir Iqbal and Minhaj Maqsood in the lurch. And from there on it was a commendable and glowing time for Ahmed Baig.

He birdied the 17th hole and without any flutter birdied the closing 18th hole thereby emerging triumphant in this Championship and defending his title that he had won last year also.

# Usman-inspired Sultans edge Kings to reach PSL 9 Playoffs

A Sports

KARACHI: Usman Khan's belligerent century, followed by a combined bowling performance led Multan Sultans to a 20-run victory over Karachi Kings in the 19th match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 9 here at National Bank Stadium on Sunday.

The 20-run victory meant Multan Sultans became the first team to qualify for the Playoffs in the ongoing ninth edition of the marquee league.

Chasing a mammoth 190, the Kings could accumulate 169 for the loss of seven wickets in the allotted 20 overs.

The home side got off to an unwanted start to the pursuit as they lost two wickets — Tim Seifert (1) and James Vince (7) — inside the batting powerplay with just 28 runs on the board.

Following the slump, skipper Shan Masood partnered with Shoaib Malik to anchor the run

chase briefly.

The pair batted sensibly and added 53 runs for the third wicket before Usama Mir dismissed Masood in the 10th over to dent Kings' recovery.

Masood scored an anchoring 36 off 29 deliveries, hitting five boundaries.

Malik then put together a brief partnership with Leus du Plooy (12) before both fell in successive overs, resulting in the Kings slipping to 99/5 in 13 overs.

Veteran all-rounder Malik top-scored for the Kings with a 28-ball 38 which featured five boundaries.

The Kings then lost another wicket in the 17th over when Muhammad Irfan Khan returned after scoring a 19-ball 23.

Hasan Ali and Mohammad Nawaz offered valuable resistance in the death over with a brilliant 41-run partnership which lasted on the penultimate deliv-

ery but the Kings fell short of tasting their third victory in the PSL 9.

Hasan scored a brisk 17 off eight deliveries while Nawaz remained unbeaten with a 17-ball 27, featuring three boundaries and a six.

For the Sultans, Usama Mir bagged two wickets while David Willey, Chris Jordan, Khushdil Shah and Mohammad Ali struck out a batter apiece.

Sultans' captain Mohammad Rizwan's decision to bat first paid dividends for his side as they racked up a massive total of 189/3 on the board, courtesy of a marathon second-wicket stand.

The Sultans had a dismal start to their innings as they lost Reeza Hendricks (13) with just 16 runs on the board in the second over.

Following the early debacle, Usman joined his skipper Rizwan in the middle and the duo launched an astounding

counterattack.

The pair batted for more than 15 overs and added 148 runs to the Sultans' total.

Usman was the core aggressor of the magnificent partnership while Rizwan anchored through before finally perishing in the 18th over after a cautious half-century.

He scored 58 off 44 deliveries with the help of five boundaries.

The Sultans then sustained another blow to their batting expedition when Ifthikhar Ahmed (4) perished on the first delivery of the penultimate over, bowled by Hasan Ali.

But Usman Khan stood his ground firm and brought up his second PSL century in the final over with a six over deep square leg off Mir Hamza.

Usman carried his bat all the way through and scored an unbeaten 106 of 59 deliveries, laced up with 15 boundaries including five sixes.



Blessing Muzarabani led the bowling attack for the Kings while Hasan made one scalp.

## Ugo Humbert continues fine final form to clinch Dubai ATP

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Fifth seed Ugo Humbert maintained his perfect record in finals by beating Alexander Bublik 6-4, 6-3 to claim the Dubai ATP title on Saturday.



The Frenchman joins Ernests Gulbis and Martin Klizan as the only men in the Open Era to win their first six tour-level finals, with his victory over Bublik earning him a second trophy of the season.

The 25-year-old will make his top-15 debut at 14 when the updated rankings are released on Monday.

"I played a fantastic level during all the week, but today was not easy," said Humbert during the trophy ceremony.

