

QUETTA VOICE

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Gwadar to play significant role in development of Balochistan: Farah



EC rejects Sindh govt plea, LB polls will be held on Jan 15

Gwadar police arrest Haq Do Tehrik chief Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman

Behram Baloch

Gwadar police arrested Gwadar Haq Do Chief, Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman on Friday. The Maulana reached Gwadar's local court to seek pre-arrest bail when police arrested him. "I am not frightened of arrest and police", the Maulana told reporters on the premises of the court.

Police had registered the first information report (FIR) against Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman, former Balochistan caretaker minister, Naveed Kalmati for causing damages to public and private properties during a protest demonstration in Gwadar a few days back. The charge was vehemently denied by Maulana and his supporters.

Who is Maulana

Amid tight security and in the presence of senior police officers, police arrested the Gwadar Rights Movement (GRM) Chief, Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman. The supporters of Maulana also chanted slogans after the arrest outside the local court. The GRM has been protesting against illegal fishing/trawling in the port city of Gwadar for last more than two months. Violent clashes have



also taken a place in Gwadar and other parts of the district during GRM's protest demonstrations. A young policeman was also killed during a clash with protesters in the Gwadar district. Other leaders of the Haq Do Tehrik including Hussain Wadela and others have been shifted to Quetta by police.

Lawyers announce a boycott of courts against the arrest of Maulana

The Balochistan Bar Council (BBC) announced the boycott of courts on Saturday (January 14) against the arrest of Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman from the premises of the court. "Police had to arrest the Maulana outside the court", Rahib Buledi, the leader of the BBC told Daily Quetta Voice via telephone. He said the police violated the sanctity of the court and arrested the Maulana from the premises of the court.

"We will observe a boycott of courts tomorrow", Mr. Buledi announced. He requested all members of the legal fraternity not to appear before the court.

GPA announces internship program for new graduates

Staff Reporter

The Gwadar Port

Housing Complex. Internships for new graduates under 30 years of domicile in



Authority (GPA) announced an internship program for new graduates on Friday to prepare them to serve in the ongoing projects underway in the port city.

This program is part of the National Development Internship Program. The program will be run by the Gwadar Port Authority and will be a unique experience for graduates or diploma holders to prepare them for better jobs and skills required in various projects.

Employment will be given in two projects installation of MGDROD (Reverse Osmosis De-Salination) Plant and Sewage Treatment Plant in GPA

Balochistan can apply for the program.

The duration of the internship program will be one year and ten students will be selected (five for each project). It is being installed to provide for the people of Gwadar city. GPA Housing Complex Sewage Treatment Plant for Gwadar is another important project of Gwadar. The Gwadar Port Authority is the body responsible for the construction, operation, management and maintenance of the Gwadar Deep Water Port. Gwadar Port is the second great monument of Pakistan-China friendship after the Karakoram Highway connecting Pakistan and China.

A delegation of Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

ABU DHABI: A delegation of Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Abu Dhabi.

The delegation was headed by H.E. Abdullah Mohamed Al Mazrouei, Chairman of Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce.

Happy to meet one of the important Chambers of Commerce of the UAE, PM

While talking to the delegation the Prime Minister said that he was happy to meet one of the important Chambers of Commerce of the UAE. Abu Dhabi Chamber had played an important role in the economic development of the UAE, he

said. The Prime Minister noted with pleasure that the Chamber also had Pakistani members. The Prime Minister further said that it was matter of pride for us that one of the Pakistani businessmen had been a Board member of this esteemed Chamber which was the indication of that fact Pakistani community was playing important role in the development of the UAE.

The Prime Minister said that the vision and wisdom of its leadership had enabled the UAE to become an economic and tourism hub within a short span of time.

Pakistan and UAE relationship

Pakistan gave importance to its relationship with the UAE which was based on common faith, shared history and people-to-people contacts, the PM said.



We considered the UAE an important strategic and economic partner for being

located in the neighborhood, playing an important role in ensuring peace, stability and economic development in the

region and having potential for joint socio-economic development, he said.

The Prime Minister said that he was delighted to note that bilateral trade between Pakistan and the UAE had grown significantly in recent times.

There was a need to enhance Chamber to Chamber cooperation and we would urge Pakistani Chambers to reach out to the Abu Dhabi Chamber and develop new linkages, the PM said.

The Prime Minister encouraged members of Abu Dhabi Chamber to visit Pakistan to experience the excellent opportunities of growing their business.

The Prime Minister said that sending skilled work force to the UAE was one of the top priorities of his government.

The members of Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce showed interests in doing business and investing in Pakistan. INP

Fawad says Hamza being contacted to seek names for Punjab caretaker govt

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice President Fawad Chaudhry has urged the governor to immediately notify the dissolution of the Punjab Assembly, adding that the opposition leader Hamza Shehbaz is being contacted to seek names for the caretaker government.

Addressing a press conference today, Fawad Chaudhry said that they decided to dissolve the Punjab Assembly yesterday and Governor Baligh-ur-Rehman will hopefully sign the summary.

Fawad urged the governor to not wait for 48 hours for signing the summary and issuing a notification regarding the dissolution of the Punjab Assembly.

[The Opposition Leader in the



Punjab Assembly] Hamza Shehbaz is being contacted to seek names for the caretaker government. We are hoping that impartial names will come forth to hold free and fair elections."

He said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Mahmood Khan had scheduled to

arrive in Lahore today but he could not reach here owing to bad weather. "KP CM has also prepared the summary for the dissolution of the provincial assembly."

Regarding local government (LG) polls, he said that the election commission decided to hold timely elections in Karachi and Hyderabad, whereas, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had ordered to organise local government polls in the federal capital.

He criticised interior minister Rana Sanaullah for violating the high court's orders. He added that the Sindh High Court (SHC) also rejected Muttahida Quami Movement's (MQM) plea to postpone the second phase of the Sindh LG polls. INP

Gwadar to play significant role in development of Balochistan: Farah

QUETTA: Balochistan government's Spokesperson Farah Azeem Shah on Friday said that the future of Balochistan was linked with development of Gwadar.

She said protection of the rights of fishermen was the responsibility of the government and the first right on Gwadar belongs to the locals here, she added.

The spokesman of the provincial government said that for any economic development and acceleration of economic



activities, the establishment of law and order and the enforcement of rule of law were very

important. Keeping in view the requirements of the modern age, the students will

be provided opportunities for technical education and the students will be helped with scholarships for higher and quality education, she noted adding that they could play their role effectively in the development of the province.

The spokesman further said that Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo was striving for the overall development of the province, therefore projects for collective development were being given priority. INP

EC rejects Sindh govt plea, LB polls will be held on Jan 15

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission (EC) while rejecting Sindh government plea to postpone Local Bodies (LB) polls has given decision to hold LB polls in Karachi and Hyderabad on January 15.

