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LAHORE: President PML (N) Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif meeting with Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari.

PML-N, PPP agree to cooperate for Pak stability

Leadership of both parties express commitment to putting nation's interest and well-being above everything

LAHORE (Agencies): The leadership of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) held a crucial meeting in Lahore as the elders of both parties principally agreed to cooperate for Pakistan's stability following the general elections.

This understanding between the parties was reached during a high-profile meeting, where top leaders from both parties convened to discuss the current political landscape and chart a course for collaboration.

The meeting, which took place at Lahore's Bilawal House, saw the participation of key figures including PPP President Asif Ali Zardari, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, and former prime minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif of the PML-N.

According to a joint statement, the meeting, held in a cordial environment, expressed commitment to putting

the nation's interest and well-being above everything. The leaders of both parties engaged in substantive discussions regarding the prevailing political landscape and the imperative of collaborative efforts for the betterment of the country.

Reflecting a spirit of consensus-building, the leaders acknowledged the importance of establishing a framework for sustained political cooperation between the PML-N and PPP, laying the groundwork for a stronger, more united approach to addressing the challenges facing the nation.

The statement added that key points of discussion included the assessment of Pakistan's overall situation, deliberations on future political strategies, and the exchange of recommendations aimed at promoting stability and progress across the board.

Independents grab 101 NA seats

PML-N emerges as largest party with 75 seats

ISLAMABAD (APP): Independent candidates have emerged as the front-runners with winning 101 National Assembly seats in the General Election 2024 held on February 8.

The Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) becomes the single largest party in the NA by grabbing 75 constituencies, according to the unofficial results of 264 out of 266 constituencies announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

The Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) has secured 54 seats, and Mutahida Qaumi Movement - Pakistan (MQM-P) 17 seats.

The Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam Pakistan (JUI-P) has managed to win four, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) three, and the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) and Balochistan National Party (BNP) two seats each. The Majlis-e-Wahdat-e-Muslimeen Pakistan, Pakhtunkhwa National Awami Party,

Pakhtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party, Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), National Party and Pakistan Muslim League-Zia (PML-Z) have won one seat each.

Elections for an NA general seat (NA-8) were postponed due to the death of a candidate, while the results of NA-88 were not announced as re-polling would be conducted at 15 out of 25 polling stations on February 15. In the Punjab Assembly, out of 297 seats, independents secured 138, PML-N 137, PPPP 10, PML eight, and IPP, PML-Z, and Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan one each, while the election for PP-266 Rahim Yar Khan could not be conducted due to a candidate's death.

With the results of one of the 130 Sindh Assembly seats withheld due to re-polling at certain polling stations, the PPPP leads the chart by winning 84 seats, followed by the MQM-P with 28, independent candidates 13, and the Grand Democratic Alliance and

Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan two each.

In the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, independent candidates have grabbed 90 seats out of 112 constituencies whose results have been declared. The JUI-P secured seven seats, PML-N five, PPPP four, JI-P three, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarian two and Awami National Party one.

Elections in two out of total 115 KP Assembly constituencies have been postponed due to the death of candidates, while the result of one was withheld due to vandalism. In the Balochistan Assembly, the PPPP and the JUI-P lead the tally with 11 seats each, followed by PML-N with 10, Balochistan Awami Party four, National Party three, Awami National Party two, and Balochistan National Party (Awami), Haq Do Tehreek Balochistan and JI-P one each. Independent candidates also grabbed six seats.

President lauds high female voter turnout in general elections

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi Sunday congratulated people on taking part in the voting process during the general elections.

In a statement on X, he said he must congratulate the people of Pakistan, specially the women for coming out in huge numbers and strengthening democracy.

"The youth deserve a special mention, and I praise them for having decided to take charge of the country by participating peacefully in the voting process. They have put their faith in democracy. This belief is very precious, it will write history and must be recognized," he added.

He said, "A true mandate is essential to come out of the severe financial

crunch, to make difficult decisions, to repair, and to heal the bitterness of the past. We must celebrate this effervescent new focus and show it to the outside world.

"My confidence in our brilliant future has been strengthened as the people have not only spoken but have shouted out their will."

"Nothing can crystallise unless this huge mandate of my citizens is respected and recognized. Politicians, their parties, and our institutions must embrace this God sent opportunity. Allah is definitely very gracious to Pakistan. Come rise my people, unite, put everything together, repair and build. The world awaits you," he concluded.



QUETTA: Activists of Balochistan National Party holding a protest against alleged rigging in the general elections.

Interim Govt. foiled agenda of country's enemies about keeping it away from democracy, asserts Jan Achakzai

Caretaker Minister for Information urges losing candidates to accept election results demonstrating sportsman spirit; relevant forum may be approached if anyone has objection

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has categorically stated that the state and interim government has foiled the agenda of Pakistan's enemies regarding keeping the country away from democracy by conducting general elections.

The nation, Pak army, Police, paramilitary forces, Election Commission, administration and all other institutions deserve appreciation on this historic success, maintained the caretaker Minister while addressing a hurriedly called press conference at the Civil Secretariat on Sunday morning.

Jan Achakzai expressed the hope that the

winning candidates would try to come up to the expectations of general elections. At the same time, he also urged those could not succeed in the elections to accept the results of elections demonstrating sportsman spirit.

However, if any of them have objections on the results, one can contact the relevant forums, adding he pleaded.

The Minister Information said that it is the enemies' agenda to suffer the country from chaos and lawlessness. He said that taking law into hands in simplicity and ignorance is nothing but tantamount to play in hands of the enemies. He said that we know that some elements are running on agenda of the enemies by fanning the

flames in the situation and adding he termed them the "Raw" agents.

He feared that some simple people would also come in the tricks of these elements. However, we want to tell them they would be equally responsible for if their act harmed democracy in the country, Jan Achakzai warned.

He said that we have to protect the country, democracy and democratic institutions.

To a query about delay in results of some constituencies of the province, the Minister maintained that the delay in results was caused mainly due to the big areas and logistic issues. He said that results of elections are declared late because of the logistic issues.



PESHAWAR: President Awami National Party (ANP) Aimal Wali Khan along with other party leaders addressing a Press conference at Bacha Khan Markaz.

Sardar Akhtar Mengal succeeds on two seats: PML-N wins highest four seats of NA from Balochistan

Jamal Shah Kakar, Jam Kamal Khan, Khan Muhammad Jamali & Sardar Yaqoob Khan Nasar win seats on PML-N tickets; PPP's Jamal Raisani & Malik Shah as well as JUI-F's Maulana Fazlur Rehman & Usman Badini secure NA seats

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has won the highest number of seats of National Assembly from Balochistan province in the General Elections 2024.

According to the unofficial results of the provincial and National Assemblies seats shared by the Provincial Election Commissioner's spokesman on Sunday, PML-N won four seats of National Assembly from the province. While Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) and Balochistan National Party (BNP) won two seats of National Assembly each from the province.

Two seats of National Assembly were secured by the independent candidates while one seat each was obtained by Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), Pashtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP), Pakistan National Pashtoonkhaw (PNAP) and National Party (NP).

The PML-N nominated candidates who won the NA seats from Balochistan are included: Sardar Yaqoob Khan Nasar

(NA-252), Mir Khan Muhammad Jamali (NA-255), Jam Kamal Khan (NA-257) and Jamal Shah Kakar (NA-263).

Similarly, PPP's winning candidates are included: Malik Shah (NA-259) and Nawabzada Jamal Raisani (NA-264) while the JUI-F candidates who secured the NA seats are included: Muhammad Usman Badini (NA-260) and Maulana Fazlur Rehman (NA-265).