"I have a good statistic in finals, but that's because I have a really good team around me," he added.

Humbert had a tough path to the title in Dubai.

He came back from a set down in his opener against his compatriot Gael Monfils, before knocking out Andy Murray, saving three match points against Hubert Hurkacz, and upsetting champion and top seed Daniil Medvedev in straight sets in the last-four.

Ugo Humbert joins Jannik Sinner as the only multiple-title winners in 2024. He also won in Marseille last month. He added a second ATP 500 trophy to his cabinet, following his success in Halle three years ago.

Follow us on our Official WhatsApp channel

Meanwhile, Bublik, who reached the final when Andrey Rublev was shockingly defaulted late in their semi-final, will rise to a career-high 19 in the world thanks to his exploits in Dubai.

"This week had everything for me and I'm really happy to be here. Thank you, Ugo for reminding me how it is to lose a final," said the 26-year-old Bublik on court.

"Honestly, before the final, I thought if I would win, I would dedicate this title to my son.

"So I'm sorry, maybe next time," he added.

The players were neck and neck for most of the opening set but a risky second serve from Bublik led the Kazakhstani big-hitter to double fault and hand the frame to Humbert on the 47-minute mark. Humbert put pressure on the Bublik serve to break serve in game four of the second set and was soon up 4-1.

Bublik tried to get in Humbert's head as the Frenchman was serving for the championship, stepping well inside the baseline to return serve.

Ugo Humbert held his nerve, saving break point and securing victory in his first meeting with Bublik on his second match point with a blizzing forehand winner. Humbert threw himself to the ground in disbelief to celebrate his hard-fought title run.

Although Bublik had entered the final with an impressive 56 aces struck through four matches, it was Humbert who out-aced his opponent on Saturday, striking nine of his own to Bublik's eight during the 85-minute Dubai ATP final.

## Karachi Region Senior Inter District Cricket Contest

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Four more matches decided in the Khansortium Karachi Region Senior Inter District Cricket Tournament at various cricket grounds.

The highlights of the days play was brilliant Centuries by Jehangir Javed 124, Ubais Ullah 124 and Waqar Ahmed 103.

The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi.

Scores in Brief:

In the first match of the at TMC Ground Zone-IV Greens defeated Zone-VII Blues by 5 Wickets. Zone-VII Blues 216/6 in allotted 45 overs. Waqar Ahmed 103 3x6 1x6, Hammad Bhatti 41, Rizwan Abbasi 22, Abdur Rehman 20. Muhammad Owais 3/27.

Zone-IV Greens 220/5 in 29.2. Overs. Muhammad Maaz 68 9x4, Afnan Khan 54 5x4 3x6, Rameez Shahid 43, Mudasir 27. Afroz Hasan 2/58.

In the 2nd Match Zone-III Blues beat Zone-VII Greens by 6 Wickets at Gulberg Gymkhana Almansooro Ground. Zone-VII Greens 254/4 in 44 overs. Zafar Ali 54 2x4 3x6, Huzaifa Munir 54 6x4 3x6, Zaem Rizvi 53 6x4 3x6, Ghazanfar Yar 28, Ghani Subhan 23. Hasan Asim 2/47, Zohaib Khan 2/39.

Zone-III Blues 255/4 in 33.1 overs. Ubais ullah 124 16x4 4x6 not out, Hamza Nadeem 50 6x4, Karar Ali 46. Muzzamil Khan 2/39.

In the 3rd Match at RLCA Gulberg Zone-V Greens beat Zone-VII Reds by 3 Wickets. Zone-VII Reds 254 all out in 44.5 overs. Jehangir Javed 124 13x4 2x6, Abdul Raheem 31, Hussain Abbas 20. Hassan Khan (mf) 4/49, Muhammad Zahid 2/43, Faiz Ahmed 2/58.

Zone-V Greens 255/7 in 44.2 overs. Muhammad Hussain 72 12x4, Raja Liaquat 63 6x4 1x6, Muhammad Shahbaz 59 5x4 1x6, Muhammad Zahid 26. Luqman Shah 2/58.