An emergency meeting was held under Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) in Election Commission (EC).

The post Punjab Assembly dissolution situation came under discussion.

The meeting was attended by CEC, mem-



bers, special secretary, DG Law, DG Local government election and others.

The participants of the meeting expressed annoyance over Sindh government steps regard-

ing be it federal government or provincial governments no one wants to hold LB polls.

The entire burden of amendment in Islamabad LB rules was shifted to election commission.

In Sindh all the arrangements were complete for holding LB polls. Sindh government took such step two days before LB polls.

It was said by Election commission LB polls in Karachi division, Hyderabad and other districts will take place as per schedule. An order will soon be issued. INP

Pakistan's economy based on strong footing, zero chance of default: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has said despite economic challenges Pakistan was not defaulting in any case.

"Although we are facing economic challenges, there is zero percent chance of defaulting", Ahsan Iqbal said while talking to British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on Thursday night.

The minister said Pakistan's economy had strong footings therefore, it would come out of crisis very soon. Speaking about the



flood damages in Pakistan, Ahsan Iqbal said over 1700 people were died across the country during the torrential rains and floods last year. More than 9 million people slipped under poverty line while over 8 million people were facing mal-nutrition due to

the devastating floods and rains, he added. He informed that in the Geneva Conference held earlier this week, the international community and the development partners had pledged support of over \$10 billion to help Pakistan recover from the dam-

ages caused by the floods. He said the rehabilitation and reconstruction process was continued in the flood hit areas across the country, however he added that the complete recovery would take two to three years' time. To a question, the minister explained that the government had prepared a three years' agenda for revival of the flood affected people. As per the national reconstruction agenda, the government would provide 50 percent of total expenses in the rehabilitation and reconstruction process from its own resources. INP

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.

Lessons in school reforms

By Kamila Hyat

Pakistan has struggled to maintain any kind of standard at both government and private schools across the country. While private schools often claim to offer the best education and learning in English to their students, they are not always successful.

The kind of education that many children receive is based on rote learning and cramming — similar to how they would learn at most government schools. The only difference is that parents pay exorbitant fees for their children's education at private schools. Only high-tier elite schools — which charge high fees and are accessible to only a tiny minority — can claim to offer education which matches international standards.

According to the available surveys, a majority of Grade-5 children at both government and private schools are unable to write a complete sentence in either English or Urdu. The conflict of the languages adds to the problem. At English-medium schools, children are taught in English and barely understand the content they have been taught. When the same content is provided to them in Urdu, their eyes light up. Children who have never been exposed to English at their homes and have received no specialized English tuitions

at their schools begin to understand the concepts. It is unclear why the country has not chosen to follow models from other countries where children are first taught in their mother tongue so they can understand the content, and then in later grades, they are taught English as a skill they will need for employment opportunities.

In our country, the situation is dismal. In Punjab, the education authorities have neglected Punjab; this has added to the problem. Punjab is the only province which does not offer primary-level education in the native tongue of most children, often leaving them blank in the class, unable to comprehend what they are learning. The only option for them is to cram what is put before them to pass the exam.

Pakistan does not need just major education reforms. The Single National Curriculum (SNC) offered by the PTI government solved no problems and, in some way, added more to them, further emphasizing cramming and taking away from a child's intellectual ability to develop skills. This is a deeply rooted problem and should be solved if the country is to progress and grow in any direction.

So, how do we go about it? One method would be to study the example of Vietnam, a desperately poor country in the 1990s, whose per

capita income has now grown massively; the Vietnamese government thinks it can grow further if education is massively reformed through the retraining of teachers and other methods. Such strategies help education become child-centred, based on the capacity of children to learn and then acquire places in universities and gain jobs.

In Vietnam, the emphasis is not only on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects but also on development of other skills. These reforms have been massive, and in some schools, classes were shut down for some days to allow teachers to be trained in the new method required for teaching.

The same happened in Japan, and since the 1990s, the Japanese committee responsible for education has recognized that cram learning is not helpful. Japan adopted and introduced an approach centred on child-based learning and the individual ability of children at schools one by one. This initially resulted in a steep fall in education standards as measured through global academic benchmarks. But Japan has since then caught up and retained its policy of training children not to cram, not to depend entirely on teachers, and to further their skills through their own initiatives and learn through these rules.

Balochistan unending wheat crisis

Muhammad Asghar Harifal



Pakistan is an agricultural country, having 70% of the population directly dependent on agriculture, while the other 16% is indirectly linked to it. Its people have always been buffeted, after every 4-5 years interval, with the crisis of staple food, in particular the wheat grain. Other than Punjab, no other province is self-sufficient in wheat production, thus generating total and everlasting dependence on a single province.

Punjab has traditionally been the fruit basket of the sub-continent

Punjab has traditionally been the major part of the food basket of the sub-continent due to it being the land of rivers. After the partition of India and the consequent division of Punjab, the staple food dependence of western Pakistan continued to be on Punjab.

The frequent crises, the poor man is subjected to, are despite the vast arrangements in place in the form of public sector departments of Agriculture and Food.

The Agriculture Department, with heavy resources at its disposal, has fallen short to contribute in mitigating the crisis by giving incentives to farmers to grow wheat. The production of wheat in Balochistan is nearly 0.8m tons, meeting nearly 50% of its requirements. Due to the sparse population, the Agriculture department's sources are sufficient enough to add a million tons of wheat grain.

The Food department, functioning as procuring and stock-maintaining agency, was brought into existence in British times when the staple food crop was not enough to meet the requirements of the population.

Earlier, ration cards were being issued as per the number of family members

Initially, wheat and sugar were stored in department stores. In addition to storage, a rationing arrangement was put in place. Under rationing, the ration cards were issued according to the number of family members and through that ration, dealers would issue the allocated quota. It continued until the late seventies when bumper crops were produced with the introduction of machinery replacing the age-old farming means.

The Food department at the provincial level continued



with seasonal procurements of wheat under state trading. In other words, the public exchequer was allowed to be used by the Food department to indulge in trade and to store a strategic reserve of 3 months to be utilized in any eventuality. When the blight of stagnancy overtook the public institutions, the state trading couldn't evade it, rather it suffered the most. The wheat trade under the aegis of the Food department turned into a lucrative source of income for a minuscule coterie consisting of a few individuals. To be more specific, they were those controlling the department at the top, using as tools, the public officials who stand in low pay-scale hierarchy thus getting petty salaries but taking care of hundreds of millions of rupees stock and the wheat grinding facilities owners.

The department is tarnished to an extent that procurement is considered as a dark motive.

