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

SLAMABAD

Imran Khan.

nakers in Pakistan's Na-

tional Assembly elected

Sharif with 201 votes,

more than three weeks af-

ter national elections

**Independent Report** 

GWADAR: In a proactive

General Rahat Naseem -

firsthand and extend sup-

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GWADAR: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti talking

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

**Independent Report** 

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz 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.

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.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the media

Sunday afternoon.

He had reached Gwadar especially to review the situation following recent torrential rains in Gwadar.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said must not feel alone in the critical time

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

The Chief Minister

official visit to Gwadar on continued to drain out the rain water and restore rou-

that he wants to assure the highly appreciative of the people of Balochistan that role played by the Pak Management Authority, He said that the govern- and other institutions for

> and other institutions took commendable measures for provision of relief to the people of Gwadar.

(AFP/ legations of rigging.

APP): Shehbaz Sharif was "No one has won a majority. It is a split manvoted in on Sunday as date. And it is the demo-Pakistan's prime minister for a second time, presidcratic way that if it's a split ing over a shaky alliance mandate, then the likethat has shut out followers minded parties may form a coalition government," of jailed opposition leader Sharif told parliament, referring to the February 8 Newly sworn-in law-

The Sharif family's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party allied with their historic rimarred by widespread al- vals the Pakistan Peoples

keep Khan's candidates

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

> 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 widower, Asif Ali

Ex-prime minister Khan was jailed in the runup to the election and

several smaller factions, to Insaf (PTI) party was tar- MPs loyal to Imran Khan, geted by a crackdown of arrests and censorship.

PTI candidates were forced to run as independents but nonetheless secured more seats than any other party. However, they fell

short of the figures needed to form a government, paving the way for Sharif's return.

Omar Ayub Khan Imran Khan, a former barred from running, while stood against Sharif as the cricket star.

Party (PPP), as well as his Pakistan Tehreek-e- candidate of choice for

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



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

Jamiat Ulema-E-Islam.

Besides them, the in-

dependent candidates

Kashif Aziz and Mir Dan-

ish Langavo also submit-

ted their nomination pa-

pers were submitted to the

Provincial Election Com-

missioner Muhammad

vincial Election Commis-

Farid Afridi.

The nomination pa-

According to the Pro-

Independent Report Abdul Shakoor Ghaibzai and 5.

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 Kuhda Babar from Balochistan Awami Party, Mir Dostain Domki and Mir Khan Kurd of Pa-

kistan Muslim League-N, Akhtar Mengal **bovcotts PM** election

ISLAMABAD (INP) Balochistan National Party-Mengal's Akhtar Mengal boycotted the election for the prime minister.

of the Senate, National Assembly and four provincial Despite insistence assemblies. In the election, from PTI's Amir Dogar and the Senate and National PPP's Yousuf Raza Gilani, Assembly's members votes the BNP chief remained are counted as single votes. seated in the opposition The votes cast by the benches and refused to cast provincial assembly legisa vote. lators are adjusted so as to

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 Pro vincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has said that the recent rains in Balochistan claimed five lives besides damaging 23° houses across province.

According to PDMA report, five people including three children and a woman were killed in sepa rate rain related incidents in Barkhan and Kharan while another was injured. The rains also com

pletely demolished 82 houses while 155 houses were partially damaged, the report added. The PDMA further

said that walls of 25 houses collapsed, four highways and a bridge was damaged due to rain. PDMA, district admin-

istration, Pakistan Army and concerned depart ments were engaged in rescue operations in rain hit areas of Balochistan. The affectees were being provided tents, blankets and other daily necessary

The last date of filing and Agha Mehmood of 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. sioner, scrutiny of papers Prince Agha Ahmed Umar



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

## **Elections 2024 shattered** record of rigging set **in 2018: Fazal**

KARACHI 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 vield, 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 pro-

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,

(INP): which we witness, will have some individuals calling themselves rulers. They may govern bodies but cannot govern the hearts of the nation.

Despite his inclination to support Mahmood Achakzai, the candidate backed by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-supported Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), Fazl indicated that his party's stance compels them to act otherwise.

He dismissed the prospect of forming alliances with allied parties, citing an inadequate environment for a grand alliance. "We will be where the opposition benches are. We will go to Parliament and protest," he asserted. JUI-F chief pledged to engage with provincial councils and workers in Karachi to devise a nationwide strategy for change. "Assemblies have been bought with money, and if governments are formed through such means, we re-

main uninvolved. We do not accept this robbery, and those involved in this are criminals," he declared.

## persons soon after hi visit mentioned that work is **Omar Ayub demands release** of PTI's political detainees

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pa- what he characterized as kistan Tehreek-e-Insaf the unconstitutional ac-(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.

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 pris-

He also urged for adequate facilities to be extended to Bushra Bibi. PTI not responsible for

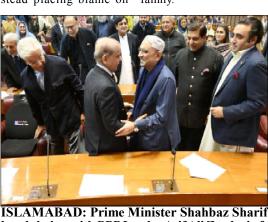
May 9 mayhem Ayub vehemently dethe May 9 incidents, instead placing blame on

tions 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.

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

Ayub continued his address by recounting instances of alleged persecution faced by PTI members, including repeated police nied PTI's involvement in raids on his residence and harassment of his



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. Raoof Hassan, PTI's information secretary, announced the intra-party election results.

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 presifor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Noorul Haq Qadri was elected as vice president, and Arbab

Jahandad Khan as vice president of PTI in KP.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa election commissioner Oazi Anwar Advocate announced the victory notification of Ali Amin Gandapur. The panel of Ali Amin Gandapur was elected unopposed, as no other panel submitted nomina-

tion papers. Ali Asghar Khan and Irfan Saleem won the roles of general secretary and additional general secretary. respectively. On the other hand, Fakhar Zaman won the position of deputy gen-

eral secretary Danival Khan Jadoon, Khaista Mehmood, and Taimoor Khalid have been elected as joint secretaries.

army, Provincial Disaster

He said that the dewatering process would be completed in Gwadar by

tine life in the port city.

Monday (today). He was ment of Balochistan are standing with its people in rescuing the affected people and providing them the re-

He said that Pak army

Corps Commander of Balochistan Corps - undertook a visit to the affected areas to assess the situation

Visits Gawadar's flood-hit areas Corps Commander vows

timely relief efforts

port to the flood victims. 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

affected populace. Furthermore, he gained insights into the immediate response to the recent measures implemented by floods wreaking havoc in Gwadar district, Lieutenant relief teams to alleviate the suffering of those affected by the natural calamity.

