

QUETTA VOICE

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Sardar Akhtar Mengal Allowed To Contest Elections

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: In a recent development, the election tribunal in Balochistan has granted permission to Sardar Akhtar Mengal, Chief of the Balochistan National Party (BNP), to contest elections on NA 264 Quetta. The decision came after the returning officer initially rejected Mengal's nomination papers due to concerns about his Aqama (work permit) from Dubai.

The tribunal, presided over by senior judges of the Balochistan High Court, Mr. Justice Hashim Khan Kakar, and Mr. Justice Amir Nawaz Rana, issued this order following an application filed by Sajid Tareen Advocate, the Counsel for the BNP Chief. Expressing optimism, Tareen stated, "Hopefully, the BNP Chief would be allowed to contest elections on the remaining two national assembly and one provincial assembly seats."

Khushal Kakar Also Allowed To Contest Elections

The tribunal also extended approval to other political leaders, including Khushal Khan Kakar, Chief of Pashtoonkhwa National Awami Party (PNAP), Manzoor Kakar,



Central Secretary General of the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), and Faiq Ali Jamali, an ex-Balochistan Minister.

Amid a backdrop of rejected nomination papers by returning officers across Balochistan, a total of 405 candidates have challenged the decisions before the election tribunal. Out of these, the tribunal has greenlit 75 candidates to participate in the upcoming general elections scheduled for February 8, 2024.

Balochistan Witnessing Robust Electoral Activity

Balochistan is witnessing robust electoral activity, with over 1400 candidates vying for 51 general assembly seats in the Balochistan Assembly. Additionally, more than 500 candidates are competing for 16 national assembly seats in the province.

The tribunal's scheduled hearings on candidate cases will continue until January 10 this month in Balochistan. Notably, many of the rejected nomination papers were based on allegations of non-payment of utility bills. The decisions of the election tribunal play a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of the upcoming elections, as hopeful candidates seek validation and approval to participate in the democratic process.

Court seeks 'clarity' on disqualification before elections, says SC

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa said the apex court was seeking "clarity" on disqualification as general elections are scheduled in the country for February as the SC resumed hearing a set of petitions to determine the length of disqualification.

A seven-member bench of the apex court, presided by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali is hearing the case.

The inconsistency between court decisions and legislative legislation regarding the duration of disqualification under Article 62(1) has prompted the apex court to intervene and determine whether the disqualification of a lawmaker should be for a lifetime or five years stipulated in the Election Act.

The disqualification conundrum stems from the addition of Article 62(1) to the Constitution by former military ruler Gen Ziaul



Haq. However, the issue gained prominence when a larger bench of the Supreme Court disqualified former prime minister Nawaz Sharif for life in the Panama Papers case.

In June last year, parliament introduced an amendment to Section 232 of the Election Act, setting the period of disqualification to five years under Article 62(1)(f). This legislative move adds a layer of complexity to the matter that the Supreme Court is now set to unravel.

As the hearing commenced today, Advocate Khurram Raza raised questions on the maintainability of the proceedings after taking the rostrum. However, the CJP continued with the main line of questioning regarding the time duration of disqualification and said Article 68 of the Constitution refers to disqualification only for five years. He further asked where it is mentioned that a law-

maker will be disqualified for life. "Where is the power in this court to do this? That is the essential question."

"Does it not appear odd to you that for other crimes as big as treason, one can always come back and contest elections but for a civil offence, the punishment is for life. But if one were to commit a murder, rape or kidnapping, then an individual could come back and contest elections," said Justice Shah.

Advocate Raza contended that these arguments were present in Islam principles, however, Justice Isa took exception to the argument and said that the principle of repentance and returning to the right path does exist in Islam.

He also asked if the provision for disqualification was added to the Constitution by a dictator. He further said the amendment to the Constitution was made at "gunpoint" and how could the wisdom of five judges be greater than that of the parliament.

"No matter how much you despise the members of the assembly, they are our representatives," News Desk.

Police Officer Injured in Quetta Firing

Staff Reporter:

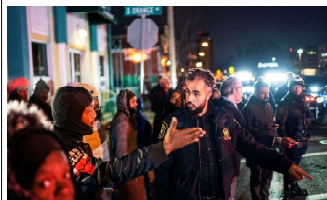


QUETTA: Unknown accused opened fire at a police vehicle in the Zarghoonabad area of the provincial capital on Thursday evening. A police officer identified as Abdul Haleem was injured in the attack.

The assailants escaped unhurt from the spot. Police reached the spot as an investigation into the incident went underway.

The injured police officer was rushed to the hospital for medical treatment.

New Jersey imam shot dead outside mosque, no suspect or motive identified



WEB DESK: An imam who was shot on Wednesday outside a mosque in New Jersey has died, the US state's attorney general said, adding that the killing did not initially appear to be driven by "bias" or domestic terrorism.

Hasan Sharif was shot multiple times outside Masjid Muhammad in Newark, just west of New York, before being taken to hospital where he later died, New Jersey Attorney General Matt Platkin said. "We do not yet know the motivation for this crime (but) the evidence collected thus far does not indicate that this was an act motivated by bias, or an act of domestic terrorism," said Platkin.

He added that "in light of global events, and with a rise in bias that many communities are experiencing across our state — particularly the Muslim community — there are many in New Jersey right now who are feeling a heightened sense of fear."

The state is home to 300,000 Muslim Americans, he said.

Since the outbreak of the conflict in the Gaza Strip, there has been an increase in Islamophobic and anti-Semitic attacks across the United States.

The Essex County prosecutor, Ted Stephens, confirmed Sharif was shot more than once a little after 6am, and that "it does not appear the imam was the victim of a bias crime or that this is related to terrorism."

"We are dedicated to bringing justice for the imam's family," said Stephens, who called it a "dastardly crime."

The United States Transportation Security Administration (TSA) earlier confirmed that Sharif had worked as a security screener at Newark airport since 2016.

"We are deeply saddened to learn of his passing and send our condolences to his family, friends and colleagues," said Lisa Farstein, a TSA spokeswoman.

A Taste of History: Landi – Preserving Tradition and Flavor in the Rugged Frontier

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: High in the windswept mountains of Pakistan's Frontier Regions, bordering Afghanistan, lies a culinary legacy dating back centuries.

