

# QUETTA VOICE

Email address: quettavoic@gmail.com

Monday 04 April, 2022

https:// www.quettavoic.com/

ABC Certified

Quettavoic



### Deputy Speaker did not follow even "the order of day"



### Imran surpassed military dictators to wrap up democracy in country: Fazl

## Supreme Court bars state institutions from taking 'extra constitutional' steps

Dawood Ahmed

The Supreme Court of Pakistan has barred all state institutions from taking any "extra-constitutional" steps in the aftermath of the dissolution of the national assembly by the President on Sunday.

The apex court had taken a suo moto notice of the dissolution of the national assembly and dismissed of no-trust motion by the deputy speaker against Prime Minister Imran Khan. Deputy Speaker of the NA, Qasim Suri dismissed the no-trust motion against the premier, terming it a conspiracy against the country at the behest of foreign players.

The top court, after issuing notices to the Attorney General of Pakistan and others on the matter, postponed the hearing till Monday (tomorrow). DS act may be held in violation of fundamental rights of the people: Petition

The petition filed by the opposition maintained that it is "most respectfully prayed that the act of the Deputy Speaker by proroguing the Session of Parliament on the vote of No Confidence Motion may be held to be in violation of fundamental rights of the people of Pakistan and against Article 66, 95, 17(2) and other enabling provisions and this act and all consequences thereafter may be set aside by declaring the same illegal, ultra vires to the Constitution and consequently the Speaker/ Deputy Speaker National Assembly may be directed to conduct the vote count on No Confidence Motion of the members present in the National Assembly on the floor of the house and declared the result of the No-Confidence Motion.

"It is further prayed that the respondents may be directed not to interfere with the vote count and smooth voting on the resolution of No Confidence of the Prime Minister as per the Agenda today, added in its written order, issued later in the day, the court did not elaborate on the status of the NA



but directed that a notice should be issued to Attorney General for Pakistan Khalid Khalid Jawed Khan "on the constitutionality of the [deputy speaker's] decision" to dismiss the no-trust motion on the basis of Article 5 of the Constitution.

Article 5 obliges every citizen to be obedient to the Constitution and law and says that "loyalty to the State is the basic duty of every citizen". In the order, The court further observed that "it is contended that, prima facie, there is neither a finding recorded in the matter nor was a hearing

granted to the affected party". It further stated, "We would also like to examine whether such an action (dismissal of the no-trust motion on the basis of Article 5) is protected by the ouster (removal from the court's jurisdiction) contained in Article 69 of the Constitution."

Article 69 of the Constitution essentially restricts the court's jurisdiction to exercise authority on a member or officer of parliament with respect to the functions of regulating parliamentary proceedings.

"No officer or member of Majlis-i-Shoora (parliament) in whom powers are vested by or under the Constitution for regulating procedure or the conduct of business, or for maintaining order in Majlis-i-Shoora, shall be subject to the jurisdiction of any court in respect of the exercise by him of those powers," clause two of the Article reads.

The Article's first clause further says: "The validity of any proceedings in Majlis-i-Shoora shall not be called in question on the ground of any irregularity of procedure."

During today's hearing, the chief justice also said the law and order situation in the country should not deteriorate, instructing all political parties to act responsibly.

The chief justice said that no unconstitutional step should be taken by any state institution and that no one should try to take advantage of the situation "Public order should be maintained," the CJP said.

He said the court did not want to drag the hearing on account of Ramadan and that notices should be issued to all the political parties. Justice Bandial also ordered the interior and defence secretaries to brief the court on the law and order situation.

The chief justice ordered that the PPP's request be accepted and said the court would review the deputy speaker's actions. The court, however, rejected a request to suspend the deputy speaker's ruling and directed the attorney general to present it tomorrow.

## Imran Khan de-notified as Prime Minister of Pakistan

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Division on Sunday night issued a notification, de-notifying Imran Khan as the Prime Minister of the country. The notification has been issued after the President dissolved the national assembly in the wake of a no-trust motion against the Premier.

Under Article 94 of the Constitution, President Dr. Arif Alvi directed the premier to continue to perform his duties as the chief executive of the country until the caretaker prime minister is appointed, media reported.

The Cabinet Division also issued a notification to dissolve the 52-member federal cabinet. The Cabinet Division also notified 25 federal ministers and four ministers of state. The Cabinet Division also de-notified four advisers to the prime minister and 19 special assistants. Added later in the day, the cabinet secretariat issued a notification saying Imran Khan had "ceased to hold the office of the prime minister". Earlier today, Prime Minister Imran, in an address to the nation, said he had advised the president to "dissolve assemblies".



The premier's announcement came moments after National Assembly Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri, who was chairing today's session, dismissed the no-confidence resolution against Prime Minister Imran Khan before voting could take place, terming it a contradiction of Article 5 of the

Constitution, which says loyalty to the state is the basic duty of every citizen.

Suri's ruling came after Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry, in a speech on the floor of the house, urged him to disallow the no-trust resolution against the premier, referring to a threat received from a foreign country which had also been rebuked by the National Security Committee.

The government claims that the no-trust motion against the premier was a "foreign funded conspiracy", citing a 'threat letter' that was received from a foreign country through Pakistan's ambassador, asking for the removal of PM Imran.

The military, meanwhile, distanced itself from the political developments in the country. "Army has nothing to do with the political process," Major General Babar Iftikhar, the head of the military's public relations wing, told Reuters in response to a question about the institution's involvement in Sunday's developments.

In his address today, Prime Minister Imran congratulated the nation for the no-trust motion being dismissed, saying the deputy speaker had "rejected the attempt of changing the regime [and] the foreign conspiracy".



President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing the participants and speakers of the Islamabad Security Dialogue, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

### New elections to be held in 90 days: Farrukh

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib has said that new elections would be held in 90 days, reported 24NewsHD TV channel. The minister announced this in a tweet on Sunday.

Federal Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry said that if any political party would escape from the elections then it would be called a political fugitive. INP

### Funeral prayers of martyred Pakistan Army peace keepers at UN offered: ISPR

ISLAMABAD: Namaz-e-Janaza of martyred officers and soldiers who embraced shahadat in a helicopter crash at United Nations Mission Congo was offered Sunday at Chaklala Garrison. Pakistan Army Spokesperson said that Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, serving and retired military personnel including the United Nations (UN) officials and relatives of shuhadas attended the funeral prayer. INP

### Deputy Speaker did not follow even "the order of day"

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Speaker National Assembly (NA) did not even follow the "the order of the day" issued by the Secretary National Assembly on Sunday.

According to the order of the day, today was the deadline for voting on no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan which was submitted by the Leader of Opposition Shehbaz Sharif.

Rule 37(8) of the National Assembly Rules of Procedure which clearly states that, after the leave is granted to move the no confidence motion, the Assembly shall not be prorogued until the No-confidence resolution is voted upon.

### Imran surpassed military dictators to wrap up democracy in country: Fazl

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Jammiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) and head of alliance of the opposition parties, Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), Maulana Fazl ur Rehman has said that Imran Khan has surpassed the military dictators to wrap up the democratic system in the country.

Talking to a private TV channel on Sunday, he said that the self-fabricated letter with claims of dispatched by a foreign country containing threats was an attempt to

Speaker of the NA was absent and the session was chaired by the Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri, during the session Deputy Speaker adjourned the session while giving the ruling to reject the no-confidence motion.

Voting on no-confidence motion was not held, which was included in the order of the day.

Member Penal of Chairperson of National Assembly, Ayyaz Sadiq later in the absence of Speaker and Deputy Speaker chaired session to hold voting in accordance with the National Assembly Rules of Procedure. INP

flee of being held accountable.

Fazlur Rehman said that Balochistan Assembly was dissolved in 1988 and we moved High Court very next day after which court restored the assembly.

He termed the National Assembly scenario unconstitutional saying Deputy Speaker was not authorized to give the said ruling. Whether it was the said rule, Imran Khan was telling the nation about, he questioned, The PDM Chief declared rejecting. INP

### Imran Khan can't dissolve assemblies at this stage: Zardari

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari said Sunday during a media talk that the ruling of the National Assembly deputy speaker was unconstitutional.

"Let's see now what the court says," stated Asif Ali Zardari as the opposition has taken the matter to the Supreme Court. "Imran Khan cannot dissolve assemblies at this stage," asserted Asif Ali Zardari.

"If you are so passionate for elections, come on then. We are ready for that," he told the prime minister. "Did you fear such a move by the deputy speaker?" a question put to him by a journalist.

