

QUETTA VOICE

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**Mehmood Achakzai
elected as chairman,
Ziaratwal GS PKMAP**



**Elahi's vote of confidence:
Punjab governor
declares PA speaker's
ruling 'unconstitutional'**

Zahoor Buledi, Saleem Khoso and Muhammad Hassani all set to join PPP

Syed Ali Shah

QUETTA: Former senior minister Balochistan, Mir Zahoor Buledi, former ministers Saleem Khan Khoso, and Arif Jan Muhammad Hassani are all set to join the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). All three former provincial ministers belong to the ruling Balochistan Awami Party (BAP).

"The three former provincial ministers have held a special meeting with PPP supremo Asif Ali Zardari the other day", sources close to the ministers told Daily Quetta Voice. They requested anonymity.

"Only a formal announcement is remaining", they revealed. The three former provincial ministers have preferred to hold direct meetings with the PPP supremo instead of contacting the party's Balochistan leadership, they mentioned. This appears to be a major blow to the ruling BAP in Balochistan since the party is still in power.

Jam Kamal is in contact with PPP

The sources also revealed that a number of politicians including the former chief minis-



ter Jam Kamal Khan were also in close contact with PPP leadership. However, they said Jam Kamal Khan has put some conditions with regard to joining the party. Jam Kamal has also held meetings with PPP leader Nawab Sanaullah Zehri and Mir Sadiq Umrani. "We had discussed the political situation and the possible joining of the party",

Mir Sadiq Umrani, the PPP leader told Daily Quetta Voice.

Former Balochistan Mir Asim Kurd Gailo and other political figures from Balochistan have also held meetings with PPP leaders. The recent joining of leaders from Balochistan in the PPP will be having an impact on the 2023 elections in the province.

State not to surrender to any terrorist group: PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has categorically clarified that the state will not surrender to any terrorist group and vowed to foil the nefarious designs of the militants.

He stated this on Wednesday while condemning the Bannu hostage and other terrorist incidents that took place in different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during recent days.

Govt will deal with external facilitators of terrorists, says Shehbaz

Premier Shehbaz Sharif said that the outlaws will be dealt as per law and those involved in spreading chaos in country will have to face dire consequences.

Termining terrorism a sensitive issue of national security, he said that a joint approach and strategy is required to deal with it.

The prime minister also said that the government will address the external facilitation of terrorists who disseminate and support it in Pakistan.

Paying tribute to the armed forces fighting against terrorism, he said



that nation will end terrorism by supporting its brave forces. He added that the sacrifices made by the armed forces and other law enforcement agencies will not be forgotten.

Premier says govt will assist KP in restructuring CTD

PM Shehbaz said that operations Zarb-e-Azb and Radd-ul-Fasaad were important measures to eradicate terrorism from Pakistan. He also said that the sacrifices of the martyrs will not go to waste. He said that the

main responsibility of peace lies with the provinces, however, the government cannot turn a blind eye to these issues.

The premier added that the federal government will work with the provinces to fight against terrorism. He said that in order to end terrorism, it is important to increase the capacity and the efficiency of the provincial government and for that, the government will assist in improving the professional capacity of counter-terrorism departments in all provinces.

PM Shehbaz said that the government will also work with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on the restructuring of its CTD, adding that they will be provided. INP

2 security personnel injured in Khuzdar hand grenade attack

Abdul Jabbar Baloch

At least two security personnel were injured in a hand grenade attack in Balochistan's Khuzdar city on Wednesday. Police sources said unknown miscreants lobbed a hand grenade at security forces near Abbas Market Khuzdar. As a result of the attack, two security personnel were injured.

The injured security personnel were



rushed to the district headquarters hospital Khuzdar for medical treatment. The attackers sped away on their motorcycle after the attack.

Police personnel reached the spot and started an investigation into the incident. Security was tightened in and around Khuzdar city in the aftermath of the hand grenade attack. This incident has come two days after over a dozen people were injured in two coordinated blasts at Omar Farooq Chowk Khuzdar.

Mehmood Achakzai elected as chairman, Ziaratwal GS PKMAP

Staff Reporter

QUETTA: Mahmood Khan Achakzai was elected as Chairman and Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal was elected as secretary general of Pashtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) on Wednesday evening. According to a press release issued by the party, Arshad Khan Swabi Senior Deputy Chairman, Abdur Rauf Lala Deputy Chairman, senior Deputy secretary Attal Khan Achakzai, for central secretaries Nawab Ayaz Khan Jeogzai, Juma Gul, Rasan Safi, Nazir Jan Lala, Malik Shaikat, Talimand Khan, Dr. Kalimullah, Fazal Qadir Sherani, Dr. Hamid Khan Achakzai, Musa Bacha, Jabar Khan and Dr. Jamil Khan Panizai were elected by the Qomi Jirga (council) as members of his executive council.

Abdul Qahar Wadan for Balochistan, Dr. Mohammad Ali Kyber Pakhtunkhwa, Janan Afghan Punjab, and Saleem Tareen were elected as provincial presidents respectively. Party chairman Mahmood Khan Achakzai has taken the oath of office from four



provincial executives (cabinet) members. The three-day 7th national Congress of Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party elected national and

four provincial Qomi Jargas as an electoral college to elect central, and provincial executives or cabinets and working committees respectively.

More than 10,000 delegates participated in the Congress

The 7th National Congress was held in Quetta from December 19 to 21. More than ten thousand delegates from across the country participated. The Congress deliberated over and discussed the organizational affairs structure and constitution for three days, and also endorsed all decisions made by the party chairman in the interim period between the 6th and 7th Congress.

Addressing the national congress that elected the new office-bearers, Mr. Achakzai urged the Pakhtuns to focus on their children's education which should also include social and moral aspects to prepare them

for facing the current complex political challenges.

He regretted that due to turning their land into a battleground of proxy wars, which stopped the evolutionary cycle that pushed Pakhtun into social, political, and economic stagnation.

Achakzai asks Nawab Jogezi to convene a jirga to end tribal disputes

He further elaborated that therefore Pakhtuns are still entangled in tribal and personal conflicts that are mostly based on trivial issues. Such conflicts devour a thousand lives every year.

Therefore, I call upon the party, particularly Nawab Ayaz Jogezi to constitute a grand reconciliatory Jirga that has representation from every tribe and region for preventing and settling disputes.

Elahi's vote of confidence: Punjab governor declares PA speaker's ruling 'unconstitutional'

Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman declared on Wednesday the ruling of Punjab Assembly Speaker Sibtain Khan regarding Chief Minister Pervez Elahi's vote of confidence as "unconstitutional" and "illegal". On December 19, the governor had instructed the chief minister to obtain a vote of confidence from the provincial assembly by 4pm today. However, on Tuesday, Punjab Assembly Speaker Sibtain Khan termed the governor's orders as "illegal, against the provisions of the Constitution and thus stand disposed of". In his two-page ruling, the speaker maintained that the governor's orders were not in accordance with Article 54(3) and Article 127. "The house is in session since Oct 23, 2022, and

under Articles 54(3) and 127. No fresh session can be convened unless and until the current one ends," the order read. In a four-page response to the speaker today, the governor addressed two main concerns raised in Khan's ruling — which had said that the governor could not summon a fresh assembly session until the current session was prorogued and that there was a minimum mandatory 10-day period for the chief minister to obtain a confidence vote. Regarding the first concern, the governor said he had implied in his Dec 19 order that "if the ongoing session was prorogued by your good self (PA speaker) any time before 4pm today then "a new session was required to be summoned" at 4pm today. Web Desk

Death toll in Lasbela cylinder blast rises to 15

From Our Correspondent

LASBELA: The death toll in the cylinder blast in Balochistan's Lasbela district rose to 15 on Tuesday evening. Two seriously injured people succumbed to injuries and the death toll rose to 15. At least 15 people were also injured in the blast in Lasbela, Murad Kasi, Deputy Commissioner Lasbela said.

