

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Gwadar

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 260, Shaban 22, 1445 AH Monday March 04, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15



GWADAR: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti talking with mediamen

People of Balochistan must not feel alone in difficult time: Chief Minister Bugti assures financial compensation for losses caused to rain affected people in Gwadar

Mir Sarfaraz Bugti forms committee to make assessment of damages in Gwadar; report to be submitted in 20 days

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that hundreds of house have been affected due to torrential rains and floods in Gwadar and adding assured that financial compensation would be paid to those affected.

official visit to Gwadar on Sunday afternoon. He had reached Gwadar especially to review the situation following recent torrential rains in Gwadar.

Mir Sarfaraz Bugti said that he wants to assure the people of Balochistan that must not feel alone in the critical time.

He said that a committee has been constituted to make assessment of the damages caused due to rains and flood in Gwadar. The committee would submit its report within 20 days.

He said that the government of Balochistan are standing with its people in critical time. He said that our first priority is to rescue the affected people, then provide them and their rehabilitation.

He said that Pak army and other institutions took commendable measures for provision of relief to the people of Gwadar.

Omar Ayub demands release of PTI's political detainees

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Omar Ayub called for an impartial inquiry into the events of May 9, and also demanded to release of the PTI's political detainees.

what he characterized as the unconstitutional actions of caretaker governments in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He alleged widespread arrests of PTI supporters and called for accountability under Article 6 of the Constitution, demanding an impartial inquiry into the events.

Addressing the post-PM voting session of the National Assembly, Ayub stressed the need for justice, stating that founding chairman Imran Khan Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi, and other leaders have been unjustly detained as political prisoners.

Expressing dissatisfaction with the coverage of his speech on state television, Ayub slammed the delay in broadcasting, despite the Speaker National Assembly's directive for live transmission.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif hand shakes with PPP Leader Asif Ali Zardari after electing prime minister.

Barrister Gohar elected PTI chairman unopposed for second time

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has released the results of its intra-party election. Raof Hassan, PTI's information secretary, announced the intra-party election results.

Jahandad Khan as vice president of PTI in KP. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa election commissioner Qazi Anwar Advocate announced the victory notification of Ali Amin Gandapur. The panel of Ali Amin Gandapur was elected unopposed, as no other panel submitted nomination papers.

Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has been elected as the chairman of PTI without facing any opposition in the intra-party elections. Omar Ayub secured the central general secretary position, while Dr. Yasmin Rashid clinched the presidency of Punjab unopposed.

Ali Amin Gandapur has been elected as PTI president for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Noorul Haq Qadri was elected as vice president, and Arbab

Becomes 24th PM in rucks-hit session

Mounds of socio-economic challenges exist; but surmountable, says Shehbaz in victory speech

Obtains 201 votes; rival PTI-SIC candidate Omar Ayub Khan bags 92 votes; Shehbaz thanks Nawaz for nominating him for PM slot; Says his party never indulged in political victimisation

ISLAMABAD (AFP/APP): Shehbaz Sharif was voted in on Sunday as Pakistan's prime minister for a second time, presiding over a shaky alliance that has shut out followers of jailed opposition leader Imran Khan.

legations of rigging. "No one has won a majority. It is a split mandate. And it is the democratic way that if it's a split mandate, then the like-minded parties may form a coalition government," Sharif told parliament, referring to the February 8 election.

Party (PPP), as well as several smaller factions, to keep Khan's candidates out. In return, the PPP—a dynastic party ruled by the family of slain ex-premier Benazir Bhutto—has been promised the office of president for Bhutto's widow, Asif Ali Zardari.

his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party was targeted by a crackdown of arrests and censorship. PTI candidates were forced to run as independents but nonetheless secured more seats than any other party.

candidate of choice for MPs loyal to Imran Khan, gaining 92 votes. "They put our leaders in jail, took our election symbol, rigged the elections, but we kept standing, and we will stand our ground," Omar Ayub Khan told parliament. Sharif, 72, first served as prime minister in 2022 at the head of a strikingly similar alliance which ousted Imran Khan, a former cricket star.