The BNP chief Sardar Akhtar Mengal remained successful on two seats of National Assembly i.e., from NA-2256 and NA-261. NP's Phulain Baloch, PKMAP's Mehmood Khan Achakzai and PNAP's Khushhal Khan Kakar won the NA seats of NA-258, NA-265 and NA-251 respectively. The independent candidates Mian Khan and Adil Bazai won the NA seats of NA-253 and NA-262 respectively.

Needless to mention here is that Jamal Raisani, Khushhal Kakar, Adil Bazai, Mian Khan, Malik Shah, Phulain Baloch and Jamal Shah Kakar have won the NA seats for the first time.

Independent MNA-elect Waseem Qadir joins PML-N

LAHORE (APP): An independent MNA-elect from NA-121 constituency, Waseem Qadir, met Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz on Sunday and announced joining the party.

He reposed full confidence in PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif. Maryam Nawaz welcomed the newly-elected MNA's decision.

Six people including an ASI killed in firing between two groups in Larkana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Six people were killed and five injured on Sunday in a firing incident between two groups near Nodero Bypass Larkana. According to the private news channel, a fight between two groups over the issue of turning into violence, with firing and indiscriminate use of sticks by both groups.

According to the police, as soon as the incident was reported, the Mahota police officers arrived at the scene. Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Sultan Shah was shot dead, whereas, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Bashir Ahmed Sharif and Constable Saddam Hussain were among the injured.

Malicious propaganda about Pakistan Army stands exposed

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: The fabricated and malicious propaganda related to the army deployment on election duty has been exposed.

According to the details, some miscreant political elements are misguiding their supporters for political gains and after inciting the security troops, deployed for elections duty, recording videos of riots and anti-army propaganda on social media.

Similarly, from the Elections Day till today, various anonymous propaganda accounts have been creating chaos and agitation in the country.

By spreading lies, propaganda and disinformation, these anti-national elements aim to cre-

ate chaos and instability in Pakistan.

Abseonder YouTubers, sitting outside the country, are leading this anti-Pakistan and disinformation campaign. Such malicious elements who are engaged in this propaganda on social media are being identified and the relevant institutions have started work to take strict disciplinary action against them as per the law.

It is pertinent to mention that according to the notification of the Election Commission of Pakistan and the Ministry of Interior, troops of the Army and Civil Armed Forces are required to provide security outside the offices of ROs until the election process is completed.

Daesh ring leader killed in Khyber operation: ISPR

Independent Report

RAWALPINDI: The security forces on Sunday killed a high-profile terrorist ring leader, associated with the banned extremist organization Daesh, in an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in the Khyber District. According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the security forces conducted the operation in the reported presence of terrorist Surat Gul alias Saif Ullah of Daesh, who was killed during an intense exchange of fire. Weapons, ammunition

and explosives were recovered from the killed terrorist commander, who remained actively involved in terror activities, including target killing of innocent civilians as well as extortion. He was highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies.

"Sanitization operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area. Locals of the area appreciated the operation and expressed their full support for the security forces to eliminate the menace of terrorism," the ISPR said.



QUETTA: Activists of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) are burn tires and blocked road as they are holding protest demonstration against alleged rigging in General Election 2024, at Syed Hameed Crossing Bridge located on Qila Abdullah area of Balochistan.

People of Balochistan take keen interest in elections: Domki

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has said people of Balochistan took keen interest in the elections and exercised their right of vote. In a statement, he said people of Balochistan have elected their representatives through free, fair and transparent elections, which were held on time despite the challenges.

He expressed hope that newly-elected Members of Provincial Assembly and National Assembly will play their role to put the province on the path of progress and prosperity.



LAHORE: Police officials are arresting the workers of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) who came to protest against rigging in General Election 2024, at Liberty Chowk in Lahore.

Elections made mockery in Balochistan, says Maulana Haideri

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Secretary General of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri has stated that the general elections of February 8 have been made mockery in Balochistan.

What a mockery and confusing situation is that in morning one is declared winner and then the other one is declared winner in the evening.

The senior leader of JUI-F was addressing a hurriedly called press conference at his residence here on Sunday.

Also present on the occasion were other senior leaders of the Jamiat.

He said that the central Ameer of JUI Maulana Fazlur Rehman has sum-

moned the meeting of central body on February 14 to review the situation and future course of action.

He alleged that we were defeated in the constituencies at Balochistan level, what might not had happened in 2018 elections even, he added.

He said he got success in the elections from NA-261. He claimed that polling was not held in seven polling stations in area of Johan in Kalat.

While on the other hand, the victory of JUI-F candidate Saeed Langove was also converted in defeat from PB-36 Kalat.

He demanded of the Election Commission to conduct re-polling in seven polling stations of Johan area.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

More uncertainty

It appears that a coalition government is in the offing, as no single party has enough seats to form a government.

After his 'victory speech' some days ago, PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif said his was the single largest party, and called on other political leaders to initiate discussions and negotiate a way forward. Soon after, there were reports that PPP's Asif Ali Zardari and PML-N's Shehbaz Sharif held a meeting, an indication that the two leaders, despite their differences in recent months, are attempting to chart a way forward.

Of course, the role of parties such as MQM-P and other smaller parties, is key as they too will lend support to reach the magic number of seats. The PML-N is optimistic that two dozen or more independents will join their ranks, and is banking on its relationship with different parties to show a victorious front.

As the numbers game plays out, the country once again finds itself in a familiar place — one that is steeped in political uncertainty. In recent months, the PPP and PML-N have had an acrimonious relationship. The PML-N is annoyed that PPP distanced itself from the PDM government's decisions, and that it was left to face the brunt of the public's wrath over increasing inflation. Its key members also do not trust Mr Zardari.

Similarly, the PPP has been vocal in its criticism of the N-League, with its chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari taking potshots at Mr Nawaz Sharif during his campaign, and even telling this newspaper in an interview that he was "disappointed" in the former prime minister.

With these misgivings, how will this motley crew sit together in parliament? Whose agenda will take priority? And how will they bring the stability, reforms and leadership the country so badly needs? More importantly, did the public really turn up in large numbers to vote to be ruled by PDM 2.0?

As the wheeling and dealing proceeds, two things are clear: one, that however the PML-N cobbles this coalition together, its 'victory' will be more bitter than sweet. Without the outcome it had hoped for, it is now left to perform that uneasy dance of give and take for political survival. This is certainly not the fantasy Mr Sharif harboured when he returned to Pakistan after four years abroad. The second is that such a government is always vulnerable to outside forces. As we saw previously, the PTI-led coalition government was held together by an external glue, and its days were numbered when that glue did not stick. Forming such a post-election alliance is not unique to Pakistan, as other countries witness similar events and end up having weak governments. But in our case, the vulnerability to external forces further complicates an already fragile democratic process.

Hope is everything

Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

Pakistan is in the grip of bad news. While much of it is fake because the detractors of Pakistan are at work, some of the bad news is also real. Decades of bad governance has shaken the confidence of the people in the rulers they elect or even in the system which brings them to power. The elite capture of the country has left the teeming majority wondering if this country can deliver even the basic amenities of life. A vast segment of the population is slipping below the poverty line. The rich are getting richer, the poor poorer. Society is also deeply polarised. All this bad news has created a sense of despondency.

How did we reach this sorry state? Foremost, we must recognise that whatever has happened is of our own doing. We don't work hard enough to deserve the riches we aspire to. Our political governance has failed to rise to the expectations of the people. We spend more than we earn and evade taxes. Corruption is rampant. Moreover, for far too long, our rulers have looked for easy money from outside the country. All through the decades, we have preferred to leverage our strategic location rather than build our productive capacities.