All of the injured in the cylinder blast were rushed to a private hospital in Karachi for medical treatment. The blast also damaged shops located in Lasbela, Murad Kasi said. The condition of the four injured is still critical, Mr. Kasi informed. He said the injured were being treated at the burn ward of the Karachi hospital.

Blast went off inside the shop. The blast went off inside a shop and then its flames also engulfed a bread shop and other shops located in the area. A loud explosion of the blast was heard far and wide causing panic in the area. Nearby shops also caught fire in the



aftermath of the blast. The Deputy Commissioner has also ordered an inquiry into the blast.

Police reached the spot and started an investigation into the incident. Most serious patients were rushed to Karachi for medical treatment as

there were no proper medical facilities in the district of Lasbela.

Unsafe gas cylinders claiming precious human lives

Unsafe gas cylinders have claimed scores of precious human lives in the past in various parts of Balochistan. The authorities have bailed to check the gas cylinders and their quality despite repeated appeals by people belonging to various of walks of life. Last year, in Balochistan's Kohlu a similar gas cylinder blast, claimed the precious lives of children.

The government ordered an inquiry. However, the report of the finding is yet to be made public. In Lasbela, people belonging to various walks of life have demanded of the provincial government to launch a probe into the quality and supply of gas cylinders.

Construction of examination hall at college of physicians, surgeons started: Dr. Ayesha

Health Desk

Elected Counsellor of the College of Physician and Surgeon from Balochistan and Chief Regional Director, Professor Ayesha Siddique, has said that Development work for the construction of the examination hall and library had been started in the College of Physician and Surgeon (CPSP) with the estimated cost of Rs.3 crores.

50% Construction of the examination hall and library in CPSP had been completed

Talking to a delegation of doctors who called on him here on Wednesday, she said that fifty percent development work for the construction of the examination hall and library in CPSP had been completed while the remaining work would be completed within three to five months. She added that it was the need of time to provide the facilities of emergency services to Sheikh Zaid Hospital, Quetta, Benazir Hospital, Quetta and Mufi Mehmood Hospital, Quetta. "I am



thankful to Professor Dr. Shoaib Shafee and Professor Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal to have provided funds to the college", she said, adding that it was for the first time in thirty years that the convocation of CPSP was arranged wherein 200 doctors were awarded degrees of fellowship.

67 doctors had been posted as supervisors in a period of three years

She said that about 67 doctors had been posted as supervisors in a period of three years besides getting Sheikh Zaid Hospital and Benazir Hospital affiliated with CPSP. She said that Loralai Medical College Teaching Hospital, Khuzdar Medical College Teaching Hospital, and Turbat Medical College Teaching Hospital would soon be got recognized by CPSP for training. She added that in the wake of recent floods, which wreaked havoc in different areas of the province, medical camps were arranged in flood-affected areas of the province to provide healthcare facilities to the people.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor Asim Khan

Unsafe Gas Cylinders in Balochistan

Gas cylinder blasts have claimed scores of precious human lives in Balochistan. A recent gas cylinder blast in Balochistan's Kohlu injured 33 people including 31 children. Six children critically injured as a result of the blast have succumbed to injuries in the burn unit of Punjab's Multan hospital. Seven minors are still battling for their lives at the burn ward.

Unsafe gas cylinders in Balochistan

All the victims had suffered burn wounds when the gas cylinder exploded with a big bang in the Bohri area of Kohlu district. Police said children had gathered around a potato chips seller when the cylinder went off during a wedding party. A similar gas cylinder blast claimed 6 precious human lives in Balochistan's Pishin district.

Gas cylinder blasts order of the day in Balochistan
Gas cylinder blasts have almost become the order of the day in Balochistan. There seems to be no mechanism to check the quality of gas cylinders. The sale of sub-standard Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders is on the rise in the market. LPG sellers are busy illegally filling the gas cylinders to mint money right under the nose of the authorities.

LPG decanting from one cylinder to another using an electric motor is prohibited by law but the practice is continuing due to the absence of strict monitoring by the authorities concerned. Since the residents face low gas pressure issues, using LPG as an alternate source is the only option for them. Not only domestic cylinders are being filled, but LPG is also being filled in vehicles through electric motors.

People smoking while decanting the LPG

It can be observed that shopkeepers decant LPG without taking any safety measures. People, customers, and even shopkeepers can be seen smoking while decanting the LPG. The government is yet to take notice of such incidents. The officials had taken notice. Regarding the Kohlu tragedy, the incident happened on November 8 and the police registered the FIR against the accused on November 14. This reflects the interest of the concerned quarters.

In rural Balochistan, such incidents are rampant. Although, very few incidents are being reported. The Balochistan government needs to take notice of such incidents and form a committee comprising experts to evolve a proper mechanism in this regard to avoid future human losses. Rulers need to be framed and the LPG sellers must be strictly monitored to ensure implementation of the said mechanism.

The main reasons for the impending economic default that Pakistan faces today are our lack of focus on judicial reforms, education, science, technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.

It is a tragic reality that the World Justice Project's (WJP) Rule of Law Index 2021 report published in October 2021 placed Pakistan at a lowly 130th out of 139 nations. The WJP Rule of Law Index is prepared by the World Justice Project (WJP) and it is based on large-scale surveys involving several hundred thousand legal practitioners and eminent citizens. The factors taken into account in the ranking process are the constraints on governments' powers, the prevalence of corruption, open government, protection of fundamental rights, law and order and security situation, regulatory enforcement, and civil and criminal justice.

How does one go

about reforming the justice system? First we must consider the magnitude of the problem at hand. At the beginning of the year 2021, there were 2.16 million cases pending before all the courts. During the year 2021, 4.06 million new cases were filed and 4.102 million cases were decided, overall including the lower courts. The Supreme Court, the five high courts and the Federal Shariat Court together had 378,216 cases pending at the beginning of 2021. They decided 229,822 cases during the year while 241,250 new cases were filed, so that the total number of pending cases grew to 389,549 cases by the end of 2021.

When one considers the situation of the Supreme Court alone, it turns out that at the start of the year 2021, there were 46,695 cases pending before it. It received 18,075 new cases during the year while 12,838 cases during

the year, so that the pending number of cases grew to 51,766 by the end of the year.

What is apparent from these statistics is the urgent need to expand the number of judges as well as the courts to cope with the situation. This needs to be done with a certain timeline in mind; any case filed at the lower court level or in the higher courts must be decided within three months of its filing, and all the back log must be cleared within six months.