In the fourth Match Zone-VI Reds beat Zone-I Blues by 124 runs at KCCA Stadium. Zone-VI Reds 259/6 in 45 overs. Ali Isaq 72 11x4, Zain Anwar 43, M. Tariq Khan 39, S. M. Tahami 38, Muhammad Asad 35. Hussain Mustafa 2/35, Adnan Shah 2/36, Farman Ahmed 2/38.

Zone-I Blues 135 all out in 38.2 overs. Shafi ullah 69 8x4. Faraz Hussain 3/21, M. Tariq Khan 2/25.

in six matches while Karachi Kings are fifth with four points in five matches.

## Consolation

GWADAR: Corps Commander Balochistan Lieutenant General Rahat Naseem meet affectees of flood hit areas of Gwadar



Photo: ISPR

## Corps Commander Balochistan visits Gwadar's flood-hit areas

## Bureau Report

GWADAR: Corps Commander Balochistan Lt Gen Rahat Naseem on Sunday undertook a visit to the flood-affected areas of Gwadar district to assess the situation firsthand and extend support to the flood victims.

According to a statement issued today, the visit was aimed at personally assessing the situation and extending support to the distressed flood victims.

Accompanied by the Gener-

al Officer Commanding (GOC) Gwadar Division, the Corps Commander engaged in crucial discussions with local authorities and community leaders to comprehend the challenges confronting the affected populace.

Furthermore, Rahat Naseem was briefed on the immediate measures implemented by relief teams to alleviate the suffering of flood-affected victims.

He also interacted with social and regional elders during his visit, reiterating the

unwavering commitment of the Pakistan Army to ensure the prompt delivery of relief and rehabilitation efforts in collaboration with civil administration.

Commander Balochistan also assured the affected communities of the Pakistan Army's steadfast support. With aid teams committed to remaining in the affected regions, timely relief measures will persist to provide comfort and aid to those grappling with the aftermath of the floods.

In a demonstration of their dedication to assisting, the Pakistan Army expedited the delivery of 17 large and small water pumps from Quetta to Gwadar to address the pressing need for water management in flood-affected areas.

The visit of Lieutenant General Rahat Naseem symbolizes the Pakistan Army's proactive stance in times of crisis, reaffirming their pledge to stand shoulder to shoulder with the citizens of Balochistan, offering solace and assistance in the face of adversity.

Heavy rains wreaked havoc in Gwadar, Makran and northern and central parts of Balochistan on Wednesday, suspending the normal life and traffic.

The 30-hour-long rains triggered flash floods, submerging most of the areas. Paramilitary forces, called in by the local administration, reached the flood-affected areas and launched rescue and relief operations there. The Gwadar district administration declared a state of emergency in the rain-hit areas.

## Pak Army rescues three from Muzaffarabad cable car stranded above river

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Teams of Pakistan Army and rescue workers rescued three passengers who were stranded inside a cable car after one of its wires snapped in Muzaffarabad city of Azad Kashmir on Sunday, reminding the dramatic Battagram rescue mission.

The incident occurred as the cable car was passing through a river in Mandgran Village.

No human losses or injuries were reported as the Pakistan Army and local rescue teams carried out an operation to rescue the stranded passengers.

Later, the repair works of the cable car were also completed.

In a similar incident last year, a cable car was stranded at 600ft with 8 people on board in the Battagram



district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Seven schoolboys and an adult were rescued by the Pakistan Army commandos and local experts after spending almost 15 hours in the cable car on August 22, 2023.

A few days later, a team of rescue officials rescued three people who got stuck in a chairlift after one of its cables snapped in Chitral on August 29.

The cable car was dangling above the Chitral river in the Kuragh area of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa district.

## NA speaker summons Parliament's joint session for presidential election

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Newly-elected National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq on Sunday summoned the joint session of the Parliament to elect the next president of Pakistan.