We also want others to adjust their stance towards us rather than changing ourselves. For instance, we expect India to reduce its hostility towards Pakistan, Afghanistan to be more friendly than it is, China to invest more, the Saudis to liberally share their abundant wealth with us, and America to maintain a steady partnership with our country. In short, we want all our key relationships to change in the way we desire them to. But this

is not how inter-state relations work. It is Pakistan which should adjust to the evolving global and regional geopolitics, and not the other way round. A ship cannot change the direction of the wind; it must adapt its sails to continue its journey.

That means that a change of attitude is needed in how we Pakistanis see ourselves as a nation and how we view the outside world. The Creator has been more than generous in granting nature's bounties to the territories that constitute today's Pakistan.

The country is the 10th largest producer of rice in the world, the eighth leading producer of wheat, and the fifth largest producer of sugarcane. Our land is home to the three highest mountain ranges, and has an irrigation system that is both efficient and extensive.

According to the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, the country has the sixth largest reserves of marble, the second largest salt mines, the fifth largest reserves of copper and gold, the second largest coal deposits, and vast reserves of gypsum.

With such abundant wealth and a young energised population, we have every reason to be hopeful about the future of our country. Even during the harshest of times for the Muslims of India under the British occupation, our founding fathers never lost hope. Allama Iqbal's advice to us was as valid then as it is today. To translate his words: 'Don't despair, as despair is the decline of knowledge and wisdom, the hope of mard-i-momin is among the secrets of God'.

As a new elected government takes office, it must lift up the

morale of the nation by setting the stage for good governance. First and foremost, we need to stabilise political governance, which is so fractured. A new charter of democracy and tolerance is required, which provides for treating political opponents with respect and dignity, for today's opponents could be tomorrow's rulers. No one should consider himself or herself as an angel or a patriot, while treating opponents as evil and corrupt.

Second, there needs to be a much stronger commitment to local governments. The de-volution of power and resources agreed upon in 18th Amendment should not have stopped at provinces, but needs to reach the grassroots level.

Third, a charter of economy is required to forge a consensus among political parties on key economic issues and priorities.

Fourth, national security should be viewed more comprehensively than it was in the past, with equal attention being given to traditional, economic and human securities. To that end, the new government should announce its national security policy, a sequel to the one issued in January 2022, establish a national security council (not committee), and appoint a full-time national security adviser.

Fifth, on the external front, we must view all our relationships, including with neighbours, through the lens of economic benefit to Pakistan and by building stakes in the stability of Pakistan. We must engage with, but not depend on, the outside world, because the fountains of wealth and prosperity lie within. -- Courtesy Dawn

'This is us too'

Muna Khan

Imran Khan and his supporters, according to the Twitterati, are 'the worst thing to happen to society' — they've ruined tehzeeb, family get-togethers, WhatsApp chats, marriages, friendships, even diets. I am, of course, being a little facetious, but do you recognise yourself as someone who believes this or is perhaps the victim of this rhetoric? Wherever you land, do you believe we can move forward?

I'm here to offer a sliver of hope.

In 2013 and 2018, when I went to vote in Karachi, I was surrounded by PTI supporters, excited and assured of victory. Because we had to wait a while in line, people got to chatting. There was a lot of disbelief when someone in line said they weren't voting for PTI. Or that they weren't voting for the first time. "No educated person could vote for the MQM," the woman in front of me told another in 2013. "You're destroying Pakistan's chance of survival by voting for Jibril Nasir," a lady told me in 2018. As an aside: I think it's time to retire this 'save Pakistan' idea. We need saving from our misconceptions, nay delusions.

A few days ago, as I stood in line to cast my vote, there was a lot of camaraderie as PTI supporters welcomed each other in the line, but when others said they were voting for Jamaat, no one baulked. Everyone agreed you should vote for who you want. One elderly woman told another younger woman that she wouldn't tell her who she was voting for because "mujhey gaaliyan parein ge" (I will receive abuse). That

woman said no, it should not be like that, you don't have to reply, we just have to vote. Even though the mood was defiant, it was also jovial.

I'm not that naïve to think people have decided to reclaim polite discourse, but I do believe this tiny exchange points to a people's awakening and then mobilising to challenge the status quo. I believe the way people came out to vote — and for who — is evidence of this, too. People are tired of broken systems; nothing is working and the impact of polarisation has caused alarm. To be little people's choices or heap scorn on them serves no purpose. Having said that, today's angry voters must accept that their stolen mandate was, in previous elections, someone else's stolen mandate.

This division across party lines benefits those angling for power at whatever cost, who know they have accomplices to help them achieve their goal. This habit of a sprinkle of engineering here, a speck of it there — as happens every time — will only take you so far.

This is why I feel hopeful the anger will help bring people together to defy the odds. We've seen glimmers of it in constituencies like Parachinar, where Shias and Sunnis united to vote their opponent out. They rejected the status quo and the hatred that sectarianism has created here. To remind, we have spent more time living together peacefully — commemorating our different sects' occasions for example — than engaged in hatred.

Another group that continues to defy the powerful is the media. As a keen follower, and sometime practitioner, I

was thrilled to watch the reporting and analysis of the clear criticism of the election process — there was nothing ambiguous about it. This must be celebrated because an independent media is vital for democracy to function. The more people see themselves and their issues on mainstream media, the less they will rely on propagandists on YouTube.

A special mention must be made of the journalists and analysts who suffered from PTI's abusive campaigns, but did not let that impact their professionalism. I am here to remind party supporters that no one cheered Imran Khan's conviction the way Nawaz Sharif's was celebrated by journalists in kitchens and bathrooms. I will also remind you how everyone slammed the iddat case and conviction, calling it morally reprehensible. It is time for all supporters to frankly grow up and learn to deal with criticism — as has been our way in the past. We must find our way back to disagreeing without being disagreeable in all fields. Our elders must show us that way.

I believe the very platforms that caused polarisation can also reduce it. I see a glimmer of hope there too. Independent candidate Jibril Nasir, who lost this election, has, along with other lawyers, created a 'Safeguard Karachi's Votes' legal cell and is offering aid to candidates across party lines who feel their mandate was stolen. ANP's Samar Bilour taking a bouquet of flowers to PTI's Meena Khan to congratulate him on his win is one example. This in-person exchange, versus the notable congratulatory tweets by other politicians, reminds me of who we are: good people who want to live in harmony. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PDM economic management led to sharp rise in per capita debt

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: A new legally mandated fiscal policy statement has revealed the worst economic management by the coalition government of the Pakistan Democratic Movement, resulting in expenditures over Rs2.2 trillion higher than budgeted and a 25% increase in the debt burden for every citizen.

The Ministry of Finance's Fiscal Policy Statement 2024 showed a sharp rise in the debt burden during the fiscal year 2022-23, the period when PDM ruled Pakistan. The debt burden of every citizen increased by 25.2% to Rs271,624 by the end of the previous fiscal year. In absolute terms, every person's debt burden rose by Rs54,500 within one

year, according to the statement. A year ago, the per person debt burden was Rs216,925, according to the Ministry of Finance report. The statement is prepared under the Fiscal Responsibility and Debt Limitation Act (FRDL) and will be placed before the new National Assembly. Although the Ministry of Finance has not officially released the statement, the deadline to present it was January 31st.

The gross public debt jumped to Rs62.9 trillion by June 2023, indicating an increase since then. A more than one-fourth increase in per capita debt in one year signifies the speed at which the country is sinking under the debt burden.

The report stated that the key factors responsible

for this rise are interest payments on debt and the exchange rate devaluation effect.

The Ministry of Finance has calculated the per capita debt based on the assumption of a population of 231.5 million people. If the new population census numbers are considered, then the per person debt burden would be Rs260,387, up by Rs44,462 or 21%.

