

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Hard to 'move on'

The caretaker prime minister recently asserted that the nation has "accepted" the election results and that we must, therefore, "move on".

As is evident from the slew of petitions being filed against the results, very few seem interested in 'moving on'.

Similarly, the PM's dismissal of concerns over tampered results, based on the simplistic assertion that people "believe that rigging was committed because the mobile service was suspended and results were delayed by 36 hours", is a fallacious framing of a highly serious matter.

Whether or not he feels it to be his "moral duty", the PM should not be defending the ECP and its decidedly poor management of the election exercise.

It also seems irresponsible of him to blame political parties for "failing to enact effective legislation" as the reason why the polls became controversial, instead of letting them take the matter up with the ECP.

The night before the election, he told a foreign interviewer that he "could not guarantee" free and fair polls because the idea was "very subjective".

Such unwarranted self-assurance and disregard for consequence would perhaps be more easily overlooked in a popularly elected leader secure in their office.

However, the people will not be gas-lit into accepting less than what they deserve. The ECP will be held accountable for its failure to organise a smooth transfer of power from one elected government to the next.

It is only its disastrous mismanagement of the election process that is to blame for the growing controversy over rigging, not the media, which simply fulfilled its responsibility by acting as a check on the counting process.



By Qamar Bashir Press Secretary to the President (Rtd); Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) finds itself embroiled in a multifaceted crisis, grappling with significant challenges that threaten its political standing and influence in both the National and Provincial Assemblies.

Faced with this precarious scenario, PTI's ability to retain its elected representatives is severely constrained, leaving the party in a vulnerable position.

In response to these daunting challenges, PTI must tread carefully, adhering scrupulously to the

stipulations of the Elections Act, 2017 (Section 104). This legal framework, while offering a pathway to address grievances, also demands meticulous compliance and strategic acumen from PTI as it seeks to navigate these turbulent waters.

Given this legal context, PTI's options to prevent defections are primarily political rather than legal. They may engage in negotiations or employ party-level strategies to retain their members.

However, the enforceability of such agreements is contingent upon their specific terms and compatibility with Pakistani law. Additionally, PTI could consider filing election petitions if there is substantial evidence of electoral fraud or malpractice associated with the defection.

In the case of reserve seats, PTI has limited options. Since PTI could not file the initial list submis-

sion reflecting the party's eventual electoral strength or diversity, PTI could explore forming alliances or negotiating coalition agreements with other parties.

PTI faces formidable challenges in its quest for justice concerning allegations of extensive electoral rigging that ostensibly transformed its potential victories and defeats. The party contends that it is up against an overwhelming adversary, with accusations that the entire Election Commission, along with various state institutions, is determined to thwart PTI's aspirations for a majority government.

The avenues available to PTI for contesting these allegations and seeking redress are notably constrained under these circumstances. The party's battle is not merely legal but also deeply political, entailing a struggle against a network of powerful forces allegedly aligned in opposition.

diplomatic channels to highlight the perceived injustices. The party's endeavor to overturn the alleged manipulation and secure its rightful place in the political arena is a testament to the turbulent nature of democratic processes in contexts where the impartiality of electoral bodies and state institutions is called into question.

The electoral framework in Pakistan, as delineated by the Elections Act, 2017, is structured to uphold the sanctity and integrity of the voting process through a series of meticulous procedures and checks. From the initial step of voter identification, which leverages both traditional ID cards and advanced technologies like biometric verification, to the methodical issuance and tracking of ballot papers marked with indelible ink, the system is designed to mitigate the risks of impersonation and double voting.

However, the efficacy of this system in delivering justice, particularly in the face of allegations of widespread rigging, hinges on the integrity with which these procedures are implemented. While the law provides a comprehensive blueprint to safeguard electoral integrity, its success ultimately depends on the impartial execution by election officials and the vigilant

oversight by political parties, candidates, and civil society.

The provisions for legal recourse and the establishment of Election Tribunals serve as a critical backstop, offering a pathway to challenge and rectify potential irregularities. This multi-layered preventive approach, combining mechanisms for redress, embodies the legislative intent to create a foolproof electoral system. Yet, the true measure of its effectiveness lies in its application, underscoring the importance of vigilance, transparency, and accountability at every stage of the electoral process.

In the intricate tapestry of Pakistan's political arena, PTI emerges as the dominant force at the Centre, yet finds itself short of achieving a simple majority. This scenario necessitates alliances for governance, but ideological rifts with major parties like PPP and PML(N) sharply limit PTI's options, steering it towards a probable tenure in opposition. This position compels PTI to focus on reclaiming what it alleges are its unfairly lost seats, while navigating the complex dynamics of parliamentary politics.

Despite the challenging circumstances, there's a simmering discourse among PTI leaders about the potential for a coalition with PPP. Such a partnership, though fraught with complexities due to fundamental ideological divergences, holds a glimmer of possibility.

Realizing this alliance would require exceptional diplomatic finesse and a willingness to engage in pragmatic policy compromises. For PTI, this path demands a strategic recalibration to forge a united front with PPP, ensuring that

governance is marked by cohesion and effectiveness despite the underlying ideological disparities.