Landi. This sun-dried meat, a testament to human ingenuity and adaptation, isn't just food; it's a story etched in every savory bite.

For generations, tribesmen have relied on Landi as a way to combat the harsh realities of their environment.

Inhospitable terrain, unpredictable weather, and the ever-present threat of blocked roads and communication loss necessitated a solution for food preservation. Enter Landi, a method as simple as it is effective.

From Necessity to Delicacy:

Landi's story begins with "special lambs," imported from Afghanistan and carefully chosen for their meat quality.

Haji Hamedullah, owner of two Landi shops on the bustling Quetta-Chaman road, describes the process with reverence. Salt and a unique blend of mountainous herbs are rubbed onto the meat, infusing it with an earthy aroma that speaks of ancient wisdom.



Then, under the relentless sun, nature works its magic. Day after day, for nearly a month, the meat dries, transforming into a concentrated nugget of flavor and sustenance.

Beyond Hunger, a Cultural Touchstone:

Landi wasn't just a weapon against hunger; it was a shield against the biting cold of the region's deserts and villages.

Nomadic communities and frontier families alike depended on this portable source of protein, a

vital companion on their journeys and a reliable comfort during harsh winters.

A Taste of Adventure for Modern Palates:

Today, Landi transcends its practical origins to become a sought-after delicacy. Foodies and travelers, captivated by its rich history and unique flavor profile, flock to Quetta and Chaman to experience this taste of the Frontier.

Hamedullah's shops, steeped in the aroma of sun-dried meat and tradition, welcome them with open arms.

Tragic Collision Claims Lives and Injures Several Near Khaliqabad in Sorab

Abdullah Lehri:

KALAT: In a devastating incident near the Khaliqabad area, a collision between a wagon and a car resulted in the loss of five lives and left eight individuals critically injured. The victims were promptly transported to DHO Sorab for medical assistance, where the gravity of the situation unfolded.

Among the deceased, two were identified as employees of Pakistan Television (PTV), adding a poignant layer to the tragedy. The collision occurred in the vicinity of Sorab, sending shockwaves through the local community.

The injured individuals are currently receiving medical care at DHO Sorab, with medical professionals working tirelessly to stabilize their conditions.

The severity of the injuries underscores the urgency of the medical response.

Local authorities and emergency services swiftly responded to the scene, coordinating efforts to manage the



aftermath of the collision and transport the victims to the hospital.

The collision site has been cordoned off for investigations, as authorities work to ascertain the factors contributing to this tragic incident.

The community mourns the loss of lives and extends heartfelt sympathies to the families affected by this unfortunate event. As the investigation unfolds, there will likely be a

heightened focus on road safety measures to prevent such accidents in the future.

The collision serves as a somber reminder of the need for continued efforts to enhance road safety awareness and infrastructure to protect lives and prevent accidents. The local community stands united in grief, emphasizing the importance of collective efforts to create a safer environment for everyone on the roads.

QUTTA GAS EXPLOSIONS

Editor: Asim Khan

Quetta Gas Explosions: Urgent Calls for SSGC Accountability and Gas Load Shedding Schedule

Editorial:

The recent spate of gas-related explosions in Quetta has cast a dark shadow over the city, leaving behind shattered lives and a community grappling with grief. The incidents in Eastern Bypass, Nawar Kali, and Kuchlak have not only resulted in severe burn injuries to innocent individuals but have also exposed the pressing need for a comprehensive and immediate review of safety protocols surrounding gas infrastructure in the region.

Consumers Bore The Brunt Of SSGC Inefficiency

The most heart-wrenching episode unfolded near Quetta East Bypass Bhosa Mandi, where a house, torn apart by a gas explosion, became a tragic testament to the vulnerabilities faced by Quetta's residents. A family, comprising a husband, wife, and five children, bore the brunt of the blast, suffering severe burns that have left them fighting for their lives in the burn ward of Civil Hospital in Quetta.

The incident in Kuchlak further adds to the distressing narrative, with four individuals from the same household falling victim to another gas explosion. The fact that such incidents occurred in separate localities raises grave concerns about the overall safety standards and practices in place.

Silent Menace Of Gas Leaks Pose A Serious Threat

Quetta, it seems, has become a city under siege, besieged not by external threats but by the silent menace of gas leaks. The frequency of such incidents has not only left the community in mourning but has also prompted questions about the efficacy of safety measures and the maintenance of gas infrastructure.

It is disheartening to note that Quetta has become no stranger to gas-related tragedies in recent times. Each incident not only inflicts physical harm on the victims but also seeps into the community. The urgency of addressing the root causes of these explosions cannot be overstated, and the responsibility falls squarely on the shoulders of the authorities.

SSGC Should Not Evade Accountability

The Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC), being the custodian of gas infrastructure, must not evade accountability in the face of such calamities. The lack of responsiveness from the company's head office in Karachi to inquiries from Daily Quetta Voice is both perplexing and unacceptable. In times of crisis, transparency and accountability are paramount, and the SSGC must step up to address the concerns and queries of the affected community.

One of the glaring issues highlighted in the aftermath of these incidents is the need for a structured schedule of gas load shedding. The prevailing chit weather in Quetta and the unpredictability of Balochistan exacerbates the situation, leading to prolonged and unannounced load shedding. The hide-and-seek of gas supply has become a dangerous game, and it is the innocent consumers who pay the price.

In this edition, we call upon the Sui Southern Gas Company to take immediate and decisive action. The company must announce a clear schedule of gas load shedding, ensuring that consumers are aware of the timings and can plan accordingly. Moreover, there is an urgent need for the SSGC to engage in a proactive campaign to create awareness among consumers about gas safety measures.

SSGC Must Announce Schedule Of Gas Load Shedding

The safety of Quetta's residents should be non-negotiable, and the SSGC must collaborate with local authorities to conduct thorough investigations into the recent incidents. Only through a transparent and accountable approach can the root causes be identified and rectified, preventing similar tragedies in the future. As the injured continue their arduous journey towards recovery, the entire community waits for tangible actions that will guarantee the safety and well-being of Quetta residents in their homes. The Sui Southern Gas Company must rise to the occasion and prove its commitment to the safety of the people it serves. The time for decisive action is now.