One can readily calculate the needs based on these requirements so that justice is delivered in a timely manner. Those judges, over 20 per cent of whose decisions are reversed by a higher court, should be removed from service as this could be either due to incompetence or corruption. Sting operations should be initiated, and the laws changed so that the severest punishment for cor-

ruption is introduced for judges, bureaucrats/government officials and politicians.

Many countries have introduced capital punishment for corruption. One of the key reasons for the success of China has been its strict action against corrupt officials. Thousands of persons are executed in China each year, with the result that mega corruption has been almost eliminated from the country.

The second major step that Pakistan must take is to transition quickly to a knowledge-based economy. Our strategy for socio-economic development must be primarily based on developing the capabilities to manufacture and export high technology goods. There are huge opportunities for growth in areas such as artificial intelligence, energy storage systems, nanomaterials, vaccines, biosimilars, and other such fields. Pakistan's

By Atta-ur-Rahman

exports however are based on low value textiles and other such items, and they have therefore stagnated at around \$30 billion.

To depart from this myopic approach, we need to make science and technology-based innovation the main thrust engine for development. This is the path that countries such as Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, and China have followed. With some 70 per cent of our population below the age of 30, this is the path that we too can follow. It would require a complete change in our systems of education and training so that problem solving skills can be developed, and private sector can be motivated through incentives to undertake the major part of the national R&D effort.

A national education emergency will need to be declared and funds diverted from other sectors to education and research.

Battle for Islamabad

By Ershad Mahmud

The local government election campaign in Islamabad is at its most crucial stage. The election will take place on December 31, 2022. Most likely, the election will feature a two-way race between the opposition PTI and the ruling PML-N.

To attract nearly a million votes, the TLP, JI, and a substantial number of independent candidates have also been engaged in a vigorous electoral campaign. Additionally, candidates from the PPP are also vying for office.

There are around 4,403 candidates competing in 101 union councils (UCs). To win the forthcoming elections, both PTI and PML-N are conducting aggressive campaigns. The outcome of the election will significantly affect the national politics and indicate the mood of the populace. Despite not being one of the country's major cities, Islamabad is a good indicator of national political trends because it is home to residents from virtually all the towns of the country.

In the general elections of 2018, the PTI won two seats in the National Assembly from Islamabad's city and rural areas. The PTI is supposed to benefit from the current wave of its

popularity. Over the years, the party has developed significant political networks, especially in urban areas, it enjoys strong pockets of influence.

Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM), a small but effective party, gave the PTI unqualified support, which will also brighten the chances of the PTI's success in elections.

Since assuming power in Islamabad, the PML-N has successfully regained its lost political space. A number of construction projects have been finished quickly, including the introduction of mass transit, two metro services and the green and blue lines, which offer daily commuters tremendous comfort.

However, the PML-N is in a difficult situation due to the skyrocketing cost of food and the increase in poverty levels. This could affect the party's chances of winning the LG election. Additionally, it has been heard that in some union councils, the PML-N and PPP may field joint candidates to oppose the PTI.

In the last elections of the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad, held in 2015, the PML-N won the majority of the seats while the PTI emerged as the second-largest party. Since the elected leadership of the

MCI took office, a power struggle broke out between the Capital Development Authority, and the Metropolitan Corporation, Islamabad, on matters of jurisdiction, taxation, and the execution of development projects. The MCI has not been entrusted with financial and administrative authority while the CDA has been calling the shots. The MCI remained a dysfunctional body, through its five-year term, concluding in February 2021.

The local governments can only be effective if they are administratively and financially empowered. The main task faced by the newly elected MCI leadership will be to reclaim its authority from the CDA and establish its administrative writ in accordance with the Local Government Act 2015. During the last five years, the MCI and the CDA have been at loggerheads over the division of assets, functions, and human resources. Even the rules of business have not been finalized yet. As a result, CDA pays salaries to the MCI's employees. The taxes that the local government ought to collect are collected by the CDA instead.

According to the Islamabad Capital Territory Local

Government Act, the MCI has the authority to maintain marketplaces and commercial areas in addition to offering public services like water supply, sewage treatment, sanitation, and solid waste collection. Additionally, it has the power to manage facilities, assets, and revenues that belong to the local government. Due to the lack of rules of business, the CDA handles all of these tasks.

To secure fiscal independence and grant the Metropolitan Corporation, Islamabad the ability to carry out its duties in accordance with the law and the aspirations of the residents, the federal government must revise the Local Government Act 2015.

The federal government must agree to financially empower the MCI in order to render the local government system fully functional. The CDA should only serve as a regulatory authority, which includes planning, developing, and maintaining the city's master plan. On the other hand, the MCI should be given the authority to oversee and manage municipal services and infrastructure.

Remember that the CDA has been largely in charge of the capital city since the 1960s,

whereas the MCI is a new organization managed by elected representatives who, on average, have less administrative and planning expertise than the CDA. Islamabad has steadily grown into a large metropolis confronting significant difficulties and governance issues as faced by the other major cities. Many displaced persons from the former Fata and earthquake-affected regions sought refuge in Islamabad's outskirts. The city has also seen the establishment of dozens of slums and katchi abadis, especially in the last two decades.

The quality of public services and environmental conditions have drastically declined as a result of the expanding population. The posh neighbourhoods are receiving the majority of the financial resources, leaving the rest of Islamabad largely ignored and neglected. Shortage of water, absence of sewage management and dilapidated roads are the hallmarks of the 'other' Islamabad nowadays.

Therefore, it is now necessary to create a comprehensive and functional LG system that enables residents' participation in decision-making processes and ensures modern municipal services.

American security strategy

By Dr Murad Ali

In its National Security Strategy released by the White House on October 12, the Biden administration asserts: "The PRC [People's Republic of China] is the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to do it. Beijing has ambitions to create an enhanced sphere of influence in the Indo-Pacific and to become the world's leading power."

In the National Security Strategy of Biden's presidency which was long awaited, the same tone and tenor has been directed at Beijing as the one adopted by Biden's predecessor, Donald Trump. How the US threat perception has shifted from Afghanistan or Al-Qaeda to China and the Indo-Pacific region can be gauged from the fact how much the new strategy has focused on US global security and strategic interests. For example, the policy document has cited the word 'Taliban' only once, Al-Qaeda three times and Afghanistan four times. In contrast, in the latest policy, Beijing/China/PRC has been mentioned a total of

60 times while Indo-Pacific has come under discussion 34 times.

Somewhat understandably and notwithstanding the recent flurry of bilateral visits between US and Pakistani officials, the policy document has completely ignored its former ally as Pakistan or Islamabad has not been mentioned a single time. Biden's recent remarks about Pakistan as "one of the most dangerous nations in the world" and regarding the country's nukes are a grim reminder that US-Pakistan ties are replete with frictions. And so is the case with the Middle East, which is discussed 11 times, but the primary focus of the new policy is the Indo-Pacific region.

In contrast to this latest line of thinking where China appears to be a key threat, in the first National Security Strategy of the Obama administration unveiled in 2010, the document had mentioned 'Taliban' three times, Al-Qaeda 25 times, Afghanistan 20 times, Pakistani 15 times, and China only 10 times. Even the tone and tenor were vastly different regarding China than it has been in recent years.