The state trading got characterized by consistent losses, multiple subsidies (at purchase and selling stages), influential interest groups (again a few), convoluted procurement and sale, stock spoilage, and a series of unending inquiries sans conclusion. The department is tarnished to the extent that procurement (its sole purpose of existence) case initiation is considered as the dark motive of the head office of the department. It goes to the credit of influential parliamentarians of the wheat-producing areas using their political clout to make it happen, irrespective of the opinion of the department officials, as they stand irrelevant. At the next stage, the irrelevant officials have no say to select poor farmers for whom the subsidy from the public exchequer is made.

The first right over the subsidy turns out to be of those who made the procurement take place. As all public institutions are to serve the already served class, the poor farmer toil as usual without

knowing about the subsidy in his name. It not only deprives the poor farmer of his due right Los, but he also loses interest to cultivate wheat for his co-citizens. One twist in the system lead to another; the weak officials with no option but to pick what awaits them and pile stock in department stores, maintained with public exchequer, ending up into unsaleable stock. Here unending saga of woes begins: either to scale down the purchase price to make it compatible with a marker or be ready for a daredevil functionary who will sell the stock and throw the job along with trickling wages to the wind. Thus, a purpose for the processes of 'put up', is engendered (the buzzword of every public office).

It takes three months to place funds to purchase wheat

The procurement of wheat got so maligned that each case of procurement, when initiated by the department, took more than three months to place the fund at the disposal of the department for the purchase of the stock. The hesitation at different stages, causing the delay, is not enough to prevent it, only the processes are put off, causing embarrassment only for battered department staff.

Inquiries against the staff and high officials galore but only to punish the individuals against whom the allegations are leveled. The causes of mismanagement, engendering heavy embezzlements, go by unattended. The element of punishment is predominant to the extent that in one of the inquiries probing the causes of delay of procurement, the inquiry officer sought the help of the Food Account Manual, which deals with accounts of the stock, that was not

there. The manual which dealt with the post-procurement was used to track the travel and stay of file as if Food Account Manual also worked as GPS. It is the only written document dealing with stock and is quoted to whoever wants to make a display of his knowledge about the food department.

This whole edifice is created to keep a strategic reserve to meet emergency requirements in case of natural calamity or war, stabilize the staple food market and fulfill the food requirements of citizens. Unfortunately, none of the above needs are met by the stock procured by the food department, involving precious scarce resources and elaborate arrangements in the form of a public department with millions of running expenditures.

Each year, a target of 0.1m ton is set for procurement from all over the province but it is uniformly made from the Naseerabad division and vicinity. Never has the procurement target been achieved except for very few procurements. The province requirement is nearly 1.6 million tons, while the targeted procurement, even if made, gets to 6.25%. An average of 2 to 3% is stored and that too when the stock is available to be procured. The quoted quantum of stock meets none of the above-stated purposes of the raison d'être of the food department. Our emergency preparedness became evident when in Feb 2019 the war-like situation developed with India in the aftermath of airstrikes in Balakot. In the civil administration meeting called for the preparation for the eventuality of war, the Balochistan Food department reported nil stock.

The Writer is Ex Secretary Food Department

An anatomy of paralysis

By Raouf Hasan

Pakistan's politics has assumed the form of a circular movement which keeps coming back to the starting point after exhausting all possible forms of abuse and invective. There is nothing new either by way of substance of conversation or means to break the vicious logjam that the country is locked in. It appears this has become the favourite battling turf for the ruling elite, and this is where they feel they can continue indulging in their sordid shenanigans.

A few days ago, I spoke to a friend who, till recently, was bubbling with confidence and optimism at the prospects that Pakistan had managed to generate. I was taken aback not only by an absence of that spirit now, but the premonition of darkness that he said the country is engulfed in. Let me assure you that he is not an exception. He reflects the general perception that has developed in the last few months with Pakistan suffering a sequence of setbacks and abject humiliation, both in the domestic and international arenas.

Worse still, there does not appear to be an easy way out of the quagmire it appears to continue sinking into. The question that, at times, haunts is whether there is anyone really interested in helping the country out with some effective remedies?

Politics has been reduced to a competition for fabricating ever more

convincing lies to cloud the reality. The economy is sinking with inflation having made it impossible for an average citizen to survive. The state assets are being leased out for paltry relief. Everything is being sold, most deplorably human conscience.

By many objective calculations, we have already suffered a technical default. The institutions have collapsed. Terror is raising its monstrous head. The justice system has plunged into deep slumber. The ECP is practising the art of how to keep postponing elections and how not to respond to genuine queries and questions. Crime and corruption have penetrated society deeply. The morality fabric lies in tatters. It is a perpetual and brutal battle for survival which constantly trespasses the boundary that separates the right from wrong. The two extremes have coalesced to become the prognosis for surviving a state of hunger and deprivation. But nobody seems to care. As T. S. Eliot wrote: "The dripping blood our only drink/ The bloody flesh our only food/ In spite of which we like to think/ That we are sound, substantial flesh and blood".

Even more aptly, the situation is like what is portrayed in Mirza Ghalib: "The cities are being sold. The state is being bartered. Every asset is up for grabs. Who are these rulers who have turned the country into a retail out-

let?"

There are others like me who see hope depleting with every passing day, but don't want to surrender before the descending dark. In an environment of rampaging looting and plunder, the painful struggle to maintain a semblance of sanity and keep your optimism alive is an agonising struggle.

There are some who keep coming up with suggestions to move forward. Despite some credible proposals, they seem to be at a loss regarding where to begin from. Who takes the initiative and what would be its form and substance? Who throws in a spark to spread the glow and how do we help this catch on and transform the beliefs and attitudes of a whole nation? Most importantly, is there a way to reform those who have the reins of power in their hands and who are primarily responsible for the current state of penury and humiliation? If reform is not an option, what is the best way to induct a leadership that is equipped with the ability to pursue a rational thought process and an inclusive approach?

These and more disturbing questions come to mind which have no ready answers. But the country cannot be allowed to continue rotting. It should become functional. It should be lifted to health. It should break the chains of captivity that it is currently shackled in. It should be

free to breathe afresh, casting a ray of genuine hope for its impoverished millions who have lived waiting for better days, only to be plunged deeper into despondency. They should be salvaged.

There are proposals for forging a grand compromise among the stakeholders. It may have some merit, but the country is tottering on the brink simply because of the doings of the very same corrupt elite which continues to have relevance in managing the affairs of the state. If one were to sit across the table for a dialogue with these forces, you can at best have a compromise that would be embedded with controversial policies they have been the authors of during their tenures in power, and they would not agree to reverse what has brought them boundless bounties. Will there be any merit in pursuing such a patently self-inflicting exercise?

Let me stress that such a compromise will be untenable because a compromise with corruption will breed more corruption, with crime more crime and with thuggery more thuggery. On the other hand, a struggle to cleanse both system and society of the ailments they have contracted over time can be daunting.