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



GWADAR: Corps Commander Balochistan Lt. General Rahat Naseem meeting with affectees during his visit to flood affected areas of Gwadar

ISLAMABAD (INP): The

joint session of Parliament

summoned on March 9 for

the presidential elections

with National Assembly

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq in chair.

the joint session was sum-

moned by NA Speaker

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Sat-

urday, March 9 at 10:00 am.

sion of Pakistan (ECP) ear-

lier announced the schedule

for the presidential elections

schedule, polling for the

presidential election will be

held on March 9 from 10 am

According to details,

The Election Commis-

According to the ECP

## 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 Paki-

President Xi Jinping expressed the confidence that under the leadership Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Pakistan's new government, and under the united efforts of all sectors of Pakistan, Pakistan would be able to make new and greater achievements in the cause of national development and progress, according to the state-run news

agency Xinhua. He stressed that China and Pakistan should continue their traditional friendship.

Chinese Premier La Qiang of the State Council also sent a congratulatory message to the newly-elected Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz President Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was elected as the prime minister for the second time after bagging 201 votes in the National Assembly.

## Jam Kamal takes oath

SLAMABAD (APP) The Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Sunday administered the oath to Jamal Kamal Khan, the newly elected member of the National Assembly Jam Kamal Khan was

elected as a member of the

National Assembly from

**Quetta records coldest night** of current winter season

Presidential elections:

Parliament's joint session

summoned on March 9

OUETTA (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 Ouetta. The major-

of Balochistan ity 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,

The electoral college for

indirect presidential election

comprises of the members

give each province an equal

share in the election. There-

fore, each provincial assem-

bly has 65 votes equivalent

Balochistan Assembly,

which has minimum num-

ber of members.

the strength of



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

# Daily soice of Masse 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. Inflation peaked at 38pc last May. The PBS did not observe a month-over-month change in prices last month, reporting a broad-based decrease in the pace of price rise on account of falling food inflation, coupled with the high base effect of the last fiscal. The rates decreased in both the urban and rural areas, with core inflation, or non-food and non-energy inflation, also down from their higher levels. And yet, there will be little respite for households anytime soon, as overall price levels and the cost of living remain elevated.

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". The calls for rate cuts are based on the assumption that the pace of increase in the prices of goods and services will slow down further over the next several months due to a high base effect, falling demand, easing of supply constraints and plunging global commodity rates. It means that if the trend witnessed last month holds, we should expect the State Bank to start monetary easing soon. However, the inflation outlook still faces risks that include a further increase in domestic energy prices, food supply shocks and an upswing in international commodity prices due to the geopolitics of the Middle East. Hence, inflation expectations remain elevated despite recent improvements. On top of that, consumers must brace themselves for Ramazan inflation. Therefore, it might be too early to expect the State Bank to start to decrease borrowing costs. A rate cut without a consistent drop in inflation might also not sit well with the IMF whose support is crucial for stabilising Pakistan's external sector. We are also not aware if the IMF agrees to a new extended programme — and how quickly. What is certain is that any new programme will be accompanied by more stringent conditions. A report in a local paper claims that the IMF has advised the FBR to significantly increase the income tax burden for both salaried and non-salaried segments and tax the contribution of private employers to their workers' pension fund, thus enabling the FBR to collect additional revenue. The proposal does not take into account the burden of inflation on the salaried classes. If implemented, this could prove to be the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back.

## 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. hand, seems to be politiing in Indian society. As the country continues lines have emerged in Indeepened in the past one decade under BJP rule.

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 plight of Indian Muslims gime. Based on ethnographic studies and interviews of victims, Jaffrelot found that the representation of Musvice, police or government jobs was far lower than the proportion of their numbers (14.5 per cent of India's total population). Muslim representation has drastically come down in the According to a CNN national and state assemblies under BJP rule. The number of Muslim graduates is declining, particularly in northern India. Sadly, Indian Muslims were only in a majority in jails.

worried about saffron wards Muslim icons. Ambedkar, who despite societal distortions. The attempt to convert facing discrimination in Courtesy Dawn

ity into a Muslim-minor- the Indian constitution' ity area is also part of the He strongly advocated wider discrimination for abolishing the caste against Clearly, India is speeding away from a secular, pluralistic democracy to-Hindu majoritarian raj.

The second fault line is the continuing dis-India, on the other crimination against the Dalits, the low-caste cally stable and eco- Hindus; the system apnomically well-off. How- pears to favour the Brahever, if one were to mins, the upper-caste scratch this veneer of Hindus. The caste sysstability, we could see tem has been an integral serious fissures appear- element of Indian society over millennia. It was officially abolished in 1951, its march towards be- but the social hierarchy coming a Hindu state continues to dominate driven by its Hindutva Indian society. The Brahideology, multiple fault mins sit atop this hierarchy, which includes dian society, which have Kshatriyas (warriors), Vaishyas (merchants), and Shudras who are supposed to labourers, and are some-

'untouchables', 'Dalits'. The scheduled castes (Dalits) or scheduled tribes (Adivasis), which together constitute over 25pc of India's extensive study on the population, endure systemic social isolation and under the Hindutva re- marginalisation, live in slums, and are obliged to

times called 'achhut',

do menial jobs. Under a study supported by The Gates Foundation in 2017, it was lims in India's civil ser- revealed that of all those employed in the sanitation and cleaning work in India, 90pc belong to Dalit sub-castes. In most cases, they are underpaid, and not provided essential protective gear. study carried out in 2020, Dalits were the most vulnerable victims of the Covid-19 pandemic because of their susceptibility to viruses, as they had little to no access to education and health ser-Indian Muslims are vices and were at the bottom of the economic hivigilante groups and the erarchy. There are excep-

Indian-occupied Kash- early life as a Dalit, rose mir from a Muslim-major- to become the 'father of Muslims. system, and later converted to Buddhism, ostensibly to be part of a more egalitarian religion. Rajesh Saraiya, the richest Dalit, runs a successful steel business. But these are exceptions.