"Yes! But our friends thought otherwise. We have to follow the thought of our friends," answered he. INP

### Four street criminals held, six snatched bikes recovered

PESHAWAR: The police arrested four notorious street criminals besides recovering six snatched bikes and arms from their possession here on Sunday. Reacting to surge in street crimes, bike snatching incidents, Shahpur police Peshawar launched crackdowns against criminals in its jurisdiction. During operations, four notorious street criminals including Gulham Muhammad s/o Muhammad Khan, Shahid s/o Muhammad Yousaf belonging to Afghanistan, Noman s/o Syedullah and Ahmadullah. INP

### مقالہ خصوصی

وزیر اعلیٰ بلوچستان میر عبدالقدوس بزنجوی زیر صدارت صوبائی کابینہ کے اجلاس میں بلوچستان میں سرمایہ کاری کے فروغ کیلئے اہم فیصلے کرنے کے ساتھ ساتھ جیلنگھ کارڈ پروگرام پر عملدرآمد اور اس کی فوری لاچنگ کی بھی منظوری دی گئی۔ کابینہ نے سرمایہ کاروں کے صوبے میں طویل مدت قیام کی پالیسی کی منظوری دی جس کا مقصد بلوچستان میں سرمایہ کاری کو فروغ دینا ہے۔ کابینہ کو ایلیٹ کارڈ پروگرام کے حوالے سے بتایا گیا کہ اس سہولت سے بلوچستان سے 18 لاکھ خاندان مستفید ہوں گے جنہیں فی خاندان 10 لاکھ روپے کا ایلیٹ کارڈ میسر ہوگا۔ کابینہ نے صوبے میں خود مختار ہسپتالوں کے قیام کے دو بلوں کی منظوری دی جن میں ایک خضدار جیکو دو سمر ہسپتالوں میں ہوگا۔ کابینہ نے محکمہ صحت کو ایڈ ہاک بنیادوں پر ضلعی سطح پر خالی میڈیکل افسر ایڈیٹ میڈیکل افسر ایڈیٹیشن اور ٹیچنگ کیڑ ڈاکٹروں اور سٹاف نرسز کی بھرتی کی منظوری دی اس اقدام کا مقصد صوبے کے دور دراز علاقوں کے ہسپتالوں اور صحت مراکز میں ڈاکٹروں اور طبی عملے کی کمی کو پورا کرنا ہے۔ کابینہ اجلاس میں ڈاکٹروں اور طبی عملے کی ضلعوں اور دور دراز کے علاقوں سے اپنی جائے تعیناتی سے غیر حاضری کا نوٹس لینے ہوئے محکمہ صحت کو ان کے خلاف حکمانہ کاروائی کرنے کی ہدایت کی گئی صوبائی کابینہ نے سٹاپ گیپ انتظام کے تحت صوبہ بھر کے سکولوں میں عبوری بنیادوں پر اساتذہ کی خدمات کے حصول کی منظوری دی۔ صوبائی کابینہ نے ماہی گیری کھیتوں کی رجسٹریشن کی پالیسی میں ایک مرتبہ چھوٹ دینے کی تجویز کو بھی منظور کر لیا کابینہ اجلاس میں بلوچستان فشریز آرڈیننس 1971 میں ترمیم کے تحت فشریز پیپر ولنگ سٹاف کی بحیثیت فوس تشکیل دینے کی منظوری بھی دی گئی۔ کابینہ نے کچھ ڈیلے ایکشن ڈیم پلنگ کوئی کی ڈی سلنگ کے منصوبے کی منظوری بھی دی جس سے ڈیم میں پانی ذخیرہ کرنے کی استعداد میں اضافہ ہوگا اور کوئٹہ میں پانی کی ضروریات کو بڑی حد تک پورا کیا جاسکے گا۔ اس میں شہنشاہ کی موجودہ حکومت نے 4 مہینے کی محکمہ صحت میں ملازمین کے مسائل حل کرنے، اداروں کی استعداد کار میں اضافہ اور صوبہ ترقی کیلئے جو فیصلے اور اقدامات کئے ہیں ان کی ماضی میں مثال نہیں ملتی۔ وزیر اعلیٰ میر عبدالقدوس بزنجو نے کابینہ اجلاس سے خطاب کرتے ہوئے بجا طور پر کہا کہ ان کی حکومت عوام اور عوامی نمائندوں سے کوئی چھٹی رکھنے پر یقین نہیں رکھتی اور تمام امور میں عوام کو اعتماد میں لینا ضروری سمجھتی ہے۔ حالیہ ریکورڈڈ معاہدہ اگلی واضح مثال ہے۔ چیلی بار معاہدے سے قبل اس معاملہ کو بلوچستان اسمبلی میں رکھا گیا۔ وزیر اعلیٰ نے تمام سیاسی جماعتوں کے قائدین کو اعتماد میں لیا اور بلوچستان کے اس اہم اور بڑے معرذنی ذخائر کے حوالے سے بہترین معاہدہ طے پایا جس میں بلوچستان کا حصہ تاریخ میں سب سے زیادہ متعین کیا گیا۔ وزیر اعلیٰ نے اپنی حکومت کے کام کے علاوہ صوبہ میں بہتر اور خوشگوار ماحول برقرار رکھنے کو ترجیحی اہمیت دی ہے اور یہ حقیقت ہے کہ بلوچستان کی روایات کا خیال رکھا جائے تو یہاں امن اور ترقی کیلئے سازگار ماحول کو مستحکم کرنا کوئی بڑی بات نہیں۔

## Balochistan Cabinet approves launching of health cards for 1.8m families

Syed Ali Shah

QUETTA: Balochistan cabinet has approved the launching of health cards for 1.8 million families across the province on Saturday. Chief Minister, Mir Qudus Bizenjo chaired an important meeting of the provincial cabinet, which made this important decision with regard to the provision of health facilities to the masses.

"Each family to have Rs. 1 million health card", an official handout quoting the decision of the cabinet meeting said. Secretary health Noor ul Haq Baloch thoroughly briefed the cabinet members about the importance of the health cards. Provincial ministers and secretaries attended the meeting.

The decision to issue health cards to families of Balochistan was made during former Chief Minister Jam Kamal-led government. The cabinet discussed a total of 45



points during its meeting. The Balochistan cabinet also approved health professionals and risk allowance for specific class four employees in the province.

Risk allowance approved for health department

employees

The handout stated that the cabinet approved a teaching allowance for teaching faculty members of the PGMI and Sheikh Zayed Hospital in Quetta. The cabinet also approved the food authority

bill 2022.

The cabinet meeting held under the chairmanship of CM Bizenjo made a number of decisions to address the scarcity of water issue in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan.

Cabinet approves recruitment of LMOs on ad-hoc basis

The cabinet approved the recruitment of vacant Medical Officer, Lady Medical Officer Specialist and Teaching Cadre Doctors and Staff Nurses at the District level on an ad hoc basis to the Provincial Health Department. The initiative aims to address the shortage of doctors and medical staff in hospitals and health centers in remote areas of the province.

The cabinet took serious notice of the chronic absentee doctors in various parts of Balochistan and directed the director-general of health to take strict action against them.



## QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

## Balochistan's Healthcare Crisis

In its 50-year history as a province, successive governments in Balochistan have failed to provide health facilities to the masses. It is woeful that the discussions around health policy receive little to no space on the agenda of political parties. The media continues to report the plight of government-run hospitals, polio, nutrition, and other issues. However, a meaningful debate in the media about the abysmal state of health services is virtually absent.

The result of this apathy is declining health indicators. For instance, maternal mortality rate, child mortality rate are the highest in Balochistan as compared to other parts of the country. Balochistan is the highest contributor, with an average of 785 out of 100,000 mothers dying in childbirth or related complications, while an average of 272 mothers dying in other provinces of Pakistan. Out of every 1,000 children under the age of five, 111 die in Balochistan, while other provinces have an average of 49 deaths. The data is as per the Pakistan Health Demographic Survey (PHDS) 2014.

In the aftermath of the global outbreak of COVID-19, the Balochistan government also increased the health budget and allocated Rs. 32 billion to improve health indicators. Most recently, Jam Kamal Khan led Balochistan government has announced to recruit doctors on a contract basis to overcome the shortage of health professionals. Over 3,000 vacancies of male, female doctors from medical officers to specialist cadres are lying vacant for years in Balochistan. The Balochistan Public Service Commission (BPSC) has already launched a process of tests and interviews for the recruitment of over 1,000 doctors. The process of recruitment takes over one year as per the BPSC procedures. And the government needs doctors on an emergency basis in hospitals to battle the second-wave of the novel coronavirus. The Young Doctors Association (YDA) Balochistan has rejected the government's decision and coronavirus. They demanded appointments through BPSC. YDA has directed its members not to submit applications for appointments on a contract basis.

This has created a new crisis. However, the solution is simple. The government needs to take all health professional bodies on board while making this decision functional. The doctors who have already applied through BPSC should be issued contract orders so that they could serve the ailing humanity and get paid until permanent orders. This will allow the government to implement its policies in the health department without strikes and agitation by doctors. The doctors too have to avoid agitation and strikes and avoid punishing patients. Beyond politics, the government, political parties, intelligentsia, health professionals, educationists must make health and education true priorities. Only then, this process can progress and living conditions can improve.