Pakistan was ruled by the PDM from April 2022 to August 2023—an alliance of about a dozen political parties. The large alliance made economic decision-making difficult, and these parties fought hard for thinning fiscal resources. A large and unsustainable Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) was also the result.

S&P 500 earnings growth seen at 9%

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: With results in from about two-thirds of companies, fourth-quarter 2023 S&P 500, tab earnings growth is now seen at 9.0%, almost double a Jan 1 forecast for 4.7% growth, according to LSEG data on Friday.

About 81% of reports are beating analysts' expectations, compared with an average of 76% in the previous four reporting periods, the data showed.

Traders express concerns on dacoities in markets

MULTAN (APP): Tanzeem-e-Tajraan Pakistan expressed concerns over rising incidents of dacoities in city's busiest markets and demanded of Punjab government to take immediate notice of the poor law and order situation.



First set of Pakistanis among batch of 600 start Overseas Careers post landmark agreements by Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development.

Pakistan fully capable of becoming AI development hub in South Asia

BEIJING (APP): CPInS Lab Director Dr Wu Jun has said that Pakistan, through further cooperation with China, is fully capable of becoming an artificial intelligence (AI) development hub in South Asia and the wider region.

The CPInS Lab has been officially established at Pakistan's National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in the beginning of year 2022 with joint efforts with the Guangzhou Institute of Software Application Technology. At present, various researches are in progress in an orderly manner.

"We have made great

progress in areas such as UAV control systems and AI recognition localization. Our lab is starting the application of smart cities in Pakistan," Dr Wu said in an interview with CEN. "Through this platform, our mature research results could be deeply connected with local projects in Pakistan, providing smart city-related products and intelligent solutions according to local conditions. "We are able to effectively implement core technologies and products such as smart street lights and smart videos to improve local urban governance ability," he added.

LESCO collects over Rs 8m from 446 defaulters

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO), in collaboration with Tehsildars (Recovery), recovered more than Rs 8 million from 446 chronic defaulters in all its five districts - Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara - on the 147th day of its campaign.

A LESCO spokesman told the media here on Sunday that on the 147th day, Chief Engineer O&M (T&G) Zafar Iqbal, with the support of Tehsildar City Mujahid Zia and Tehsildar Shalimar Noreez Humayun, recovered outstanding dues of Rs 1.04 million from 51 defaulters in Northern Circle and Rs 2.43 million

from 51 defaulters in Eastern Circle respectively.

Similarly, LESCO Manager (Material Disposal) Engineer Anwar Watto along with Tehsildar Model Town Rana Ahsan and Tehsildar Cant. Sajjad Qureshi recovered Rs 2.19 million from 63 defaulters in Central Circle, and Rs 0.72 million from 27 defaulters in South Circle; while Manager (Technical) Engineer Muhammad Farooq with the assistance of Tehsildar Nankana Sahib Muhammad Iqbal Rasheed and Tehsildar Sheikhupura Muhammad Aslam Gupar recovered Rs 0.48 million from 44 defaulters in Nankana Circle and Rs 1.06 million from 62 defaulters in Sheikhupura Circle.

Launching New Horizons: 600 Pakistani professionals embark on international careers

ISLAMABAD (Online): In a landmark moment for employment mobility, 600 Pakistani professionals have embarked on international careers, following the successful negotiation of strategic employment agreements with global partners. This departure marks a significant milestone in the initiative led by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, underscoring Pakistan's commitment to enhancing global employment opportunities for its workforce.

The initiative, under the guidance of Mr. Jawad Sohrab Malik, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development, has seen the fruition of agreements signed merely 90 days ago. This effort has opened thousands of job avenues across diverse sectors for Pakistani professionals, reflecting the country's proactive engagement on the international stage.

Departing from major cities including Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, and Peshawar, the

professionals expressed gratitude for the seamless process facilitated by the government. Their departure, witnessed by families and ministry officials, with Mr. Malik personally seeing off Islamabad's contingent, illustrates the government's dedication to supporting its citizens' aspirations. The initial batch of 600 professionals marks just the beginning. This figure is set to rise substantially as global employers continue to conduct interviews and select candidates on a daily basis.

PFC delegation off to USA for Las Vegas Expo

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) delegation Sunday left for Las Vegas, USA, to partake in a three-day expo commencing on February 13 to showcase the diverse range of Pakistan's furniture products and to explore new opportunities in the global market.

The delegation comprises representatives from various segments of the furniture sector including manufacturers, designers, and exporters, all poised to highlight the richness and uniqueness of Pakistani furniture designs.

PFC CEO Mian Kashif Ashfaq told the media that with an aim to bolster the country's furniture industry on an international platform, the delegation was set to exhibit the craftsmanship.

Abu Dhabi Dialogue focuses on labour issues, enhancing women jobs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Faisal Niaz Tirmizi on Sunday while highlighting the role of Abu Dhabi Dialogue said that it was a unique event that brought 17 member states from the Gulf and Asia together with the core objective to address issues pertaining to labour mobility and women's jobs. He said that the platform had a key role in establishing the principle of protecting the rights of migrant workers which was the common responsibility of labour-sending and labour-receiving countries.

The ambassador addressed the 7th Ministerial Consultation of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) here in Abu Dhabi.

Pakistan is the current chair of the ADD, a press release said. The envoy stressed that the technology was changing demands for various skills and they needed to be innovative in meeting the labour demands. There was dire need for diversifying skill sets and engagement aimed at developing skills mobility partnerships.

He also lauded the efforts of ADD for focusing on women in green jobs and said that women could fill critical skills gaps in industries including renewable energy. "Climate change and natural disasters including floods are the gravest challenges that have emphasized the significance of collective efforts to mitigate losses and build back better."



LAHORE: Women visiting stall during Faiz Mela at Al-Hamra.

Agri dept to organize sugarcane production contest among farmers

MULTAN (APP): The Punjab Agriculture Department decided to organize production competitions among sugarcane growers.

According to a spokesman for the Punjab Agriculture Department (Multan), sugarcane is a crucial cash crop, and increasing its production per acre is essential. To achieve this goal, he recommended new production technologies

such as advanced seed varieties, sowing methods, timely sowing, appropriate use of fertilizers, timely irrigation, and steps for effective prevention of diseases.

Under the Punjab government's Agricultural Emergency Program, a five-year national program to increase sugarcane production per acre had been launched since the fiscal year 2019-20.

CM inaugurates FM Radio at P&SHD

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid a visit to the Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department (P&SHD) located at the Birdwood Road Lahore and inaugurated FM Radio 'Sehat Zindagi' by the Health Department. He inspected the studios and various sections of the FM Radio and recorded a message for the FM Radio Sehat Zindagi. He said that the launching of FM Radio was an appreciable step of the Health Department. The people could be provided awareness to save themselves from various diseases and undergo their treatment through the FM Radio. He said that specialists from various medical departments should be invited on Sehat Zindagi radio and people should be provided

awareness with regard to health issues and treatment. Mohsin Naqvi underscored that Sehat Zindagi radio would prove to be a beneficial project in the health sector. He maintained that the standard of radio industry has definitely declined but FM Radio is listened even today. The broadcast of FM Radio Sehat Zindagi can be listened within approximately 50-km range of Lahore. The P&SHD minister deserved appreciation on successful launch of FM Radio, he said. The Health Department could make an effective awareness campaign through the platform of Sehat Zindagi. The health secretary, despite scarce resources, launched an excellent project, he added. The FM Radio has to focus only on programs relating to the

health sector. Naqvi apprised that various hospitals had been upgraded in a short span of time while upgradation of few other hospitals was in their final phases of completion. The hospitals which have not been upgraded yet, will be upgraded in the next phase. The CM said, "We have provided non-available facilities in the hospitals. We will arrange new operation theatres, MRI machines and other facilities in collaboration with the private sector." The CM also inaugurated Human Resource Information and Management System (HRIMS), Health Information and Service Delivery Unit (HISDU). He inaugurated the van especially being prepared for the video link along with the coaster project.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi inaugurates FM Radio "Sehat Zindagi" during his visit to Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department.