Despite counter views, I believe that, in the history of nations, there comes a time when, for the sake of the state and its people, it becomes

essential to launch a struggle in earnest. For Pakistan, that time is now. It does not brook a compromise with those who have pushed it to the verge and who will not agree to cede their chances of squeezing the state coffers further. For them, governance is all about making money which is what they have done in the past as is amply demonstrated by the palatial empires they have raised in many countries of the world by impoverishing their own and for which they believe they are not answerable before any legal entity.

The tragedy is that, through a combination of Machiavellian stratagems, they have been able to secure the hold of the country again, thus strengthening the perception that justice remains, by far, the most purchasable commodity which these crooks and criminals always have on their side. One also wonders about the compulsions that some faced to become complicit in the rampaging crime world of this ruling elite whom they have again housed in the echelons of power.

Pakistan stares hauntingly at the prospect of being paralyzed, leaving it with a choice that is neither easy to make, nor forfeit. The brutal logjam must be broken quickly — through launching a genuine struggle by upholding core values of governance, not compromising them. It is that time of reckoning.

Bureaucratic varsities

By Dr Faizan Naqvi

Public-sector universities are the only hope of those from the middle class for a better future in Pakistan. However, across Pakistan, varsities are facing financial cuts and their autonomy is continuously impeded by predatory governments.

University of Karachi, one the biggest and oldest varsities, is worst affected. Catering to 40,000 students and more than 50 disciplines this once-topnotch university is going through a brain drain. Unending delays in the process of hiring and promoting faculty members take six to eight years to complete while other universities in Sindh take between six months and a year to do the same.

Underfunding, lack of accountability and disregard of standards allow bureaucratic delays, frustrating KU faculty that now stands at the brink of disorder. Faculty with over 25 years of service are retiring as assistant professors.

Attempts were made to reform governance and the Sindh Universities Amendment 2018 simplified the process of recruitment but

Karachi University continues without policy reforms. Over 400 faculty members applied for the next cadre in 2019, scores have retired and hundreds will superannuate in next five years but are denied the right to present their case to the Selection Board. Recently Dr Zafar Iqbal of Environmental Sciences retired after 25 years of service as assistant professor despite a court order to hold his Board. Similarly, Dr Ameer Ahsan of Pharmacy is to retire in October after serving Baqai, Ziauddin and lastly Karachi University while waiting for a Board.

Universities only need to follow the University Act that requires three experts with eight board members to select a suitable candidate. Instead Karachi University allows deans, chairpersons, foreign expert reports and secretary boards and universities to further the red-tape in the process.

The University of Karachi needs an overhaul of the existing bureaucratic mindset and to get rid of the assumption that red-tape is a substitute for standards. Discrimination against varsities and within a varsity must end by

following same procedures of hiring.

As reported in this paper recently, KU faculty members have extended their protest from demonstrations to a hunger strike onto death. This escalation not only highlights the sense of frustration amongst the faculty but also shows the blatant disregard for faculty by the KU administration and the Sindh government. The protesting faculty say this is the time for policy reforms that abolish the hindrances and speed up the already delayed processes.

Varsities should be a benchmark for academic standards, hubs of knowledge, and arenas for debate and disagreement with a sense that changing the world is possible. Instead, the varsity bureaucracy has abandoned research and replaced it with a business sense where research culture is shamelessly suppressed and denied official support and the only function of the administration is to ensure salaries.

When teachers turn to hunger strikes to press for their demands, society at large must acknowledge its disbelief at the state of affairs of what should have been a centre of excellence.

SC orders AGP to complete audit of STBB, file report in court

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court (SC) has ordered Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) to complete audit of Sindh Text Book Board (STBB) and file report in court.

The SC gave these orders during the hearing of a petition against Sindh High Court (SHC) decision regarding forensic audit of STBB.

The case came up for hearing before a two members bench of SC presided over by the

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Friday.

The CJP remarked the biggest weakness of our country is that no one places focus on education. Sindh province is famous for ghost schools. Tell us who audits STBB.

Justice Ayesha Malik remarked Rs 2.30 billion budget was provided to STBB. SHC ordered its audit be got conducted. The audit has not been got conducted despite court orders. The counsel for

STBB told the court we have no objection over audit. The objection is over appointing additional registrar as supervisor and immediate audit. SHC issued illegal order. AGPR conducts audit of STBB. If court orders we will present audit of last 20 years. The court while ordering auditor general to complete audit of STBB and file the report in the respective court adjourned the hearing of the case for indefinite period. Online

Financial support from Geneva conference will be spent on rehabilitation of flood affectees: FO

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office (FO) Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch has said the support from Geneva conference will be spent to deal with climate changes and rehabilitation of flood affectees.

She said this during weekly press briefing here Friday.

She held Prime Minister Mohammad Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Abu Dhabi yesterday for a two-day visit at the invitation of the President of the United Arab Emirates His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

She observed Prime Minister has held meetings with the President of the UAE, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Prime Minister and Vice President of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, His Highness Sheikh Muhammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum. During these meetings the leaders reviewed bilateral ties between Pakistan and the UAE, and agreed to further strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation especially in the areas of trade, investment and

Government of Pakistan presented its vision, plans and priorities for the post-flood recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction in the form of the Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework Pakistan (4RF). Delegations reaffirmed their support for immediate relief efforts and extended their financial support for resilient recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

The conference identified the principles and action plan for Pakistan's resilient recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Bilateral and multilateral partners committed financial support of over US\$ 9.5 billion for realization of the objectives and priority areas outlined in 4RF. A number of delegations made further announcements for in-kind support. We are grateful to all our partners for the generous pledges they made at the Conference, she underscored. Condemning the terrorist act in the strongest possible terms, the Foreign Minister underscored that terrorism posed a common threat to both INP

She underlined the two sides agreed to deepen bilateral investment cooperation, stimulate partnerships and enable investment integration opportunities. Today, the Prime Minister is meeting Emirati entrepreneurs and investors to explore opportunities to enhance trade and investment. He returns home later today.

She stated International Conference on Resilient Pakistan was held in Geneva on 9th January 2023 and co-hosted by the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations.

The International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan brought together the international community to reaffirm solidarity with the flood affected people of Pakistan. There was high-level representation from a large number of countries and prominent international financial and development institutions. We are particularly grateful for the UN Secretary-General's presence at the Conference, as the co-host, and becoming the voice of the flood affected people of Pakistan, she observed.

At the conference, the



QUETTA: Provincial Information Minister Mitha Khan addressing a press conference.

Sindh govt again postpones LG polls in Karachi, Hyderabad, Dadu

KARACHI: The Sindh government has withdrawn notification to hold the local government elections on the basis of existing delimitations, announcing postponement of the polls in Karachi, Hyderabad and Dadu scheduled to be held on January 15.