RIP Sartaj Aziz

By Khurram Husain:

ONE by one, those with a memory, and those who played a critical role in navigating this country through the many crises it has passed through, are leaving us. The last few days have seen Sartaj Aziz and Riaz Khokhar pass away, taking with them a treasure of memories, reflections and much more, from so many critical episodes in our history.

I never knew Riaz Khokhar sahib, and it is my loss for not having familiarised myself with him. But I met Sartaj sahib on a few occasions, followed his speaker at an event which was a featured attraction in Washington, D.C. when he was national security adviser back in 2013, and recorded a long detailed, probing interview with him back in 2007 and again in 2013 shortly after the elections.

Sartaj sahib was solid, serious and wore an austere countenance. The closest to a smile I saw on his face was a brief, short smirk. But far more than his personal characteristics, it is the life trajectory that he carved out which tells a remarkable story.

He was an outsider in economic management circles when he landed as minister of state for agriculture in the Junjo government. Economic management in Pakistan was the grip of a small coterie of civil servants in those days, a tightly knit network of hand-picked men around Ghulam Ishaq Khan. These men circulated between all key positions involved in managing the country's economy: finance minister, deputy chairman Planning Commission, chairman Wapda, governor State Bank of Pakistan.

These were also serious men, of very high

calibre, including people such as V.A. Jaffery, A.G.N. Kazi and H.U. Beg. It was quite the norm for civil servants to run with their initials and surname in those days.

Ranged against them in a virtually adversarial role were the "outsiders", or those who had served in international agencies and were returning to Pakistan with new, and different ideas of how to run a country. Among them was Mahbub ul Haq. Another, younger one, was Sartaj Aziz.

The GK's clique believed in a centralised economy, where the state would preside over all economic activity, sometimes as a direct owner of productive assets, at other times administering the prices or setting the terms of entry into any given field. They were mistrustful of private capital, but not hostile to it. They loathed bankers, at least the private variety, and had strong views favouring import substitution, protection of the domestic market and its farmers who needed a strong, paternalistic power watching over them in their view.

Sartaj sahib was among the newcomers who believed the country needed to change. It needed to embrace markets, not smother them. It needed to open up foreign trade, move away from import substitution towards exports, and lose its fear of imports. Mahbub ul Haq and Muhammad Yaqub at the State Bank were among these individuals too, although the former was not exactly a newcomer.

He got his chance to start making a difference in 1985 as a junior minister in the Junjo government, but the government had it well planned to change when he was

dismissed by the army minister in the first Nawaz Sharif government of 1990.

Pakistan's first reform-minded budget was drafted by Sartaj. Import tariffs were slashed massively and a domestic general sales tax was introduced to replace the revenues that previously had come from the high customs duties on all imports. Those years saw the first privatisation (of Mushki Commercial Bank) that we now know as MCB, the inauguration of the treasury bill auctions as the way to raise government debt, and the first serious advancement in private power generation projects (Hubco), lessons from which were later incorporated into the Private Power Policy in 1996.

Those years also saw the beginning of the Foreign Currency Deposit scheme, which eventually grew so large it would cast a shadow on the viability of Pakistan's external sector.

The decade of the 1990s saw such momentum in the economy and lifestyles that it is sometimes difficult to convey the full impact of these changes to the younger generation. These were the years when the first mobile phones appeared in the hands of private citizens, the first time foreign TV channels including CNN and MTV could be viewed in Pakistan homes. It was the first taste of foreign brands for many as shopping malls sprouted in major cities, like Pace in Lahore or Park Towers in Karachi.

Foreign currency could be purchased without having to have your passport stamped, and so on.

All this flowed from the changes that rolled on from the earliest reformers pushed by Sartaj sahib. But there was a darker side:

Chandni Kakar:

Balochistan.

Throughout history, crisis situations, be they wars, natural disasters, or extreme economic downturns, inevitably unmask the ugly face of social inequality. Among the different types of inequality, gender-based violence (GBV), often considered a shadow pandemic, regrettably seizes these crisis situations as a breeding ground, leveraging emotions of fear and uncertainty. Strikingly, in the windswept terrains of Balochistan, a menacing overlap of climate change and GBV rises like an ominous specter, particularly in the flood-prone areas.

Catastrophic Climatic Events and GBV-Mysterious Puppets on the Same String

Here's the curious case: aggravated climate change, leading to increased flood events and a rising tide of GBV are not isolated instances of social trauma but deeply intermingled

phenomena in Balochistan. Official reports show a disturbing trend: 157 cases of domestic violence were reported in Balochistan in 2022, with 35 individuals being killed on the pretext of Karo Kar, half of whom were women becoming victims of sexual abuse.

Before this, in 2021, the number of reported cases of domestic violence was 127, with 30 women being victims of sexual violence.

In 2021, according to the Balochistan Gender-Based-Violence Case Management System, close to 3726 cases of GBV were reported. The following year, in 2022, illustrating a staggering increase of nearly 9%. Digging deeper, the events seem a canny coincidence. An upward trend in extreme climate events in the same timeline correlates

with this rise, painting a chilling picture. This correlation isn't incidental but consequential, a nexus amplified by the continuous environmental changes and socio-economic fallout they induce.

Climate Change in Balochistan: More Than Just an Environmental Issue

Climate change in Balochistan isn't calming down, like a seemingly ceaseless sandstorm that obliterates ways of life. In July 2022, unprecedented torrential rains in Quetta led to submerged communities, damaged infrastructure, and homeless families. Similarly, Naserabad faced daunting floods in August, with farmlands, the vital backbone of their economy, laid to waste.

This consistent harsh climate rattles the socio-economic fabric where women, due to systemic patriarchy and gender biases, bear the heavy toll. Societal roles

designate farming, household work, and gathering water and firewood as feminine duties, all of which become perilous with fluctuating climatic conditions.

Recent Case: An Appalling Tale from Naserabad

Consider the heart-wrenching drama that unfolded in Naserabad. Amidst the devastating floods, several women and girls reported being victims of horrific violence when they went out to collect clean water or seek shelter. A specific case that sounds alarm bells was that of a seventeen-year-old girl who, seeking refuge during the floods, was brutally assaulted.