> 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, whereas the northern states, particularly UP and Bihar, receive far higher returns. In many respects, the southern states have excelled over northern India. These states have a greater degree of religious harmony, are economically doing better, excel in providing IT services, and enjoy lower population growth, which over time has reduced their representation in the Lok Sabha. There is emerging chatter about the possibility of these states forming a country of their own, which recently evoked a heated debate in the

Rajya Sabha. Since 2014, the Modi regime has been steering India towards the path of a Hindu majoritarian nation, where space mino-rities including Muslims and Christians is shrinking, while lowcaste Hindus continue to suffer. The answer to whether they can ever reverse these discriminations is not yet apparent. However, it is clear that these fault lines could potentially create considerable commotion within Indian society if positive action is not rising intolerance to- tions, such as the late Dr taken to address these

# 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 once witnessed students' disdain for Malala but Ghazi sahib handled it with such poise, never making them feel they were being challenged for their views. Students repeated the usual claims 'what has Malala done for Pakistan'. (As an aside, I believe an update of that disdain should ask what has Malala done for Palestine because her silence has been especially disap-

pointing.) 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. It has served me well — seemwell-meaning people, who aren't anti-West, or women, or rightwing, would say the Although the paper strangest things about

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. Maryam is treated like a pariah. She is also disparaged privately by party members who feel she doesn't deserve to be where she is. She hasn't ranked high in popularity polls before the elections, though to be fair, it's hard to compete with Imran Khan.

Maryam's unfavourablity factor, if there's such a thing, is rooted in misogyny which women leaders the world over ex-

The Reykjavik Index,

ship, 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 when The New York Times 11 powerful women "we met in the world" in 2017. rep-o--rted on corruption charges against her fa-m-ily, social media users were not convin-ced she earned her place as her father's right-hand person. Male scions are not carefully examined.

I am not here to convince you of them — I have serious reservations — but I am curious what our attitude towards her says about We are a highly polarised society, with terrible social indicators and a very poor scorecard on how women are treated in this country. I don't believe women leaders automatically means an improvement in women's rights — looking at you, war-mongering Hillary we wait before giving Maryam an F?

I certainly do not bewhich studies how people lieve she is above scru- Courtesy Dawn

feel about women leader- tiny. 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 jeal-

Men get away with so much, incl-u-ding say-ing PML-N's leader Sobia Sha-hid in the KP Assembly was asking for it when she was met with verbal abuse, a shoe thro-wn at her and a lota earlier this week. The what-aboutery always makes the woman the bad guy'

Women politici-ans 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 aggressocial media users were siveness is a given but women doing something featured her as one of the unexpected is well ... unacceptable.

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

I believe the press should pound Mar-y-am, for policies, inaction, siding with cor-p-o-rat-ions over the public, and any favouritism sh--o--wn in about awarding contracts, for Maryam's abilities or lack ex-a-m-ple. I have heard men (always men) on TV advise her to dress down to be taken seriously. While I understand what they mean — get your hands dirty — it would not cross their mind to say this about her male counterparts.

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 confi-Clinton — but shouldn't dence. 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

of State and Government determination of its several key points, of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) concluded in Algiers with the issuance of the "Algiers Declaration," reaffirming the member the Russian Minister for resources to promote countries' commitment to promoting natural gas as a key component of a secure and sustainable energy

future. Under the leadership of Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, the summit saw the from GECF member member countries to surrounding natural gas production, utilization, and cooperation. In his opening emphasized the importance Tebboune emphasized the ensuring stability amidst importance of GECF as a global challenges.

ALGIERS, Algeria (APP): cooperation platform and The 7th Summit of Heads highlighted the global energy security. over their Iranian President Dr. resources,

Energy addressed the sustainable development, summit, championing and cooperation to ensure in the energy sector. natural gas markets. President Raisi showcased Iran's vast potential in the expressed gas industry, extending invitations to international sentiments, the Russian Minister for Energy

the Declaration" highlighted members to strengthen its including the sovereign role and contribution to rights of member countries over their natural gas efficient Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi and management of natural gas cooperation and innovation balanced and reliable

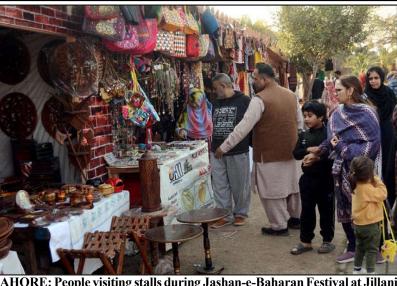
Member countries their commitment to innovationpractices investors and urging collaboration in enhancing participation of leaders collaboration among the role of natural gas in improving energy access countries, who convened to maximize utilization of and reducing energy discuss crucial issues resources. Echoing these poverty. They also surrounding natural gas sentiments, the Russian welcomed the accession of new members, reaffirming the forum's commitment to President of collective action in fostering energy chasized the ensuring stability amidst cooperation and dialogue on a global scale.

## KTH chairman greets PM

LAHORE Kyrgyzstan Trade House Pakistan (KTH) Chairman Meher Kashif Younis here Sunday greeted Shehbaz Sharif on becoming Prime Minister for the second timed.

He hoped that under his dynamic leadership, Pakistan would emerge as one of the leading economies in the world.

Meher said the character of economy is the need of the hour that requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach from the top leadership of the incumbent government. By evolving a consensus among all stakeholders and prioritizing national interests, the government can set the stage for meaningful reforms that will strengthen the national economy and improve the living standards of people, he added. Pakistan faced a number of economic challenges, ranging from high inflation and unemployment to a growing debt burden and dwindling foreign reserves, and to address these challenges.



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

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

BEIJING (APP): The high- Jieyi said here on Sunday. quality Belt and Road cooperation provides huge opportunities for partner countries to achieve common development and improve people's wellthe second session of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's

The last decade of practice has fully demonstrated that building a community with a shared future for mankind conforms to the trend of human being, Spokesperson for development and progress and serves the common interests of peoples of all countries, Liu made the remarks during a Political Consultative press conference held by the Conference (CPPCC), Liu CPPCC National Committee, alleviation.

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

# Mobile companies cheating masses, evading taxes: PEW ISLAMABAD (INP): taxes from consumers than Chairman Pakistan they transfer to the

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.

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 the country where some operators deduct more taxes are not applicable.

government, and there seems to be no end to this practice as authorities prefer to go soft on the telecom sector for obvious

Mobile 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.

The Chairman PEW said that there were some underdeveloped areas in



**ISLAMABAD:** Avendor 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 Pakhtunkhwa 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, Khybererstwhile 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

and cultivation. More than half million plants are being Rs4.416bn. The climate 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 oil olive production will increase to Rs1.727 billion, he said.