For example, the policy document of the Obama era stated that the US "will continue to deepen our cooperation with other 21st century centers

of influence - including China, India, and Russia - on the basis of mutual interests and mutual respect". The same document further stated that "we will continue to pursue a positive, constructive, and comprehensive relationship with China" and that Washington welcomes Beijing to play a central role in partnership with the US and the international community to work towards resolving pressing global challenges including economic stagnation, climate change and non-proliferation.

However, the latest 48-page policy document unequivocally asserts that Beijing has been on the path to become a challenge for the US. This is an indication how the US threat perception has transformed about all these actors and that the US now considers China a critical security threat to its unrivaled global hegemony. In the 2017 National Security Strategy of the Trump administration, it was stated that "for decades, US policy was rooted in the belief that support for China's rise and for its integration into the post-war international order would liberalize China". However, in contrast to these expectations, the document opined that Beijing expanded "its power at the expense.

Demographic engineering

By Malik Muhammad Ashraf

Indian authorities have recently permitted temporary residents in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) to register as voters. This is yet another attempt by the Indian government to change the demographic features of Kashmir.

This move follows the promulgation of a new domicile law after the repeal of Article 370 of the Indian constitution, revoking the special status of the state and its bifurcation into two territories. The announced measure is likely to add 2.5 million more voters, which the local population fears would allow the BJP government to alter the demographics of the region.

It is a sinister move to convert the Muslim majority into a minority in due course of time and has rightly been rejected and condemned by Pakistan. The action constitutes the blatant violation of the Geneva Convention and the UN resolutions on the Kashmir dispute. After the end of World War II, as a consequence of the initiative taken by the International Committee of Red Cross, the Diplomatic Conference for the Establishment of International Convention for Protection of Victims of War was held in Geneva, which adopted the fourth Geneva Convention on 12 August 1949. It is one of the four treaties of the Geneva Conventions.

While the first three

conventions dealt with combatants, the fourth Geneva Convention was the first to deal with humanitarian protections for civilians in a war zone. Currently, 196 countries are party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

In 1993, the UN Security Council adopted a report from the secretary general and a commission of experts which concluded that the Geneva Conventions had passed into the body of customary international law, thus making them binding even on non-signatories to the conventions whenever they engage in armed conflicts.

Article 27 of the Geneva IV states: "Protected persons are entitled, in all circumstances, to respect for their persons, their honour, their family rights, their religious convictions and practices, and their manners and customs. They shall at all times be humanely treated, and shall be protected especially against all acts of violence or threats thereof and against insults and public curiosity."

Article 49 of the Geneva IV says: "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies." Article 32 of the convention adds: "The High Contracting Parties specifically agree that each of them is prohibited from taking any measure

of such a character as to cause the physical suffering or extermination of protected persons in their hands. This prohibition applies not only to murder, torture, corporal punishment, but also to any other measures of brutality by civilian or military agents."

Giving voting rights to non-residents and allowing people from the Indian mainland to buy property in IIOJK is in breach of Article 49 of the fourth Geneva Convention. Indian security forces in IIOJK are the occupying power by all definitions since Kashmir's fate, as per UN resolutions, is to be decided through a plebiscite held under the auspices of the world body, a position which the UNSC has reiterated in its three informal meetings after the Modi regime revoked the state's special status.

After the scrapping of Article 370 of the Indian constitution, the entire population of Kashmir is under siege, and they have been denied contact with the outside world; there is a complete lockdown in the valley, and people are not even given access to mosques. International media, human rights organizations like Amnesty International and even UN Human Rights Commission in its reports has corroborated blatant violations of human rights in IIOJK. The discovery of mass graves at 38 sites also lends currency to the inhumane treatment of

the local population by Indian security forces.

Through the foregoing actions India has not only torn asunder the fourth Geneva Convention but also pummeled the UN resolutions with regard to the plebiscite and breached international law with impunity.

It is indeed regrettable that neither the UN nor the big powers have shown real interest in stopping India in its tracks and resolving the Kashmir conflict as per the UN resolutions. Their indifference to the developments taking place in the valley and the fallout of those provocative measures is encouraging Indian hegemonic designs in the region.

India is being ruled by a diehard follower of the supremacist RSS ideology of Hindutva, which takes inspiration from Nazism. It has already started showing its ugly face in the form of enhanced Indian hostility towards Pakistan. Indian leaders have repeatedly threatened Pakistan of dire consequence, and on February 2019, India made its intentions clear when it sent planes to bomb imagined terrorist camps in Balakot, ostensibly in retaliation for the Pulwama incident. It is interesting to note that an Indian journalist close to the BJP regime later revealed that the Pulwama incident was stage-managed by the Modi government to win elections and find an excuse to take action against Pakistan.

Animal cruelty in Pakistan

Syed Mohammad Ali

The indifference, callousness, and contempt that so many people exhibit toward animals is evil first because it results in great suffering in animals, and second because it results in an incalculably great impoverishment of the human spirit. I did not pen these words. Albert Einstein did. Islam also forbids treating animals cruelly or killing them except for food. Zabiha rules stipulate how an animal to be slaughtered must not be mistreated or caused undue pain. Yet, animal cruelty is rampant and exists in varied forms in countries like ours.

We live in a country where political leaders have been known to hold political rallies with caged and chained lions, and where animals like turtles given away as party favours at children's birthdays. Many well-to-do people pay a lot of money to purchase expensive cats, dogs, or birds but treat them callously. Cruelty towards animals is not the reserve of rich people only. Cruelty to animals especially donkeys, horses and mules is also widespread. These animals are overworked, under-fed, and harshly beaten by their owners.

Some recent attempts at humane dog population management and mass vaccinations in Karachi have dissipated. Instead,

the recent uproar following the negligence of animal owners and attacks by guard dogs on pedestrians in Karachi unleashed another unwarranted attacks on dogs all over the country. Several neighbourhoods started instigating municipal organisations to shoot stray dogs on sight. Use of strychnine poison was once again allowed to poison dogs.

There is a general absence of adequate laws related to animal welfare and animal slaughter, and the existing laws that exist are not adequately implemented. Pakistan's Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1890) aims to protect many animals, including draught animals. This law is however outdated and does not reflect the prevalent scientific, cultural, or commercial compulsions pertaining to animal welfare.

It is time to update this law to protect both pet and wild animals, to institute mechanisms for their care, and define consequences for those who are neglectful towards animals.

It is encouraging that the Halal Authority Act (2015) has not only mandated humane treatment of animals throughout the slaughter process, but also prohibited animals from being slaughtered. However, there has been little implementation of this law.

While animal abandon-

ment is illegal in Pakistan, there is scant regulation on how animal owners should care for their animals. Moreover, zoos across Pakistan are notorious for their poor conditions. Prompted by international criticism over the Islamabad zoo's maltreatment of the elephant, Kaavan, the Islamabad High Court issued an unprecedented ruling last year. It ordered that the entire zoo of over four hundred animals to be closed and all the animals within it to be transferred to appropriate wildlife sanctuaries in the short period of two months. The rush to empty the zoo caused the death of a pair of lions, which passed away, two days apart, during their transfer from the zoo to a farmhouse in Kasur city instead of a sanctuary as had been directly by the court.