## PPL and the Case of Balochistan

Mehfooz Ali Khan

As Secretary of Finance, I had initiated a case for getting Balochistan in PPL, the biggest oil and gas producing company. This company owes all its assets based on Balochistan's Sui Gas Field. Unfortunately, political leadership didn't press for its due share.

Here is my analysis of PPL from inception. Recent developments have not been captured, but it tells the story.

**Overview**  
Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) has been a major player in the energy sector since the mid-1950s. As a major supplier of natural gas, PPL today contributes over 20 percent of the country's total natural gas supplies besides producing crude oil, Natural Gas Liquid, and Liquefied Petroleum Gas. The company's history can be traced back to the establishment of a public limited company in June 1950, with major shareholding by Burma Oil Company (BOC) of the United Kingdom for exploration, prospecting, development, and production of oil and natural gas resources.

PPL employees were allotted 12 percent shares from the government's equity. In September 1997, BOC disinvested from the Exploration and Production (E&P) sector worldwide and sold its equity in PPL to the Government of Pakistan (GOP). Subsequently, the government reduced its holding through an initial public offer in June 2004, which was further decreased with



the initiation of the Benazir Employees Stock Option Scheme (BESOS) in August 2009 when PPL employees were allotted 12 percent shares from the government's equity. More recently, GoP further disinvested its 5 percent shares, around 3.55 percent of the total paid-up capital, in PPL through Secondary Public Offering in 2014. Currently, the company's shareholding is divided between the government, which owns about 68 percent, PPL Employees Empowerment Trust which has approximately 7 percent, and private investors, which hold nearly 25 percent.

PPL has acquired 100 percent shareholding of MND E&P Limited, a company incorporated in England and Wales. The name of the subsidiary has been changed to PPL Europe E&P Limited. PPL operates eight producing fields across the country. The company has also established a wholly-owned subsidiary, PPL Asia E&P

which the company operates 27, including one contract in Iraq, while 20 blocks, comprising three offshore leases in Pakistan and two onshore concessions in Yemen, are operated by joint venture partners.

PPL has developed a reliable foundation and infrastructure for providing clean and safe energy.

Over the years, PPL has developed a reliable foundation and infrastructure for providing clean and safe energy through sustainable exploitation of indigenous natural resources while adhering to best practices of corporate governance and employee health and safety and constraining the ecological footprint of its operations. As a result, Monitoring and Inspection, Design and Construction, Drilling and Well Engineering, Joint Operations, Operational Technical Support Services and Projects departments, Mazarani, Admi and Kandhkot fields, Sui Field Gas Compressor Station, Sui Production, Sui Field Engineering and Sui Purification stand certified for ISO 9001 Quality Management System.

Similarly, Kandhkot, Mazarani and Admi fields, Sui Production, Sui Field Gas Compressor Station, Sui Field Stores, Sui Field Engineering and Drilling and Well Engineering, Design and Construction, Projects, Health, Safety and Environment and Exploration departments and Sui Field Hospital have been certified

for ISO 14001 Environmental Management System and OHSAS 18001 Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series. Sui Purification is also certified for OHSAS 18001.

Currently Government of Pakistan holds 68% Shares out of total shares outstanding of 676.95% Current Year

Current Financial position of PPL. Currently Government of Pakistan holds 68% Shares out of total shares outstanding of 676.95% Current Year the Company paid 80% dividend to shareholders and government of Pakistan got Rs.36.826 billion as Dividend. The net profit registered by the company was Rs.30.0 Billion. Government also earned billions in tax revenue as well. The government of Balochistan only got slightly above Rs.3.0 billion as Royalty from the Sui field. Legal position Legally after 18th Constitutional Amendment, Article 172(3), province of Origin should have an equal share in the profit of oil and gas companies operating in a province. In this case, no such arrangement has yet been made even after a lapse of 10 years. So it is the right of the province to claim its share in holding and profits of the company.

The company divested 5% shares to the public in 2014 and the government of Balochistan was not consulted in violation of the Constitution.

The author has served as the Chief Secretary of Balochistan

## A new cold war

By Malik Muhammad Ashraf

Political analysts and world watchers viewed the burgeoning rivalry between the US and China as the possible beginning of yet another cold war era. That process seems to have been hastened by the Ukraine crisis. And like the first cold war the world might see the same rivals confronting each other and dividing the world into two blocks with all its debilitating effects on world peace and security, besides its economic fall-out for the poorer nations.

The Ukraine crisis and US animosity towards China as reflected by its 'contain China policy' is likely to push Russia and China towards making a common cause against the US and its allies.

The architect of this scenario, to a great extent, is the US which also enjoys unqualified support of its allies and the members of Nato both from the cold-war era and the new entrants after the fall of the Berlin Wall and break-up of the former Soviet Union. It is pertinent to mention that after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the US assured Gorbachev that Nato would refrain from its expansion towards the east. Many Western allies of the US and Nato members also reiterated this pledge. But after the dismemberment of the Soviet Union into 15 independent countries, the assurances given to the former Soviet leader were violated unilaterally. The Baltic States and seven of the eight former

members of the Warsaw Pact were taken into Nato's fold.

Since 2008, efforts were also on the anvil to woo Georgia and Ukraine to join Nato. Putin was strongly opposed to the proposition which he considered a threat to Russia's security, and rightly so. Independent observers believe that the crisis is a sequel to flawed US diplomacy over the years which included wriggling out of the commitment given to Russia regarding Nato not expanding towards the east; the US sponsored coup in Ukraine which catapulted a pro-US regime into power; withdrawal of the US from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Missile Treaty and placement of such missiles in Poland in 2019; and the overdrive exhibited by US against the opening of a pipeline Nord Stream 2 which would supply Russian gas to Germany. The US and its allies have also been exhibiting the determination to keep the possibility of Ukraine joining Nato open — maintaining that Ukraine had the sovereign right to take decisions about its future orientation.

With a view to counter the machinations of the US and its allies and to put pressure on Ukraine to refrain from joining Nato, Russia has been supporting separatists in eastern Ukraine who have been at war with the central government since 2014. Putin also demanded legal guarantees for Russian security in

December 2021 in the form of draft treaties with the US and Nato.

The proposed treaties demanded Nato to rule out its further expansion eastwards; Nato foregoing military cooperation with Ukraine; non-deployment of Nato troops and weapons on the soil of its members in Eastern Europe. The adoption of the demanded treaties would have put Nato under obligation to dismantle its forces stationed in Poland and Baltic states. The treaties would have also required the US to withdraw nuclear weapons from Europe without any reciprocal concessions from Russia. However, diplomatic engagements between Russia and the US and Nato on these demands failed to make any headway.

Instead, the US offered to discuss limiting missile deployments in Europe, putting curbs on military drills and other confidence-building measures to which Russian response was in the negative as it did not consider the proposition as a plausible solution to her security concerns. It was in the backdrop of the foregoing developments that Russia amassed its troops on its borders with Ukraine because it wanted to dissuade Ukraine from joining Nato at any cost. The deployment of troops created an alarming situation.

To defuse the situation the American president held several sessions of talks with Putin to find a diplomatic solution to the

crisis. A number of European leaders including French President Macron and German Chancellor Scholz also visited Moscow, but no breakthrough could be achieved. The US and its allies also threatened Russia with serious consequences in case it invaded Ukraine, but Russia refused to bow to these intimidations and launched a military offensive against Ukraine 24 February 24. Before the blitzkrieg Russia also extended recognition to Eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk of Ukraine and contended that the military action was in response to the letters written by the separatist leaders to save them from attacks by the Ukrainian army.

The US and its Nato allies have responded with clamping multiple sanctions against Russia besides efforts at the UN to condemn the Russian action urging it to cease hostilities and give diplomacy a chance. Russia has employed its own sanctions against the US and the countries of the European Union and refuses to pay heed to what the US and its allies are demanding. As is evident, it would not settle on anything less than guarantees about Ukraine not joining Nato. That assurance does not seem to be coming forth at the moment.

Meanwhile, the president of Ukraine has expressed his disappointment over the US and European response to the Russian attack. It wants

direct intervention by them to stop Russia in its tracks. Nato has also not agreed to his proposal for a no-fly zone, with the Nato chief saying that the alliance would not intervene in the conflict over fears of a direct clash with Moscow that could spiral into a nuclear war. The US and its allies are however more than willing to supply arms to Ukraine to ward off Russian aggression and inflict economic pain on Russia. Looks like Ukraine will have to fight it out itself or succumb to Russian demands. My hunch is that though the US and Nato will not intervene directly, they will make sure that Russia remains bogged down there for a long time.