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, for the promotion of olive Balochistan, over half a

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 ÂJK, 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 fruitbearing olive plants tonnes of olive oil with an estimated value

change ministry also plans to plant 1m olive plants. Edible oil is an every-

day use food item. Pakistan has been chronically deficient in its production. More than 80 per cent of the domestic requirements are met through imports, he added. Dr Waqas Cheema, a scientific officer at Promotion of Olive cultivation project, told APP that over 1.5 million olive plants have already been planted under producing roughly 1,415 Promotion of Olive cultivation project Phaseof II, across the country.

#### **Reclamation Workshop** inaugurated LAHORE (APP): Lahore lot of time and money. 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 utilized

GILGIT: A vendor busy in compiling the parts of

**Sheikhupura Transformer** 

traditional fire stove at his workplace.

electricity to consumers and speed up the repair process of transformers. On this occasion, Engineer Shahid Haider this tradition will be that

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

The CEO said, "We have also been equipping the company wit modern facilities in the past, and these continued in the future workshops would save a as well.

# CM KP announces relief package for rains affected families in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief checks of Rs1 million for such as temporary shelter, Pakhtunkhwa Ali Ámin Khan Gandapur on Sunday announced compensation package for the affected families due to rains in the

directed the Relief rains. Secretary to compile reports on the affected and the damages incurred due

Detailed information about the life and property losses across the province should be collected, the Minister's

He announced relief

Lahore Press Club on

Sunday organised a free

medical camp for members

and their families with the

support of Private Nursing

gynecological problems,

dental diseases, eye

examination, nutrition

issues, free sugar check,

and free blood pressure

was checked. Specialist

General Physician Dr.

Jameel Baloch, Dr.

Shumaila, Dr. Saba, Dr.

Osama Asif, Dr. Abdul

Rahman, Dr. Ayman and

participated in the medical

paramedical

In the medical camp,

check-up,

Colleges Federation.

FAISALABAD: A speaker addressing an Annual

General meeting of Faisalabad Union of Journalist

Free medical, dental

camp held at LPC

LAHORE (APP): The prescribed treatment and

provided medicines.

Arshad Ansari, Vice President Amjad Usmani,

Secretary Zahid Abid,

Member Governing Body

Imran Sheikh, Rana Shehzad, Fatima Mukhtar

welcomed doctors, members of Lahore Press

Club and their families

who participated in the

camp.

The LPC members families

and their families

satisfaction over the

conduct of the camp and

expressed hope that the

would continue to take

expressed

camp and examined the such measures so that the

patients, participating in members of the LPC can

the medical camp for benefit more.

staff elected governing body

President

Khyber the killed, Rs 300,000 for food, and other necessities severely injured and Rs 50,000 for those who received moderate injuries. Financial

compensation will also be provided for property The Chief Minister damages caused by the

The Chief Minister has instructed the concerned Divisional Commissioners the affected.

Immediate relief focusing on essential needs

for owners of damaged

Ali Amin Gandapur directed urgent provision of medical assistance to the He also directed to

restore the closed roads due to heavy snowfall and rain. The Chief Minister has stressed the utilization of all available resources coordinate efforts and for this purpose. In light promptly provide relief to of any emergency

situations, preparedness measures should be in place measures are to be taken on to tackle the challenges an emergency basis, effectively, Ali Amin Gandapur asserts.

## Azma Bokhari greets Shehbaz

LAHORE (APP): PML-N Punjab spokesperson ongratulating Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif on being elected as Prime Minister, stated that the era of progress and prosperity will continue again under his leadership.

would steer Pakistan out

of the economic vortex

and vicious circle as his

first and foremost

priority is to ensure the

revival of the national

economy and elimination

of the price hike. Those

who are destined to wail

will continue to do so for

the next five years. The

PML-N government under the dynamic

leadership of Nawaz Sharif will work with the

same spirit of rendering

public service in the

federation and in Punjab

as well. The able

leadership of Nawaz

Sharif is a matter of great

pride for Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif and Chief

Nawaz," she added.

Maryam

Minister

has directed to provide relief and compensation Azma Bokhari in her cheques to the affected felicitation message outlined that PM Shehbaz Sharif had saved families. He also directed for opening of closed road and provide facilities to of Rescue 1122 KP. Pakistan from default and it was his biggest credit. "PM Shehbaz Sharif

Provincial

destroyed while 129

(PDMA)

partially.

PESHAWAR (APP): At people stuck in rains and least 27 persons were landslidings. killed and 38 were reported The Chief Minister injured due rains for the last also directed PDMA,

Rescue 1122, district 48 hours, said said DG Rescue 1122, district Provincial Disaster administrations to be alert Management Authority and facilitate people. Six tourists have been 33 houses were rescued in Malamjabba,

eported completely said DG PDMA Muhammad Qaiser Khan. He said that directives The Chief Minister have been issued to all DCs in this regard.

Apart from humans, reports about perishing of livestock has also been received from authorities

## Never Again' walk held to create awareness about violence against women

27 persons killed,

38 injured due to

rains in KP: PDMA

under the theme of 'Violence against women no more, never again' was organised by the Punjab Police here on Sunday to create awareness among citizens.

participants were told the Punjab Police were determined to prevent violence against women and protect their rights. The walk started from Liberty Roundabout, and IGP Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar and ASP Gulberg participated in Syeda Shehrbano led the awareness walk.

LAHORE (APP): A walk walk. Senior officers including Operations Lahore Ali Nasir Rizvi, COO Safe Authority Cities Mustansar Feroze, CTO Lahore Amara Athar, SSP Operations, Supervisory officers of

different divisions of Lahore, hundreds of male and female officials of all police units, a large number of students, famous personalities from various walks of life, civil society and citizens

### LAHORE: The brave Superintendent of Police (SP) Syeda Sheherbano Naqvi heading a walk in liberty Chowk organized by Punjab Police. 2 people killed in different incidents in Attock

ATTOCK (APP): Two people, among them a teenage teacher of a private school were killed in two different incidents in various parts of Attock on Sunday, police and rescue sources said.

In the first incident, a teenage teacher of a private school was going to her house when she reached Mohallah Subalan, she slipped and drowned in a drainage line in the limits of Fatehjang Police Station. Later, Rescue 1122 retrieved her body and shifted to the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital in Fatehjang, where she was declared dead. Separately, an employee of the Municipal Committee Hassanabdal, lost his life while repairing a street light in Mohallah Shaheedabad.