The Future: Deciphering the Complex Jigsaw Puzzle

So, how do the convoluted cogs of climate change and GBV work in unison? A deeper scrutiny suggests that, with

rising environmental instability, women are forced into vulnerable situations, escalating GBV rates.

Additionally, the diversion of resources and law enforcement focus to disaster relief further aggravates these incidences.

The growing climate crisis in Balochistan is more than an environmental problem. It is a socio-economic dilemma that acts as a catalyst for gender-based violence, and a glaring testament to the intricate relationship between humanity and Mother Earth.

A multi-faceted approach that intertwines climate strategy with gender justice is the need of the hour.

The time is ripe to refine our lenses. Climate change comes not just with roaring winds but also with shifting boundaries of rising injustice against vulnerable sections of society.

The writer is a Balochistan-based journalist, she can be contacted at @KakarChand7977.

Sizing up climate negotiations

By Ali Taqueer Sheikh:

THE global climate year moves from one climate summit to the other. All 29 annual Conferences of the Parties, or COPs, have traditionally been held at the end of each calendar year, allowing countries to begin their follow-up climate actions in January.

Pakistan has always left COP participation until its last few weeks before the COPs, relegating Pakistan's global climate engagement to passivity and its decision-making to hurried afterthoughts. Thinking proactively, the climate ministry has now decided to set up a special cell to initiate year-long preparations for climate negotiations.

Would the establishment of a COP cell consign the federal ministry to spending all its time jockeying for participation in the COP? Or can this help align all national endeavours with the global discourse on building climate resilience and a low-carbon path to development? How can it help Pakistan map, track, and break its global climate isolation?

It is possible only if we realise that COPs have over the years become ever-evolving. They have become the world's largest knowledge marketplace, a rendezvous for a wide range of stakeholders and not just a lavish and boisterous jamboree.

Actual negotiations under the convention on climate change are only a small part of the COPs. The gathering is

used to strike deals, joint or negotiate voluntary conditions and partnerships for specific actions, forge alliances to protect or promote sectors, diversify and evolving portfolios and priorities of key institutions and countries, and trends in international climate financial and technology flows.

All this seemingly outside the targets of the Paris Agreement (NDC), commitments made under periodically revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). The formal negotiations between the parties, countless side events organised under the Paris Agreement and other pavilions typically focus on the unfinished agenda of previous COPs.

The success of the next COP in Baku, Azerbaijan, for example, will be gauged by at least seven unfinished agenda items from COP28: operationalising the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF), Article 6 of the Paris Agreement on Carbon Trading, Global Stocktake (GST), the new Collective Quantitative Goal (NCQG), Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), Mission Plan Programme (MPP), and the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP).

Let's look at the first three more closely from Pakistan's vantage point. LDF: The LDF has been established, as Pakistan had demanded. But several key decisions still need to be made, particularly about

the LDF's financials. Would it rely primarily on the mandatory contributions from countries that have historical responsibility for global emissions or voluntary contributions by emergent economies like China and India? Or rich developing countries like the UAE and Singapore?

Or can the LDF adopt innovative sources of financial aid that rely only on donor countries? There are several other unresolved questions of interest to Pakistan, such as will the fund disburse grants or concessional loans, or both? There is a strong undercurrent for it to focus on 45 least developed countries and small island developing states.

For Pakistan, a key pending decision is whether the fund is only for the least developed countries or whether it applies to "particularly vulnerable" developing countries? Should a separate window be created for emergency fund (LDF), Article 6 of the Paris Agreement on Carbon Trading, Global Stocktake (GST), the new Collective Quantitative Goal (NCQG), Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), Mission Plan Programme (MPP), and the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP).

Let's look at the first three more closely from Pakistan's vantage point. LDF: The LDF has been established, as Pakistan had demanded. But several key decisions still need to be made, particularly about

have implications for countries such as Pakistan that were planning to develop their VCMs. Indonesia and several other countries have imposed conditions on the export of carbon credits, and many others have put carbon trading on hold. All the disagreements surrounding the implementation of these articles are resolved.

Some countries, however, continue with cross-border cooperation under Article 6.2. Concurrently, the World Bank has announced leading the growth of high-integrity global carbon markets, initially with 15 countries. The list does not include Pakistan that has already signed on to the REDD Plus project.

Pakistan and other countries have begun to develop the entire ecosystem of carbon trading: carbon pricing initiatives, emissions trading systems, domestic carbon markets, and carbon taxes. Over two-thirds of the countries, however, are said to be planning to use carbon markets to meet their NDC commitments. Pakistan's 2022 flooding has triggered by climate disasters such as Pakistan's 2022 flooding has triggered by climate disasters such as Pakistan's 2022 flooding has triggered by climate disasters such as

conclusive. These articles are related to carbon trading, markets, and pricing. The negotiations in relation to water of the Euphrates are particularly contentious, especially with regard to oversight, transparency, methodological rigour, integrity, and risks of double counting in voluntary carbon markets. These disagreements

Baku will therefore, provide another venue for the unfinished battle for the time-bound phasing down of fossil fuels, leading to their phasing out.

While GST has set an ambitious target of tripling renewables and tripling efficiency by 2030, it has not committed any financial resources for this energy transition. It is because of no clear financial commitments for NCCQ, GGA, MPP, and JTWP have all remained incomplete. This has further weakened GST as it has raised cross-retrofitting for them.

Finally, responding presumably to European Union's carbon border adjustment mechanism that will steadily impose carbon taxes on trading partners like Pakistan, the EU has recorded that unilateral measures should not constitute a means of arbitrary discrimination or disguised restriction on international trade.

The COP cell will be immensely useful only if it works on the premise that most initiatives announced at the COP are implemented during the year, just the way the launch of studies commissioned during the COP cell's work.

It perhaps not unfair to say that the unfinished agenda of COP28, that will be taken up in Baku in December, should be at the heart of the COP cell's work. This can best be achieved through collaborative inter-ministerial initiatives.

In their own words

By Muhammad Ali Siddiqi:

MARTIN Luther was by any standards a great man. He took on medieval Europe's strongest institutions, the papacy, and changed the continent's religious map. The 95 theses he nailed on the door of a church in Wittenberg were a declaration of war on the religious establishment, ultimately heralding an era of religious freedom.