The provincial government has decided to amend the Sindh Local Government Act. It will write a letter to the Election Commission of Pakistan under Clause 10 of the Sindh Local Government Act with which the local government elections will be postponed.

In a hurriedly called press conference in Karachi in the wee hours of Friday, Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Memon announced that the

Sindh government would not hold the LG polls in Karachi and Hyderabad scheduled for Jan 15 on the basis of existing demarcation of the constituencies as demanded by the MQM. He revealed that the notification of the delimitations of Karachi and Hyderabad constituencies was withdrawn.

The decision was taken during an emergency meeting of the Pakistan Peoples Party headed by its Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and attended by Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah provincial ministers, PPP district presidents of Karachi and others. Memon said that the meeting discussed the local bodies' elections in the province and held a discussion on the reservations of its ally MQM over the delimita-

tion issue. He said that the meeting decided to accept the demand of its coalition partner vis-a-vis postponement of the polls on the basis of existing delimitations.

He further informed that the Government of Sindh wrote a letter to the Election Commission to postpone the LG elections in Dadu due to flood-water still standing there.

He said the elections in other districts including Tando Allahyar, Tando Muhsam Khan, Badin, Thatta, Sujawal and Jamshoro would go ahead as planned on Jan 15. He, however, made it clear that the provincial government was not covered by the protests, rather it accepted the demand because it wanted to take along all its allies. INP

A delegation of Pakistan Business Council (UAE) calls on PM

Abu Dhabi: A delegation of Pakistan Business Council (UAE) called on Prime Minister Muhammad (PM) Shehbaz Sharif today in Abu Dhabi.

While talking to the delegation, the Prime Minister said that he was happy to know that Pakistani businessmen were bringing their own and Pakistan's name to light in the United Arab Emirates through their hard work and experience. The Prime Minister said that his meetings with the leadership of the United Arab Emirates were successful. He further said that his visit

would help in turning the friendship between Pakistan and United Arab Emirates into a strategic partnership. He said that the international community made more than expected announcements at the Geneva Conference.

The Prime Minister encouraged the delegation of Pakistan Business Council United Arab Emirates to do business and investment in Pakistan and said that energy, real estate, information technology, alternative energy, food processing, tourism etc. He also invited the mem-

bers of the delegation to come to Pakistan with proposals for investment and business.

The members of the delegation expressed their content over the economic policies of the government and showed their interest in doing business and investment in Pakistan.

The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Revenue Mr. Ishaq Dar, Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar, Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif and government officials ONLINE

Several domestic flights at Karachi Airport are delayed

KARACHI: The schedule of several domestic flights coming and taking off from Karachi airport has been changed on Friday.

The Bahawalpur-bound PIA Flight PK 588 is delayed and it will take off from Karachi airport at 10am instead of 8:40am.

The Islamabad-bound AirSial Flight PF123 will depart at 3pm instead of 1pm today. The AirSial's Lahore-bound flight took off at 9am instead of 8am.

The PIA's flight coming from Islamabad will reach Karachi airport at 12:55pm instead of 12:25pm.

The AirSial's flight coming from Lahore will land at 1:30pm instead of 12:30pm.

The flight coming from Islamabad will arrive at 8pm instead of 6pm. INP

LHC orders action against restaurants without parking facility

LAHORE: In a step towards controlling smog, the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday directed the authorities to take action against restaurants without parking facilities.

Punjab badly struck with such weather conditions in recent years in the initial days of winter in the region. The LHC bench issued orders while hearing a petition seeking the court's intervention to curb smog. During today's hearing, the LHC showed reservations about the commencement of development projects simultaneously.

Court observed that restaurants working without proper parking facilities are also fuming traffic problems in the city and ordered to take action against such units.

"They (restaurants) are not building parking facilities nor paying taxes, if this behavior continues, the restaurants will be closed. Later, the LHC ordered the Punjab chief secretary not to transfer CTO Lahore, Asad Aijaz Malhi for at least six months as he has been assisting the court on the smog issue. INP

Saudi-bound passenger caught with drugs at Karachi airport

KARACHI: An outbound passenger has been caught by the Airport Security Force (ASF) at Karachi airport while carrying drugs.

As per details, the ASF officials foiled an attempt to smuggle ice to a Saudi Arabia-bound passenger. Rehmatullah was caught with 1.264-kilogram ice in his luggage.

The officials said the passenger who concealed the drugs in his luggage was traveling to Jeddah. INP



HYDERABAD: PTI leader Asad Umar addressing party workers Election campaign at Latifabad.

Govt, opp start consultation on name of care taker CM Punjab

ISLAMABAD: Government and opposition has started consultations on who will be the care taker Chief Minister (CM) in Punjab following the dissolution of Punjab Assembly (PA).

The constitutional process of nomination of care taker CM will be completed within 8 days.

The role of governor, speaker PA and Election Commission has become vital.

PTI and PML-N have started considering the name for care taker CM.

According to legal and constitutional experts Pervez Elahi will continue to work as CM till the

appointment of care taker CM.

The articles 112, 224 and 224 A of the constitution have become functional.

Governor Punjab Balighur Rehman will dissolve assembly under article 112 of the constitution.

PA will stand dissolved within 48 hours on its own if CM does not comply with CM advice.

Article 224 of the constitution will come into operation after the issuance of notification by governor.

The legal and constitutional experts have said governor Punjab

Balighur Rehman will appoint care taker CM in consultation with CM Punjab and opposition leader. He will write a letter to both in this regard. The two will send their candidates name to governor. If CM and opposition leader don't agree on the name of care taker CM in three days then the matter will go to speaker of PA.

PA speaker will constitute a 6-member committee comprising 3 members each from the government and speaker. CM and opposition leader will send two names each to this committee on their part. INP

Rs 434.43m spent on Imran Khan's air travel from PM House to Bani Gala

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan on Friday said that Rs 434.43 million was spent on former prime minister Imran Khan's back-and-forth travel from the Prime Minister House to his private residence in Bani Gala via helicopter during his time in office from 2019 to March 2022.

Replying to the question of Senator Behramand Khan Tangi, the minister shared the breakdown of the helicopter expenses incurred by Imran Khan.

The helicopter was used for a total of 1,579.8 flying hours in four years with an average cost of Rs 275,000 per hour, the breakdown showed.

According to the detailed breakdown of expenses, Total flying hours and expenditure during flight per year: 2019: 479.8 hours at a cost of Rs131.94m; 2020: 522.0 hours at a cost of Rs143.55m. INP

PAC expresses concern over purchase of 33 vehicles during Nawaz Sharif regime despite cancellation of SAARC conference

ISLAMABAD: Disclosure has been made in Public Accounts Committee (PAC) meeting that 33 vehicles worth Rs 1.40 billion were purchased during Nawaz Sharif previous regime despite imposition of ban by finance ministry.