### Boy electrocuted while catching stray kite

FAISALABAD (APP): A teenager boy electrocuted while catching a stray kite in the area of Sadar police station. Rescue 1122 spokesman said here on Sunday that 19-year-old Shehzad Iqbal of Syedwala was working in a factory situated at Kararwala Road where he went on rooftop of the factory to catch a stray kite, but he accidentally touched a live electricity wire passing near the roof.

Around 9000

women killed

by Israeli forces

in Gaza since

October last year

GAZA (Online): Around 9000 women were killed by

Israeli forces in Gaza since

October last year. This was

reported by UN Women, a United Nations agency

dedicated to gender equal-

ity and the empowerment

sieged Gaza as a war on

women. The agency said

that roughly thirty seven

mothers are killed every

day, leaving their families

devastated and their chil-

dren with diminished pro-

tection. According to

Gaza's Ministry of Health,

at least 50 people were in-

jured in drone attack.

It called the war in be-

of women

## Govt to take measures to protect wildlife: Maryam Nawaz

Maryam congratulates Shehbaz Sharif on being elected as PM

protect wildlife in Punjab.

on Sunday, the CM said the importance of wildlife in maintaining ecological balance cannot be underestimated. Realizing the importance of biodiversity, the Punjab government would take effective measures to bring environmental balance. Conservation of all kinds of wildlife from wild sheep found in Salt Range to the dolphins, is our top priority. Like entire have got a Khadim.'

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Pakistan, nature has Chief Minister Maryam blessed Punjab with Nawaz has said that beautiful wildlife, the provincial government protection and promotion would take comprehensive of which is our and effective measures to responsibility."

"On World Wildlife In her message on World Wildlife Day, I pay tribute to the workers and organizations serving in this field" she concluded.

Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif congratulated Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif on being elected Prime Minister of Pakistan for the second

In her message issued on Sunday, the CM said."I 'talurs' of Cholistan and to also congratulate the people of Pakistan as they



SARGODHA: Student giving final touch to painting during Punjab painting competitions organized by Sargodha Arts Council.

## **KPCTA** arranges Safari Train trip to Takhtbhai

Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) arranged first ever safari train trip to Takht Bahi relics on Sunday.

It was aimed of informing people about the rich history of Buddha-era heritage sites declared by UNEŠCO as worlď heritage site.

A large number of people enjoyed the train safari, which commenced

PESHAWAR (APP): The Station. The visitors were Khyber Pakhtunkhwa warmly welcomed at the station with traditional Pipe band. A total of 140 passengers visited the site through the train safari, during which they were briefed about the historic places of KP, its culture, traditions and the history of Takht Bahi relics.

The train safari departed from Saddar Cantt Railway Station at 9:00 AM and reached Takht Bahi Railway Station after from Saddar Railway sightseeing stops at City.

# International News

# Many aid distribution victims were shot in Gaza: UN

**Monitoring Desk** GAZA CITY: A UN team

has reported seeing "a large number" of gunshot wounds among Gazans after Israeli troops opened fire on Palestinian civilians scrambling for food supplies near an aid convoy, killing 115 people and wounded more than 750.

The aid convoy deaths pushed the number of Palestinian dead in Gaza since Oct 7 to 30,320, mostly women and children. Hossam Abu Safiya, director of Gaza City's Kamal Adwan Hospital, said all the casualties it admitted were hit by "bullets and shrapnel from (Israeli) occupation forces"

There are contradictions within the Israeli claims; BBC News re-

Gazans were injured as a result of pushing and trampling" during looting, then saving that tanks in the area "tried to disperse the mob with a few warning shots".

In a video statement posted on X, the Israeli armed forces spokesman, Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari claimed: "Hundreds became thousands and things got out of hand.'

some of the wounded from Friday and saw a "large Guterres said.

The hospital received 70 of the dead, and around 200 wounded were still ported that officials first there during the team's

claimed that "dozens of visit. 11 Palestinians killed Separately, at least 11 Palestinians were killed on Saturday when an Israeli air strike hit a tent in Rafah, in Gaza's south where people have been seeking refuge from Israel's devastating

bombardment. Another 50 people were wounded in the strike next to a hospital in the Tel Al Sultan area of Rafah. One of the dead was a medic at A UN team visited the hospital. "The strike hit one tent, where people the aid incident, in Gaza took shelter, directly, shrap-City's Al Shifa Hospital, on nel came inside the hospital

> ing for food in farmland in Beit Hanoun were killed by



where I and friends were number of gunshot wounds", a spoke-sperson for UN chief Antonio where a land friends were sitting, we survived by a miracle," a witness said by phone from the area. phone from the area. And in the territory's north, three people search-

Israeli strikes.



Monitoring Desk MUMBAI: Three men

torbike trip through reports said. The attack took place on Friday night with the attack and were on the hunt for more sus-

The Spanish woman is being treated at a local hospital in Dumka and an investigation is underway, reports said. An average of nearly 90 rapes were reported in India every day in 2022, according to data by the National Crime Records



destroyed in Israeli strikes in Deir El-Balah in central Gaza.

## Malaysia says MH370 search must go on, 10 years after plane vanished

Monitoring Desk sia is pushing for a re-newed search for Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, the transport minister said on Sunday, as the 10th anniversary of its disappearance in one of the world's greatest aviation mysteries approaches.

Flight MH370, a Boeing 777 carrying 227 passengers and 12 crew, vanished en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing on March 8, 2014.

tors initially did not rule out the possibility that the aircraft had been deliberately taken off course, and debris, some confirmed and

the aircraft, has washed up along the coast of Africa and on islands in the Indian Ocean.

Malaysian Transport Minister Anthony Loke said US seabed exploration firm Ocean Infinity had been invited to discuss its latest search proposal after two previous failed at-

'The Malaysian government is committed to the search (for MH370) and the search must go on," Loke said at a remembrance

Malaysia engaged Ocean Infinity in 2018 to search the southern Indian Ocean, offering to pay up to \$70 million if it found

### India navy to open strategic base near action on cost of living **Maldives** amid by-election

Monitoring Desk NEW DELHI: India's navy

has said it is bolstering forces on "strategically important" islands close to the Maldives, with a new base set to open just days before Male starts sending home Indian forces. Relations between India and the Maldives have soured since pro-China President Mohamed Muizzu won elections last year after promising to expel Indian forces.