However, looking for something else about him, I ran into Luther's views about Jews and Judaism, and was shocked to discover views that have been in Adolf Hitler's cabinet.

The Jews survived 2,000 years of unabashed persecution,

but emerged powerful in every sense of the term. They also produced some of the world's greatest scientists and scholars. Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, James Franck, Eugene Wigner, etc.

The brutalities to which they were subjected in medieval as well as modern times gave the Jewish people a psyche that has steelled them. Regrettably, some among them also developed shocking indifference to human misery.

We know, for instance, of Iraq's fate after Saddam Hussein's Kuwait misadventure, and the consequences to the Jewish people. I considered Iraq its principal enemy, and Saddam's stupidity provided Iraqis a sense of unity especially children. Esti-

an opportunity to strangle Iraq by means of sanctions.

The original purpose of the UN resolution was to isolate Saddam. The Security Council in 1990, was to force Saddam to pull out of Iraq and pay compensation to those affected by the Iraq invasion. The sanctions banned all economic dealing with the world, and forbade even food imports, something abolished later. However, even without the ban on food, the sanctions were harsh and created a wide variety of economic problems for the people of Baghdad and nearby cities.

He resigned as the UN humanitarian coordinator in Baghdad because the Security Council demanded for lifting the sanctions, saying he could not run a programme that amounted to genocide.

The children were Iraqis, so should that exclude the element of human sympathy? No less

mates of child victims of the polluted water and sanctions.

Iraq said half a million children died, but it was claimed that the Saddam regime had exaggerated the figure to gain world sympathy. Nevertheless, a key figure denouncing the sanctions was Irish diplomat Denis Halliday, once UN assistant secretary general.

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The children were Iraqis, so should that exclude the element of human sympathy? No less

a person than Madeleine Albright was asked her opinion about the effects of the sanctions. Secular in outlook, Albright said she didn't know what her religion was and came to know of it only after she learnt she had won Bill Clinton's cabinet in the Jewish quota.

To know her views, Leslie Stahl of CBS, in an interview in 1996, told Albright, "We have heard that a half million children have died. I mean, that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And, is the price worth it?" Albright, who became the 64th US secretary of state a year later, replied, "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price—we think the price is worth it."

Let us also take a look at Menachem Begin's views.

Mushahid terms sanitary workers as unsung heroes, real VIPs?

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senator Mushahid Hussain has said that the role of sanitary workers in cleanliness of federal capital was commendable and they are our unsung heroes.

Senator Mushahid, who represents the Federal Capital in the Senate, held a Christmas-eve New Year's Party in honour of sanitation workers at the E-7 Park, which was attended by about 150 persons.

Lauding the hard work, role and contribution of sanitary workers to keep Islamabad 'clean and green', he said: 'you are the real VIPs.

given your honesty, dedication and hardwork and we are proud of you'. He also awarded shields of appreciation to two retiring sanitary workers: Yaqoob Masih, who served for 42 years, and Saifur Rahman, who served for 38 years.

Talking to the media, Senator Mushahid Hussain said that knowing Islamabad is a city of the elites, where VIP Culture is prevalent and only VIPs are acknowledged or honoured, he wanted to set a different example, by 'honouring our unsung heroes', the poor, underprivileged, belonging to the Christian com-

munity, who are the weakest and most oppressed section of Pakistani society. He said 'usually, in Islamabad, we only honour VIPs or those holding high offices'. He said the sanitary workers are the real VIPs, because they serve selflessly, above and beyond the call of duty, at meagre salaries, and it is because of them that our city is so clean and beautiful'.

Senator Mushahid Hussain said that 'we must uphold Qaid-e-Azam's vision of equality for all Pakistanis, irrespective of religion, caste or creed' and respect the National Flag where the white colour

honours non-Muslim Pakistanis.

He also said 'humanity should be paramount and the real worship is serving humanity, above any prejudices or any consideration of colour, caste or creed'.

Last year too, Senator Mushahid Hussain arranged a similar function in honour of Manzoor Masih, a retiring sanitary worker and other members of CDA Sanitation staff.

The head of CDA Labour Union, Chaudhry Yasin, and Senator Fawzia Arshad, PTI Senator from Islamabad also participated in the function.



ISLAMABAD: Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony & Islamic Council and chairman Pakistan Ulama Council Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi meeting with the Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi ambassador of UAE in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Murtaza Solangi, Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting addressing an event organized by Pakistan Disabled Foundation for special persons at National Press Club.

Hundreds cut off after Japan quake that killed 78

TOKYO (INP): More than 50 people were reported missing Thursday as Japanese rescuers frantically searched for survivors three days after a devastating earthquake left at least 78 dead.

The frantic search for survivors continues, more than a dozen communities remained isolated by landslides and blocked roads in central Japan, where the 7.5-magnitude quake struck on Monday.

Around 29,000 households were without electricity in Ishikawa prefecture on the Sea of Japan coast, and more than 110,000 homes across Ishikawa and two neighbouring regions had no water.

Authorities also published a list on Thursday of 51 people whose whereabouts could not be confirmed. Further scenes of destruction were seen in the coastal town of Oyoia in the Suzu area.

Anamizu, including cars crushed under crumbling concrete and whole facades torn off three-storey structures.

Thousands of soldiers, firefighters and police officers from across Japan combed through the rubble of collapsed wooden houses and toppled commercial buildings for signs of life.

Access was blocked to small communities in the hardest-hit Noto Peninsula region - with 300 people desperately waiting for aid at a school in the town of Oyoia in the Suzu area.

'Even if I give my food to my children, it is not enough at all. I have eaten almost nothing for the past two days.'

A woman in her 30s, with three children in Suzu told the Asahi Shimbun newspaper. In the city of Nanto, police managing traffic told drivers that one of the main roads leading to Wajima - where a huge fire razed a whole area of traditional wooden houses - had been prioritised for emergency vehicles.

'Either reconsider carrying on, or risk facing a huge traffic jam ahead,' an officer with heard warning drivers, approaching them one by one. At a nearby gas station, a long queue of cars was waiting outside for it to open as the clock ticked past 8 am. Although there were no fuel shortages at

the station for now, workers there told they were rationing gas nonetheless.