In a notification issued on Sunday, Speaker Sadiq summoned the session on March 9 at 10am.

Former president Asif Ali Zardari will be contesting for a second term

in the President's Office. He will be up against Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party chief Mahmood Khan Achakzai who is backed by Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) lawmakers.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Shehbaz Sharif was elected the prime minister of Pakistan as he secured 201 votes after the polling process ended in the newly-elected National Assembly.

## CM Gandapur announces compensation for rain-hit people

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister (CM) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Ali Amin Gandapur announced compensation for the victims of heavy rain in the province.

As per details, Ali Amin Gandapur announced Rs1 million compensation for each of the deceased and Rs300,000 for each severely wounded person. Each minor injured person would be compensated with Rs50,000.

He also announced to compensate those who suffered financial losses during the rain.

The Chief Minister also directed the secretary of relief to prepare a report on life and financial losses caused by heavy rain in the province.

The Chief Minister also gave the district administrations, Provincial Disaster Management Authority, and Rescue 1122 instructions to be vigilant and assist people.

"The affected people will not be left alone and be supported in every possible way," Ali Amin Gandapur added.

It is pertinent to mention here that due to torrential rainfall over the past 48 hours, at least 21 people have perished and 37 were injured in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to a report released by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), 97 houses in the province were partially damaged, while at least 30 houses were destroyed.

## Sindh, Balochistan CMs decide to curb drug smuggling

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Chief Ministers of Sindh and Balochistan agreed to take joint measures against drug smuggling and mafia operating at the border of the two provinces.

As per details, Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah and his counterpart in Balochistan Sarfraz Bugti held a meeting in Karachi. The issues pertaining to drug smuggling on the Sindh-Balochistan border were discussed.

Syed Murad Ali Shah and Sarfraz Bugti decided to



make joint efforts to curb the menace of drugs. Chief Ministers of both provinces decided to launch strict action

against the lawbreakers on the borders of the two provinces soon.

Syed Murad Ali Shah also

expressed grief over the loss of lives and properties in torrential rain in Gwadar. CM Sindh told Sarfraz Bugti that the

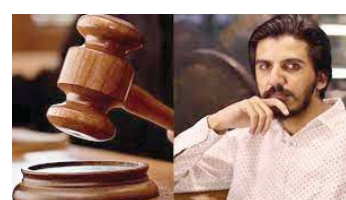
Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Sindh had sent seven drainage machines to Gwadar.

"PDMA of Sindh and Balochistan PDMA are in contact. More machinery will be sent to Gwadar, if needed," Syed Murad Ali Shah added.

Speaking on the occasion, Sarfraz Bugti said that water drainage and other rehabilitation measures are underway in Gwadar.

Meanwhile, both the chief ministers of Sindh and Balochistan also discussed the upcoming presidential elections set to be held on March 9.

## Asad Toor remanded for another three days



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A sessions court in Islamabad extended journalist Asad Toor's remand by three days on Sunday. Toor was brought to court by the Federal Investigation Agency in a minivan, bound in handcuffs.

Judicial Magistrate Abbas Shah presided over the hearing where FIA asked for a nine-day remand.

Reserving the verdict after arguments were completed, Shah approved a three-day extension in Toor's remand.

Toor was reportedly on a hunger strike for the past five days, which he ended after journalists including Matuallah Jan reasoned with him in the court room.

The journalist was arrested from FLA's office in Islamabad under charges of making allegations against institutions and civil servants.

## Pak-China cooperation to explore chemical industry digitalization

Spokesman Report

BELJING: Commercial Counsellor of the Embassy of Pakistan in China, Ghulam Qadir led a Pakistani delegation to visit TDD E-commerce Company, a chemical e-commerce platform under IBI Guolian providing digital supply chain and industrial big data services. The two parties engaged in discussions and exchanges regarding potential cooperation in chemical industry, with the aim of jointly building a digital trading service platform.