## **Zelensky seeks Western** air defence systems as Russian attacks kill 10

**Monitoring Desk** Volodymyr Zelensky on Saturday urged the West to

deliver more air defence systems as a wave of Russian missile, drone and artillery strikes killed at least Seven were confirmed

dead, including a threemonth-old baby and twoyear-old child, after an overnight drone strike on the southern port city of Odesa. Separate shelling attacks on the frontline Kharkiv, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions killed another three, Ukrainian officials said.

"Russia continues to hit civilians," Zelensky said in a post on social media. We need more air defences from our partners. We need to strengthen the

more protection for our people from Russian terror. More air defence systems and more missiles for air defence systems save lives," he said.

Ukraine is currently on the back foot in the twoyear war as a crucial \$60billion aid package is held up in the United States

In Odesa, "a nine-storey building was destroyed as a result of an attack by Russian terrorists," Interior Minister Igor Klymenko said on Saturday in a post on Tele-

The attack killed at least seven people, including a three-month-old baby, Klymenko said. Another child, aged two, was also among the dead, Odesa region Governor Oleg Kiper Ukrainian air shield to add said on state TV.

## **UK PM Sunak rails** against 'extremism' after Galloway's win

**Monitoring Desk** ONDON: For the first

prime minister 16 months of earlier, Rishi Sunak made an impromptu speech from outside his office, not to call a general election but to rail against extremist groups, which, according to him, are trying to tear the nation

Standing in the rain, his back to 10 Downing Street, PM Sunak in speech to the nation on Friday night said: "There is no 'context' in which it can be acceptable to beam antisemitic tropes onto Big Ben in the middle of a vote on Israel/Gaza. And there can be no cause you can use to justify the support of a proscribed terrorist group, like Hamas. Yes, you can freely criticise the actions of this government, or indeed any government: that is a fundamental democratic right. But no, you can-

not use that as an excuse time since he became of a state — or any kind antisemitism.

After months of pro-Gaza public demonstrations and growing pressure on both the government and Labour party to take a tougher stance on Israel, it appears that the victory of George Galloway in a byelection in the erstwhile Labour stronghold of Rochdale is the straw that broke the camel's

He won with overwhelming numbers that night, beating both the Labour and Tory candidate by wide margins.

A much-loathed figure in British politics for his populist rhetoric, pro-Gaza Galloway lured Rochdale's Muslim voters through a targeted campaign centering on Gaza and the British government's silence on Israel's continued bom-

# Rescuers work at the site of a heavily damaged

apartment building in Odesa, following a Russian

## **Europe battles powder** shortage to supply shells for Ukraine

**Monitoring Desk** PARIS: Hard-to-find gunpowder is hindering Europe's scramble to provide hundreds of thousands of shells for Ukraine's defensive effort against Russian invaders, with solutions only starting to

"We have all become artillery shell has three up to the scarcity of some components, especially gunpowders," French President Emmanuel Macron said Monday after a gathering of Kyiv's allies in Paris. "Powder is really what's lacking today," he armed forces university in Munich.

Gunpowder goes into propellant charges that hurl artillery shells—such as the NATO-standard 155millimetre projectiles used in many guns sent to Ukraine—over distances of tens of kilometres.

aware of the need to face parts. It has a steel casing, a high-explosive main charge and a detonator' usually set to trigger the blast on impact, said Johann Hoecherl, a munitions expert at the German

"A simple explosive Bureau

were arrested on Saturday after the gang rape of a Spanish tourist on a mo-India's remote east with her husband, local media in the Dumka district of the eastern state of Jharkhand, where the couple had stopped to camp the night in a tent. The woman was able to reach a police patrol van at around 11pm and was taken to hospital for treatment, police officer Pitamber Singh Kherwar told The Times of India newspaper. Kherwar said police had detained three people in connection

# Malaysian investigaevent on Sunday. some believed to be from the plane. Australia PM defends

**Monitoring Desk** 

SYDNEY: Voters went to the polls on Saturday in a by-election in Australia's Victoria state seen as a referendum on Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's handling of cost of living pressures across the country. Australian households

have been under broad fi-

nancial pressure from high

inflation, which although recently easing has prompted the nation's central bank to hike interest rates by 425 basis points since May 2022 to a 12year top of 4.35%.
"We know people

have done it tough through cost of living pressures, but we've been prepared to take action, decisive action.

quiet revolution on Febru-

the Parliament House be-

fore the assembly session

to elect prime minister, he

said the PTI mandate was

stolen on February 8. The

party had won 180 seats as

the nation voted for the ide-

ology of the PTI founder, he added.

the office of speaker said the ECP has not yet de-

cided on the reserved seats of the PTI. If those seats

are counted, the total seats of the PTI becomes 235,

JAMSHED DASTI

Dasti said they have been

defeated squarely on Feb-

ruary 8. The [new] govern-

Meanwhile, Jamshed

Dogar continued.

The PTI nominee for

Speaking to media at

PTI mandate stolen

on February 8, says

## PN deploys helicopters in flood hit Gwadar to expedite rescue & relief operations

stan Navy continues to extended relief and rescue operations to various small coastal villages of Balochistan affected by recent flash flooding.

To expedite rescue and relief operations in flood affected areas of district Gwadar, Pakistan Navy has stationed helicopters there. Pakistan Navy helicopters undertook multiple hops from Gwadar to the flood affected villages of Pishukan and Kappar. Relief teams delivered ration bags, clean drinking water and food items near people stranded in their villages.

Moreover, ration and relief goods distribution conducted by Pakistan Navy personnel amongst difficult time.

KARACHI (INP): Paki- flood affectees of Gwadar bers of medical supplies and ration bags have also been dispatched to different other flood-affected villages through road where land connectivity was restored.

Further, in assistance to civil administration, Pakistan Navy troops were wholeheartedly undertaking rescue and relief operations utilizing all available equipment and resources. In this regard, de-flooding operations were being conducted on various localities of Gwadar city to clear

Pakistan Navy was resolutely committed to supporting our flood-affected brethren during this



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif hand shakes with Leader of Pakistan Muslim League N Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif after electing prime minister.