Monday's main shockwave triggered tsunami waves at least 1.2 metres (four feet) high in Wajima, and a series of smaller tsunamis were reported elsewhere. Broadcaster NHK reported that one person was swept away by the tsunami in Noto's Suzu area, with the coast guard investigating.

'This is a very difficult situation. But from the viewpoint of protecting lives, I ask that you make every effort to save and rescue as many lives as possible by this evening, when the crisis, a long queue of cars was waiting outside for it to open as the clock ticked past 8 am. Although there were no fuel shortages at

Blinken embarks on new Mideast crisis trip

WASHINGTON (INP): US Secretary of State Antony Blinken will leave Thursday on his fourth crisis trip to the Middle East, an official said, as fears mount that the Israel-Hamas conflict will spiral into a regional war.

The top US diplomat will leave Thursday evening from Washington on a trip that will include Israel, the US official said Wednesday on condition of anonymity.

The official did not offer any further detail but Blinken on previous trips has visited a number of Arab countries.

It will mark Blinken's fourth trip to the region and fifth to Israel - excluding a visit accompanying President Joe Biden - since Hamas militants carried out the deadliest-ever attack inside Israel on October 7, triggering massive retaliation.

On Tuesday, a suspected Israeli strike killed a top Hamas leader in the suburbs of Beirut, raising fears of a wider war.

'It is in no one's interest - not in the interest of any country in the region, not in the interest of any country in the world - to see this conflict escalate any further than it already is,' State Department

spokesman Matthew Miller said earlier Wednesday.

Inside Iran, whose clerical leaders back Hamas, bomb blasts on Wednesday killed at least 95 people as they ripped through a crowd commemorating Revolutionary Guards general Qasem Soleimani, who was killed exactly four years earlier in a US strike ordered by Biden's predecessor Donald Trump.

The United States denied either it or Israel were involved, with a senior Biden administration official saying it appeared to be a 'terrorist attack' along the lines of those carried out by the Islamic State extremist group, which staunchly opposes Shiite-majority Iran.

The Biden administration has backed Israel both with public and diplomatic support and with weapons, with Blinken days ago again bypassing congressional review to rush a sale of weapons to Israel.

Biden's approach has provoked fury in parts of the Arab world and has proven to be a liability with much of the left-wing base of his Democratic Party, less than a year before elections.

But the Biden administration has also voiced exasperation with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the heavy toll on civilians in the Gaza Strip, as well as provocative statements from Netanyahu's far-right coalition partners.

The State Department has criticized Israel's National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who has called for the removal of Gazans from the Palestinian territory.

Hamas fighters infiltrated Israel on October 7, killing around 1,140 people, most of them civilians.

In response to the deadliest attack in its history, Israel launched a relentless offensive that has reduced vast swathes of Gaza to rubble and claimed over 22,300 lives, according to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory.

Fears that Israel's war in Gaza could spiral across the Middle East mounted Wednesday as twin explosions ripped through an Iranian court, claiming at least 103 lives following a strike in Lebanon that killed Hamas's deputy leader.

More than 200 other people were wounded when the blasts about 15

minutes apart struck mosques commemorating slain Revolutionary Guards general Qasem Soleimani on the fourth anniversary of his killing in a United States drone strike, Iran's state media reported.

No group claimed responsibility for the blasts which were the country's deadliest attack since a 1978 arson that killed at least 377 people.

State-run TV labelled the blasts a 'terrorist attack'. They came with regional tensions already soaring a day after the Beirut strike which killed Hamas number two Saleh al-Aruri.

A US official on Wednesday told a foreign news agency 'an Israel strike' took the life of 'Amr, the most high-profile figure killed during the nearly three months that Israel has been at war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Following Tuesday's unclaimed Beirut strike, Israeli army spokesman Daniel Hagari said the military was 'highly prepared for any scenario'. He did not comment directly on the killing of Aruri, who Hamas said will be buried on Thursday in Beirut's Shatila Palestinian refugee camp.

Six years ago he was convicted in absentia of masterminding a deadly grenade attack on a campaign rally for Hamas - a charge he insists is fabricated - and sentenced to life imprisonment.

His party staged a months-long protest campaign last year demanding the prime minister's resignation that saw at least 11 people killed and thousands of supporters arrested. In his first interview with a major international media outlet for several years, Rahman, 56, said it would be inappropriate to have his party participate in a vote with a 'predetermined' outcome.

'Bangladesh is approaching another sham election,' he told by email from London, where he has lived since

Sheikh Rashid's nominations from NA-56, NA-57 approved

RAWALPINDI (INP): An appellate tribunal on Thursday granted appeals of Sheikh Rashid against rejection of his nominations in two constituencies.

Appellate tribunal declared return of officers decisions as void and approved nomination papers of Sheikh Rashid for Rawalpindi's National Assembly constituencies NA-56 and NA-57. The tribunal on Tuesday approved the former federal minister's appeal against nomination papers rejection for hearing Appellate tribunal

judge Justice Mirza Waqas Rauf had issued notices to returning officers and fixed the date on January 04.

Sardar Abdul Raziq and Sardar Shehbaz appeared before the court on behalf of Sheikh Rashid Ahmed.

Returning officer

rejecting nomination papers said that Sheikh Rashid was failed to provide complete details of his assets.

'The value of his declared assets not matching his investment,' RO said. 'He didn't declare his incomes from year 2021 to 2023 in assets papers,' RO said.

Bangladesh's exiled opposition leader condemns 'sham' election

DHAKA, Jan 04 (INP): Bangladesh's election on Sunday was a 'sham' designed to cement Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's rule, exiled opposition leader Tarique Rahman has

told a foreign news agency in an interview defending his party's boycott. Rahman is heir to one of the country's two main political dynasties which ruled by Hasina - and has helmed its largest opposition party since the 2018 jailing of his mother, two-time premier Khaleda Zia.

Six years ago he was convicted in absentia of masterminding a deadly grenade attack on a campaign rally for Hamas - a charge he insists is fabricated - and sentenced to life imprisonment.