Pakistan also urgently needs to enact legislation detailing specific welfare requirements for the rearing of farm animals during distinct phases of rearing, transport, and slaughter. Such requirements must be legally binding and species-specific and aligned with international animal welfare standards. Regular inspections of farms and slaughter establishments would have to be carried out with a special focus on animal welfare or the situation on the ground will not change for the better.

Int'l conference on "Nation Building in Pakistan Prospects and Challenges"

ISLAMABAD: A two-day international conference on "Nation Building in Pakistan Prospects and Challenges" jointly organized by Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Education and Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue (IRD), of International Islamic University (IIU) commenced at Quaid-e-Azam Auditorium, Faisal Masjid Campus, Islamabad on Wednesday.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Mufti Abdul Shukoor said that educational institutions are vital for nation building. Federal Minister lauded the role of International Islamic University especially in building the national narrative of peaceful Pakistan across the globe.

Mufti Abdul Shukoor underscored the importance of the universities in solution of the problems, challenges of society and nation building process by giving examples from the regime of Hazrat Omer Farooq RA. He opined that Islamic economic system yields the creation of best society for nation building. He stressed that debates on this vital topic are the need of the hour while educational INP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication syed Amin Ul Haque in a meeting with the delegation of Etisalat International.

Ismail Industries extends relationship with SAP for digital transformation

KARACHI: Ismail Industries Limited, one of the major Pakistani confectionery and snack food manufacturers, has signed up a roadmap contract with SAP for the digitization of business functions across all its operations.

SAP has successfully provided a holistic solution to one of the largest manufacturers in Pakistan to improve its core system and move to the cloud. Ismail Industries is a family-run business and required a massive investment to meet the challenges of complete digitization.

markets in the UAE and Europe. The transformation will provide ease in terms of data gathering and real-time reporting in six diverse businesses that Ismail Industries operates.

SAP has provided various solutions, enabling the manufacturer to move to strategic procurement and improve its supply chain and human capital management. These solutions include RISE with SAP for core operations, SAP Ariba, Digital Board Room Solutions, SAP Analytics Cloud, Success Factors and Integrated Business Planning.

ware for quite some time, and now we look forward to adopting SAP's latest technologies to be able to take the quality products, that our customers have come to love and trust, to other international markets" said Hamid Ismail, Director Ismail Industries Ltd, CEO Biscinni, SnackCity, and Ismail Global Trading LLC. Elaborating on the same, Saquib Ahmad, Country Managing Director, SAP Pakistan, said, "We are proud to be selected as the digital transformation partner for Ismail Industries in order to help them with their strategic vision, daily operations as well as their expansion plans. This builds on over a decade of us being providers of their enterprise resource planning software". INP

Court sends Toshakhana reference against Zardari, Gilani & Nawaz back to NAB

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court in Islamabad on Wednesday sent back the Toshakhana reference against former president Asif Ali Zardari, ex-prime ministers Yousuf Raza Gilani and Nawaz Sharif filed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

Khawaja Anwar Majeed and Khawaja Abdul Ghani Majeed, the owners of the Omni group were also named as suspects in the reference. According to the accountability bureau, former president Zardari and former premier Sharif obtained cars from the Toshakhana by paying 15% of the price of the cars.

and sentence the accused to the strictest possible jail terms under the NAB Ordinance for their involvement in the corruption scam. In May of the same year, the accountability court issued arrest warrants for former prime minister Nawaz Sharif after no one appeared on his behalf to represent him.

Accountability court judge Muhammad Bashir sent back the reference after the PPP and PML-N leaders applied to cancel the case because of the recent amendments made to the NAB Ordinance.

The bureau further alleged that former premier Gilani facilitated Zardari and Nawaz in this regard.

In September, of the same year, all three were declared proclaimed offenders in the case.

Toshakhana is responsible to store gifts given to Pakistani heads of state and premiers by other countries.

Sharif and Zardari are currently out on bail in other corruption cases against them. The reference filed by NAB alleges that Zardari was gifted luxury cars by the governments of Libya and the United Arab Emirates, and he used them instead of submitting them to the Toshakhana.

And in October 2020, the court ordered the confiscation of the property owned by Nawaz after he was declared an absconder in the case.

As per the gift depositary rules, the presidents and prime ministers have to deposit any gifts they receive in the Toshakhana as they are the property of the state — unless sold at an open auction. The rules, however, do allow officials to retain gifts with a market value of less than Rs10,000 without paying anything.

The accountability watchdog claimed that former premier Nawaz was given a car from the Toshakhana by the PPP government in 2008 even though he did not hold any official position in the government.

Chairman of a meeting of the leaders from Sindh of UBG core committee, it was discussed that in FPCCI election

Believe in work and service, not hollow claims: President UBG

KARACHI: President United Business Group (UBG) Zubair Tufail has said that we believe in work, service and not hollow claims. He said he will actively participate in the next FPCCI election.

for the year 2023, there was a strong possibility that the date of the election was expected to be announced after the official notification of the amendment bill was issued, so all members across Sindh should actively prepare and participate in the upcoming elections.

Feroze, Mirza Ikhtiar Baig and others. Speaking on the occasion, Zubair Tufail said that the United Business Group has started active activities across Pakistan and the victory of UBG with a huge majority in the 2023 elections of the FPCCI was expected.

The UBG has started discussions on the approval of the amendment bill in the Trade Organization Act presented by Commerce Minister Naveed Qamar by the National Assembly and in the context of the approval of the amendment bill, FPCCI preparations have started to make a strategy for the next election.

SM Tanveer, Chairman of UBG Sindh Khalid Tawab and Secretary General Hanif Gohar, Sardar Yasin Malik, President of UBG Karachi Ahmed Chinoy, Former Senior Vice President FPCCI Syed Mazhar Ali Nasir, Shakeel Ahmed Dhingra, Malik Khuda Bakhsh, Gulzar

He said that the business community across the country was suffering from various problems and the current ruling group in the federation has failed to solve the problems of the business community.

Addressing the meeting, SM Tanveer said that United Business Group is a representative group of the business community of the entire country and we will participate in the upcoming elections. INP

PU awards four PhD degrees after approval of thesis

LAHORE: Punjab University Wednesday awarded PhD degrees to four scholars in different subjects after approval of thesis.

According to details, Urooj Saeed D/o Saeed Iqbal Pasruri was awarded PhD degree in the subject of Geomatics after approval of her thesis entitled 'Application of Geo-Spatial Techniques for Livability Ranking of Selected Cities of Punjab'. Umbleen Samra D/o Muhammad Isar Qutab in the subject of Islamic Studies after approval of her thesis entitled 'Informal Agricultural Credit In Pakistan: A Case Study in Shariah Perspective', Muhammad Arif S/o Muhammad Tahir in the subject of Chemistry after approval of his thesis entitled 'Synthesis, Characterization and Applications of Metal Nanoparticles Fabricated in Microgels' and Aamna Mukhtar D/o Muhammad Mukhtar Shkir was awarded PhD degree in the subject of Business Administration after approval of her thesis entitled 'Work-Life Interface among Female Entrepreneurs of Pakistan: A Study of Fashion Design Sector'. INP

Introductory talk on two books organized by PU Library

LAHORE: The Punjab University Library Book Club Wednesday conducted introductory talk on the books on 'Transformative Realism: How to overcome the system crisis' by Marc Saxer and 'Tasawwuf: Talash Ahsan ki Hama-Geer Tehreek'.