Azam Nazeer says: PML-N respects mandate of people

LAHORE (APP): PML-N Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar has said that his party respects the mandate of people as it is important to take along all federating units for the solution of economic and other challenges facing the country. Talking to media at Model Town on Sunday, he said that certain elements wanted to create doubts about election results and a hue and cry was being created in this regard. "A decision of forming a government in

the Centre will be made after conclusion of the ongoing consultation process with political parties and keeping in view the ground realities. A coalition government will be formed in the Centre as no party has a clear cut majority," he added. He said that with the grace of Allah Almighty, the PML-N would form a strong government in Punjab and claimed that at present his party had the number between 150 and 160.

JUI-F demands recounting of votes in Tank

PESHAWAR (APP): The Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) on Sunday demanded recounting of votes in NA-43 Deracum-Tank. The JUI-F workers by the party candidate Maulana Asad Mehmood staged a sit-in on the Tank-Wana Road in front of the Deputy Commissioner's Office. Dawar Khan Kundli, an independent candidate, succeeded in winning the National Assembly seat by defeating Maulana Asad.

Kashmiri diaspora pays tributes to martyred leaders Butt, Afzal Guru in Brussels

MIRPUR (APP): The Kashmiri participants of a gathering in Brussels have paid rich tributes to the great Kashmiri martyrs Muhammad Maqbool Butt and Muhammad Afzal Guru for the supreme sacrifices of their lives for the liberation of the Kashmir from Indian illegal occupation. The event was organized by Kashmir Council Europe (KCEU) at its central secretariat in connection with the martyrdom anniversaries of these two martyrs, according to a message reaching and released to the media here on Sunday.

Zahid, Shiraz Raj, Faisal Rizvi, Imran Saqib, Hafiz Aneeb Rashid, Nadeem Butt, Zahidshah, Chaudhry Nasir, Shazia Aslam, Raja Abdaqayyum, and Meher Nadeem were also among the participants of the gathering. Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and across the world observe the martyrdom anniversary of noted Kashmiri figure Muhammad Afzal Guru on February 9 every year. He was hanged and buried at New Delhi's Tehar prison by the Indian authorities on February 9, 2013. The prominent Kashmiri liberation leader, Muhammad Maqbool Butt, was also hanged and



PESHAWAR: Supporters of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) political party gather to protest as they allege rigging in the general elections, in Peshawar, Pakistan, 11 February 2024.

Law & order situation in Ghotki is deteriorating

By Tanveer Soomro
MIRPUR MATHELO: Deteriorating law and order situation in Ghotki district, abduction, end of tribal conflicts and a protest rally and hunger strike by Jai Sindh Qummi Muhaaz for the recovery of hostages, according to the details, peace and order in Ghotki district. JASQM organized a protest rally and hunger strike at Bhitai Chowk, in which workers and citizens participated in large numbers. On this occasion slogans were raised for the end of tribal conflicts and restoration of law and order in the district. On this occasion, President of Ghotki district of Jaspam, Faqir Ranzan Kalwar, Mir Hassan Lashari, Kamal Mahar, Nazir Ahmed Sheikh, District General Secretary of SUP Akram Mitloo, Jasaf leader Shehryar Khan Marnas, Secretary of Sindhi Literary Sanghat Ayaz Khahawar, Youth League Junaid Jalbani, Waqar Bozdar and others said that the citizens are very worried about the unrest in Ghotki district.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Hajji Gulbar Khan presiding over the meeting regarding the Chitral Express way at CM Secretariat.

Azma Bukhari says: PTI in habit of not accepting its defeat

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League leader Azma Bukhari said on Sunday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was in the habit of not accepting its defeat. Talking to the media here at Model Town, she said, "From where PTI loses it levels allegation of rigging in that constituency." Azma Bukhari said that PTI levelled rigging allegations in 2013 and created chaos in the country. She said, "Every party talks about respect of their mandate but no one talks about the respect of PML-N's mandate." She further said that PML-N was a responsible party and it does not believe in politics of lies and agitation. Election tribunal was an appropriate forum which could be approached by aggrieved candidates.

Election 2024 signifies people unshakable trust in democracy

PESHAWAR (APP): The Election 2024 results have signified the people's unshakable trust in the electoral process as well as the strong parliamentary system and have pinned high expectations on their elected representatives to address their problems besides taking the country forward on the road to progress and development, experts said. "The people of Pakistan delivered the verdict on February 8, 2024, and now it is up to elected representatives, institutions and political leadership to accept their decision imperative to carry the ship of democracy forward and

take the country out of the shabby economic situation," said Professor Dr. A.H. Hilali, ex-Chairman Political Science Department, University of Peshawar while talking to APP on Sunday. The split electoral mandate which was given to mainstream political parties on February 8 is a manifestation of pluralism in the country's politics besides signifying that people of Pakistan wanted resolution of their problems and country's challenges through a national government represented by all political parties, he said. "Pakistan is currently facing enormous challenges

including shabby economy, terrorism, security issues, price hike, inflation and climate change and no political party can address it single-handedly, and that is why people of Pakistan had given split mandate to political parties for resolution of these issues amicably," he said. By taking lessons from the past; he said that political leadership should immediately sit together and form a coalition government as quickly as possible to take the country out of economic challenges by accepting each other's mandate wholeheartedly. Independent

candidates have so far won 93 seats at the National Assembly, 116 in Punjab Assembly, 11 in Sindh Assembly, 83 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly while PML-N's clinched 77 seats at National Assembly, 137 seats in Punjab, 10 in Balochistan and five seats in KP Assembly. PPP has secured third position with 54 NA seats, 10 seats in the Punjab Assembly, 84 in the Sindh Assembly, 11 in the Balochistan Assembly and five in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly till the filing of this report. Likewise, MQM Pakistan will play a key

role in the formation of a coalition government in centre after winning 17 NA seats and 28 seats in Sindh Assembly, he said. Similarly, six seats in the National Assembly, 22 seats in Punjab, 3 in Sindh and 5 seats in Balochistan have been clinched by independent candidates while JUIF bagged four seats in National Assembly, 10 seats in Balochistan and eight seats in KP. PMLQ has bagged three seats in National Assembly and 7 seats in Punjab Assembly while two each NA seats of Istehkam Pakistan Party and Balochistan National Party will also matter in coalition government.

International News

Red Sea crisis not yet having 'significant' impact on global economy - IMF

WASHINGTON (Online): The Houthi rebel attacks on vessels in the Red Sea have had a significant impact on insurance and shipping rates, but have so far not affected global economic growth prospects, Kristalina Georgieva, the managing director of the IMF, said in an interview with the Washington Post this week. "It adds pressure on prices, but not yet to the point that our projections for inflation globally will be corrected upwards," the IMF chief said, adding that "for now, this has implications, but not of the magnitude that would significantly derail growth projec-

tions for the world economy." She noted that in January 2024, traffic through the Suez Canal, a critical maritime trade route connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea, plunged by nearly a half versus last January. However, according to Georgieva, the impact of this drop in traffic is more "localized," and most severe for Egypt, which relies on revenues from the waterway traffic and is currently losing roughly \$100 million a month. Still, Georgieva warned that "surprises" like the Red Sea shipping crisis are making long-term growth prospects for the

world economy "bleak." The IMF recently slightly updated its economic projections, and now expects the global economy to grow by 3.1% this year, but, according to Georgieva, this figure is still "weak by historical standards" if compared to the average growth of 3.8% in the decade before the Covid-19 pandemic. "It is a signal that we are in a more shock-prone world - surprises of this type... mean we have to be in better position to face these repetitive shocks," she warned, suggesting that fiscal authorities around the world should build "buffers" to withstand crises.