Newly sworn-in lawmakers in Pakistan's National Assembly elected Sharif with 201 votes, more than three weeks after national elections marred by widespread al-

The Sharif family's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party allied with their historic rivals the Pakistan Peoples

Ex-prime minister Khan was jailed in the run-up to the election and barred from running, while

Omar Ayub Khan stood against Sharif as the

Visits Gwadar's flood-hit areas Corps Commander vows timely relief efforts

Independent Report GWADAR: In a proactive response to the recent floods wreaking havoc in Gwadar district, Lieutenant General Rahat Naseem - Corps Commander of Balochistan Corps - undertook a visit to the affected areas to assess the situation firsthand and extend support to the flood victims.

affected populace. Furthermore, he gained insights into the immediate measures implemented by relief teams to alleviate the suffering of those affected by the natural calamity.

His visit aimed at personally assessing the situation and extending support to the distressed flood victims. Accompanied by the General Officer Commanding (GOC) Gwadar Division, the Corps Commander engaged in crucial discussions with local authorities and community leaders to comprehend the challenges confronting the

Interacting with social and regional elders during his visit, Lieutenant General Rahat Naseem reiterated the unwavering commitment of the Pakistan Army to ensure the prompt delivery of relief and rehabilitation efforts in collaboration with civil administration and pertinent institutions. Emphasizing continuity in relief operations until normalcy is restored, the Corps Commander assured the affected communities of the Pakistan Army's steadfast support.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif address in the National Assembly after electing Prime Minister.

13 nomination papers submitted for 3 seats of Senate from Balochistan

Abdul Quddus Bizenjo, Kohda Babar, Mir Hair Biyar, Agha Shakeel Durrani, Mobin Khilji among others file candidatures for Senate

Independent Report

QUETTA: In all 13 nomination papers were submitted for three vacant seats of Senate from Balochistan province here in Quetta. Those who submitted papers were included: Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo, Agha Shakeel Durrani and Mir Hair Biyar from Pakistan Peoples Party, Mobin Khilji and Kohda Babar from Balochistan Awami Party, Mir Dostain Domki and Mir Khan Kurd of Pakistan Muslim League-N,

and 5. The last date of filing papers against acceptance and rejection of the papers is March 7. The revised list of candidates would be published on March 9. The polling for the vacant seats of Senate would be held on March 14. It may be mentioned here that the seats of Senate had fallen vacant due to resignation of Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, Prince Agha Ahmed Umar Ahmedzai.

Akhtar Mengal boycotts PM election

ISLAMABAD (INP): Balochistan National Party-Mengal's Akhtar Mengal boycotted the election for the prime minister. Despite insistence from PTI's Amir Dogar and PPP's Yousuf Raza Gilani, the BNP chief remained seated in the opposition benches and refused to cast a vote.



JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman addressing a press conference in Karachi.

It must be noted that the JUI-F has also boycotted the election on allegations of rigging in the February 8 general elections.

Balochistan rains killed five, damaged 237 houses: PDMA

QUETTA (INP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has said that the recent rains in Balochistan claimed five lives besides damaging 237 houses across province. According to PDMA report, five people including three children and a woman were killed in separate rain related incidents in Barkhan and Kharan while another was injured.

Elections 2024 shattered record of rigging set in 2018: Fazal

KARACHI (INP): Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the head of Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam (JUI-F), lambasted the recently concluded 2024 elections in Pakistan, accusing them of surpassing the previous record of rigging set during the 2018 polls. Fazl made these assertions during a press conference in Karachi, where he claimed that mounting international pressure forced Pakistan's military establishment to yield, thus influencing the election outcome.