PAC committee met under Mushahid Hussain Syed here Friday.

According to The Foreign ministry the vehicles were purchased for SAARC summit.

PAC sub committee expressed concern over purchasing the vehicles despite cancellation of SAARC summit.

Mushahid Hussain Syed said as to why the vehicles were purchased when summit was cancelled, before October 2016. Acting foreign secretary told the committee permission for purchasing the vehicles was given by Prime Minister and ECC in 2016. 21 vehicles are still in PM office.

This case was referred to NAB during the former PM Imran Khan tenure.

NAB told the committee no element of corruption was found in this matter. INP



QUETTA: Activists of Jamat e Islami hold protest against price hike.

Masood Khan seeks enhanced economic ties b/w Pakistan, Washington State

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan has sought enhanced economic ties between Pakistan and Washington State.

He was talking to Governor Danny Heck during his visit to the capital of Washington State.

Masood Khan said Pakistan and the United States enjoy a unique equation that had withstood test of times.

He said United States has remained the leading development partner of Pakistan for past 75 years. Our shared values and objectives provide strong underpinnings for forging robust partnerships in all domains and working together for regional and global peace and socio-economic development.

Referring to the recent floods in Pakistan and generous support provided by the US, especially an additional \$100 million during the recently held International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan in Geneva, the Ambassador thanked US and its citizenry for always standing beside people of Pakistan at every hour of need.

Noting impressive annual growth of Washington with GDP exceeding \$600 bn, Masood Khan said that a strong economy and presence of world's leading business conglomerates in Washington provided an ideal ground for fertile minds and booming businesses of Pakistan for forging mutually beneficial economic partnerships.

He identified agriculture, manufacturing, IT & telecom, biotechnology,

He said Washington is the most trade driven economy of the United States and a strong partnership between Pakistan and Washington would be instrumental in enhancing bilateral trade volume manifold.

Earlier, Ambassador Khan visited the Microsoft Headquarters and was received by Fatima Kardar, Vice President, COO & Chief Technical Advisor to CTO along with other Pakistani-American executives working in Microsoft. The Ambassador was informed. INP

Iranian Cultural Consulate marks birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad's daughter

Islamabad: Iranian Cultural Consulate in Islamabad hosted a ceremony to mark the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad's daughter, Hazrat Fatima Zahra SA.

To mark the occasion, the cultural consulate of Iran in Islamabad organized special gatherings to pay tribute to the only daughter of Islam's holy prophet Mohammad.

The host of the event Ehsan Khazaei, Cultural Consular Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Islamabad, while giving a welcome speech, congratulated the audience on the occasion of

Birth day of Hazrat Fatima Zahra (S) which also Women's Day and Mother's Day and paid great tribute to Khatoon Jannat SA.

He further said that it is an opportunity to take stock of how much we have understood the real position of women, and what fundamental steps will be taken to fill this gap in a systematic manner on the occasion of birth anniversary next year.

He also congratulated Imam Khomeini on the birth anniversary of the great leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran.

When Hazrat Imam Khomeini (R.A.) was arrested to be exiled, the guard said, "Where are your soldiers?" He said, "They are drinking milk in their mothers' laps, and today these children have become young."

Their sacrifices, especially commanders like Qassem Soleimani, were trained in the arms of their mothers and played a vital role in the success of the Islamic Revolution.

After the success of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, women have performed outstanding works in various fields and have been pioneers in

many fields.

The number of Iranian women in various fields, especially in these last three months, protected their veils by making Hazrat Fatima Zahra (PBUH) a model and the image presented by the Western media is not correct. In order to lead a successful life, we should follow the example of Hazrat Fatima (PBUH) as she is a role model for us.

The special events were attended by women from all walks of life and included prayers and lectures by scholars on the life and services of Islam's greatest lady Hazrat Zahra.

The participants in the ceremony described the wife of first Shia Imam Ali Ibn-e-Abi Talib, as a role model for Muslim women for her moral and religious virtues.

Religious Scholars said that if the women of the modern century really want to get their rights, they have to take refuge in the shadow of Islam by associating them with the life of Prophets Mohammad's daughter.

Every year, Shia Muslims worldwide commemorate Mother's Day on the 20th day of the Islamic lunar month of Jamadi al-Thani, which marks INP

TENDER NOTICE			
The MINORITIES AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. TSE-222301210871 Only electronic bid will be submitted, No physical bid is required.			
S.No.	Class of Object	T/Fee	Bid Security
1	Manufactured Vehicles & Accessories	1,000 PKR	2%
(Total Item(s) Count: 1)			
Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 10,000,000 in Previous 2. Turn over of at least 5,000,000 PKR in 2 Subsequent Previous Years. Presence in Active Tax Payer List, Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Certificate from the Manufacturer and Authorized agent. Must agree & comply to serve the Contract within the time.			
Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bpcra.gov.pk Issuance of tender Documents: Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bpcra.gov.pk Last Date of bid submission: Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 14 February, 2023 till 12:00 PM through supplier dashboard. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at 01:00 PM on EPPS System Address: minorities affairs department block no 4 Phone no: 3498955825 Email: 020367mushahid@gmail.com			
PRQ No.1910/13-01-2023			SECTION OFFICER MINORITIES AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
www.dpr.gov.pk dpr.gov dpr.gov dpr.gov			

Country importing wheat worth \$2 billion annually: Tariq Cheema

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Tariq Bashir Cheema on Friday said that now Pakistan is importing wheat worth \$2 billion annually, at one time, Pakistan used to export wheat. Addressing a press conference here, he said that this time "we have to import 2.6 million tons of wheat from Russia, out of which we have received 1.3 million tons. The minister said that after the decision of the review committee, the government has decided to import 2.6 million tons of wheat this year. He said that the government had stored 1.8 tons of wheat in the Strategic Reserve last year, which will contain 1.5 million tons this year. The minister said that there is no shortage of wheat/flour anywhere in the country, "we have wheat in abundance and the provinces have also been asked to tell how much wheat they want." He said that provinces including Punjab are not releasing wheat; they are getting wheat as per requirement. Tariq Cheema said that the shortage of wheat in the country and noise about prices is unnecessary and the government is ready to face all kinds of challenges. He said that after the 18th amendment, agricultural commodities including wheat are the issue of provincial governments. He said that all the provinces including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are getting quota wheat and there is no shortage of wheat anywhere in the country. The minister said that when provincial governments released wheat from the

provinces, the prices of flour in the country decreased. He said that Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation Ltd (PASSCO) does the procurement of wheat and all the provinces also deal with it in terms of wheat. Replying to a question, he said that efforts were being made to reduce the reliance on imported food commodities, and enhance the local output of food commodities, including that of wheat and oil seeds as edible oil imports swelled to \$ 4.5 billion during last year and wheat imports to \$ 2 billion. He said that a strategy was being devised for stabilizing flour prices to ensure the provision of flour at affordable rates. "The shortfall is being fulfilled by purchasing the commodity from the open market, due to which we faced price fluctuation", he said adding "the government has also established about 38 sale points to provide wheat flour to the lower income groups." The government was also inspecting the grinding capacity of flour mills in order to operate them to their optimal capacity to produce sufficient quantities of flour to meet local needs, he added. The minister further said that out of the total procurements, the government was procuring about 20 to 21 percent of the total wheat produced, whereas the remaining 80 percent was procured by the private sector. He said that it was needed to streamline the price differential to maintain prices INP



MURREE: A view of vehicles and trees covered with snow after the snowfall in the city.