Rescuers carry a body bag as search and rescue operations continue in the landslide-hit village of Masara, Maco, Davao de Oro, Philippines.

Hamas official survives Israeli attack in Lebanon

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: A senior Hamas officer survived on Saturday an Israeli assassination attempt in Lebanon, Palestinian and Lebanese security sources said, with officials reporting two killed in the attack south of Beirut. Israeli forces and the Lebanese movement Hezbollah, a Hamas ally, have traded near-daily fire since Oct 7. But the Israel-Lebanon violence has been largely contained to the border area, and Saturday's strike was the second-farthest deadly attack from the frontier in four months of hostilities. Lebanon's state-

run National News Agency (NNA) said an Israeli drone struck a car in the coastal town of Jadra, about 40 kilometres from the border. The Palestinian source said the strike "was a failed attempt to assassinate a senior official in the (Hamas) movement". A Lebanese security official identified the target as Hamas recruitment officer Bassel Saleh. Shortly after the initial strike on Saleh's car, a second Israeli drone hit the same location, killing two people, the official said. Hezbollah said one of its members had died.

Jeff Bezos sells roughly \$2 billion of Amazon shares

NEW YORK (INP): Amazon founder Jeff Bezos sold around 12 million shares of the online retail and cloud services firm for roughly \$2 billion, according to a company filing, soon after laying out a plan to sell his shares over the next year. The sale took place on Wednesday and Thursday, the filings showed. Last week, Amazon said that Bezos would sell up to 50 million shares in the firm. The sale plan, which is subject to certain conditions, was adopted on Nov. 8, 2023, and would be completed by Jan. 31, 2025, according to the company's latest annual report. Jeff Bezos, who stepped down as the company's chief executive and took over as executive chairman in 2021, founded Amazon as a bookseller in 1994. He is currently the world's second richest person with a net worth of \$200 billion, according to Bloomberg Billionaires Index.



People gather near the wreckage of a police vehicle destroyed in Israeli Rafah.

Palestinians brace for Israeli assault on their last refuge in Gaza

Monitoring Desk
GAZA STRIP: Israeli air strikes killed 117 Palestinians during the past 24 hours, the health ministry in Gaza Strip said on Saturday as over a million Palestinians cramping into the border city of Rafah await a full-blown offensive, with nowhere left to run. Unlike in previous Israeli assaults on the besieged territory's cities, when the military ordered civilians to flee south, no other relatively uncaptured area remains in the tiny Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said it had ordered the

military to develop a plan to destroy "four Hamas battalions deployed there", despite repeated warnings from several countries and aid agencies that civilians in large numbers could die. With the latest addition of 117 killings over the past 24 hours, the death toll in the besieged territory has surpassed 28,000 during the past four months. "Any Israeli incursion in Rafah means massacres, means destruction. People are filling every inch of the city and we have nowhere to go," said Rezik Salah, 35, who had to flee his Gaza City home.

Britain's King Charles attends church in first public outing since cancer diagnosis announced

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Britain's King Charles attended church on Sunday in his first public outing since announcing last week he had been diagnosed with cancer and would postpone some engagements to undergo treatment. The king, wearing a brown overcoat and carrying an umbrella, waved as he arrived with his wife, Camilla, at St Mary Magdalene church in Sandringham in eastern England.

At least five dead after soldier opens fire at military base in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (INP): At least five people, including Somali military officials and a United Arab Emirates (UAE) soldier, were killed on Saturday after a soldier opened fire at a military base in the capital Mogadishu, an army officer and hospital staff told reporters. The UAE's defence ministry, however, said three members of its armed forces and one Bahraini officer were killed in a "terrorist act" in Somalia while they were training Somali

armed forces. Two more were injured, the ministry added in a statement. The ministry did not give other details about the attack but said the UAE "continues to coordinate and cooperate with the Somali government in investigating" the act. The gunman, a newly trained Somali soldier, was also shot dead at the Gordon military base managed by the UAE, said the army officer, who gave his name only as Ahmed.

Panama denies ex-president safe passage to Nicaragua

Monitoring Desk
PANAMA CITY: Panama denied its scandal-plagued former president Ricardo Martinelli, who has taken refuge at the Nicaraguan embassy, safe passage out of the country on Friday, following his granting of asylum by Managua. Martinelli, who was president from 2009 to 2014, was found guilty last year of using stolen public money to buy a stake in a publishing house. He also received a \$19 million fine.

Trump comments on Russia, NATO 'appalling and unhinged' - White House

WASHINGTON (Internews): The White House on Saturday rejected comments made by former U.S. President Donald Trump about not protecting NATO allies from a potential Russian invasion as "appalling and unhinged." Trump, appearing to recount a meeting with NATO leaders during a political rally in South Carolina on Saturday, quoted the president of "a big country" that he did not name as asking, "Well sir if we don't pay, and we're attacked by Russia - will you protect us?" "I said: 'You didn't pay? You're delinquent?' He said: 'Yes, let's say that happened. No I would not protect you. In fact I would encourage them to do whatever the hell they want. You gotta pay.'"

White House spokesperson Andrew Bates, asked about Trump's comments, said, "Encouraging invasions of our closest allies by murderous regimes is appalling and unhinged - and it endangers American national security, global stability and our economy at home." The NATO treaty contains a provision that guarantees mutual defense of member states if one is attacked. Trump, frontrunner for the Republican presidential nomination, was a fierce critic of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization when he was president, repeatedly threatening to pull out of the alliance. He cut defense funding to NATO and frequently complained that the United States was paying more than its fair share.

Indonesia presidential frontrunner skips press freedom event

JAKARTA (Internews): Two of Indonesia's three presidential contenders pledged to protect press freedom in the world's third-largest democracy at a weekend event that frontrunner Prabowo Subianto didn't attend. The event came just days ahead of the Feb. 14 poll, and as some Indonesians raise concerns over an erosion of the country's hard-won democratic freedoms. Criticism over political interference has been levelled especially at outgoing President Joko Widodo, who has given tacit support to Prabowo. In the past, incumbents wrapping up their second term as president have remained neutral. On the last day of campaigning, ex-Jakarta governor Anies Baswedan and ex-Central Java governor Ganjar Pranowo signed the National Press Council's written declarations to uphold democracy

and press freedom. It was unclear if Prabowo, represented at the Saturday event by the head of his campaign team, signed the declaration. His campaign did not respond to queries on the matter. Prabowo is projected by some opinion surveys to pip the 50% threshold needed to win the election in a single round. The former special forces commander, who is making his third run at the presidency, has long faced allegations of rights abuses during his time in the military. He denies the accusations, but critics have questioned Prabowo's commitment to protecting human rights. Prabowo's campaign chief, Rosan Roeslani, said at the event: "Freedom of the press is something that we absolutely must maintain and improve... because it is one of the spearheads of our democracy."



ABU DHABI: Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Pakistan's Envoy to the UAE, representing Pakistan, in a group photo with other delegates during the 7th Ministerial Consultation of Abu Dhabi Dialogue. Pakistan is the current Chair of Abu Dhabi Dialogue.

ECP bars ROs to issue final results of 10 NA & 16 PAs seats

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has barred the Returning Officers (ROs) to issue the final results of several National Assembly and provincial assembly seats. A four-member bench headed by chief election commissioner held the hearing of alleged alteration in the election result of NA-48.