His party staged a months-long protest campaign last year demanding the prime minister's resignation that saw at least 11 people killed and thousands of supporters arrested. In his first interview with a major international media outlet for several years, Rahman, 56, said it would be inappropriate to have his party participate in a vote with a 'predetermined' outcome.

'Bangladesh is approaching another sham election,' he told by email from London, where he has lived since

said previous polls won by her party in 2014 and 2018 were marred by irregularities. 'Go to the polling stations and cast votes in the morning to show the world that we know how to hold the election in a free and fair manner,' she told a Saturday campaign rally.

He accused it of fielding 'dummy' opposition candidates aligned with the ruling party to give the election a patina of legitimacy. This would create an impression of competition even though all results are predetermined,' he said. He also claimed the party was attempting to have an turnout by threatening to withhold government benefits from those who did not vote for Awami League candidates.

In the United States, which sanctioned Bangladesh security forces in 2021 over allegations of rights abuses, and other countries have also voiced their concerns about the conduct of this week's vote.

Hasina, in power since 2009, has repeatedly vowed that the election would be credible, after observers



ISLAMABAD: The CDWP meeting presided over by Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Mohammad Jahanzeb Khan, approved 1 development project with a cost of Rs.45.69 million & recommended 3 projects worth Rs. 358.810 billion to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) for further consideration.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER. The Executive Engineer, Irrigation Division Sibi invites sealed tender for... 1 Repair and maintenance of superintending... 2.00M... 2.456M... 1.5M... Note: - (Bid Security @ 2% in shape of Call Deposit...)

LHC bins PTI's plea against withdrawal of election symbol bat

LAHORE (INP) - The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday dismissed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) plea against the withdrawal of the election symbol bat.

LHC Justice Jawad Hasan announced the reserved verdict and declared PTI's plea 'inadmissible'.

PTI's local leader Umar Aftab Dhillon moved LHC against the withdrawal of the election symbol bat.

Wednesday, Peshawar High Court (PHC) revoked the stay order and restored the ECP decision to declare PTI intra-party polls null and void and stripping it of its election symbol — bat.

On December 26, the high court announced the verdict on PTI's petition challenging the ECP's verdict, which had

stripped PTI of using the 'bat' symbol.

A single-member bench comprising Justice Ejaz Khan announced the reserved verdict on a review plea filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) against the January 26 single-member bench order.

On December 2, the ECP had nullified Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's intra-party elections, for the third time since last year, declaring the PTI ineligible for obtaining its traditional electoral symbol of 'bat'.

In its verdict, the ECP said, "So keeping in view the clear mandate of Elections Act 2017 — it is held that PTI has not complied with our directions rendered therein order dated 23rd November, 2023 and failed to hold intra-party elec-

tion in accordance with PTI prevailing Constitution 2019 and Elections Act 2017, and Election Rules, 2017. Therefore, the certificate dated 4th December, 2023 and Form-65 filed by the alleged chairman, is hereby regretted and rejected accordingly".

PTI had challenged the ECP verdict in Peshawar High Court. PTI's intraparty elections, in which Barnister Gohar Khan was elected as chairman of the party, were held on December 2. The polls had drawn a sharp criticism as estranged PTI founding member Akbar S. Babar announced that he would challenge the entire process. He alleged that the PTI had carried out a selection process aimed at throwing out party workers to give the reins to a few lawyers.



ISLAMABAD: The 4th meeting of the National Economic Council (NEC) Sub Committee on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was held on January 4, 2024 under the chairmanship of the Caretaker Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saad.

No ban on airing Imran's speeches, Pemra tells LHC

ISLAMABAD (INP) - The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) on Thursday informed the Lahore High Court (LHC) that there was no ban on broadcasting former prime minister Imran Khan's speeches.

The revelation was made by Pemra counsel Advocate Waqas Mir during the hearing of a petition filed by Imran — who is currently incarcerated at Adiala Jail — last year against the authority's decision to bar all satellite TV channels from broadcasting his speeches and press talks.

The ban was imposed with "immediate effect" after Imran had lashed out at former army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa for what he called "protecting incumbent rulers in their alleged corruption cases".

The PTI chief had subsequently approached the court and challenged the ban, arguing that Pemra's order was "purely driven out of vengeance". The LHC has so far conducted eight hearings on the case since its initiation. Imran's lawyer Ahmed Pansota, the federal government's lawyer appeared in court. LHC's Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza presided over the proceedings.

During the hearing, the court

emphasised that Pemra should refrain from exerting pressure on TV channels regarding the concerns raised by the petitioner.

In response, Pemra counsel Mir said there was no ban on telecasting speeches of the petitioner.

Following the brief arguments, the court wrapped up the petition. In the prohibition order issued last year, Pemra had referred to previous directives when all licenses were directed to "refrain from telecasting any content against state institutions". The authority had noted that Imran, in his speeches and statements, was "leveling baseless allegations and spreading hate speech through his provocative statements against state institutions and officers which are prejudicial to the maintenance of law and order and is likely to disturb public peace and tranquility".

Pemra had said that licenses telecasted the content without the effective utilisation of the time delay mechanism, in violation of the authority's laws and judgments by the apex court. "... therefore, the competent authority i.e. chairman Pemra in view of the above mentioned background and reasons, in the exercise of delegated powers of the authority vested in Section 27(a) of the Pemra Ordinance 2002 as

amended by Pemra (Amendment) Act 2007, hereby prohibits broadcast/rebroadcast of speech(es)/press talks (recorded or live) of Imran Khan on all satellite TV channels with immediate effect, "the order had said.

The authority had also directed all satellite TV channels to ensure that an "independent editorial board" is constituted to ensure that their platforms is not used by anyone for "uttering remarks in any manner which are contemptuous and against any state institutions and against any state institutions to law and order situation in the country". Challenging the Pemra order, Imran had pointed out that the IHC had set aside a similar prohibition order in the past. The petition had said that Pemra issued the order "in excess of the jurisdiction vested in it and without having regard to the constitutional rights guaranteed under Articles 19 and 19-A of the Constitution". It had further contended that the authority was not empowered to issue a blanket prohibition order, which appears to be "in violation of the principle of proportionality".

The plea had argued that according to Section 8 of the Pemra Ordinance, one-third of the total number of members were required to constitute quorum for meetings.