It looks like a long drawn-out conflict. In the meantime, while China has emphasised a diplomatic solution to the crisis, it has strongly supported Russia's security concerns and also refrained from voting against a resolution condemning Russian attack on Ukraine at the UNSC. If the conflict prolongs and the US and its allies persist with their 'contain China policy' it would surely bring Russia and China together. Such a scenario would have a serious impact on the entire region and countries like Pakistan would find it very difficult to formulate a foreign policy that saves them from the negative fall-out of the likely commencement of the new cold-war.

## Life: thy name is tragedy

Ali Hassan Bangwar

Though the phenomenological experience of life is considered as the greatest of realities, its taste and texture are not the same for all souls. For some, it is about wealth and possessions; for others, life is a barren landscape. But for someone with a poor and humble background, life turns out to be a necessary evil — a tragedy.

Survival and continuity of life demands a sufficient supply of abiotic needs including water, food, clothing and shelter. In order to acquire these needs hard labour is required. The life of these souls gets entangled into the tireless though unfulfilled journey to nowhere. They have within their proverbial heart a cemetery where their dreams, desires, likes and wishes are decomposed and buried altogether. Through their all-out endeavours they conquer insurmountable challenges only to be welcomed by the more obstacles. In this backdrop, a person from a poor background is left with two alternatives: i) to continue to suffer the fate for generations; or ii) to dare for more and challenge the system. The latter is more rewarding though testing. For children from lower-income households, getting an education entails high risk but it comes with the highest social and personal reward. However,

the road to education for these students isn't plain sailing as early school years pass in deprivation. The exorbitantly lavish display of possessions by students from affluent and elite backgrounds open up a new barrage of wishes and desires in them. Sacrificing these desires and needs is what becomes a habit for them. Missing educational tours and gatherings due to financial constraints on the pretext of "exams" or "illnesses" are but the only viable option they are left with. Skipping meals to save a few rupees is yet another survival technique. The life of these students is filled with such compromises. Hailing from a humble background I remember how I had to wait around half an hour for the public transport to commute to my school in Kandhkot which was around 7km from my village. The memories of making it into the city on the villager's donkey cart or other forms of transport are still fresh in my heart and mind. The words of my classmates who had mockingly asked in front of others if I had only a single school uniform to wear still echo in my ears. Nothing is as tormenting for a struggling student as the toxic mindset and malignant social attitudes prevailing in our society. In the social fabric interwoven in ultra-materialistic outlooks, external appearance and attire are

what define the value of a person. In the crudest sense, the brand of clothes is what one is judged by. The allure of kind gestures and high morals is being increasingly overshadowed by materialistic attributes. In the face of this, for a student constrained by his socio-economic condition, survival becomes overwhelmingly arduous. A poor student is thus treated by many as if he/she is a subhuman who doesn't have the right to compete or grow. The discourteous and insolent behaviour of the administration and staff of educational institutions that I had witnessed is what I pray no poor student comes across in life.

However, despite the extent of these challenges, such students should realise that life is worth pursuing. We can't control what we are born with. We can however change the fate and future of our life and the coming generations by working hard and embodying exalted humanistic values such as respect, empathy, compassion and altruism. A rewarding future does not require a rewarding past. In retrospect, all hardships and challenges turn out to be blessings in disguise since they prepare one for a greater assignment. There is a need to do away with the toxic and discouraging social psyche prevalent in our educational institutions and in society. It's time.

## Importance of civic environmental knowledge

Muhammad Zaheer

While I write these lines, a dense greyish layer covers the atmosphere outside my window, limiting the visibility to just a few feet. I hear my two kids — under five — periodically coughing while asleep from the other room. Our physician blames Lahore's bad air for their respiratory condition. The outside scenery, a burning smell in the air, and coughing kids remind me of the LUMS Environmental Action Forum (LEAF) panel discussion a few days back. While answering a question, Punjab's environmental minister reiterated that Lahore's current atmospheric conditions are not smog.

Rather, a private company overestimates air pollution with their faulty low-cost monitors and misguides the public to sell their air purifiers. He shared the figures from Punjab's health department to support his claim. The number of hospital visits due to respiratory symptoms was around 97,000 during the first week of March this year which declined to just a few thousand in late November. While the low-cost sensors overestimate particulate air pollution under high humidity (>75%) conditions and are not the reference instruments for regulatory air monitoring, they at

least provide guidelines values for the citizens to plan their outdoor activities during high pollution hours.

The performance of low-cost monitors can be enhanced by calibrating them against standard reference instruments — at least three currently available with the EPD. The private sector (IQAir) and the EPD cooperation can potentially enhance the current monitoring capacity ten times. Reliable emission data is the bottleneck for all policy interventions towards mitigating air pollution. Regarding patients with respiratory symptoms, a quick look at the figures shows that the fourth wave of Covid-19 was at a surge in March, and the number of daily cases touched 4,000 by the end of March. This number significantly dropped to less than 500 daily cases in November. Therefore, claiming a minor impact of air pollution on people's health based on these numbers is not correct. The minister emphasised adding environment to the curriculum, which is an excellent suggestion.

The terms such as water, carbon and ecological footprints, air quality indices, and particulate matter are essential in understanding environmental issues and their root causes. Sound environmental knowledge in early school education will create awareness and

prepare a more environmentally sensitive generation. Environmental problems, nevertheless, are complex and would need long-term planning. To what level we understand environmental issues is exemplified by a recent advertisement by Pakistan Science Foundation. The foundation called for research proposals from public and private institutes of higher education (HEIs) to address smog issues in Pakistan through indigenous research and innovation.

The guideline document for this competitive research programme mentions "photochemical smog", which is not the kind of smog we observe in Lahore or anywhere in Pakistan. Photochemical smog — also known as California smog — is a brown haze mainly observed in metropolitan cities during summers. It is created by the chemical reaction of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) with nitrogen oxides (NOx) and contains ozone as one of the principal components. The Lahore smog, on the other hand, consists of particles with diameters 10 (PM10) and 2.5 (PM2.5) micron along with NOx and is similar to the famous London smog in the early 50s. The other viable suggestions to mitigate smog include lowering the fuel's sulfur content, which would otherwise

choke the catalytic converters — a vehicular device that breaks down the particulate and gaseous pollutants to environmentally benign forms. A policy could be formulated to enforce the installation of catalytic converters in all kinds of vehicles. According to the World Bank, outdoor air pollution in Pakistan accounts for 22,000 premature adult deaths annually. We need to take emergency measures to make the air breathable for us and generations to come. Bringing environment as an essential component of our curriculum could be one of such measures with a positive impact in the long run. Rather, a private company overestimates air pollution with their faulty low-cost monitors and misguides the public to sell their air purifiers. He shared the figures from Punjab's health department to support his claim. The number of hospital visits due to respiratory symptoms was around 97,000 during the first week of March this year which declined to just a few thousand in late November. While the low-cost sensors overestimate particulate air pollution under high humidity (>75%) conditions and are not the reference instruments for regulatory air monitoring, they at least provide guidelines values for the citizens to plan their outdoor activities during high pollution

hours. The performance of low-cost monitors can be enhanced by calibrating them against standard reference instruments — at least three currently available with the EPD. The private sector (IQAir) and the EPD cooperation can potentially enhance the current monitoring capacity ten times. Reliable emission data is the bottleneck for all policy interventions towards mitigating air pollution. Regarding patients with respiratory symptoms, a quick look at the figures shows that the fourth wave of Covid-19 was at a surge in March, and the number of daily cases touched 4,000 by the end of March. This number significantly dropped to less than 500 daily cases in November. Therefore, claiming a minor impact of air pollution on people's health based on these numbers is not correct. The minister emphasised adding environment to the curriculum, which is an excellent suggestion.

The terms such as water, carbon and ecological footprints, air quality indices, and particulate matter are essential in understanding environmental issues and their root causes. Sound environmental knowledge in early school education will create awareness and prepare a more environmentally sensitive generation. Environmental

## can spring be far behind!

Haroon Rashid Siddiqi

The recent political developments in Pakistan have at least clarified a lot of ambiguities about the direction our country is heading towards. The whisper is becoming resounding that Imran Khan had to chew his words on the resolve of establishing the writ of the state in dealing with TLP. Understandably, the slogan TLP uses as a driving force in its rank and file is so potent, resonant and sacrosanct that none can dare to differ, defy or deny their philosophy of politics so craftily constructed. I wonder what Allama Iqbal had really meant when he conceived this verse: *Jalal e badshahi ho ke jamhoori tamasha ho; jeda ho deen siyassat sai to reh jati hai changeeri*. Otherwise, we all know for sure that Allama was dead against the traditional mullayati, peeri, faqeri and mazaar parasti. Even Ruhollah Khomeini had said: "Islam is politics or it is nothing." But I don't intend digging too deep into the philosophy of contemporary religious thought across the divide. Late Khadim Hussain Rizvi was a gifted demagogue and a high caliber cognitive scientist. The religious cum political party established by him is all set to become a major political player in Pakistan in the years ahead. Seldom does it happen that the sudden exit of the founding leader of a party does not leave any vacuum of his leadership and legacy which in this case has been instantly filled by his son,

Saad Hussain Rizvi, recently released from jail by the government. Don't get surprised if you see an electoral alliance between PTI and TLP in the next general elections. Even the bill passed in the parliament giving rights to the overseas Pakistanis to cast their votes in the elections is likely to benefit PTI in having a fairly large constituency of fresh electoral support.