"We were ahead with the lead of 50,000 votes as per the Form-45 but the Returning Officer issued the Form-47 and changed our victory into defeat," the counsel of PTI candidate Ali Bukhari argued.

The ECP issued notice to the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party backed candidate Raja Khuram Nawaz and barred the RO to issue the final notification of NA-47 and NA-48.

Meanwhile, ECP also barred the ROs to issue the final results of PK-73, PK-79, PK-80 and PK-82. PTI backed Taimoor Jhagra and Kamran Bangash had challenged the results from PK-79 and PK-82 respectively. Moreover, the results of NA-28, NA-49 Attock, NA-50 Attock, NA-55 Rawalpindi, NA-63 and

Khuhro says: No party alone can't form govt at Centre

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party Sindh President Nisar Khuhro on Sunday said that no political party was in a position to form a government alone at the Centre.

The PPP would try to form the government and if, otherwise, it would prefer to sit on the opposition benches in the Parliament, he said while talking to the media after offering Fataha at the graves of Bhutto family martyrs in Garhi Khudabakhsh Bhutto.

He said it was premature to comment about the government's formation at the Centre as negotiations between the parties in that regard were underway.

He viewed that as per the Constitution, the elected independent Na-

tional Assembly members could not form the government on their own, they would have to join any party for the purpose.

To a question, Khuhro said those defeated in the elections should honour the mandate given to the PPP candidates by the people.

He said the PPP had never did divisive politics and would not do so in future. It would rather take the entire Sindh Assembly members along for the sake of country's development, he added.

He said the PPP had won more assembly seats in the current election than 2018 as its government had served the people, and it would again come up to their expectations.

Pak strongly condemns terrorist attack at military base in Somalia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Sunday strongly condemned yesterday's heinous terrorist attack against the UAE military trainers and under training Somali soldiers at a military base in Mogadishu.

In a statement the Foreign Office Spokesperson said, "We offer our deepest condolences to the governments and the people of the UAE and Bahrain and to the families of victims and pray for the early recovery of all the injured."

"Pakistan rejects terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stands in firm solidarity with the government of Somalia in combating terrorism," she added.

Caretaker govt fulfills its constitutional responsibility by holding polls: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Sunday said there was a procedure for the transfer of power under the constitution and law.

He said the incumbent speakers would call sessions of all the assemblies as soon as the official results of the general election conveyed to the respective assemblies officially.

The caretaker governments would be dissolved when the elected Prime Minister and Chief Ministers would take oaths of their positions, he added.

The Ministry of Interior had responded to the queries about the suspension of mobile service on election day, he said, adding the citizens' lives were of paramount importance for the state.

There were threats to the citizens and polling staff, he said in response to another query. "It was important for us to ensure that there was no hindrance to the people's mobility on the election day."

There had always been disputes over the election process and election date, he said recalling such disputes at the time 2018 and 2013 elections.

Speaking in a TV talk show on private media, the minister said the caretaker government had extended all-out facilitation to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in holding the polls.

The results of the elections were a testament to

the transparency of the elections, he added.

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QUETTA: Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani celebrates with supporters after his victory in the General Election 2024, in Quetta.

PTI alleges Form 47 of 18 NA seats falsely changed by returning officers

ISLAMABAD: The PTI said on Sunday that the Form 47 of 18 National Assembly (NA) seats allegedly won by the party were "falsely changed" by returning officers (RO).

Thursday's general election had seen mobile services suspended and a delay in the announcement of the preliminary results, an exercise which was extended till the weekend.

On Friday, following the victory of candidates with its support, the PTI had claimed it had become the single largest party in the Centre and two provinces and vowed to get back its iconic 'bat' symbol.

In an AI-generated message on Imran Khan's official X account, a message attributed to the erstwhile party chief congratulated supporters on winning the 2024 general elections and securing a two-thirds majority. The message also echoed allegations of rigging, claiming that the party was winning "170

seats" according to Form 45.

Separately, PTI Central Information Secretary Rauf Hasan lamented that when the results started pouring in late on Thursday night and the trend clearly showed that PTI was taking a clear lead in the Centre, KP, and Punjab, the "poll manipulators" first slowed down the process of announcement of results and subsequently halted the process altogether to "tamper with the results."

"PTI candidates were clearly winning with a huge margin in several constituencies, including Islamabad at night, but ironically, their clear victory was converted into defeat in the morning because political engineering was going on behind the scenes," he had said. It should be mentioned that political parties, including PTI, Jamaat-i-Islami and Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan, have also been staging protests against alleged rigging in the polls.

ECP directs re-polling at 53 polling stations in three constituencies on Thursday

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Election Commission of Pakistan has directed a re-polling at 53 polling stations in three constituencies of national and provincial assemblies on Thursday.

According to an ECP spokesman, the commission has withheld the results in NA-88 Khushab, PS-18 Ghotki-I, and PK-90 Kohat-I constituencies due to the wastage of polling materials.

The results of these constituencies will be announced after 15th of this month.

The Commission ordered re-polling in 26 polling stations of NA-88, following the burning of polling material by a crowd at the Returning Officer's office.

The commission has mandated the re-polling of 2 polling stations in Ghotki due to the snatching and destruction by unknown miscreants and 25 polling stations in PK-90 Kohat.

recounting in NA-148.

MULTAN (INP): After the recount in National Assembly constituency NA-148, the number of votes obtained by former PM, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani increased.

Upon the request of Independent candidate Barrister Taimur Malik, the process of verification of Form 45 was carried out in the RO office. Resultantly, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani secured victory with 67,377 votes, while Taimur Malik remained runner-up with 67,047 votes.

Gilani's votes increased after recounting in NA-148

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LAHORE: A delegation of MQM Pakistan meeting with PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and President Shabbaz Sharif.

Newly elected PPP candidate arrested on terrorism charges

KARACHI (INP): Irfan Zafar Leghari, a newly elected Member of the National Assembly for the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), was arrested alongside his uncle Qambar Leghari and fellow PPP member Fayyaz Bhatt in Mehra Tehsil, Sindh. The arrests were made under the Terrorism Act, casting a shadow over their recent electoral success.

According to reports, a case was registered at the Mehra police station accusing Leghari, his uncle, and Bhatt of firing and attacking Pakistani soldiers. The case reportedly involves over 200 individuals, but these three newly elected politicians stand out due to their recent ascent to public office.

This development comes amidst ongoing tensions in the region and

raises questions about the potential involvement of elected officials in acts of violence. While the full details of the case remain under investigation, the arrests have sparked outrage and debate within Pakistan.

The PPP has yet to issue an official statement on the matter. However, the party's leadership is likely under immense pressure to address these serious accusations and clarify their stance on the alleged involvement of their members in such activities.

The arrests also raise concerns about the potential for political influence in legal proceedings, particularly in cases related to terrorism. It is crucial that the investigation is conducted transparently and impartially to ensure justice is served and public trust remains intact.

Sharif's claim to poll victory is 'insult to Pakistanis', says Aleema

ISLAMABAD (INP): Aleema Khan, the sister of former prime minister Imran Khan, has described PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif's claim to victory as an "insult to Pakistanis".

"Nawaz Sharif has been sent back. This is how he does it. He spends four years in London. I think it's a big insult to Pakistanis that we accept people like that. We don't," she said in an interview with Sky News.

She was asked about the PML-N supreme Sharif making claims to victory and his speech that the country does not have the space for a fight.

Sharif was the first politician to come out and claim victory in the election after the PML-N emerged as the single largest party in the poll. He has announced his bid to form a coalition government.

The party has started reaching out to other political parties to make alliances.

"I would be embarrassed as a Pakistani to think that this is acceptable for us. It isn't acceptable to Pakistanis," she went on.