## CM directs to hand over GoB helicopter to Gwadar district administration

**Independent Report** 

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti had directed to the concerned provincial authorities to hand over the government helicopter to the district administration of Gwadar to carry out relief activities in the port

the Chief Secretary and there. Director General Provincial Disaster Management Authority to personally affected from the devastating rains in Gwadar.

monitor the relief and rehabilitation activities while remaining in

issued by the Chief Minister during his maiden visit to the Gwadar city on Sun-

Mir Sarfraz Bugti visited the Gwadar city without protocol and inspected He has also directed the situation following rains

He also met the people

## Aneeq says: First ever selection of Moavineen-e-Hujjaj via NTS ensures transparency

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed on Sunday said the selection of Moavineen-e-Hujjaj is being conducted for the first time in history through the National Testing Service (NTS) in a landmark move prioritizing transpar-

He announced this milestone during his visit to the NTS center in the federal capital. During the visit, he oversaw the administration of written exams for the selection of Moavineen-e-Hujjaj and Hajj Medical Mission personnel for Hajj 2024.

Emphasizing the significance of this development, he highlighted that every year, Pakistani assistants and doctors are deployed for Hajj duties. Last year, he said there were 794 assistants, while this year, the number stands at 625. Similarly, the number of doctors remains consistent at 540, as it was in the previous year, he added.

Aneeq further stated that this year, they pledge to serve the pilgrims diligently, and those selected through the written exam would demonstrate enhanced performance during the Hajj 2024



QUETTA: Beautiful eye catching view of snow covered area during the snowfall of winter season. which more decreases the temperature below in minus degree Celsius, at mountainous areas of

## 503,261 illegal Afghans returned to their homeland

ISLAMABAD (INP): Re- from Punjab, and 34 from patriation of illegal foreign immigrants including Afghans to their homeland Afghanistan is continuing in a dignified and safe manner, reported on Sunday.

As per details, 5033 illegal Afghan nationals returned to their country from February 25 till March 2, taking the total number of returned immigrants to 503,261.

Over 217 families including 1573 men, 1048 women and 2412 children returned to Afghanistan in 204 vehicles. Earlier, 233 Afghan nationals were sent to Afghanistan via the Torkham border.

and another 5299 immi-38 from Islamabad, 1152

Azad Kashmir were sent to Afghanistan. Efforts were made to send migrants to Afghanistan from Peshawar, other borders, and Angoor Adda in Kharlachi. A total of 3956 people were sent to Afghanistan via the

Angoor Adda border, while 698 people were sent to Afghanistan from the Kharlachi border. It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan reaffirmed its commitment to peace and prosperity in Afghanistan at a

conference titled 'Afghanistan's Regional Cooperation Initiative' held at capital of the war-torn country. Ambassador of Pakistan According to details, a total of 6623 migrants emphasized that the region emphasized that the region were sent to Afghanistan, must work together to harness mutually beneficial congrants from Pakhtunkhwa, nectivity potential and address shared concerns.



# CMs of Sindh & Balochistan vow to strengthen mutual relations between two provinces further

serve Pakistan

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Chief Minsters of Sindh and Balochistan have vowed to strengthen mutual relations between the two provinces

The Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti were confident that Asif Ali Zardari would be elected once again vith thumbing majority. The Chief Minister of

Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah was in meeting with the Chief Minister Balochistan

SJC likely to

send opinion

on Justice

Naqvi case to

authorities

ISLAMABAD (Online):

After the completion of the

proceedings against Justice

(retd) Mazahar Ali Akbar

Naqvi in the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), the opin-

ion of the Council is likely

to be sent to the relevant

completed under the chair-

manship of Chief Justice

Qazi Faiz Esa. The state-

ments of different wit-

nesses were completed,

while the retired judge re-

fused to cross-examine the

witnesses, the letter sent to

the council on behalf of re-

tired judges was made part

of the record. Council Chair-

man Chief Justice Qazi Faiz

The proceedings were

authorities this week.

Sunday evening.

During the course of meeting, Chief Minister was accompanied by members of assembly Ali Madad Jatak, Mir Zahoor Buledi and Ubaid Gorgej

While on the other hand, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, Sharjeel Memon, Mukesh Chawla and Ziaul Hasan Lanjar were accompanied with the Chief Minister Sindh.

Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, who are long-standing relations called on him in Karachi on between Sindh and between Sindh and Balochistan.

> Sved Murad Ali Shah congratulated Mir Sarfraz Bugti on taking over as Chief Minister Balochistan.

> During the meeting, both the Chief Ministers discussed the situation of Gwadar and the steps taken for wellbeing of the people.
>
> Syed Murad Ali Shah
> said that PDMA Sindh is

in contact with PDMA Balochistan, and if there Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Balochistan said that there Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister ery, then would be sent to Gwadar. was need of other machin-

# Ahsan advises PTI to stop mudslinging,

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Ahsan Iqbal Sunday advised the Pakistan Tehreek e- Insaf (PTI) leaders to stop its mudslinging campaign and focus its attention and energies on serving people as the country needed national unity at this

"PTI has a track record of instigating chaos and blaming others for involvement in electoral rigging", he said while talking to a Private news channel outside the National As-He said that the PTI

founder will not receive the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO), adding, innocence in court.' He also emphasized political stability, which, he states, is vital for achieving economic stability in the

To strive for economic stability, all differences must be set aside, he said adding that there is a need for mutual unity for political and economic stability in the country.

Replying to a question, he said that in the past, the PML-N had set a shining example of economic progress and stability and that it would take concrete and practical steps to further improve the economy.

The era of Mian Nawaz Sharif was a golden era of progress and pros-



QUETTA: A view of counting of votes at the end of PTI inter-party election.

## Gilani to **contest Senate** election

ISLAMABAD (INP): On the instructions of the party's high command, former prime minister and PPP stalwart Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has said on Sunday he will contest the election for a Senate seat scheduled to be held on March 14. In this regard, Gilani has submitted his nomination papers to the Election Commission of Pakistan through his lawyers. The PPP leadership will decide who will be the party's candidate in the election for the National Assembly seat vacated by Gilani before contesting the Senate election.

## Death toll from pneumonia rises to

456 in Punjab LAHORE (INP): Five more children died of pneumonia across Punjab on Sunday taking the death toll in about three months to 456, reported. However, no death was reported in Lahore during the last 24 hours. As many as 464 new cases of pneumonia have been reported in Punjab during the last 24 hours while 98 new cases were reported in Lahore during one day.

## PML-N issues show cause notice to MNA for skipping Speaker, Dy Speaker polls

Nawaz (PML-N) has taken disciplinary action against newly elected National Assembly member Nelson Azim, issuing a show cause notice for failing to participate in the Speaker and Deputy Speaker elections.