During the visit, the delegation toured the data center and the Guolian Cloud Digital Experience Hall, where they gained in-depth insights into TDD's operational model, business scope, as well as the technical capabilities and application scenarios of the Guolian Cloud, according to local media.

In the subsequent discussions, the two sides explored various possibilities for international cooperation, primarily focusing on the joint construction of a digital trading service platform, a localized B2B e-commerce platform and a China-Pakistan digital supply chain service system. Ghulam Qadir stated during the discussions, "Pakistan will soon launch economic zones and indus-

trial parks to provide a favorable business environment and strong support for enterprises. The achievements of TDD platform in the digital transformation of chemical industry are commendable. Leveraging TDD's operational experience and advantages in the entire industry chain, we want to jointly create an international one-stop full-chain service for various industries in Pakistan."

Liu Zhai, CEO of TDD, provided a detailed introduction of the TDD platform and its global strategic layout. She also shared views on the development of TDD's cross-border e-commerce and the current business operations in Pakistan. "Integrating the upstream and downstream segments of the chemical industry chain in Pakistan is an important strategic layout for TDD's cross-border e-commerce. To do that, TDD will cooperate with Pakistani enterprises and continuously expand the scope of services.

Cooperating with the Belt and Road Initiative countries, We are also vigorously expand a global supply chain based on the industrial internet platform, she added. In March, TDD will send a delegation to participate in the Pakistan Coating Show 2024 and conduct market research on the local chemical industry.

## PTI's intra-party elections results announced

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Federal Election Commissioner Raouf Hassan announced that the process of PTI's intra-party elections has been completed successfully on Sunday, resultantly Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has been elected as PTI Chairman and Omar Ayub Khan as party's Secretary General unopposed.

PTI Federal Election Commissioner made the announcement of the intra-party elections during a press conference here on Sunday.

Raouf Hassan said the PTI intra-party elections were held as per the guidelines and benchmarks set by the Supreme Court.

Moreover, in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, he further stated that there was only one panel led by Ali Amin Khan Gandapur for the provincial president slot; therefore, Ali Amin was announced as PTI KP President uncontested.

PTI Federal Election Commissioner announced that Haleem Adil Sheikh elected the party's Sindh President uncontested because Khawand Bakhsh Jahejo led panel was disqualified as one of its members Zaheer Muhammad Babar did not comply with PTI's policy.

## Economic revival top priority of PML-N: Ahsan Iqbal



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Secretary General and senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Ahsan Iqbal said on Sunday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif saved the country from default during the last Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) led government.

Talking to the official news channel, he said PML-N has a comprehensive plan to get the country out of this quagmire, increase the country's resources, production and tax collection. The country will be put back on the track of development, he added.

Encouraging the Pakistanis living abroad, Ahsan Iqbal said that they were the country's assets and they always played an important role in its development.

## PTV cuts Omar Ayub Khan's live speech in NA

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: As soon as the speech of Omar Ayub Khan, a member of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-backed Sunni Ittehad Council in the National Assembly (NA), began, PTV, the state TV abruptly stopped live broadcasting.

After the address of the PM-elect Shehbaz Sharif in the National Assembly session, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq invited Omar Ayub to speak. However, the state TV stopped broadcasting as soon as he started speaking. During his speech, slogans of "thief" were also raised in the assembly.

The deputy speaker of the NA took notice of the matter and directed PTV to revive live broadcast of Ayub's speech.

Omar Ayub expressed gratitude to Allah for allowing him to contest the election for the prime minister's office. He described the people present in the assembly as having faces as if they were attending a funeral.

He stated that those who have a mandate are the ones involved in theft. PTI organized peaceful protests against Form 47, and around 80 workers were arrested in Lahore. He promised to reveal the facts.

Omar Ayub said that our women and children were harassed, shots were fired at us, but we stood firm. The PTI leader demanded an independent inquiry into the events of May 9, asking who is responsible for the sacrifice of the youth.

He emphasized that Bushra Bibi is not a weakness of PTI but she is its strength.