Dr Muhammad Haroon Usmani thanked the speakers and audience for their lively contribution to the program. INP

Two women deprived of Rs49,000 while traveling in Metro Bus

RAWALPINDI: Female pickpockets deprived two women of 49 thousand rupees in separate incidents while traveling in Metro Bus here on Wednesday.

According to details, taking advantage of crowd, female pickpockets took away 25,000 rupees from purse of Safia and 24,000 from purse of Naveeda Mazhar while travelling in Metro Bus in New Town police station jurisdiction in Rawalpindi.

The police after registering separate cases in both incidents have started investigations. INP



ISLAMABAD: Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Mr. Neil Hawkins called on speaker National assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf at parliament house.

Low growth, high inflation, unemployment expected in 2023: Mian Zahid

KARACHI: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain has said that the growth rate will remain low in the coming year while inflation and unemployment will increase.

At present the state of the country's economy was critical and Pakistan also has to repay a huge amount of loans which has become a big problem, he added.

and the IMF, which is unnerving investors.

In interaction with businessmen on Wednesday, he said that interest rates are likely to rise further in 2023, profits of many companies will decrease, many businesses will run on almost zero profit and many will bankrupt.

The business leader said that Finance Minister Ishaq Dar wants to bring the dollar to two hundred rupees, while the majority of economists are calling it impossible.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the difference between the official price of the dollar and the open market rate has increased to 25 rupees, which is establishing a parallel market.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that in prevailing circumstances, any further delay in reviving the IMF programme would be tantamount to suicide.

The finance minister was not ready to leave the dollar unregulated at any cost because it will weaken the rupee and increase inflation in the country, he maintained.

The present situation is a blessing for those who are involved in illegal hundi business while Pakistanis living abroad are also sending money through illegal channels due to which the remittances have decreased by 15% and the country's problems are increasing.

Pakistan needs to explore potential of small cities for economic uplift: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan needs to reduce the gap between prime and secondary cities and explore the potential of the latter for economic growth, creating jobs, supporting manufacturing and industries and linking agricultural areas with markets, WealthPK reports.

Dr Durra Nayab, the Joint Director of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), told WealthPK that cities were engines of growth as urbanisation was closely associated with development.

Administratively, they are fragmented with traditional systems managing old, dilapidated congested cities and sprawling suburbs with little control. "It is imperative that city-specific policies are formulated, keeping in view regional, provincial and national situations. Today's successful economies have a small socioeconomic gap between prime and secondary cities. Pakistan needs to address this issue to ensure economic growth," said the expert. She said that secondary cities of Pakistan could play a major role in strengthening the national economy if they were provided with suitable infrastructure and facilities. Good accessibility is a necessary, though not sufficient. INP

Normalcy returns to Bannu

BANNU: Life returned to normalcy in Bannu city on Wednesday with internet services restored, main roads opened for traffic, and commercial activities fully resumed.

After a successful 25-minute military operation against the terrorists besieging the compound of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) here on Tuesday, security clearance was given.

According to the district administration officials, educational activities would hopefully be allowed in the Bannu district from Thursday. Despite the terrorists' attack on the CTD compound and its four-day possession, normal life continued in the rest of the district, they added.

Meanwhile, an explosive improvised explosive device blast was reported in Jani Khel area here in which three terrorists were killed. It was reportedly targeted at a vehicle of the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS), which was on its way to Spinkai Raghzai area.

The BDS officials remained unhurt while a passerby child sustained injuries in the blast and was rushed to a hospital, the district administration said. INP

Broadening 4G technology network in country priority: Amin Ul Haque

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque has said that broadening the 4G technology network in the country is top priority.

These views were expressed by him while talking to a delegation of Etisalat International led by Mr. Mikhail Gerchuk, CEO e& International here on Wednesday. The delegation comprised Mr. Abdulrahim Al Nooryani, CEO Etisalat Pakistan, Mr. Hatem Bamatraf, President and CEO PTCL & Ufone, and Naveed Butt, Chief Regulatory Officer. Additional Secretary (Incharge) Ministry of IT Mohsin Mushtaq was also present.

Matters related to connectivity, 5G technology and telecom sector were discussed during the meeting. Syed Amin Ul Haque said that the future of technology in Pakistan was linked to introducing 5G technology. He said that Ministry of IT was extending full support to telecom companies. He urged the telecom companies to play their role for bringing modern technology in Pakistan. INP



MUZAFFRABAD: Dismiss employees of M.N.C.H shouting slogans during sit-protest (Dharna) protest in front of Chattr Chowk in the city.

Pakistani scientist invents filter to reduce indoor concentration of carbon dioxide: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: A prototype filter invented by a Pakistani scientist will help to control the concentration of carbon dioxide indoors and protect people from its negative impacts, WealthPK reports.

Nearly 90% of people spend most of their time indoors where poor ventilation and other external environmental factors contribute to higher levels of carbon dioxide, causing health impacts including coughing, wheezing, allergies and nausea. The prototype filter, developed by a Pakistani scientist, will control the concentration of carbon dioxide indoors.

part of human life. "The healthier a human breathes, the more healthily he lives. Indoor and outdoor air pollutants may INP

NOTICE INVITING TENDER. The Executive Engineer (Roads) CW, PP&H Department District Mastung invites sealed bids tender based on Composite Schedule of Rates 2018, Government of Balochistan amended up-to-date from interested contractors / firms for the work listed below under BPPRA Rules. Earnest Money 2% of the E/Cost. Tender fee Rs.1000/- and Time limit 30th June 2023. Sr. # Name of Work E/Cost 1. Repair Of Komatsu Motor Grader No.2 District Mastung. TSE-222312193223

Advertisement for 'Ahsan-e-Karachi' magazine. It includes contact information for the publisher, Asim Khan, and details about the magazine's content and subscription rates. The ad is in Urdu and English.

CPEC charges up IT, Digital economy in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: CPEC's positive stir in IT industry and digital economy in 2022 has set the tone of resilient growth and progression for 2023 on automation, e-governance, e-commerce, IT parks, Research & Development, Internet density and computer Technology in Pakistan.

According to Gwadar Pro, benefited by CPEC-led cooperation on IT and digital economy, it is predicted that the total value of Pakistan's IT industry will reach \$10 billion by 2025. During onset and till end of current year, Pakistan has more than 2,000 software R&D centers.

At present, Pakistan is the fourth largest base for free IT practitioners in the world. Owing to multiple strategic, development and trade compulsions, China and Pakistan are specially focusing on the development of IT sector for China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and beyond.

In July 2022 the first-ever China-Pakistan Technology Investment Conference was jointly organised by Special Technology Zones Authority, the Pakistan Embassy in China, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad, and the Zhong guancun Belt and Road Industrial Promotion Association (ZBRA) in order to forge new connections with the Chinese technology sector and open the door for Chinese and Pakistani technology players to collaborate in the field of technology.

July 2022 also marked an important development when The Ministry of IT and

Telecommunication hosted the inaugural meeting of the Pakistan-China Joint Working Group (JWG) on the Information Technology.

The decision was made that both nations would gain from one another's expertise in the areas of spectrum, policy regulations, cyber security, human resource development, and 5G.