Azim, elected on a large minority seat, has been given seven days to justify his absence from the cru-

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pa- cial voting process. The kistan Muslim League- notice highlights concerns over his non-participation in the democratic proceedings. In the recent Speaker election, PML-N's Sardar Ayaz Sadiq reclaimed the position with a resounding 199 votes, defeating his rival Malik Muhammad Amir Dogar. Meanwhile, Ghulam Mustafa Shah of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) secured victory.

## Siraj-ul-Haq demands election audit, labels government 'fake'

LAHORE (INP): Siraj-ul-Haq, the leader of Jamaate-Islami Pakistan, has openly criticized the legitimacy of the current government, calling it a product of

a "fake election and results. Addressing the media he emphasized the need for constitutional adherence by institutions for national stability. He highlighted the disarray with electoral forms, indicating discrepancies in the election process.

He pointed out the lack of genuine victory among the declared winners, pressing for an independent judicial commission to audit the elections. He accused the election machinery of not only stealing votes but also manipulating results, and called for the resignation of the Chief Election Com-

missioner, citing the theft of Jamaat-e-Islami's mandate as a violation of electoral sanctity. His call for recognizing the people's decision underscores a deep rift in the political landscape, seeking a reevaluation of the electoral process.

Moreover, they also held on March 9.

law and order situation was also discussed by them.

were agreed upon taking action against the law breakers at borders

The Chief Minister Balochistan mentioned that measures are being taken for draining out the rain water and rehabilitation in

discussed the upcoming Presidential elections to be In addition to this, the

The Chief Ministers

Gwadar.

ment would prove to be a disaster for the country, he An anti-people gov-ernment would not last long, he said and added that

the government formed by those who have been rejected by the people would We are fighting them day.

Aamir Dogar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) member Malik highhandedness. We will highlandedness. We will highlandedness. We will highlandedness. Aamir Dogar said on Sun- not let Shehbaz Sharif govday that the country had a ernment run for six months," Dasti stated. Latif Khosa

Latif Khosa, a PTI leader, has clarified that their party's protest against rigging and irregularities in the Feb 8 polls result was their constitutional right but it mustn't be labeled as rowdyism. He asserted that the party was struggling for the prevalence of democracy, rule of law, and public jus-

Ali Muhammad Khan Ali Muhammad Khan affirmed that today was the day of tough competition between Form-45 and Form-47 the day of real and forged mandate, referring to the election of the coveted seat of the prime minister of Pa-

He added that the real victory would be the victory of the people's man-date and truth whether the rivals won by rigging and malpractices. He stressed that the PTI founder would be victorious and would take the throne of the prime spell doom for the country. minister of Pakistan one



Pakistan Navy Rescue working during rescue efforts at flood affected areas of Gwadar

## **PML-N stole** public mandate to come into power: Zartai

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader, Zartaj Gul has said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has stolen public mandate to come into power.

Talking to a private T channel in Parliament House on Sunday, face expressions of the mandate stealers reveal their theft.

Zartaj Gul said that PTI founder and Form 45 has won the election but those having Form 47 and 49, were celebrating the victory

Four killed,

## 12 injured as passenger coaster overturns

CHINIOT (INP): At least four people were killed and 12 others injured when an over speeding passenger coaster turned turtle here on Sunday, rescue sources said According to details, the accident took place at Chiniot-Sargodharoadnear Ahmad Nagar

## Gohar says assembly isn't bogus, Qaiser and others still claim it

is seemingly divided over had fake mandate and the the stated position on the nature of newly-elected minister would not have National Assembly, as Barrister Gohar said they were not labelling the House as "bogus" while Asad Qaiser insisted that the rival parties had a fake mandate.

Talking to reporters outside the Parliament House on Sunday, Gohar said he was not using the word bogus for the assembly and would not escape the democratic process to leave the field open for the other parties. Amid the reports that the PTI members - who have joined the assemblies under the banner of SIC (Sunni Ittehad Council) after winning the recentlyheld polls as independents - are mulling over boycotting the session convened to elect the new prime minister, Gohar said they would have their opposition and parliamentary leader. "We won't boycott, we will compete against them."

trast, Asad Qaiser, sepa- and Mardan respectively.

ISLAMABAD (INP): The rately, said they were of the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) view that the rival parties

> any legal standing.
> "He would be fake prime minister elected on the basis of fake votes," he claimed and added that they would ponder upon all the

available options. Qaiser said they enjoyed the right to protest and would exercise the same, as he, like other party leaders, questioned the mandate of other.

Similar views were repeated by Ali Muhammad Khan who told reporters inside the Parliament House that the competition was between the "original" Omar Ayubl and "bogus" Shehbaz Sharif] mandate for the prime minister's of-

It is interesting to note that the three SIC leaders -Gohar, Qaiser and Ali – are from the same province -Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and have been elected to the But in complete con- House from Buner, Swabi

# Closer scrutiny of seized Karachi-bound ship deflates Indian propaganda

India's propaganda concerning the seizure of a dard piece of equipment used for precise manufac-Karachi-bound ship at turing in a variety of industries, including the automo-Port has been discredited upon closer examination. According to Kashmir

Media Service, allegations suggesting links to Pakistan's nuclear program have been found to be entirely unfounded and concocted, representing nothing more than an attempt to undermine specific busi-nesses through misrepresentation.

The CMA CGM Attila-a Malta-flagged commercial vessel was seized on the baseless charge of transporting a dual-use consignment with probable links to Pakistan's nuclear programme. Among the products withheld, is a Computer Numerical Con-

dard piece of equipment bile sector

While there have been claims about the potential use of CNC machines in military applications, it is important to remember that such machines are routinely used for legitimate fabrication purposes and are not restricted objects. A thorough review of the equipment's specifications reveals that it is widely used for commercial purposes.

As regards needful documentation, all shipment-related transactions were undertaken through transparent banking channels and fully documented. The shipment was intended for import by a reasons.

ISLAMABAD (INP): trol (CNC) machine, a stan- Karachi-based commercial company that specializes in selling parts to Pakistan's automobile industry. There is no convincing evidence to substantiate any suspicion of illegal intent behind the transaction.

The claims made by Indian security forces and repeated by chosen media sources appear to be part of a larger effort to undermine specific groups. Such unfounded accusations not only degrade the reputations of individuals involved, but also demonstrate the dangers of misinformation and arbitrary disruptions in global trade.

The seizure of the shipment by Indian officials highlights the dangers of assuming policing responsibilities without specific evidence or reasonable