Conversely, in provinces like Punjab and Sindh, where PTI is not the dominant force, the party faces a more complex situation. In Punjab, where PML(N) leads, and Sindh, predominantly under PPP control, PTI's prospects for forming a government are slim. The political dynamics in these regions might compel PTI to adopt a role in the opposition, focusing on legislative influence and preparing for future electoral opportunities.

Whereas, Balochistan offers a unique challenge where PTI didn't do well compared to any other national party.

Navigating the tumultuous waters of Pakistan's political landscape, PTI stands at a crossroads, facing daunting challenges that test its resilience, strategic acumen, and ideological commitment. The party's struggle to reclaim its allegedly stolen seats, counter the shifting loyalties of its representatives, and grapple with the complexities of forming alliances underlines the intricate balance between political pragmatism and principled governance.

PTI's Challenges: Stolen & reserved seats, and shifting loyalties

Commerce News

Project for enhancing domestic pharmaceutical ingredients production inaugurated

KARACHI (APP): The Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Dr. Nadeem Jan, Wednesday, inaugurated a project of expansion and revamping of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API) manufacturing facility at DrugPharma Chemicals.

API and at completion of the project the production capacity of the DrugPharma would increase in a phased manner from existing 52000 liters to over 105000 liters by end of the year.

opportunities the local pharmaceutical sector. Increase in export of pharmaceutical products will also contribute significantly in ensuring the availability of quality medicines on appropriate prices across the country, he added.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman in a group photo with delegation of overseas Pakistani business community from UK, Europe, Muscat and Oman led by Chaudhry Khalid Mehmood Hanjara and Tafazul Hussain at Governor House.



LAHORE: Chairman of All Pakistan Textile Mills Association Punjab Kamran Arshad addressing a press conference.

EDOTCO Pakistan spearheads sustainable development, community wellbeing in 2023

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: EDOTCO Pakistan, a key player in the telecommunications infrastructure industry marked a significant stride in its dedication to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in 2023.

energy to adjacent households but also set a benchmark in integrating sustainable energy practices with societal upliftment. By tapping into solar energy, EDOTCO Pakistan innovatively utilized its towers not just as telecom infrastructure to connect the unconnected, but also as power sources for neighboring off-grid homes.

continuous pursuit to community welfare, EDOTCO Pakistan also introduced the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) school program, a pioneering step in promoting health and safety awareness. The program was piloted in Islamabad and the Mansehra District, reflecting the company's proactive stance in creating a safer and more health-conscious environment.

Qadir Bakhsh says: Thematic design ideas for new banknote series to be submitted till March 11

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director Finance of the State Bank Pakistan Qadir Bakhsh Wednesday said that SBP was organizing an art competition to develop innovative and thematic design ideas for new banknotes where local artists, designers and art students would submit their final designs by March 11.

government for approval and the process of issuing the new series of banknotes would involve a number of steps, adding, cash prizes would be awarded to top three entries in each of the current seven denominations.

Saqib Ateel says: Early sown cotton yields more production

MULTAN (APP): Secretary Agriculture South Punjab Saqib Ateel said on Wednesday that early sowing of cotton was yielding handsome production and the trend was on the rise in the region.

Sahiwal, Sargodha and Faisalabad divisions. Saqib directed officials to guide farmers on breaking hard soil, triple-gene cultivation, and implementation of the IPM model. He also stressed the importance of prioritizing national interests over personal gains. He highlighted how cotton, being a unique crop, can significantly contribute to the country's economy in a short period.

Overseas Pak business community can play vital role in stabilizing economy

LAHORE (Online): Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that overseas Pakistani business community can play an important role in stabilizing the country's economy by exporting agricultural products to European and other countries.

community delegation from UK, Europe, Muscat and Oman led by Chaudhry Khalid Mehmood Hanjara and Tafazul Hussain at Governor House Lahore. Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that overseas Pakistanis are the asset of the country.

sending remittances to Pakistan. He said that overseas Pakistanis should play a robust role in increasing exports. Governor Punjab further said that Pakistan offers conducive business environment to foreign investors, adding that the government through the Special Investment Facilitation Council has facilitated foreign investors to invest in agriculture and other sectors.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity reported at Port Qasim where four ships namely, Bow Endeavor, Epic Sunter, Lokoja and Stockholm Eagle, carrying Palm oil, LPG, LNG and Coal, berthed at Liquid Terminal, Engro Terminal, Gas Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 926 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Wednesday, gaining 926.92 points, a positive change of 1.51 percent, closing at 62,153.84 points against 61,226.93 points the previous trading day.

Some 342 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 267 of them recorded gains and 56 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 19 remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 33,417,936 shares at Rs 4.47 per share, Oil and Gas Development with 32,231,367 shares at Rs 122.01 per share and Pak Petroleum with 15,505,464 shares at Rs 107.37 per share.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Madad Ali Sindhi chairs a meeting. The meeting was attended by DG FDE and senior representatives from HEC in addition with senior officials from Ministry of Education.