Similarly, in October 2022, Pakistani ambassador to China Moinul Haque shared a news that the two countries have decided to build three new corridors, including the China-Pakistan Digital Corridor, which would help improve collaboration in many information technology industries.

He also envisaged an international conference on artificial intelligence in March, 2023 where local and foreign businesses will attend.

A lot of commitments and agreements were reached between the two countries in 2022 regarding IT and beyond. Now, 2023 is the year when we should consolidate on our previous work by enhancing the cooperation in the IT sector.

If we look around the world, a lot is happening in the world of IT. For example, hybrid or multicloud management technology, tools, and procedures will be used by 70% of businesses in the near future. With expectations of speeds up to 100 times faster, 5G will simultaneously provide network speeds that are around ten times quicker than those on existing 4G LTE networks. INP

Javid Iqbal has successfully complete P.hd from balochistan University

We congratulate Dr. Muhammad Javid Iqbal on successful completion of P.hd from Balochistan University. He has worked on user behaviour modeling in peer to peer network using machine learning. He has become first P.hd scholar to graduate from Balochistan University in computer sciences. He is serving in SBKWU as a director



since 2004. And became first SBKWU employee to done P.hd in computer science.

Pakistan sees breakthrough in royal jelly production with Chinese technology

ISLAMABAD: "With Chinese technology, we have witnessed a historic breakthrough in local royal jelly production. Thirty beekeepers have mastered the skill to extract royal jelly, and more will be trained in the future", said Dr. Muhammad Asif Aziz in an interview to China Economic Net (CEN).

He is an Associate Professor of the Department of Entomology Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, the person in charge of the Billion Tree Honey Initiative (trial phase), and a participant of the online training course on beekeeping and honey processing technology sponsored by Ministry of Commerce of People's Republic of China and organized by Hunan Agricultural Group Co., Ltd. in the summer of 2021.

For him, the training came just in time as he was eager to learn more about royal jelly production, bee breeding techniques, honey production technology, and bee-related product processing to reach the goal of the Billion Tree Honey Initiative, that is to produce 70,000 tonnes of honey through the introduction of modern beekeeping equipment, training in the latest technologies, standardization and product certification, and marketing. "It is challenging to receive technical training online, but I'm lucky to have a great online management team to make everything organized. Chinese professors demonstrated the country's beekeeping technology through theoretical explanations and demonstrations on aparies. And there were interesting introductions of Chinese culture, so we not only learned Chinese beekeeping technology but also had a

deeper understanding of China", he termed the training "beyond expectation" and was awarded excellent trainee at the end of the training program.

The training made him realize that to further develop the apiculture industry in Pakistan, the first step should be to improve the skills of local practitioners in the production of various bee products, including royal jelly and other higher-value bee products, through training and capacity-building programs.

Therefore, he started to train local beekeepers in two categories. One is short-term course that teaches modern apiculture technology for professional bee farmers. The other is middle- to long-term training for green hands. Previously, local beekeeper used to think that royal jelly can only be produced in natural beeswax cups and in queenless colonies. Therefore, mostly they remained reluctant to produce this valuable product due to the fear to loose bee population in the absence of queens and considered royal jelly production costlier than net profits. After learning about China's royal jelly technology, Dr. Muhammad Asif Aziz along with his students Ali Raza and Usama Umer decided to use Chinese technology. Then, he invited several bee farmers to learn and practice together. To everyone's surprise, royal jelly was successfully produced with plastic queen cells in colonies with queens. "The approach of Chinese people to work for betterment of humanity through knowledge sharing is remarkable, which ultimately will pave the path towards social and economic stability of both the nations", he said, looking forward to more exchanges in the future. INP



Kot Diji, Khairpur: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inspecting de-watering process in Peer Guddu Village of District Khairpur.

FM, USAID official discuss post-flood assistance

WASHINGTON: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in a meeting with Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Samantha Power has discussed the long-term cooperation for rehabilitation and reconstruction of Pakistan's flood-affected areas.

"Had a productive meeting with USAID Administrator. Thanked for her leadership in galvanizing support for flood relief," he said in a tweet following the meeting.

The foreign minister appreciated the United Nations Secretary-General's humanitarian assistance of \$97 million.

Samantha Power in a tweet said she discussed with FM Bilawal how communities impacted by Pakistan's recent floods were faring and the impact of U.S. assistance in the immediate aftermath.

She also mentioned that the discussion also focused on working together to build resilience in preparing for future crises. INP

AC returns Toshakhana reference against Zardari, Nawaz to NAB

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court (AC) on Wednesday returned the Toshakhana reference against Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Zardari, Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) supreme minister Yousuf Raza Gilani to National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

As per details, Judge Muhammad Bashir heard the case as an administrative judge after the completion of the term of Judge Asghar Ali. He returned the Toshakhana reference to National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

The court remarked that after the amendments in the NAB Ordinance, a case cannot be registered on an amount less than Rs 500 million. INP

IPC moves summary to remove Ramiz Raja as PCB chairman

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) has finally moved the summary to remove Ramiz Raja as Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman.

The IPC has sent a summary to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to include the names of Najam Sethi and Shakil Sheikh as new PCB Governing Board members in place of Asad Ali Khan and Ramiz Raja.

"Najam Sethi and Shakil Sheikh's names have been included in the summary forwarded for the PM's approval on Tuesday," say sources.

The summary required approval from the cabinet, they say.

However, the approval from cabinet members could well be sought through circulation. INP

President lauds security forces on successful Bannu operation against militants

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday lauded the security forces for carrying out a successful operation against terrorists in Bannu and expressed resolve to eliminate terrorism from the country's soil.

The president in a statement termed the success a result of the professionalism of security forces and their unwavering commitment against terrorism.

He said the nation would always remember the sacrifices made against terrorism for national defence and security.

The entire nation, he said, stands with its brave security forces on operations against terrorists. INP

Pakistan earns \$854 million from IT services' export in 4 months

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan earned US\$ 854.100 million by providing different Information Technology (IT) services to various countries during the first four months of the current fiscal year 2022-23.

This shows a growth of 2.92 percent as compared to US\$ 829.890 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding months of the fiscal year 2021-22, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During July-October (2022-23), the export of computer services grew by 5.86 percent as it surged from US\$ 650.090 million last fiscal year to US\$ 688.160 million this year.

Among the computer services, the exports of software consultancy services witnessed an increase of 9.65 percent, from US\$ 231.238 million to US\$ 253.549 million while the exports of hardware consultancy services also rose by 12.36 percent from US\$ 0.898 million to US\$ 1.009 million.

PML-N approaches IHC to postpone Islamabad LG polls

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has approached the Islamabad High Court (IHC) seeking postponement of the local government (LG) elections in Islamabad.

The PML-N in its application, submitted to IHC, pleaded with the court to delay LG polls in the federal capital on the pretext of an increase in the number of union councils.

The party has urged the court to accept its application for an early hearing.

The federal government Tuesday increased the number of union councils (UCs) in Islamabad 10 days before the scheduled polling day for local government elections, surprising candidates as well as the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

The federal cabinet approved the amendment in number of the union councils after which the

federal government notified the increase in the number of UCs in the federal capital territory.

The notification stated that under the Local Bodies Act the demarcation of Union Councils must be based on the population figures of Islamabad thus the number of union councils to be increased to 125 from existing 101. Meanwhile, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) said the elections would be held as per schedule on Dec 31.