Pakistan pushes for implementation of UNSC resolutions on Kashmir, Palestine

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan, citing the unresolved Kashmir and Palestine disputes, has called for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions that provide for the exercise of the right to self-determination by the Kashmiri and Palestinian people. Ambassador Munir Akram told the 15-member body that the Security Council needs to actively promote the resolution of conflicts and disputes, not simply manage them, much less ignore them. "The Council has not been able to secure consistent implementation of its own resolutions, such as the resolutions relating to Palestine or Jammu and Kashmir," he said in the course of a debate on 'the Rule of Law among Nations'. "In these cases," the Pakistani envoy added, "The right to self-determination has been suppressed brutally and foreign occupation has been allowed to persist over several decades. It is essential to elaborate the modalities through which this principle can be implemented universally and consistently in the contemporary context." Noting that the international community has adopted laws to regulate the use of force, especially military force, he also pointed out that the Charter has placed explicit restraints on the use of force, except in cases of defence. It has laid down principles which have been a foundation to maintain world order over the past seven decades and prevent another world war. The Security Council's resolutions — whether adopted under Chapter VI (pacific settlement of dis-

putes) or VII (enforcement action) of the UN Charter, are legally binding since Member States are obliged, under the Article 25 of the Charter, to implement the Council's decisions, Ambassador Akram said. The Secretary General should be less reticent in exercising his authority under Article 99 of the Charter, which gives him the role to lead the Security Council to act when and where international peace and security are under threat, he said. Ambassador Munir Akram told the 15-member body that the Security Council needs to actively promote the resolution of conflicts and disputes, not simply manage them, much less ignore them. "The Council has not been able to secure consistent implementation of its own resolutions, such as the resolutions relating to Palestine or Jammu and Kashmir," he said in the course of a debate on 'the Rule of Law among Nations'. "In these cases," the Pakistani envoy added, "The right to self-determination has been suppressed brutally and foreign occupation has been allowed to persist over several decades. It is essential to elaborate the modalities through which this principle can be implemented universally and consistently in the contemporary context." Noting that the international community has adopted laws to regulate the use of force, especially military force, he also pointed out that the Charter has placed explicit restraints on the use of force, except in cases of defence. It has laid down principles which have been a foundation to maintain world order over the past seven decades and prevent another world war. INP

Bid to smuggle 200 wheat flour bags foiled

RAWALPINDI: The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police in an operation here on Friday foiled a bid to smuggle wheat flour and seized 200 bags. According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities of the food department along with Taxila police conducted a raid and rounded up a driver namely Ishaq on recovery of 200 wheat bags from his possession. He said the Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on the directives of the authorities concerned were strictly monitoring all the exit points of Rawalpindi district to foil wheat and flour smuggling bids. INP

President rejects appeal of accused in workplace sexual harassment case

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has rejected the appeal of a person accused of sexual harassment at workplace and referred the case back to the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment at Workplace (FOS-PAH) for final adjudication after appraisal of the evidence. While deciding on an appeal filed by the accused, President Alvi held that the request to once again cross-examine the complainant after the engagement of a fresh counsel had no ground. The president endorsed Ombudsman's observation that the appeal filing by the accused was an apparent attempt to prolong the impugned case indefinitely to enhance the anguish and agony of the complainant. It was further observed that the matter had already consumed sufficient time in the disposal due to the accused's miscellaneous applications and was tantamount to starting a new round of litigation which prima facie was against the spirit and scheme of the Act 2010. The president observed that the complainant who had filed a case of sexual harassment under section 8 of the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010 before the Ombudsman on 27.05.2019 had yet not been adjudicated. The accused had filed a representation before the President against the order of 23.09.2021 for seeking permission to re-examine the complainant again by a fresh counsel which was rejected. Dr Alvi in his order observed that the complaint was filed under the Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010 before the Ombudsman on 27.05.2019. The accused had earlier filed a representation before the president against interlocutory order dated 23.09.2021 for seeking permission for the cross-examination of the complainant which was rejected on 26.01.2022. INP

Neptra hikes K-Electric tariff to bring it at par with other Discos

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority has allowed to raise the K-Electric tariff from Rs1.49 to Rs4.49 in different categories to bring it at par with electricity rates being charged by other electricity distribution companies in the country. In a statement issued on Friday, the Neptra said that the federal government had submitted a petition seeking a uniformity of the electricity tariff of the K-Electric with other Discos operating across the country. The Neptra has allowed an increase of Rs3.30/unit in the rate of Discos under the head of fourth quarterly adjustment for FY2021-22, the statement said. It added that the federal government also petitioned for same rate hike for the K-Electric. The Neptra explained that this adjustment would be charged on units consumed in Oct-Dec 2022 and January 2023. It added that the fuel adjustment would be charged for four months from January-April 2023. The tariff hike for K-Electric would be in the region between Rs1.49 and Rs4.45 in different categories. INP

Pakistan, UAE agree to further strengthen strategic partnership in diverse fields

DUBAI: Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have agreed to intensify consultation and coordination to strengthen strategic partnership and cooperation particularly in the field of information and communication technologies. In a joint statement issued at the conclusion of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's two day official visit to UAE where he held a bilateral meeting with President of UAE Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, it has been stated that the two sides agreed to developing tangible and meaningful bilateral cooperation in key areas. The two sides agreed to work together for bridging the digital divide. During talks, Pakistan and the UAE reaffirmed their historical and brotherly ties, rooted in shared religion, culture, values, and pursuit of regional and global peace and security. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the convergence of views on a host of regional and global issues. Based on their decades-old fraternal ties, both countries expressed solidarity with each other in efforts to preserve their sovereignty and territorial integrity. According to the joint statement, the Prime Minister and the President of the UAE held detailed discussions on concrete measures to strengthen the bilateral relationship while also exchanging views on regional political and security matters. They also discussed specific initiatives to enhance cooperation in political, defense, economic, commercial and cultural areas, developing joint ventures, and strengthening collaboration in the human resource sector. The Prime Minister thanked President of the UAE Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan for UAE's generous assistance during the recent floods in Pakistan. INP