"The establishment's coercion will indeed be labelled as coercion. The establishment has divided its own ranks, accommodating some at one place and others elsewhere," he stated, addressing the alleged interference in the electoral process. Expressing dismay over the dwindling significance of the Parliament, Fazl remarked, "The Parliament, where we see a mockery of democracy, is no longer representative of the people. The Parliament,

Chinese President, PM congratulate newly-elected PM Shehbaz

BEIJING (APP): Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang on Sunday congratulated Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on his election as Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Presidential elections: Parliament's joint session summoned on March 9

ISLAMABAD (INP): The joint session of Parliament summoned on March 9 for the presidential elections with National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq in chair.

According to details, the joint session was summoned by NA Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Saturday, March 9 at 10:00 am. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) earlier announced the schedule for the presidential elections. According to the ECP schedule, polling for the presidential election will be held on March 9 from 10 am to 4 pm.

The electoral college for indirect presidential election comprises of the members of the Senate, National Assembly and four provincial assemblies. In the election, the Senate and National Assembly's members votes are counted as single votes. The votes cast by the provincial assembly legislators are adjusted so as to give each province an equal share in the election. Therefore, each provincial assembly has 65 votes equivalent to the strength of Balochistan Assembly, which has minimum number of members.

Quetta records coldest night of current winter season

QUETTA (INP): Quetta, Balochistan's capital, experienced its coldest night of the ongoing winter season, recording a temperature drop to -5 degrees Celsius on Sunday, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said.

Water in pipelines and roads started to freeze as a cold breeze was blowing across Quetta. The majority of Balochistan province's areas were under the grip of a cold wave. Meanwhile, the sky is now clear in Quetta and adjoining areas after heavy rainfall. The weather on Saturday remained rainy with thunderstorms, and heavy snowfall across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad, northern Punjab, and Balochistan.



KARACHI: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti offering Fateha at Mazar-e-Quaid

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Little respite

Is inflation on its way out? The Consumer Price Index showed that inflation dropped to 23.1pc in February from 28.3pc the previous month, and 31.5pc a year ago, raising hopes. It is the lowest CPI reading recorded by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics in the last 20 months.

Nevertheless, the drop in inflation seems to have encouraged some — such as a former finance minister, who called the reduction in the inflation rate “wonderful news” — to renew calls for early rate cuts to “reduce government deficit and also provide a much-needed respite to industry and consumers”.

India's fault lines

Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

Pakistan is passing through a challenging time. A divisive and polarising politics, economic uncertainties, and the continuing threat of violent extremism are some of the fault lines that impede the country's path to stability.

India, on the other hand, seems to be politically stable and economically well-off. However, if one were to scratch this veneer of stability, we could see serious fissures appearing in Indian society.

The first fault line is the growing discrimination against minorities, particularly Indian Muslims. Prof Christophe Jaffrelot at the Centre for International Studies and Research in Paris, recently carried out an extensive study on the plight of Indian Muslims under the Hindutva regime.

Under a study supported by The Gates Foundation in 2017, it was revealed that of all those employed in the sanitation and cleaning work in India, 90pc belong to Dalit sub-castes.

Indian Muslims are worried about saffron vigilante groups and the rising intolerance towards Muslim icons. The attempt to convert

Indian-occupied Kashmir from a Muslim-majority area into a Muslim-minority area is also part of the wider discrimination against Muslims. Clearly, India is speeding away from a secular, pluralistic democracy towards a Hindu majoritarian raj.

The second fault line is the continuing discrimination against the Dalits, the low-caste Hindus; the system appears to favour the Brahmins, the upper-caste Hindus. The caste system has been an integral element of Indian society over millennia.

The third noticeable fault line is the growing divide between north and south India. The major grievance for the southern states (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh) is that they contribute more to the Union budget than they receive.

Since 2014, the Modi regime has been steering India towards the path of a Hindu majoritarian nation, where space for minorities including Muslims and Christians is shrinking.

Since 2014, the Modi regime has been steering India towards the path of a Hindu majoritarian nation, where space for minorities including Muslims and Christians is shrinking.

Maryam-bashing

Muna Khan

When I was teaching at a journalism programme in Karachi a few years ago, former editor of The News, and columnist Ghazi Salahuddin would give a lecture on Malala Yousafzai where he would tell students to speak openly.

I digress. The point Ghazi sahib was making, as he told me after that lecture, was that if you want to gauge people's politics quickly, you should ask them about Malala.

I believe Maryam Nawaz is the new bashing-kid on the block. Of course, she's not a kid but I've rarely seen people express that kind of rage and hatred for another dynasty child — Pakistan has plenty across all parties.

I understand Maryam's unfavourability factor, if there's such a thing, is rooted in misogyny which women leaders the world over experience.

The Reykjavik Index, which studies how people

feel about women leadership, found in 2021 low levels of confidence for women leaders; the higher percentages were in G7 countries. I was surprised to read that younger men “were especially unlikely to endorse women leaders”, but then I reminded myself of some classroom discussions I've had about Aurat March...

This finding was particularly eye-opening: “Some people who don't consider the m-selves sexist believe that because the world is sexist, women leaders are likely to be weaker.”

Just a year later, the index found trust in women leadership is falling though their numbers in high-ranking positions are on the rise. Analysts urged countries to “fix the trust gap” if they want to eradicate gender bias.

The more Maryam's profile rose since 2013, the more scorn she received. I remember how furious social media users were when The New York Times featured her as one of the 11 powerful women “we met in the world” in 2017.

I am not here to convince you about Maryam's abilities or lack of them — I have serious reservations — but I am curious what our attitude towards her says about us. We are a highly polarised society, with terrible social indicators and a very poor scorecard on how women are treated in this country.

I certainly do not believe she is above scrutiny.

By all means critique the video of her helping a female official adjust her dupatta, but to liken it to an assault — as some “progressives” have done on X — is preposterous. Especially compared to the muted response to Imran Khan telling a jalsa in 2022 that Maryam talks about him so much it may make her husband jealous.

Men get away with so much, including saying PML-N's leader Sobia Sha-hid in the KP Assembly was asking for it when she was met with verbal abuse, a shoe thrown at her and a lota earlier this week. The what-aboutery always makes the woman the “bad guy”.

Women politicians all over the world are held to different standards. Their likeability is put under the microscope whereas it doesn't matter what their counterparts are like. Men's aggressiveness is a given but women doing something unexpected is well ... unacceptable.

It is this double standard rooted in deep gender bias, often unconscious, that needs to change.

I believe the press should pound Mary-am, for policies, inaction, siding with corruptors over the public, and any favouritism shown in awarding contracts, for ex-a-m-ple. I have heard men (always men) on TV advise her to dress down to be taken seriously.

Every election in this country has been tainted and that could include Maryam's. However, she has won votes and needs to win people's confidence. For that, she needs to be given a chance, not to be confused with a free pass.

Commerce News

GECF Summit concludes with pledge to natural gas for secure, sustainable energy future

ALGIERS, Algeria (APP): The 7th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) concluded in Algiers with the issuance of the “Algiers Declaration,” reaffirming the member countries' commitment to promoting natural gas as a key component of a secure and sustainable energy future.

cooperation platform and highlighted the determination of its members to strengthen its role and contribution to global energy security.

Iranian President Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi and the Russian Minister for Energy addressed the summit, championing cooperation and innovation in the energy sector. President Raisi showcased Iran's vast potential in the gas industry, extending invitations to international investors and urging collaboration among member countries to maximize utilization of resources.

The “Algiers Declaration” highlighted several key points, including the sovereign rights of member countries over their natural gas resources, efficient management of natural gas resources to promote sustainable development, and cooperation to ensure balanced and reliable natural gas markets.

Member countries expressed their commitment to innovation-led practices and collaboration in enhancing the role of natural gas in improving energy access and reducing energy poverty. They also welcomed the accession of new members, reaffirming the forum's commitment to fostering energy cooperation and dialogue on a global scale.



GILGIT: A vendor busy in compiling the parts of traditional fire stove at his workplace.

Sheikhupura Transformer Reclamation Workshop inaugurated

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) Chief Executive Officer Engineer Shahid Haider Sunday inaugurated a transformer reclamation workshop in Sheikhupura after Kasur to ensure uninterrupted supply of electricity to consumers and speed up the repair process of transformers.

lot of time and money. He asserted that uninterrupted supply of electricity to consumers and prompt resolution of complaints is the motto of LESCO, for which all available energies would be utilized.

On this occasion, Engineer Shahid Haider said that these workshops would save a

The CEO said, “We have also been equipping the company with modern facilities in the past, and this tradition will be continued in the future as well.”



LAHORE: People visiting stalls during Jashan-e-Baharan Festival at Jilani Park organized by PHA.

China's top political advisory body BRI cooperation provides huge opportunities for partner countries

BEIJING (APP): The high-quality Belt and Road cooperation provides huge opportunities for partner countries to achieve common development and improve people's well-being. Spokesperson for the second session of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Liu

Jieyi said here on Sunday. The last decade of practice has fully demonstrated that building a community with a shared future for mankind conforms to the trend of human development and progress and serves the common interests of peoples of all countries. Liu made the remarks during a press conference held by the CPPCC National Committee,

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

Mobile companies cheating masses, evading taxes: PEW

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), Brigadier (retd) Aslam Khan has said that some telecom companies were cheating consumers by employing different tactics. At the same time, the government was being defrauded by evading taxes to the tune of billions of rupees.

taxes from consumers than they transfer to the government, and there seems to be no end to this practice as authorities prefer to go soft on the telecom sector for obvious reasons.

Mobile phone operators also overcharge subscribers, who end up paying more money for less talk time, and other tactics were also employed to fleece consumers, he said, adding that one reason for this continued trend of economic crime was the lack of capacity of the tax collectors to monitor the cellular companies.

In a statement issued on Sunday, he said, “The masses are tired of inflation, and the country is on the verge of bankruptcy. Still, some greedy corporations are not ready to fulfill their commitments and discharge national obligations by paying due taxes.” Brigadier (retd) Aslam Khan said that some mobile phone operators deduct more

The Chairman PEW said that there were some underdeveloped areas in the country where some taxes are not applicable.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying and selling caps to attract the customers at his roadside setup.

Olive cultivation to bring about economic revolution, sustainable growth: experts

LAHORE (APP): Experts on Sunday said that the government, by bringing an available potential area of about 10 million acres under olive cultivation in Punjab, is bringing about a silent revolution for the sustainable development growth of the country.

With a considerable increase in the area under potential cultivation, Pakistan is passing through a silent revolution of olive oil production, they opined. Talking to APP, they said that in all parts of the country, particularly the Pothohar region, Balochistan, Khyber-

Pakhtunkhwa and erstwhile Fata, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan areas, olive cultivation fertility is most suitable and have natural growthable environment while providing fruitful conditions. Given its potential for growing olive plantations, Pothohar has been termed an ‘olive valley’ where over 1.2 million olive plants are being grown on an area of 11,125 acres, engaging about 1,300 farmers, said Dr. Muhammad Tariq, national project director for the promotion of olive

cultivation. More than half the plants have started bearing fruit since 2019-20's cropping period, producing 5,118 tonnes of olive oil. By the fall of 2024, the value of olive production will increase to Rs1.727 billion, he said.

In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, over a million olive plants are being grown on an area of 9,391 acres engaging 768 farmers. The production of olive oil is estimated to reach the value of Rs1.458bn in 2024, Dr Tariq informed. Likewise, in Balochistan, over half a

million plants are being grown over an area of over 9,391 acres and it is expected that by closing December, 2024, the value of oil will be Rs1.160bn.

In Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) and AJK, over 50,000 plants are being grown on an area of 455 acres of land engaging 228 farmers. The value of oil by 2024 is expected to be Rs71 million, he told.

To a query, he said that in 2024, the country will have about 3m fruit-bearing olive plants producing roughly 1,415 tonnes of olive oil with an estimated value of Rs4.416bn. The climate change ministry also plans to plant 1m olive plants.