Aleema described her brother as an "alternative" in dealing with the country's challenges.

She was of the view that her brother inspired a "revolution" in Pakistan.

PTI secures triple century in NA, PAs

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has emerged as the sole party to clinch 300 or more seats across the national and provincial assemblies. The latest results reveal that PTI-backed independent candidates have secured 95 seats in the National Assembly, 116 in the Punjab Assembly, 83 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 11 in Sindh.

With a total of 305 seats, PTI has established a commanding presence in both the national and provincial legislative bodies, surpassing all other political contenders. Notably, the Election Commission has announced unofficial official results for 257 seats of the National Assembly.

Independent candidates backed by PTI have emerged as the largest group in the National Assembly, securing 95 seats, outnumbering other independent members by a significant margin.

The runner-up in the current electoral standings is the Muslim League-N, which has garnered 76 seats thus far, followed by the People's Party with 54 seats, and MQM Pakistan with 17 seats. Additionally, Muslim League-Q and JUI-

F have secured 3 seats each, while IPP has clinched 2 seats.

Responding to the released results, PTI spokesperson Rauf Hasan has raised allegations of seat misappropriation, asserting that approximately 60 seats have been unjustly taken away from their party. Promising to reclaim these seats through legal recourse, Hasan emphasized their commitment to presenting compelling evidence before tribunals and potentially the courts if necessary. He highlighted the absence of Form 47 in certain constituencies as a procedural hurdle, vowing to pursue all available legal avenues to secure their rightful share.

Furthermore, Hasan affirmed PTI's determination to uphold their party's legitimacy and safeguard against any attempts at electoral manipulation. He underscored the meticulous selection process for independent candidates, contrasting it with the alleged unethical practices of rival parties. With legal challenges looming, PTI remains resolute in their pursuit of electoral justice and preserving the integrity of democratic processes.



LAHORE: Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul Haq presiding over meeting of central leadership at Mansoor.

Lahore ranks 5th in global air pollution ranking

LAHORE (APP): The provincial metropolis was the 5th most polluted place in the world on Sunday.

According to the details, the weather in the provincial capital again has become polluted, despite cold winds continuing in the early morning in the bright sun, the temperature was recorded at 10 degrees Celsius, while the weather is predicted to remain dry-polluted in the next 24

hours. According to the Meteorological Department, the maximum temperature in the city is likely to go up to 21 degrees, the humidity in the air is 90 percent, the wind is blowing at a speed of 5 km, there is no chance of rain in the next 24 hours. Lahore ranks 5th in the global air pollution ranking, with an overall air quality index of 192.

Meanwhile, on the instructions of Commissioner

Muhammad Ali Randhawa, action continues against violation of anti-smog orders. Various trash burning furnaces have been demolished for using old technology, while others were extinguished. The Punjab Environment Protection Department (EPD) also started various initiatives to control smog, under which smog dissolution "weather generators" have been installed in Lahore.

12-camel convoy loaded with 852kg hashish seized in Gwadar

GWADAR (INP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting an intelligence-based operation recovered 852kg hashish from Pasi city of district Gwadar in Balochistan, reported on Sunday.

According to an ANF spokesperson, the Force was informed that 852 kilograms hashish was being smuggled on 12 camels in Balochistan's Pasi area.

Taking an urgent action, the ANF personnel cordoned off the smugglers and recovered drug worth millions of rupees.

ANF claimed that it was committed to eradicate smuggling from the country.

Last week, ANF while conducting 11 operations recovered over 724 kg drugs and arrested nine accused.

746 grams hashish was recovered from a passenger going to Sharjah from Islamabad Airport. 91 heroin-filled capsules were re-covered from a passenger going to Dubai from Islamabad Airport.

159 grams hashish was recovered from two passengers going to China at Karachi Airport.

Kashmiri pays tribute to Maqbool Butt Shaheed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pasban-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir Uzair Ahmed Ghazali has said that Maqbool Bhatt was a revolutionary leader who has sacrificed his life for Kashmir's independence.

In a statement issued here Sunday on the martyrdom anniversary of Maqbool Bhatt, he said that Maqbool Bhatt's eternal struggle for the freedom was exemplary.

He said that Bhatt was one of the first leaders of freedom under Indian imperialism, who showed the people the way of freedom and struggle from India.

Ghazali said that the Kashmiri people will continue their struggle to get freedom from the illegal occupation of India.

"India could not weaken Kashmir's freedom struggle with executions, fake military encounters, arrests, worst use of laws, and coercive leadership" he reiterated.

"The bigoted and tyrannical Indian judiciary openly expressed its hatred and enmity towards the Kashmiri people."



LORALAI: Activists of Peoples Party (PPP) are holding protest demonstration against alleged rigging in General Election 2024, outside DC Office.

We wouldn't accept change in results of elections: Real mandate of people should be announced, demands Asghar Khan Achakzai

QUETTA: The Provincial President of Awami National Party (ANP) Asghar Khan Achakzai and his other leaders have demanded of the concerned authorities to announce the real mandate of the people given by them to the party and its candidates on February 8.

They were addressing the grand protest sit-in outside Deputy Commissioner Complex in Chaman on Sunday.

The protest was registered against alleged alteration in the results of PB-51 Chaman.

The Leaders of Jamiat Ulema-I-Islam Hafiz Hamdullah and others also joined the protest.

A large number of people participated in the

protest.

They said that the general elections were announced on February 8 after lot of hurdles and then the political parties took part in the election campaign for around one and half month.

They said that the ANP's candidate Asghar Khan Achakzai who was on first number in the election from Chaman was shown as looser while the candidate who was at number four was declared as winner.

They said that the ANP believes in the power of masses, who reposed confidence in it's candidates.

But if anyone wants to prove something otherwise then it would produce dangerous consequences,

the ANP leaders asserted.

They demanded of the authorities to announce the results of elections as per the Form-45, which is already with all the parties.

Otherwise, the whole responsibility would rest with the Election Commission as well as the Returning Officers and District Returning Officers, they asserted.

Asghar Khan and others warned if their demands were not met, then the protest would be intensified further.

Meanwhile, protest was also lodged by ANP at Balali near Quetta the same day.

The ANP's district President Sanauallah Kakar and General Secretary Hamza Kakar addressed the protesters.

PTI backed candidates winning's seats snatched on gunpoint: Babar Awan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Babar Awan addressed the media outside the Election Commission of Pakistan on Sunday stating that worst election rigging happened in the recently held general elections and alleged that number of seats that earlier won PTI backed candidates later snatched on gunpoint.

He stated that not only PTI but the entire world condemned and rejected the election day midnight horrible attempt of snatching PTI willing seats. Awan alleged that PML-N head Nawaz Sharif is attempting to secure victory through hidden hands since February 9, claiming that pre-poll rigging persisted for two years.

Babar Awan emphasized the controversial nature of the elections, labeling them as the most disputed in Pakistan's history.

He challenged the results in Sargodha and Faisalabad, asserting that PTI candidates emerged victorious in these constituencies. Furthermore, Awan called for the immediate release of PTI founder Imran Khan, urging the President to exercise the power of pardon.

Speaking passionately, Awan declared, "Nawaz Sharif gave a victory speech without a vote; we reject the results of February 9. The entire world has denounced these results, but Nawaz Sharif continues to exert force since February 9. We hold the majority with 179 seats, and we refuse to accept the decision of February 9."

Awan criticized the election process, drawing attention to the unorthodox victory speech by Nawaz Sharif. He stated, "One side was eggplant, and the other side was the billion-dollar man."



QUETTA: Peoples Party (PPP) Leader, Ali Madad Jattak celebrates with supporters after his victory in the General Election 2024, in Quetta.