"The Election Commission in exercise of its power under Articles 140-A (2), Article 218, (3) Article 219(d) and Article 222 of the Constitution read with Section 219 of Elections Act, 2017 and all other enabling provisions of law hereby decides to continue elections process notwithstanding the notification dated 19-12-2022 issued by the federal government. INP

PM Shehbaz okays appointment of Najam Sethi as PCB Chairman

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday approved the appointment of Najam Sethi as the new chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).

Sources privy to the matter said that notification regarding the change in PCB board of governors will be issued later in the day.

Sources revealed that the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) will release four notifications related to the abolishment of the 2019 constitution of the cricket board; restoration of the 2014 constitution; termination of the two PCB governing body names nominated for the chairmanship under the 2019 constitution and the fourth notification will notify the establishment of an interim "set up" to run the existing

board. The interim selection committee will be formed to announce the squad for upcoming series against New Zealand starting from December 26, they say.

The development comes after the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) today moved the summary to remove Ramiz Raja as Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman.

IPC has sent a summary to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to include the names of Najam Sethi and Shakil Sheikh as new PCB Governing Board members in place of Asad Ali Khan and Ramiz Raja. It is worth mentioning here that Ramiz Raja was appointed as PCB chairman by the former prime minister of Pakistan Imran Khan on September 13, 2021. INP

Pakistan urges Afghan authorities to revisit ban on university girls

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday urged the Afghan authorities to revisit the decision to suspend university and higher education for girl students in Afghanistan.

"Pakistan is disappointed to learn about the suspension of the university and higher education for female students in Afghanistan," the Foreign Office said in a statement.

The FO said Pakistan's position on this issue had been clear and consistent.

"We strongly believe that every man and woman has the inherent right to education in accordance with the injunctions of Islam," it said. "We strongly urge the Afghan authorities to revisit this decision."

The Afghan Taliban authorities on Tuesday ordered an indefinite ban on university education for girls, the ministry of higher education said in a letter issued to all government and private universities. INP

Children with disabilities facing multifaceted challenges: Minister HRs

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada has said that children with disabilities are facing multifaceted challenges of accessibility, education, rehabilitation and inclusion in main stream society.

This was stated by him on Wednesday while speaking as chief guest after inaugurating the Resource Centre for Autistic Children at Rehabilitation Centre for the Children with Developmental Disorder, under the Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE).

Representatives of Ministry of Human Rights, NGOs, social workers, parents, special children, representative of Planning Commission and staff of the centre attended the ceremony.

While addressing the event, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada appreciated the efforts of Directorate General of Special Education for Children with Disabilities and said that the Ministry of Human Rights is working on priority basis for these children. He further said that through such facilities inclusion of children with disabilities will be possible that would certainly change. INP

Pakistan needs to ensure foolproof maritime security: Mushahid

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Defence Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed has said that Pakistan needed to ensure foolproof maritime security as the next war was expected to be at sea and not on land. According to news release issued on Wednesday, the Chairman Senate Body was delivering his keynote address at the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA), a two-day International Maritime Symposium (IMS) on the topic "Geo-economic Dimensions of Indian Ocean Region (IOR) - Opportunities for Region and Beyond" on 20 and 21 December 2022. On the occasion, the experts from home and abroad presented their views about the geo-economic

importance of IOR. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, while deliberating on the current global security scenario, opined that it was the most dangerous decade after World War II. "World is witnessing historic changes; economic and global powers are emerging from East," he added.

The focus of second day proceeding was on maritime security in the context of regional connectivity. Air Marshal Zahid Mahmood, vice chief of Air Staff was the chief guest.

Whereas Vice Admiral (R) Abdul Aleem moderated the session discussion. Vice Admiral (R) Ifikhar Rao spoke about the Maritime Threats & Challenges in Regional Perspective. He talked about the Malacca Strait choke point and its importance. INP



Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar presided over the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet in Islamabad.

'Gravity of situation in IIOJK deserves immediate attention of world'

ISTANBUL: Speakers at a briefing in Istanbul have said that gravity of the situation in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir deserves immediate attention of the world for the sake of international peace and security.

During the briefing, a Kashmiri delegation apprised the members of Istanbul-based ASSAM, (Justice Defenders Strategic Studies Center), about the grim human rights situation in IIOJK. The Kashmiri delegation included Dr Ghulam N Mir, Chairman of 'Kashmiri Diaspora Coalition (KDC) and President of World Kashmir Awareness Forum; Dr Mubeen Shah, Vice Chairman KDC and President of Istanbul-based Kashmir House; and Dr Ghulam Nabi Fai, Chairman of World Forum for Peace and Justice.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Mubeen Shah explained the objective of Kashmir House to the members of the board of ASSAM. He said that the main compo-

nents of Kashmir House include, 'Advocacy / Political Engagement' where we will engage with Turkish government, political parties, civil society, think tanks, universities, besides diaspora groups based in Istanbul and beyond. The engagement would be within the limits of Turkish law. The aim of such engagements would be to strive for achieving United Nations-granted right to self-determination for people of IIOJK.

Dr Mubeen Shah added that 'Institute of Kashmir Studies' will be a research center in Istanbul in one or more universities, to do research regarding the struggle of Kashmiris in different languages.

The Kashmir House intends to launch news/views/comment website and magazine/newspaper/newsletter regarding Kashmir from Istanbul. This will include documentaries, videos and photo galleries, etc. INP

Pakistani scientist invents filter to reduce indoor concentration of carbon dioxide: WealthPK

ISLAMABAD: A prototype filter invented by a Pakistani scientist will help to control the concentration of carbon dioxide indoors and protect people from its negative impacts, WealthPK reports.

Nearly 90% of people spend most of their time indoors where poor ventilation and other external environmental factors contribute to higher levels of carbon dioxide, causing health impacts including coughing, wheezing, allergies and nausea. The prototype filter, developed by a Pakistani scientist, will control the concentration of carbon dioxide indoors.

Dr Muhammad Fahim Khokhar, the head of a department at the Institute of Environmental Sciences and Engineering (IESE), told WealthPK that it took him years to develop the prototype filter, which included designing, engineering, prototyping, testing, and manufacturing. This innovative concept of a "CO2 Bin" is based on capturing carbon dioxide from indoor air, resulting in improved air quality for better work-

ing conditions.

He said that air is an essential part of human life. "The healthier a human breathes, the more healthy he lives. Indoor and outdoor air pollutants may be detrimental to human health depending upon the time and concentration of exposure to them. Air quality, especially indoor air (IAQ), is becoming a significant health issue," he added.

Dr Fahim said that indoor air quality referred to air quality in the building that influenced human health and comfort. "Carbon dioxide (CO2) at very high levels, i.e. 500 parts per million, can pose severe and lethal health impacts. Typical office activity levels are 700 parts per million; however, the amount of CO2 in a house is 1,000 to 1,200 parts per million. Moreover, CO2, the most potent greenhouse gas, can also contribute to climate change," he added.

In the coming decades, it will be vital to minimise the emission of CO2 to improve indoor air quality and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Capturing and storing. INP



LAHORE: People are busy in exercise in morning hours at a local park during heavy foggy weather in Provincial Capital.