The political and state structure in Pakistan is historically under the siege of an elite class which has made deep inroads in all key elements of the country's functional apparatus. Consequently, the rotten and amoral structure of the state needs to be completely obliterated first and then reconstructed anew if Pakistan has to become a self-reliant, prosperous and civilised nation in the world. Noam Chomsky has rightly maintained in one of his discourses: "I think it only makes sense to seek out and identify structures of authority, hierarchy, and domination in every aspect of life, and challenge them; unless a justification for them can be given, they are illegitimate, and should be dismantled to increase the scope of human freedom [and development]." I personally feel that the scourge of religious fanaticism and other kinds of terrorism within our country is actually an outcome of the increasing gulf between the haves and the have-nots resulting from a prolonged economic disparity and deprivation amongst the

common people. A new social contract between all stakeholders is the battle cry of the day or else the country will continue to face an existential threat.

The economy in Pakistan is in shambles. It would be unjust to attribute the cataclysm to Imran Khan except that he misread the pitch after winning the toss on the container and electing to bat. Yet the captain has to take the blame for picking up a team of relu kattas, except for some, if I were to use one of his own cricketing jargons. IMF is coercing Pakistan to legislate and provide an unheard-of constitutional immunity to their appointed Governor and his institution in the garb of autonomy and independence which even our own President and the Prime Minister do not enjoy. The free float of the rupee against the dollar and whimsical determination of the interest rate will prove economic tools of mass destruction apparently in the hands of Reza Baqir acting as a loose cannon for IMF. It is much better that we now stop knocking at the door of IMF and face the shortage of greenbacks through homegrown remedies. I have stopped listening to Imran Khan's hollow solace when he says ghabrana nahi he. But this qitab by Faiz does assuage the bleeding heart: *go sab ko baham saghar o baada to nahin tha; ye shahr udaas itna ziyada to nahin tha; galiyon mai phira karte thi do chaar divane; har shakhs ka sad chaak labada to nahin tha.*



## Pakistan Railways digitalizes its land record: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Railways (PR) has digitalized 168,858 acres of its land spread over 108 sections in the country - including the operational, built-up, and agricultural land, WealthPK reported.

The land has been digitalized under the Land Management Information System (LMIS), which will help the railway authorities in accessing their land, including the encroached one, within no time.

All related data is available on the railways' website. With this software/application, the PR will keep track of its agricultural, residential, and commercial lands across

the country.

The Pakistan Railways has 83,138 acres of land in Punjab, 45,663 acres in Sindh, 23,771 acres in Balochistan and 16,286 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Azam Khan Swati said all the information and data relating to the railway's land is digitalized and available at their fingertips. He said the ministry was considering changing its land department Real Estate Development and Management Company (REDAMCO) to a new company - Land Management Company - through amendments to the railway acts.

Currently, REDAMCO has two responsibilities, i.e., building up and leasing the railway's land, while the Land Management Company will be responsible for looking after of all the railway's land.

Swati said the Land Management Company will have its board of directors and chief executive officer and will also be made independent. No railway officer or minister can interfere in his duties. In contrast, the company's sole priority will be revenue generation from leasing out the lands. According to the data available with WealthPK, the Pakistan Railways land under INP



ISLAMABAD: Policemen stand guard during a protest called by activists of ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) after Pakistan's president dissolved the National Assembly on the advice of Prime Minister Imran Khan, in front of the National Assembly in Federal Capital.

## Turkish agency to set up centre for Women economic empowerment in Islamabad: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) and the Pakistan Baitul Maal (PBM) have signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a packaging centre for the clothing products prepared at the PBM's women empowerment centres (WECs), according to WealthPK.

The first WEC was established in Azad Jammu and Kashmir in 1995 for equipping widows and orphans with income generating skills. Since then, 161 WECs have been set up all over Pakistan, providing specialised training in tailoring, interior decoration, cooking, computer literacy, etc.

The finishing centre, to be established in Islamabad's F-9 park, will serve as a facility for giving final touches to the products produced at WECs. As per the plan, commercial space in a central location of Islamabad is to be acquired for selling the products.

To multiply the dividends of the initiative, 75% of the profits will be distributed among the students/producers, while the remaining chunk will be utilised for upgradation of the WECs.

TIKA, established to assist Turkish-speaking communities in different countries following the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991, has planned 50 projects in Pakistan during the year 2022, according to WealthPK.

In the past, TIKA's projects in Pakistan have focused on key areas, including installation of solar panels, construction of medical facilities and exchange of locust fighting technology.

Talking about the initiative, PBM managing director Malik Zaheer Abbas Khokhar remarked, "It is the vision of the government to bring the women in the mainstream so as to ensure their economic wellbeing." As per the PBM data, WECs have so far produced 190,222 graduates with 19,888 currently enrolled in various streams of specialisation. INP

## Orange Line Metro-driver receives prize of outstanding CPEC staff member

ISLAMABAD: Orange Line Metro-driver Muhammad Shah Zareen Khan who received prize as an outstanding CPEC staff member says he is proud of his work, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Sunday.

The year 2016 was the darkest period for him. The aggravating illness of his mother and mounting medical expenses put him under considerable pressure.

"I had lost my father, and I couldn't imagine what life would be like without my mother", Muhammad recalled when talking to Gwadar Pro.

In dire need of a well-paid job, Muhammad Shah Zareen Khan, hailing from Sharaq pur, a small city of Punjab, joined the Orange Line Metro Train project which was launched in September 2015.

His main job was to drive the Chinese officials to and from the meeting venues and the airports. Focus, control, and speed, Muhammad Shah Zareen Khan shuttles in the Lahore city, with views outside the window flashing by.

He is no stranger to the fleeting scenery. As a veteran driver and a travelling enthusiast, he had driven around the northern area of the province

numerous times. From twisting mountain roads to deep valleys, he feasted his eyes on the splendid scenery in nature. When asked about the most difficult part of driving, he said, "to make the right at every crossroad".

"My interest in driving was developed in college, when I drove the school van for three to four years. That was the point I learned to manage difficulties in life responsibly because I had to pick or drop children from school or home at any cost", Muhammad told Gwadar Pro.

Having learned how to drive 25 years ago, Muhammad didn't go into this profession right after graduation. In an agriculture-based country, Muhammad tried different professions, from farmer, to pesticide seller, to shop keeper.

"For me, it is an inspiring experience to get exposed to various landscape and people through working and travelling. It also helps with my driving, because to be a driver is not all about manipulating a car. It's also about getting in touch with different people from different backgrounds and feeling the impulses of the city", Muhammad said.

He became a regular visitor of meeting venues and airports, and kept

updated about the Orange Line project in an usual way. In his connection with the Chinese officials of the project, he has a chance to feel in person the "Pakistan-China friendship" that he had only seen in textbook. "I was treated as an equal, a brother. I feel respected on the driver's seat, and honored to receive the prize as an outstanding CPEC staff member".

Muhammad drove 400 to 500 km per day, with Special Protection Squad (SPU) alongside to ensure their safety. As the mileage of his car accrued, the tracks of Orange Line became longer and longer.

Never been a speaker on one of those meetings he drove to or a worker laying the tracks, Muhammad was involved in the project in a unique way. "I'm part of this historical project, and luckily, I can also adopt a standby's view, watching it evolve day by day, year by year. I was amazed by the 'Chinese efficiency'. I have never seen a mass transit system under construction, and every day, I was surprised to see its rapid progress".

Six years ago, he was driving with the rumbles of construction machinery working on the Orange Line, and now, around his ears is the roaring of metros. INP



MUZAFFRABAD: People offering nimaz-e-janzah of Lt Col Asif Ali Awan, At least eight UN peacekeepers including six Pakistan Army officers and soldiers were martyred after their helicopter crashed in Democratic Republic of Congo.

## Orange Line Metro-driver receives prize of outstanding CPEC staff member

ISLAMABAD: Orange Line Metro-driver Muhammad Shah Zareen Khan who received prize as an outstanding CPEC staff member says he is proud of his work, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Sunday.

The year 2016 was the darkest period for him. The aggravating illness of his mother and mounting medical expenses put him under considerable pressure.

"I had lost my father, and I couldn't imagine what life would be like without my mother", Muhammad recalled when talking to Gwadar Pro.

In dire need of a well-paid job, Muhammad Shah Zareen Khan, hailing from Sharaq pur, a small city of Punjab, joined the Orange Line Metro Train project which was launched in September 2015.

His main job was to drive the Chinese officials to and from the meeting venues and the

airports. Focus, control, and speed, Muhammad Shah Zareen Khan shuttles in the Lahore city, with views outside the window flashing by.

He is no stranger to the fleeting scenery. As a veteran driver and a travelling enthusiast, he had driven around the northern area of the province numerous times. From twisting mountain roads to deep valleys, he feasted his eyes on the splendid scenery in nature. When asked about the most difficult part of driving, he said, "to make the right at every crossroad".

"My interest in driving was developed in college, when I drove the school van for three to four years. That was the point I learned to manage difficulties in life responsibly because I had to pick or drop children from school or home at any cost", Muhammad told Gwadar Pro. Having learned how to drive 25 years ago,

Muhammad didn't go into this profession right after graduation. In an agriculture-based country, Muhammad tried different professions, from farmer, to pesticide seller, to shop keeper.

"For me, it is an inspiring experience to get exposed to various landscape and people through working and travelling. It also helps with my driving, because to be a driver is not all about manipulating a car. It's also about getting in touch with different people from different backgrounds and feeling the impulses of the city", Muhammad said.

He became a regular visitor of meeting venues and airports, and kept updated about the Orange Line project in an usual way. In his connection with the Chinese officials of the project, he has a chance to feel in person the "Pakistan-China friendship" that he had only seen in textbook. INP

## Despite tensions, US wants Pakistan to play its role in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON: Despite growing tensions in bilateral ties, the United States still wants Pakistan to continue playing its role in bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan.

On March 31, both Pakistan and the United States participated in yet another meeting of the so-called Extended Troika for Afghanistan, which also includes Russia and China.

All four countries sent their special envoys for Afghanistan to the ancient Chinese city of Tunxi which also hosted the foreign ministers of China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan for another meeting. After the troika meeting, a spokesperson for the Chinese Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Wang Wenbin, noted that "China, the US, Russia and Pakistan are all countries with significant influence on the Afghan issue," a key point that also echoed at a US State Department's latest news briefing. "These are countries that have a good degree of leverage with the Taliban, and the 'Extended Troika' has, in the past, been a constructive forum, and it is critical that the international community remain united in its approach to Afghanistan," State Department spokesperson Ned Price said. INP

## President dissolves national assembly on PM Imran Khan's advice

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Arif Alvi has approved an advice from Prime Minister Imran Khan regarding dissolution of National Assembly.

Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry took to Twitter and said that under Article 224 of the Constitution, the prime minister will continue to perform his duties while federal cabinet stands dissolved.

Prime Minister Imran Khan on Sunday in an address to the Nation announced to dissolve the assemblies.

Immediately after Deputy Speaker Qasim Khan Suri ruled to reject the no-trust motion from the opposition parties against Prime Minister Imran Khan, over having links with the foreign conspiracy, the prime minister announced dissolution of assemblies in an address to the nation.

The prime minister in his address called the no-trust motion against him a "foreign agenda" and congratulated the nation over the motion rejected in the National Assembly.

"It was a foreign agenda, I want to tell the people don't get disturb the God is looking over the nation," PM Imran Khan said. "The Speaker has decided to use his authority," he said. "I have sent an advice to the President for dissolution of the assemblies," prime minister said. "The people have to decide what will be the future," the prime minister said. INP



ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani arrives at the Parliament House building in Federal Capital.

## Punjab Assembly session to elect new CM adjourned till April 6

LAHORE: Following the decision of the Deputy Speaker of National Assembly Qasim Suri to adjourn the NA session for an indefinite period, the Punjab Assembly session has also been adjourned till April 6 (Wednesday).

The Opposition was hopeful of a PML-N leader Hamza Shahbaz; however, following Prime Minister Imran Khan's "surprise" regarding assembly dissolution, the announcement regarding the postponement was made.

The Punjab Assembly session lasted for nearly six minutes following which the decision was made; however, the party members got into a heated argument.

Commenting on the development PTI leader Fayyaz ul Hassan Chauhan said that members of the Jahangir Tareen Group will also be available by April 6.

It is worth mentioning that the prized slot fell vacant after the resignation of Sardar Usman Buzdar following a deal between the ruling PTI and PML-Q few days back. Both candidates need at least 186 votes in the House of 371 to win the poll for the slot of CM Punjab. The News reported. With the full House comprising 371 MPAs, PML-N seems highly optimistic of regaining the crown of Punjab that it lost in 2018. The Opposition claims that its joint strength comprising its own 160 MPAs (PML-N total strength is 165 out of which five MPAs are siding with the government), seven MPAs of PPP and rest from the rebel groups of PTI headed by Jehangir Khan Tareen (JKT) and Abdul Aleem Khan and four out of five independents, stands above 188.

On the other hand, the ruling coalition candidate has also used his experience and influence in winning the support of JKT group MPAs and publicly, MPA Raftaq Gilani, a part of JKT group has claimed that he was "siding with Imran and cannot leave him in crucial time".

Raftaq claims that nearly five to six MPAs of JKT group, who are PTI MPAs would vote for Parvez Elahi. Raftaq Gilani had reached PA along with Chaudhry Moonis Elahi, son of Chaudhry Parvez Elahi.

On the other hand, Malik Nauman Langrial, Saeed Niwani, Tahir Randhawa and many other MPAs of PTI have openly announced to support Hamza in the CM contest. Malik Nauman Langrial also held a press conference with Hamza in which he announced support to PML-N.

Earlier, the nomination papers of Parvez Elahi and Hamza Shehbaz were accepted. The polling will take place on Sunday and Deputy Speaker Mir Dost Muhammad Mazari will preside over the PA session. The PA session on Saturday started with a delay of nearly three hours and continued for a brief period in which the schedule for the poll and procedure was announced. Nevertheless, the PA remained full of political activity and senior leaders like Rana Sana Ullah Khan, Chaudhry Moonis Elahi, Atta Ullah Tarar, Raja Basharat were seen in the PA Secretariat.

Addressing the joint parliamentary meeting of the PTI and PML-Q, Parvez Elahi, meanwhile, had said the first Ramadan will bring the good news of victory for us. INP

## Hamza Shehbaz vs Pervaiz Elahi: Punjab Assembly session adjourned

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly session adjourned till April 6, in which the Members of Provincial Assembly (MPA) were supposed to vote for the next Chief Minister of Punjab.

According to details, a total of 371 MNAs will vote for the leader of the Punjab Assembly with Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leader Chaudhry Parvez Elahi and Hamza Shahbaz of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) contesting for the office.

The new Leader of the House will be elected on the basis of Division of the House.

Meanwhile, Prime

Minister Imran Khan has asked all members of Punjab Assembly to ensure their vote to Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi for the election of the Chief Minister.

In a tweet, Imran Khan said any PTI MPA going against party direction, including abstaining from vote, will be disqualified and will face strict disciplinary action.

Govt removes Chaudhry Sarwar as Governor Punjab

In a surprising turn of events, federal government has removed Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar as Governor Punjab. Federal Minister for Information and

Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry on Sunday said that government will announce the new appointee later on.

The minister further said that Deputy Speaker of Punjab Assembly will be acting Governor Punjab. Opposition claims support of 205 MPAs in Punjab. The joint opposition on Saturday has claimed the support of 205 MPAs as the Punjab Assembly will go to vote on Sunday (April 3) to elect new Chief Minister Punjab. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and the joint opposition candidate for the post of Chief Minister Punjab, Humza Shahbaz,

hosted a dinner in honor of the groups and members of the assembly who have announced their support for the Chief Minister's election.

During the dinner, Aleem Khan group, Tareen group and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) formally announced their support for Hamza Shahbaz for the post of Punjab Chief Minister.

Earlier, Hamza Shahbaz held a meeting with nine members of the Aleem Khan group at the Abdul Aleem Khan's office. Two cabinet ministers of Usman Buzdar government Asad Khokhar and Ijaz Alam also announced their sup-

port for Hamza Shahbaz.

Meanwhile, PPP leader Nadeem Afzal Chan has claimed that the joint opposition will emerge victorious in the Chief Minister Punjab election as they have support of over 205 members.

Group of disgruntled Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Jahangir Tareen on Saturday formally announced support for joint opposition candidate Hamza Shahbaz for slot of Chief Minister of Punjab. Tareen group's Noman Langrial, while addressing a press conference with opposition leader of Punjab Assembly, said that they have taken. INP



LAHORE: A large numbers of women gathered to collecting free Desi Ghee in connection with holy month of Ramadan, in a house at Dharam Pura area in Provincial Capital.

## Omar Sarfraz Cheema sworn in as new Governor Punjab

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding member, Omar Sarfraz Cheema was sworn as new Governor Punjab on Sunday. President Dr. Arif Alvi appointed Omar Sarfraz Cheema as Governor Punjab under Article 101 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, after federal government on advice of PM Imran Khan removed Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar over his contacts with members of the dissident group.