FUFAST organizes awareness seminar on drugs & crimes

ISLAMABAD (INP) - A seminar to create awareness among students regarding drugs and crimes was held yesterday at Federal Urdu University of Science and Technology (FUFAST).

The seminar was organized by the International Relations Department of Federal Urdu University Islamabad and Capital Police. Muhammad Shoab Khuram, DIG Safe City and Traffic Police Islamabad along with his team attended the event as chief guest.

Dr. Ehtishamul Haq, In-charge Islamabad Campus, Mohammad Aleem Raza Additional Registrar and Dr. Uzma Sinj, President, Department of International Relations welcomed the distinguished guests.

The function was organized in the university auditorium in which a large number of students participated.

DIG Muhammad Shoab Khuram told the students that special instructions have been is-

sued by the IG Islamabad that the educational institutions should inform the students about social crimes and drugs and their prevention. During his address, the chief guest gave many important information including various types of crimes, police strategies to prevent crimes with the help of modern technology, the use of safe city cameras, and data from previous years.



NASERABAD: Chief Engineer Buildings Abdul Razaq presiding over the review meeting



ISLAMABAD: Amb. Ali Mubarak Ali Essa Al-Khater, Ambassador of the State of Qatar in Pakistan calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

PTI leader Firdous Shamim's appeal against rejection of election candidature from Karachi accepted

KARACHI (INP) - The Sindh High Court (SHC) election appellate tribunal on Thursday accepted PTI Central Vice President Firdous Shamim Naqvi's appeal against the rejection of his nomination papers from Karachi's NA-236 constituency for the Feb 8 polls.

Naqvi was among several PTI leaders whose nomination papers were rejected. On Monday, he had approached the election tribunal against the decisions of returning officers regarding his papers.

The former lawmaker, who is currently confined at his house in connection with a case related to the violent incidents of May 9, had filed the appeal through his lawyer and human rights activist Fibran Nasir.

According to Nasir, his client had filed three identical nomination papers from the same constituency as a precautionary measure after incidents of harassment and abduction of seconders and proposers were reported, especially from Punjab.

However, the lawyer had

maintained that all such papers were rejected by the RO on the ground that the appellant's party had lost the electoral symbol.

Today, Justice Khadim Hussain presided over the proceedings while Advocate Hasaan Sabir, the objector to the papers, appeared before the court along with Nasir.

Following the hearing, Nasir said the tribunal accepted "all of our three appeals filed on behalf" of Naqvi.

"He is cleared to represent his party and contest elections," he wrote in a post on social media platform X, formerly Twitter. The counsel added that the tribunal had declared the objections to the papers "illegal".

At the outset of the hearing, Nasir informed the court that the nomination papers of PTI leaders were being rejected on political basis, which was why his client had submitted more than one application.

However, Justice Hussain directed the lawyer to talk only about the law. Nasir contended that the papers were rejected

due to the absence of a party symbol.

The judge observed that the PTI would later take a decision on its candidates and wondered why the papers had been rejected in the "first stage of the checking process".

Justice Hussain also inquired about the stage at which a party symbol was needed according to the law. "Has the PTI expressed indifference to the candidate?" he asked.

For his part, the objector argued that it was "necessary to state the party affiliation in the affidavit", claiming that Naqvi had not done so. He asked how the papers could have been accepted if there was "incorrect information given in the affidavit".

Here, the tribunal asked Sabir how he knew that Naqvi did not belong to the PTI.

The objector then urged the court to dismiss Naqvi's appeal, contending that he could not claim the party symbol without the PTI's certificate. However, the court accepted the PTI leader's appeal.

Elections 2024: PML-N, Q likely to strike seat adjustment deal

LAHORE (INP) - Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q) are expected to strike a deal on seat adjustment for the general elections in the coming days.

According to media reports, the sources said the PML-Q wanted seat adjustment on four National Assembly and eight provincial assembly seats.

PML-Q leaders Salik Hussain, Monis Elahi, Hussain

Elahi and Tariq Bashir Cheema succeeded in those NA constituencies. On the other hand, the PML-N is also in talks with the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) for seat adjustment. On Wednesday, the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) announced the names of its candidates for national and provincial assemblies from Balochistan. Taking to X, the PML-N said the party approved the award of party tickets

to Balochistan candidates after conclusion of the interviews by the Central Parliamentary Board for the General Election 2024. According to the list, Nawabzada Toor Gul Jugzai had been issued the party ticket from NA-251, whereas Sardar Yaqoob Nasir had been awarded party ticket from NA-252. Mir Dostan Khan Domki and Abdul Ghafoor had been nominated from NA-253 and NA-254, respectively.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf Barrister Gohar Ali Khan speaks during a press conference at party secretariat.

SC resumes hearing of lifetime disqualification case

ISLAMABAD (INP) - A seven-member Supreme Court (SC) bench on Thursday resumed hearing of the lifetime disqualification case.

The hearing pertains to a case concerning the lifetime disqualification of Sardar Meer Badshah Qaisrani — a former member of Punjab Assembly — before the 2018 elections. And interestingly, even Saqib Hili, the counsel leading the original plea against Qaisrani, told the court that he was against the original Supreme Court verdict.

Chief Justice Faez Isa is hearing the bench which also comprises Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Aminuddin, Justice Jamal

Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hili. The Supreme Court had disqualified PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif for lifetime over corruption allegations.

A five-member bench of the country's apex court had unanimously ruled that anyone disqualified under the constitutional clause requiring legislators to be "honest and trustworthy" would be considered banned for life.

Although the nomination papers of Nawaz from both constituencies NA-15 and NA-130 were accepted by the respective returning officers, an election tribunal has been moved against him in Lahore.

The objections were raised on Monday in the case of NA-130 in Lahore on the grounds of his lifetime disqualification under Article 62 (1) f of the Constitution in July 2017, which ended his third five-year term to yet another premature end. Previously, he had fallen a prey to the

"Kakar formula" in 1993 and later a Perviz Musharraf-led coup in 1999.

The similar objections were raised by the rival PTI lawyers in Manshra in the case of NA-15 at the initial stage of filing of nomination papers. But the returning officer rejected these on the basis of the changes introduced in the Election Act 2017.