Ashrafi commends institutions for ensuring law, order during elections

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Special Representative on Religious Affairs and Pakistani Diaspora in Middle East and Muslim Countries, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmoed Ashrafi on Wednesday commended the significant role of all institutions, including the Pakistan Army, security agencies, and police for their efforts in ensuring law and order, especially during the recent general elections held on February 8, across the country.

Education body acknowledges support of members, officials

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training, Senator Irfan Siddiqui in a final meeting of the committee before dissolution held Wednesday acknowledged the unwavering support of both committee members and officials from the education ministry and HEC over the past three years.

Minister directs HEC, FDE to accelerate policy formulation process

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi Wednesday directed the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) to accelerate formulation of policy and execution of ongoing projects.



ISLAMABAD: FIA Director Anti Human Smuggling (AHS) Israr Ahmed Khan and SSDO Executive Director Syed Kausar Abbas exchanges the documents after signing the MoU at FIA headquarters.

FIA, SSDO join hands to address human trafficking, migrants smuggling

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to collaborate on various initiatives aimed at raising awareness, building capacity, campaigning, and coordinating stakeholders to address transnational organized crime, with a specific focus on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM) in Pakistan.



LAHORE: Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed talking with persons after visiting Haji Camp, in the Provincial Capital.

People of GB unaware of their constitutional status

ISLAMABAD (INP): Expressing surprise that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) still had no idea about their constitutional status, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa on Wednesday suggested holding a referendum or a plebiscite in GB and Pakistan-administered Kashmir.

The CJP replied that he had no information about that. "All I am asking you whether this is possible."



ISLAMABAD: Labourers busy in construction work of bridge on under construction 10th Avenue during development work in Federal Capital.

In Court of Abdul Baseer Judge Banking Court Hazara Division Abbottabad

MCB Baffa Doraha Shinkhari Road Mansehra Branch (Plaintiff) Versus (1) Shahzad Traders and Fertilizer Dealer, Mohalla Noghazi near Katchery opposite Election Office Safaidia Road Mansehra City through proprietor Muhammad Shahzad S/o Rafique (2) Mr. Rasheed S/o Ameer (3) Shaheed Bibi W/o Mr. Rasheed R/o Tameen P/o Dhodial Tehsil and District Mansehra. (Defendants)

Two missing kids reunited with family

ISLAMABAD (APP): Aabpara police on Wednesday reunited two missing kids including a boy and a girl with their family, a public relations officer said.



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council, Maulana Tahir Mehmoed Ashrafi addressing a press conference at Maaz bin Jabal (Markazi Jamia Masjid) I-8/3.

Four more independent MPAs elect join PML-N

ISLAMABAD (APP): Four more independent members of the Punjab Assembly joined the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) on Wednesday, as independents continue to flock to the party.

PTA escalates efforts to combat illegal SIM activation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Zonal Office Sukhar, in close collaboration with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cyber Crime Circle Wednesday conducted a successful raid against a franchisee involved in the illicit activation of SIMs at Ratodero, district Larkana.

CDA starts cleaning work of Khanpur Dam Canal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Water Supply Directorate of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) is working rapidly on several projects to meet the shortage of water in the city so that the citizens could not face any kind of difficulties during summer.

Excise to facilitate citizens for vehicle registration under ICT doorstep initiative

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a move to streamline services and bring them closer to the community, the Excise department on Wednesday is providing civic facilities to residents of the federal capital to get their vehicle registration as well as access to various essential services: domicile certificate, birth certificate, power of attorney, international driving permit, fuel permit (domestic/commercial), and Motor vehicle registration.

ICP ensuring foolproof security arrangements in High Security Zone

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police is using all available resources to ensure the peace and tranquility within the federal capital, a public relations officer said.

MoU signed for Machike-Thallian-Tarujabba White Oil Pipeline

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a landmark achievement, the signing ceremony of the MoU between the Stakeholders on Consortium Formation (SCF) for the Machike-Thallian-Tarujabba White Oil Pipeline Project was held here on Wednesday.

Pak urges 'strict' implementation of Indus Waters Treaty, an Indo-Pak water-sharing pact

UNITED NATIONS (APP): A top Pakistani diplomat Tuesday called for "strict" implementation of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), a World Bank-negotiated water-distribution agreement between India and Pakistan, as he underscored the need to address the looming water crisis.

The ceremony was witnessed by Minister for Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali, Secretary (Petroleum Division) Momin Agha, and Secretary SIFC Jameel Qureshi, said a news release.

The pipeline project is a testament to the commitment of the Petroleum Division and the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

The Machike-Thallian-Taru Jabba White Oil Pipeline (MTT-WOP) aims to complement the oil pipeline backbone from Karachi to Peshawar apart from achieving the energy-efficient movement of petroleum products.



ISLAMABAD: The signing ceremony of MoU between the Stakeholders on Consortium Formation for Machike-Thallian-Tarujabba White Oil Pipeline Project at SIFC Secretariat, PM Office.