Chief Justice Lahore High Court (LHC), Muhammad Ameer Bhatti took oath from the newly appointed Governor Punjab. INP

## No-Trust motion an int'l conspiracy, foiled: Hammad Azhar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader, Hammad Azhar has said that No-Trust motion was an international conspiracy and was foiled.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said that some powers wanted to have a control over the foreign policy of the country.

However, Hammad Azhar said that now these power would try to escape but the masses would not let them to run.

The PTI leaders said that some traitors in affiliation of their foreign masters hatched conspiracy to destabilize the country but they would not allowed to succeed in their nefarious designs. INP

## ITP erects special squads to curb on-wheeling, road stunt activities in Capital

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has constituted special squads to curb on-wheeling and road stunt activities in the city.

The special squads have been erected on directives of Inspector General of Police Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younis, to check practices of one wheeling, car racing and rash driving which not only put the lives of violators in danger but also of other road users.

The special squads and various teams of the ITP would continuously patrol in various areas of the city especially in 7th avenue, 9th avenue, Margallah Road, Kashmir Highway, Expressway, Murree Road to take action against speedsters who play stunt on roads.

The policemen of these teams and squad performing in these areas would ensure special vigilance and stopping youngsters to get involved in these stunts putting their lives on risk.

SSP (Traffic) Mazhar Iqbal said that strict action would be taken against one-wheelers and rash drivers. INP



# Saleh Muhammad Nasar appointed as Secretary Health Balochistan

News Desk

QUETTA: Saleh Muhammad Nasar, a grade-20 officer has been appointed as the Secretary of Health Balochistan on Sunday. According to a notification issued by the Services and General



Administration Department (S&GAD). Noor ul Haq Baloch, a grade-20 officer has been transferred and directed to report to the S&GAD.

The transfer of Mr. Baloch was one of the demands of the protesting Young Doctors

Association (YDA) Balochistan. YDA has been boycotting OPDs of government-run hospitals for last more than six months.

Patients remained the worst sufferers of the doctors' strike in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan.

## Ukraine accuses Russia of civilian 'massacre'; Russia denies this

BUCHA: Ukraine on Sunday accused Russian forces of carrying out a "massacre" in the town of Bucha, while Western nations reacted to images of dead bodies there with calls for new sanctions against Moscow.

Russia's defence ministry denied the Ukrainian allegations, saying footage and photographs showing bodies in Bucha were "yet another provocation" by

the Ukrainian government. The images from Bucha came after Ukraine said on Saturday its forces had reclaimed control of the whole Kyiv region and liberated towns from Russian troops. They prompted outrage in Ukraine and abroad, adding to pressure on Russian President Vladimir Putin by increasing the likelihood of further Western sanctions. Web Desk



ISLAMABAD: Police personals arresting women sputters of ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) during a protest in front of the National Assembly in Federal Capital, after Pakistan's president dissolved the National Assembly on the advice of Prime Minister Imran Khan.

## No Confidence Motion: PPP'S Bilawal Bhutto accuses NA speaker for constitution breach

ISLAMABAD: Member of the National Assembly and Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Sunday accused the Speaker of violating the constitution following the dismissal of the no-confidence motion.

The People's Party chairman made the statement in a video following the crucial assembly session in which the voting on the no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan was to take place.

The son of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and President Asif Ali Zardari said that the premier along with the speaker and the world have seen that the joint opposition had the majority of votes of the members.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said the prime minister exposed himself with his childish acts and ran away from a fight. He said that the parliament cannot be dissolved and the voting on no-confidence has to take place at any cost. He urged the people to support the constitution and democracy and do not allow their rights to be taken away from them.

'No-Confidence Motion session'  
The National Assembly session to vote on no-trust motion was prorogued after Deputy Speaker Qasim Khan Suri ruled to reject no-

trust motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan over having links with the foreign conspiracy.

Fawad Chaudhry presented before the deputy speaker that the no-trust move was brought with the support of a foreign conspiracy and therefore the chair should give its ruling on the matter before deciding on the no-trust move.

The deputy speaker said it has been confirmed that the no-trust motion is being brought forward with the international conspiracy and therefore it has been rejected.

"The points raised by law minister are valid and the no-trust motion is against the constitution," he said.

In an address to the nation later, Imran Khan called the no-trust motion against him a 'foreign agenda' and congratulated the nation over the motion rejected in the National Assembly.

"It was a foreign agenda, I want to tell the people don't get disturb the God is looking over the nation," PM Imran Khan said.

President of Pakistan Arif Alvi approved advice from Prime Minister Imran Khan regarding the dissolution of the National Assembly. INP

## Four impersonating secret agency officials held

PESHAWAR: The police arrested four fraudster impersonating as secret agency officials here on Sunday. A vehicle was impounded, arms and fake service cards of spy agency were recovered from their possession.

On a tip-off, SP Saddar Farhan Khan along with SHO Sarband police station Sardar Hussain and police team intercepted a vehicle heading to Peshawar from district Khyber.

After investigation, the police arrested four fraudsters including Ijaz s/o Razaq Khan, Abdul Ameen s/o Aziz Muhammad, Muhammad Anas s/o Azmat Khan and Muhammad Abbas s/o Wali Khan. The police arrested four fraudster impersonating as secret agency officials here on Sunday. A vehicle was impounded, arms and fake service cards of spy agency were recovered from their possession.

On a tip-off, SP Saddar Farhan Khan along with SHO Sarband police station Sardar Hussain and police team intercepted a vehicle heading to Peshawar from district Khyber.

After investigation, the police arrested four fraudsters including Ijaz s/o Razaq Khan, Abdul Ameen s/o Aziz Muhammad, Muhammad Anas s/o Azmat Khan and Muhammad Abbas s/o Wali Khan.

A case was registered against the detainees and they were being investigated. INP

## First 'Iftar': IGP joins policemen deputated on law & order duty in Capital

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younis on Sunday did 'Iftar' with policemen deputated on law and order duty in the federal capital.

While encouraging the police personnel, he said every jawan of Islamabad police was determined to perform his duties during the scorching heat.

"I am proud of the professionalism, bravery and good faith with which every officer of Islamabad Police has performed his duties during the last several days of political activities," said IGP Ahsan Younis.

The Capital Police Chief urged them to accomplish their responsibilities in professional manner during the holy month of Ramadan and continue the work with zeal and zest.

The purpose of this activity was to keep morale of personnel of Islamabad police high as they were ensuring protection to the lives and property of the citizens in this critical time.

All the police officials also had 'Iftar' with their subordinates performing duties across the city. "I am proud of the professionalism, bravery and good faith with which every officer of Islamabad Police has performed his duties during the last several days of political activities," said IGP Ahsan Younis. The Capital Police Chief urged them to accomplish their responsibilities in professional manner during the holy month of Ramadan and continue the work with zeal and zest. INP



ISLAMABAD: Rangers security personals stands alert during Opposition parties and Supporters of ruling party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) protest outside National Assembly in Federal Capital.

## Turkish agency to set up centre for Women economic empowerment in Islamabad: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) and the Pakistan Baitul Maal (PBM) have signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a packaging centre for the clothing products prepared at the PBM's women empowerment centres (WECs), according to WealthPK.

The first WEC was established in Azad Jammu and Kashmir in 1995 for equipping widows and orphans with income generating skills. Since then, 161 WECs have been set up all over Pakistan, providing specialised training in tailoring, interior decoration, cooking, computer literacy, etc.

The finishing centre, to be established in Islamabad's F-9 park, will serve as a facility for giving final touches to the products produced at WECs. As per the plan, commercial space in a central location of Islamabad is to be acquired for selling the products.

To multiply the dividends of the initiative, 75% of the profits will be

distributed among the students/producers, while the remaining chunk will be utilised for upgradation of the WECs.

TIKA, established to assist Turkish-speaking communities in different countries following the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991, has planned 50 projects in Pakistan during the year 2022, according to WealthPK.

In the past, TIKA's projects in Pakistan have focused on key areas, including installation of solar panels, construction of medical facilities and exchange of locust fighting technology.

Talking about the initiative, PBM managing director Malik Zaheer Abbas Khokhar remarked, "It is the vision of the government to bring the women in the mainstream so as to ensure their economic wellbeing." As per the PBM data, WECs have so far produced 190,222 graduates with 19,888 currently enrolled in various streams of specialisation. INP

## Sarwar lashes out at PTI, says appointing Buzdar was 'real conspiracy'

Former Punjab governor and PTI leader Chaudhry Sarwar on Sunday heavily criticised the PTI leadership and former chief minister Usman Buzdar, saying he begged the party leadership to not make him do "unconstitutional" acts.

Addressing a press conference in Lahore hours after he was sacked, Sarwar termed the appointment of Buzdar, who recently resigned from his position as chief minister, as the "biggest conspiracy".

The former governor began his presser by recalling how he had visited constituencies and organised rallies ahead of the 2018 general elections. Following Imran Khan's election as prime minister, there were several options for the office of chief minister of Punjab, including Aleem Khan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi and himself, he said.

But the prime minister believed that only Usman Buzdar could build the Naya Pakistan and other party leaders compromised, he said.

"We said that we want to build Naya Pakistan and if Imran Khan thinks Usman Buzdar can do that, we are with him. But the entire country saw that chaos [subsequently] ensued in Punjab. Workers across Pakistan, federal [cabinet] members, [people] from Europe to the United Kingdom questioned if this was the Pakistan we voted for." Sarwar also criticised the appointments of inspector generals of police and deputy commissioners, saying that party leaders had tolerated it all because of PM Imran. "Imran Khan was on one side and the PTI on the other," he said. Referring to the party's claims that the no-confidence resolution against PM Imran was a "foreign conspiracy", Sarwar said: "If there is an international conspiracy ... the biggest conspiracy was making Usman Buzdar chief minister. Earlier today, the federal government removed Chaudhry Sarwar from his post as Punjab governor, appointing Omer Sarfraz Cheema as his replacement. Web Desk

## CJP arrives at SC amid appeals to take suo motu notice

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial Sunday summoned senior judges to his residence at Judges Colony for consultation in the wake of the annulment of the no-confidence motion. Later, the country's top judge arrived at the Supreme Court, sources said on Sunday.

It was learnt that SC Justice Qazi Faez Isa appealed to Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial to take suo motu notice in the current worsening political situation in the country.

Similarly, SC Bar Association President Ahsan Bhoon said that the bar association would file a petition against the cancellation of the no-confidence motion.

The chief justice had reached the apex court. Members of the apex court staff also rushed to the SC building the gates of which have been closed public and lawyers. INP

## Pakistan posts one coronavirus death, 285 infections

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has once again recorded only one death and 285 infections by coronavirus pandemic during the last 24 hours, showed the figures released by the National Institute of Health Pakistan on Sunday morning.

As per the latest NIH data, with the addition of one more death the toll has now gone up to 30,361, whereas the number of total infections now stood at 1,525,466 after adding the fresh 285 cases.

During the last 24 hours (Saturday), 30,167 tests were conducted throughout Pakistan whereas the positivity ratio stood at 0.94 percent. The number of patients in critical care was 365.

During the last 24 hours, as many as 117 patients have recovered from the virus whereas the total recoveries stood at 1,486,113. As of Sunday, the total count of active cases in the country was recorded at 8,992.

As many as 575,683 coronavirus cases have so far been confirmed in Sindh, 505,127 in Punjab, 219,106 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 135,088 in Islamabad, 35,476 in Balochistan, 43,276 in Azad Kashmir and 11,710 in Gilgit-Baltistan.

As many as 13,558 individuals have lost their lives to the pandemic in Punjab so far, 8,097 in Sindh, 6,322 in KP, 1,023 in Islamabad, 792 in Azad Kashmir, 378 in Balochistan and 191 in Gilgit Baltistan. INP

## Aamir Liaquat announces decision to leave PTI

ISLAMABAD: Aamir Liaquat Hussain Sunday officially announced his decision to leave the Prime Minister Imran Khan-led PTI, calling the Opposition's move against the premier "justified."

"Now that the drama has ended, I want to say that whatever PM Imran Khan did today proved that the actions taken by the Opposition leaders were right," he wrote on Twitter.

He announced that keeping the situation in view, he has decided to leave the party; however, the MNA added that the decision regarding who is against the constitution or who is in favour of it will be taken by the Supreme Court.

However, the non-committal Hussain had said he would choose a side right at the time of polling, and even made some confusing remarks about his affiliation with PTI and MQM-London. INP

## Imran Khan following Pervez Musharraf's footsteps: Musadiq Malik

ISLAMABAD: Leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Musadiq Malik has said that Imran Khan is following the footsteps of military dictator General (Retd) Pervez Musharraf.

In a statement issued on Sunday, he said that both Imran Khan and Pervez Musharraf violated the constitution of the country.

Musadiq Malik said that Governor Punjab was asked to dissolve assemblies and was removed over refusal.

Today the national assembly removed PM Imran Khan and Speaker NA alleged the assembly members, he added. INP

## Orange Line Metro-driver receives prize of outstanding CPEC staff member

ISLAMABAD: Orange Line Metro-driver Muhammad Shah Zareen Khan who received prize as an outstanding CPEC staff member says he is proud of his work, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Sunday.

The year 2016 was the darkest period for him. The aggravating illness of his mother and mounting medical expenses put him under considerable pressure.

"I had lost my father, and I couldn't imagine what life would be like without my mother", Muhammad recalled when talking to Gwadar Pro.

In dire need of a well-paid job, Muhammad Shah Zareen Khan, hailing from Sharaq pur, a small city of Punjab, joined the Orange Line Metro Train project which was launched in September 2015.

His main job was to drive the Chinese officials to and from the meeting venues and the airports. Focus, control, and speed, Muhammad Shah Zareen Khan shuttles in the Lahore city, with views outside the window flashing by.

He is no stranger to the fleeting scenery. As a veteran driver and a travelling enthusiast, he had driven around the northern area of the province numerous times. From twisting mountain roads to deep valleys, he feasted his eyes on the splendid scenery in nature. When asked about the most difficult part of driving, he said, "to make the right at every crossroad".

"My interest in driving was developed in college, when I drove the school van for three to four years. That was the point I learned to manage difficulties in life responsibly because I had to pick or drop children from school or home at any cost", Muhammad told Gwadar Pro.

Having learned how to drive 25 years ago, Muhammad didn't go into this profession right after graduation. In an agriculture-based country, Muhammad tried different professions, from farmer, to pesticide seller, to shop keeper.

"For me, it is an inspiring experience to get exposed to

various landscape and people through working and travelling. It also helps with my driving, because to be a driver is not all about manipulating a car. It's also about getting in touch with different people from different backgrounds and feeling the impulses of the city", Muhammad said.

He became a regular visitor of meeting venues and airports, and kept updated about the Orange Line project in an usual way. In his connection with the Chinese officials of the project, he has a chance to feel in person the "Pakistan-China friendship" that he had only seen in textbook. "I was treated as an equal, a brother. I feel respected on the driver's seat, and honored to receive the prize as an outstanding CPEC staff member".

Muhammad drove 400 to 500 km per day, with Special Protection Squad (SPU) alongside to ensure their safety. As the mileage of his car accrued, the tracks of Orange Line became longer and longer.

Never been a speaker on one of those meetings he drove to or a worker laying the tracks, Muhammad was involved in the project in a unique way. "I'm part of this historical project, and luckily, I can also adopt a standby's view, watching it evolve day by day, year by year. I was amazed by the 'Chinese efficiency'. I have never seen a mass transit system under construction, and every day, I was surprised to see its rapid progress".

Six years ago, he was driving with the rumbles of construction machinery working on the Orange Line, and now, around his ears is the roaring of metros. "I'm glad I made the right choice at the crossroad of my life", Muhammad said.

A pity for him is that despite his higher-than-average salary supported much of his mother's medical expenses, she succumbed to illness during the pandemic.

But now, he has been able to adopt a broader and detached mentality. "During the pandemic, my company provides me with accommodation. INP

## Govt appoints Omer Cheema as Punjab governor, sacks Chaudhry Sarwar

Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry said on Friday that the federal government had removed Punjab Governor Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar from his post, appointing Omer Sarfraz Cheema as his replacement.

The announcement also came hours before a crucial session of the National Assembly on the no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan as well as a sitting of the Punjab Assembly to elect a new leader of the house following Usman Buzdar's resignation.

It was not immediately clear why the federal government decided to remove Sarwar and the information minister, who announced the development on Twitter, did

not provide a reason.

At the time, the minister said that the new governor would be announced later. "According to the Constitution, the deputy speaker [of the Punjab Assembly] will be the acting governor," he said.

Later, he shared that Cheema, the PTI's former information secretary, had been appointed the new Punjab governor.

Hours after the development, Cheema took oath as the Punjab governor.

According to state-run Radio Pakistan, Lahore High Court Chief Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti administered the oath to him during a ceremony at the Governor House in Lahore. Web Desk

## Youth held for exhibiting arms on social media

PESHAWAR: The Capital City Police Peshawar arrested a youth for exhibiting arms on social media and recovered weapons from his possession.

According to details, a youth uploaded photos on social media website facebook.

The Pishtakhara police team headed by SHO Zafar Khan conducted a raid and arrested the youth identified as Muhammad Umer s/o Imtiaz Qureshi besides recovering M4 Rifle, a pistol and bullets from his possession. A case was registered against the detainee and investigation was kicked off. INP



LAHORE: Speaker of the Provincial Assembly Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi addressing a press conference outside Punjab Assembly in Provincial Capital.