'IOJK people witnessing Indian tyranny for last over seven decades'

ISLAMABAD: The people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) have been witnessing Indian tyranny for the last over seven decades. A report released by Kashmir Media Service, today, said that though the Indian troops have been responding to cries of the Kashmiris for freedom with bullets and bayonets yet they have failed to subdue the people of the occupied territory. The report maintained that the Kashmiris had kept the flame of freedom alive despite facing India's limitless atrocities, adding that Modi must bear in mind that the military might has never cowed down any nation into submission. The report said New Delhi will eventually fail in its wicked plans against Muslims in IOJK and urged the world community to come to rescue the Kashmiris from Indian tyranny. The report expressed the confidence that the IOJK people's steadfastness in their just struggle for right to self-determination would surely bring success and that their valiant struggle against tyrant India will remain a golden page in the annals of history while India would be remembered as a tyrant for its brutal repression in the occupied territory. INP

Fawad warns of anarchy as LG polls in Karachi, Hyderabad delayed again

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry warned on Friday that anarchy could spark in the country if the constitutional orders of courts are not implemented. His reaction comes as the Sindh government announced postponement of local body elections in Karachi divisions, and districts of Hyderabad and Dadu citing reservations of Mutahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) on delimitation and flood water. Earlier, the federal government ignored the court order for holding LG polls in Islamabad and now the ruling of the Sindh High Court (SHC) had been tossed in the air, the former information minister said. Referring to Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Memon's last night press conference, Mr Chaudhry said courts were threatened in the PPP presser. He warned that there would be anarchy if orders of the courts were not honoured. On Thursday night, the Sindh government announced its decision to delay local body elections in Karachi division, Hyderabad and Dadu due to MQM-P's reservations and flood water. Sindh Minister for Information Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the cabinet meeting was held for several hours under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah in which the LG polls, which are set to be held on Jan 15, were discussed and decided to delay the polls. INP

Arshad Sharif murder: Special JIT to leave for UAE Today

ISLAMABAD: The special Joint Investigation Team (JIT) formed to probe the murder of senior journalist Arshad Sharif will leave for United Arab Emirates (UAE) tomorrow (Saturday). The probe team will stay in UAE for a week to collect details of Arshad Sharif's meetings and contacts he made in his last days. The special JIT will then visit Nairobi on January 15 to collect evidence regarding the murder of the renowned journalist. The team will probe two brothers Khurram and Waqar, who accompanied Sharif while he was in Kenya. The probe team will stay in UAE for a week to collect details of Arshad Sharif's meetings and contacts he made in his last days. The special JIT will then visit Nairobi on January 15 to collect evidence regarding the murder of the renowned journalist. The team will probe two brothers Khurram and Waqar, who accompanied Sharif while he was in Kenya. INP

Nawaz phones PM, discusses possibility of elections in Mar-Apr

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held telephonic conversation with PML-N's supreme Nawaz Sharif on Friday and discussed ongoing political situation in Punjab, sources said. Sources further said top PML-N leaders discussed a strategy to hold general elections in March or April this year. Nawaz Sharif asked PM Shehbaz to give important directions to the Punjab Governor to tackle the political situation in Punjab. Sources added, the premiere also contacted former president and PPP co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari and discussed in detail the political situation after no confidence motion episode. The development comes a day after the Chief Minister Chaudhry Parvez

Elahi had signed a summary for dissolution of Punjab Assembly day after he obtained vote of confidence from Punjab Assembly amid ruckus and opposition's boycott following weeks of political turbulence in the province. The decision to dissolve the assembly had been taken in a meeting between the chief minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan held at Zaman Park, where senior party leaders were also present. Speaking to the media on Thursday, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry said that the Punjab CM has signed the summary asking the Governor to dissolve provincial assembly. The PTI leader said that the advice has been sent to the Punjab. INP



KARACHI: Sharjeel Inam Memon talking to media after inaugurating bus service.

Dr Mubeen Shah, Zafar Qureshi discuss IOJK's latest situation with APHC-AJK leaders

ISLAMABAD: Senior Vice Chairman of Diaspora Alliance and Chief Executive Officer of Kashmir House, Türkiye, Dr Mubeen Shah and Vice Chairman of Kashmir Diaspora Alliance, Zafar Qureshi discussed the latest situation of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir with the All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter leaders in Islamabad, today. Dr Mubeen Shah and Zafar Qureshi on the occasion informed the Hurriyat leaders over the activities of the Kashmir Diaspora at the international level. Addressing the event, Dr Mubeen Shah said the APHC represents the collective sentiments, struggles, sufferings and sacrifices of the subjugated people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir and it has a high status among the common people. He hoped that the

new office-bearers would work tirelessly and sincerely for the Kashmir cause and would take all possible steps on the political and diplomatic fronts to highlight the Kashmiris' struggle for their right to self-determination. Zafar Qureshi in his address said that the ugly face of India had been exposed to the world and added that the Kashmir freedom movement would be intensified at the international level in consultation with the APHC. APHC-AJK Convener Mahmood Ahmad Saghar in his address reiterated the pledge to continue efforts for the Kashmir freedom movement and to move forward with a new plan of action. He said, "We have to make the best use of media and social media to highlight the atrocities and serious violations of human rights in IOJK by Indian troops at the international level." INP

CCPO Lahore blames JIT members for 'damaging' Wazirabad attack case

LAHORE: The CCPO Lahore Ghulam Mehmood Dogar blamed the JIT members for 'damaging' the Wazirabad Attack case. As per details, JIT head CCPO Ghulam Mehmood Dogar submitted the report against the JIT members to the additional chief secretary's home and requested to take strict action against them. He blamed the other members of JIT for ruining the case and said that the members of the JIT leaked the secret information to social media and mainstream media and damaged the case. The JIT head Gulam Dogar said that the two members did not carry out the inquiry that's why the judge reprimanded the JIT head on November 17. Meanwhile, SP Ihsan Ullah Chauhan was told to investigate the main suspect but he did not do it even once, he tempered the investigation instead. The JIT member said there was only one shooter.

The RPO DG khan attended only two meetings and was not interested in the case. The CCPO Ghulam Dogar said it is important to know that SP Malik Tariq went with the forensic team to the spot of the attack on December 17. During the search operation, around 30 bullet shells were found in the nearby building and SP Tariq recorded the video of the crime scene. These bullet shells are a proof of the third attacker's presence. Surprisingly, despite recording the video himself he said there was only one shooter. The JIT head Gulam Dogar said that the two members did not carry out the inquiry that's why the judge reprimanded the JIT head on November 17. Meanwhile, SP Ihsan Ullah Chauhan was told to investigate the main suspect but he did not do it even once, he tempered the investigation instead. The JIT member said there was only one shooter. INP



ABU DHABI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with the delegation of Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce.