



PATS was the right forum, which appropriately combined professional military skills and tactical acumen of all participating soldiers, fostering much-needed team spirit in the face of evolving character of war

Chief of Army Staff  
Gen Syed Asim Munir

## Raja Pervaiz administers oath to 302 newly elected MNAs



ISLAMABAD: As many as 302 newly elected members of the sixteenth National Assembly, out of a total of 336, took oath on Thursday.

Outgoing National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf administered the oath to the MNAs, said a press release issued by the National Assembly Secretariat.

Leading political figures — PML-N Quaid and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, ex-prime minister Shehbaz Sharif, former president Asif Ali Zardari, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazal (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Yusuf Raza Gillani, Abdul Aleem Khan, Barrister Gohar Khan, Ali Muhammad Khan, Omar Ayub Khan, Asad Qaiser, and Sher Afzal Marwat — took the oath during the House proceedings.

Furthermore, three Senators — PML-N's Nuzhat Sadiq, JUI-F's Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, and PPP's Yousuf Raza Gilani — resigned from the upper house of Parliament in order to join the National Assembly.

## Prime minister's election to be held on March 3

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly (NA) Secretariat has announced the schedule for the election of the prime minister's slot.

According to details, the newly elected MNAs who took oath on Thursday would be voting for the prime minister's slot on Sunday, March 3.

As per the schedule issued by the NA Secretariat, the premiership aspirants can submit their nomination papers by 2 pm on March 2. "The final list of candidates would be issued after scrutiny of the nomination papers," it added.

The NA Secretariat said that candidates can collect the nomination papers from the legislation department. "The candidates are asked to submit their nomination papers to the NA Secretariat," the schedule read. It is pertinent to mention here that Shehbaz Sharif has been nominated by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan People's Party (PPP), and other allies for the slot. While the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) named Omar Ayub as its candidate for the prime minister's slot. APP



KHEWRA: President Dr Arif Alvi being briefed about salt mining during his visit to the Khewra salt mines. INP

## PATS, right forum fostering team spirit in evolving character of war: COAS

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Thursday said Pakistan Army Team Spirit (PATS) was the right forum, which appropriately combined professional military skills and tactical acumen of all participating soldiers, fostering much-needed team spirit in the face of evolving character of war.

The Army Chief was addressing the participants of the 7th Pakistan Army Team Spirit (PATS) Exercise-2024 as chief guest that concluded at Kharian Garrison with an impressive Closing Ceremony, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The COAS appreciated the participating teams for their professionalism, physical & mental endurance and high morale displayed during various stages of the exercise.

He reiterated mutual learning during such exercises and said: "Pakistan Army upholds rich soldierly attributes of character, courage and competence which have amply been displayed by our men in the face of fight against terrorism."

The 60 hours rigorous "Patrolling Exercise" aimed at enhancing combat skills through sharing of innovative ideas and experiences by the participants of the forum.

Seven teams from Pakistan Army and fifteen teams from friendly countries including Bahrain, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kingdom of



Saudi Arabia, Maldives, Morocco, Qatar, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Turkiye participated in the exercise. Azerbaijan, China, Germany, Indonesia, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Myanmar witnessed the exercise as observers. The exercise was conducted from 25-27 February in the semi mountainous terrain of Punjab. Over the years, the exercise has gained much prominence as a very competitive professional military activity for the friendly countries.

At the end, COAS gave away individual and team awards to the participants of the exercise. International observers and Defence Attachés of participating countries also attended the ceremony and appreciated its professional conduct.

Earlier on arrival, the COAS was received by Commander Mangla Corps. PR

## Pink salt be projected as Pakistani product in world markets: President Alvi

VOM Report

KHEWRA: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday underlined the need for projecting pink salt as a Pakistani product in potential global markets after its value addition in line with the international standards.

"A significant amount of foreign exchange can be earned by adding value to the local raw salt and making various products," he said during his visit to the Khewra salt mines.

He also emphasized to utilize the modern technology to minimize the loss of salt during the mining process besides adopting atmosphere friendly and responsible mining ways.

He said Pakistan had huge reserves of high quality rock salt which was low cost and full of minerals. The president also reviewed the tourist places inside the salt mine.

On the occasion the president was briefed on various ongoing projects of the Pakistan Minerals Development Corporation in Khewra. He was informed about quality of the salt found in Khewra and various salt ingredients.

Managing Director of Pakistan Minerals Development Corporation informed the president about various aspects of salt mining from Khewra Salt Mine. The president was informed about the ongoing activities for salt mining.

President Alvi also inaugurated the salt library in the Khewra salt mine and visited the Asthma center. He also interacted with the patients undergoing treatment in the Asthma center in Khewra salt mine.

He took special interest in the historical background of Khewra Mine and he also wrote his comments in the guest book.

## Abdul Khaliq Achakzai, Ghazala Gola sworn in as Speaker, Deputy Speaker of Balochistan Assembly

QUETTA: Captain (ret) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Ghazala Gola of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) were sworn in as Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly.

The Balochistan Assembly elected Captain (ret) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai as speaker and MPA Ghazala Gola as deputy speaker unopposed. The newly-elected speaker and deputy speaker took oath during the assembly session at 3:00 pm on Thursday.

Aside from captain (ret) Abdul Khaliq and Ghazala Gola, no other member has submitted nomination papers.

Ghazala Gola made history by becoming the first woman ever elected Deputy Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly.

## People's representatives to run country's affairs after general elections : Solangi

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Thursday said the elected representatives of the people would eventually run the affairs of country after general elections. Speaking in a talk-show of the Pakistan Television, he said the caretaker government had fulfilled its constitutional responsibility of holding elections in free, fair and peaceful manner by fully facilitating the Election Commission of Pakistan.

To a query, he said the newly elected Prime Minister would take oath on March 4 while Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly would be elected on Friday.

He said newly elected Members of National Assembly had taken oath today as the notification for convening of National Assembly session was issued late night.

Murtaza Solangi said the process of negotiations with International Monetary Fund would go forward despite PTT's letter.

To a question Murtaza Solangi said the next Prime Minister would take multiple initiatives to redress the major problems being faced by the country.

He said the caretaker government had fulfilled the financial requirements of the ECP for holding the elections and added it also attached priority to put the economy on track.

## More than 100 killed as Israeli forces open fire at people gathered for taking food

GAZA: At least 104 people were killed and 760 injured in a chaotic incident where Israeli troops opened fire as hungry Palestinian civilians were gathering around food aid trucks, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza. People had swarmed around newly arrived aid trucks in the hope of getting food, when Israeli tanks and drones started shooting at the people in Haroun Al Rasheed Street in western Gaza City, in the Sheikh Ajleen area. "Most" of the casualties were the result of aid trucks ramming people as everyone tried to escape Israeli fire, according to a local journalist in Gaza, said media reports.

The tragedy comes as the death toll in the Gaza war surpasses 30,000, more than a half a million people in Gaza are on the brink of famine, United Nations agencies say, and as negotiations between Israel and Hamas reach a potentially pivotal moment. An Israeli official told media the Israel Defense Forces did use live fire on people surrounding aid trucks as "the crowd approached the forces in a manner that posed a threat to the troops, who responded to the threat with live fire. The incident is under review." SABAH

## Nomination papers of Ayaz Sadiq, Amir Dogar for NA Speaker accepted

ISLAMABAD: The Secretariat of the National Assembly on Thursday accepted the nomination papers of candidates contesting for the slots of National Assembly Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Sardar Ayaz Sadiq submitted his nomination papers for the Speaker of the National Assembly slot, while the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) nominated Amir Dogar for the same position. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)'s Ghulam Mustafa submitted nomination papers for the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly while Junaid Akbar Khan from the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) submitted nominated nomination papers for the same slot.

The proposers for Sardar Ayaz Sadiq included Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Abdul Aleem Khan, Syed Naveed Qamar, and Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari.

Malik Muhammad Amir Dogar's nomination was proposed by Sahibzada Sibghatullah, Ali



Muhammad, and Dr. Amjad Ali Khan. Ghulam Mustafa Shah's nomination for Deputy Speaker was proposed by Muhammad Raza Hayat Hiraj and Aijaz Hussain Jakhani. Junaid Akbar's nomination was proposed by Muhammad Sanaullah Khan Masti Khel, Muhammad Riaz Khan Fatiyana, and Mehr Ghulam Muhammad Lali.

The election for the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly is scheduled to take place on Friday. DNA



PESHAWAR: Speaker KP assembly Mushtaq Ghani administers oath to newly elected speaker Babar Saleem Swati. APP

## Ambassador Hashmi call on Minister, CPC International Department

BEIJING: Ambassador of Pakistan to China, Khalil Hashmi paid a courtesy call to the Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC), Liu Jianchao here in Beijing. During the meeting, Ambassador Hashmi conveyed warm greetings from the government and people of Pakistan to Minister Liu Jianchao and expressed his determination to further strengthen the longstanding friendship and coop-

eration between Pakistan and China. Ambassador Hashmi also extended his gratitude for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to him since his arrival in Beijing. Minister Liu Jianchao welcomed Ambassador Hashmi, congratulated him on his important assignment, and reaffirmed the commitment of the IDCPC to further enhancing the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between Pakistan and China, based on mutual trust, respect, and shared interests. APP

RAWALPINDI: Chief Minister (CM) Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif here on Thursday visited Rawalpindi Ring Road and directed the authorities to complete the project by December. NESPAK and FWO officials briefed the chief minister on the progress of Rawalpindi Ring Road Project at Tehraiya site.

The CM was briefed that the project started in September 2023 and all the construction work would be completed by February 2025.

All the structures on the way of 38.3 kms long Ring Road Project had been removed for speedy construction work while removal of the utility services in the right of the way was underway. 24 percent work on Rawalpindi Ring Road project has



been completed. Five interchanges, 11 overpasses, bridges on 2 rivers, 6 canals and a railway bridge would be constructed under the project while 15 subways

and 53 small bridges would be constructed on the Rawalpindi Ring Road. A rest area would be constructed on the Ring Road. The project was indispensable for ease of transportation of the citizens, Maryam Nawaz said adding, industrial zones would also be built on the project. The CM said that the project would be a game changer for Rawalpindi, adding creation of the industrial zones would provide employment opportunities to the local people.

Two years were fixed for the completion of the project and all-out efforts would be made to complete it before the deadline, the CM said.

The completion of the most important public welfare project should not

be delayed, she directed. The work on the ring road project was going on day and night and it would be completed before the stipulated time frame, Maryam Nawaz informed. Swift construction work would be ensured on Ring Road Project and there would be no compromise on the quality, she added. She instructed that Rawalpindi Ring Road interchanges should be named after the respective villages.

Former Senator Pervaiz Rasheed, Members of Assembly Marriyum Aurangzeb, Uzmi Bukhari, Sania Ashiq, Chief Secretary, concerned secretaries, Commissioner Rawalpindi Division and other officials were also present on the occasion. APP

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## Civilization under threat?

M SAIED KHALID

Masood Kizilbash's book 'Human Conflict with Nature' published by the Pakistan Scientific and Technological Information Centre Islamabad in 2020 carries an intriguing subtitle - 'Alarm Bell for the Demise of our Modern Civilization'. After having read it, I could not help asking the author if he really believed in the mind-numbing scenario of the human race getting wiped out by a new ice age, resulting from the destruction of nature caused by humans.

Masood Kizilbash explains that unless the modern civilization's systematic damage to mother nature is controlled, that was the logical conclusion anticipated by scientific studies. His book, based on comprehensive research, makes several observations. To begin, it reminds us that humans appeared on this planet half a million years ago, after the last ice age. However, archaeologists have gathered evidence of human civilization of only the last 13,000 years, a fraction of the period humans emerged on the earth.

As time passes, the human quest to dominate nature in order to meet their needs, aggravated by excessive greed, takes a heavy toll on the environmental balance preserved by nature.

"The UN-sponsored environmentalists firmly hold the view that human-caused factors threaten the environment and climate, and a cap on the desire to exploit natural resources to its last drop is necessary. This stands in contrast to the view of the US, which believes that technology can solve all problems", observes Kizilbash.

The author cautions that natural laws maintain a certain balance. When human behaviour or actions cause disequilibrium or disorder for long, natural law is triggered to restore order through variations in heat emissions from the sun, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, cyclones, tempests, levels of the sea, droughts, etc. The past civilizations or empires succumbed to their goal of self-glorification. Our civilization, pursuing the same goal to bypass nature, may lead nature's laws to restore equilibrium by acting from underneath the land or from the sky, which may consign us to another ice age. History reveals how human desires grew in line with its conquest of nature and ability to produce and possess. As civilization progressed with human beings turning into farmers from hunters and gatherers, given the innate human nature of competition, revenge and greed, money became the driving motive for action.

Fast forward to the age of the corporate system which led Abraham Lincoln to say in 1864: "Corporations have been enthroned and...an era of corruption in high places will follow...until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the republic is destroyed".

That was accomplished when the Supreme Court of the United States conferred the right to corporations in January 2010, to make contributions to election campaigns and thus acquire control over decision-making. No wonder, the US has been reticent about actions to control climate change. Kizilbash refers to dissenters like Jared Diamond who feel that climate change is being associated with global warming caused by humans. Diamond asserts that climate change over a period occurs "because of changes in natural forces that drive climate and that have nothing to do with humans." Niall Ferguson discards the idea that humanity is threatened by a catastrophic change. While agreeing that there has been an unprecedented increase in the amount of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere and that has caused an increase in average temperatures, he says that it is less clear "how a continuation of these trends will impact on the earth's weather."

'Human Conflict with Nature' upholds the view that unabated exploitation of natural resources beyond the coping capacity of nature such as deforestation and habitat destruction, soil deterioration, water depletion, build-up of toxic chemicals, overhunting, overfishing, human population growth, and human-caused climate change will cause serious damage to the earth's environment and climate.

Unsustainable human activity has already degraded the earth's ecosystems. Urgent action is needed to arrest and reverse the situation, but the unilateralism of the US is an obstacle. Francis Fukuyama and Niall Ferguson have argued that modern technology can help resolve problems and augment resources from other heavenly bodies to enrich human life. Can human needs be met by recourse to genetic engineering, cloning and other technological means? Kizilbash points out how America, in its urge to go alone, has denied the UN's comprehensive plans to arrest human-created factors that threaten climate and the environment. There is an invisible and wise hand behind the creation of the universe. It comes into self-correcting mode to restore balance as manifested in earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, cyclones, etc. The book ends with some stark conclusions. Humans' acquisitive instinct and greed, if unchecked, can lead to their own demise. Humans owe their existence to natural resources, and human civilization is based on those bounties.

The assumption that technological development can enhance resources is erroneous. Humans are not capable of controlling auto-correcting mode to restore equilibrium in the universe. If unchecked, climate degradation may return us to another ice age.

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Raza Hussain Qazi

## A fund for the vulnerable

During COP28 in the UAE, the signatories of the 2015 Paris Agreement achieved a consensus on the operationalization of new funding arrangements, including a Loss and Damage Fund.

It is significant that the Loss and Damage Fund's agreed framework acknowledges the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and children while recognizing their sheer vulnerability. The agreement emphasizes prioritized measures to safeguard their rights and wellbeing in the face of climate-induced losses. It also underscores the need for targeted support, including access to resources - education, healthcare and resilience-building. Not only does it emphasize the importance of gender-responsive and child-centric approaches but also outlines key strategies to empower women and enhance the adaptive capacity of children in communities affected by climate-induced disasters.

The inclusion of women and children in the Loss and Damage Fund signifies a crucial step towards addressing the intersectional impacts of climate change. This recognition acknowledges that women and children bear the worst brunt of climate-induced disasters due to their existing social, economic, and cultural vulnerabilities, as well as their marginalization in decision-making processes. By specifically acknowledging this reality, the agreement commits to promoting gender-responsive approaches within climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Likewise, it recognizes the unique vulnerabilities of children in the face of climate-induced disasters. It acknowledges that children are particularly susceptible to a plethora of associated risks such as displacements, disruptions to education and healthcare, heightened risks of food

insecurity, and psychosocial trauma. The agreement's focus on children and women is commendable as it aims to protect their rights, wellbeing, and future prospects. This entails investing in systems that prioritize children for essential services to alleviate the enduring effects of trauma induced by climate change. It is quite evident that the impact of emergencies is disproportionately felt by women, girls and children with special abilities. During the floods of 2022, more than 650,000 pregnant and lactating women were among the millions of individuals severely impacted. The affected women lacked access to essential healthcare services and the support required for childbirth and newborn care.

The unprecedented magnitude of the climate event led to a total halt in the healthcare system. The provinces of Sindh and Balochistan were significantly impacted, with a majority of their health facilities being destroyed. Furthermore, at least 25,993 schools experienced damage or were entirely demolished. The substantial deterioration of roads and communication networks additionally impeded access to medical and educational facilities. Since the catastrophe, I have frequently visited the places. My most recent visit was last week where I met the affected - men, women, youth, and children. It was again a poignant experience as I listened to their harrowing stories. The ordeal has not ceased for them; the profound suffering remains pervasive. The feelings of despair and hopelessness persistently confront wherever one goes. Children still languish in gloomy circumstances, forced to live in crumbled homes with no essential amenities in their reach such as clean water, health and sanitation. There is hardly any livelihood available to the affected families to sustain themselves and provide for their children. It is heart-wrenching to witness women and children, including girls and boys, with pallid expressions, severely malnourished, and infants showing ubiquitous signs of stunted growth. The enormity of the devastation has been such that it has crum-

bled almost the entire government system related to health, water, sanitation, and education, with little to no progress made towards their restoration or functionality. It is because the restoration requires gigantic financial resources needed for life to return to a level even below normal. The federal and provincial governments as well as civil society have made tremendous efforts but the scale of the catastrophe necessitates financial investments.

Impoverished communities which bear minimal responsibility for instigating climate rage look towards those nations that are primarily responsible for bringing the monster to their doorstep. The unmerited predicament warrants assistance to be provided consistently and promptly. Global commitments made in Geneva in January 2023 by the world's 'haves', even if fully realized, would fall significantly short in scale when compared to the substantial requirements needed to tackle the formidable challenges.

It is now imperative for the countries to intensify efforts and expedite progress on the strong commitments made in the agreement document with the following words: "Given the urgent and immediate need for new, additional, predictable and adequate financial resources to assist developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change in responding to economic and non-economic loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events, especially in the context of ongoing and ex post (including rehabilitation, recovery and reconstruction) action."

Data by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) from 2016-2020 shows that loans accounted for 72 per cent of international climate finance. As the proportion of non-concessional finance is growing, multilateral, bilateral, and regional financial institutions need to leverage their climate funds as grants instead of loans to support local-led adaptation (LLA) and mitigation initiatives.

These efforts are vital for minimizing and recovering from losses and damages caused by climate events. Rightfully spotlighting the vicious spiral of debt, the UNDP calls for adaptive social protection and a 'debt-poverty pause' to redirect debt repayments towards critical social expenditures. Juxtaposed to the ostensible despair and despondency, there exists a glimmer of hope in the eyes of youth and children. Hidden within their conversation is an idea of fundamental perseverance, poised to withstand challenges and strengthen their resilience. The challenge is never greater than the determination to conquer it.

As committed, the Fund needs to engage governments to establish country-level consultative forums to communicate with and involve the groups most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change in the design, development, and implementation of the activities financed by the Fund. It is necessary for the government to develop a national framework on loss and damage for the purpose of pre-positioning.

There is also a need for targeted support and interventions, as well as tailored stratagems to build adaptive capacity, strengthen social safety nets, and promote sustainable livelihoods. By addressing the root causes of vulnerability, such as poverty and gender inequality, governments - federal and provincial - need to enhance the resilience of women and children by prioritizing their needs and rights. This involves guaranteeing the participation of women, youth, and children in the planning and decision-making processes aimed at providing them with access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Empowering the most vulnerable individuals has been empirically demonstrated to not only increase their resilience to climate change but also foster more inclusive and sustainable development trajectories.

The writer is a climate governance expert who works for global development organizations in the fields of research, advisory, policy analysis, and legislative reforms. He tweets/posts @razashafqat

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

## Today in History

### History of Pakistan



An autonomous Muslim state linked with the Umayyad, and later, the Abbassid Caliphate was established with jurisdiction extending over southern and central parts of present Pakistan. Quite a few new cities were established and Arabic was introduced as the official language. At the time of Mahmud of Ghazna's invasion, Muslim rule still existed, though in a weakened form, in Multan and some other regions. The Ghaznavids (976-1148) and their successors, the Ghaurids (1148-1206), were Central Asian

by origin and they ruled their territories, which covered mostly the regions of present Pakistan, from capitals outside India. It was in the early thirteenth century that the foundations of the Muslim rule in India were laid with extended boundaries and Delhi as the capital. From 1206 to 1526 A.D., five different dynasties held sway. They followed the period of Mughal ascendancy (1526-1707) and their rule continued, though nominally, till 1857. From the time of the Ghaznavids, Persian more or less

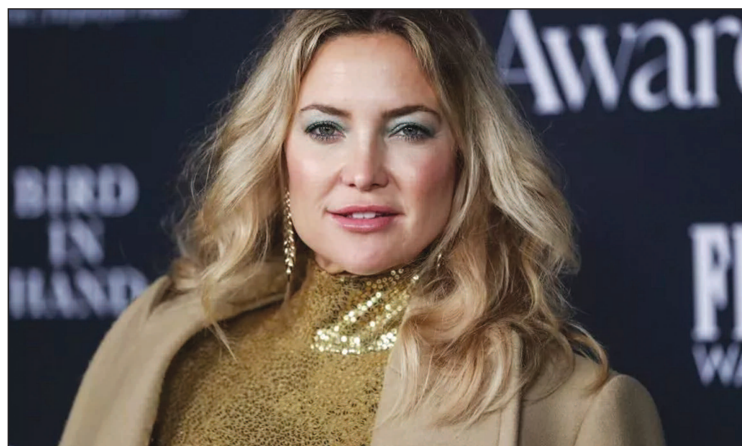
replaced Arabic as the official language. The economic, political and religious institutions developed by the Muslims bore their unique impression. The law of the State was based on Shariah and in principle the rulers were bound to enforce it. Any long period of laxity was generally followed by reinforcement of these laws under public pressure. The impact of Islam on the South-Asian subcontinent was deep and far-reaching. Islam introduced not only a new religion, but a new civilization, a new way of

life and new set of values. Islamic traditions of art and literature, of culture and refinement, of social and welfare institution, were established by Muslim rulers throughout the subcontinent. A new language, Urdu, derived mainly from Arabic and Persian vocabulary and adopting indigenous words and idioms, came to be spoken and written by the Muslims and it gained currency among the rest of the Indian population.

To be continued....

## Kate Hudson shares what motivates her to kickstart music career

Kate Hudson offers advice on fashion, life and music in an exclusive interview



Kate Hudson has recently shared what motivates her to kickstart her music career amid fears of rejection. Speaking to E! News, the Almost Famous alum revealed, "Do it because you love it, not because you're expecting some sort of validation—I just got that point." Kate, who plans to release her new music album later this year, said, "For me, with music and songwriting, it was time." She admitted, "It was a great fear of mine to be rejected for my writing. You know, why put myself out there so vulnerably?" However, the How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days star discussed she lived by the mantra of "don't break what's not broken". "Over time you realise, and as

you get older, that's the very thing holding you back," continued the 44-year-old. Kate explained, "Taking risk is part of [what] has been a thrill for me, which is why I want to be an artist and why I've always put myself out there." "And I would say to the younger kids is, 'What moves you? What is the actual purpose of all this?' If it's seeking the outside, then you're going to get hurt. But if it's a drive, if it's a calling, keep going," stated the actress. Elsewhere in the interview, Kate also offered words of wisdom on fashion, in addition to music. "Fashion is about individuality and expressing yourself in a very authentic way," she noted.

## What would happen if Leap Day disappears from calendar?

If you've looked at the calendar this year, you must know that February 2024 will be a leap year, with 29 days instead of 28, Clarion Ledger reported. However, have you ever wondered where Leap Years originate from, and what would happen if they disappeared? It's an ancient technique for adjusting time to correspond with the changing of the seasons, and it even has a history that includes a well-known incident. Not all years consist of 365 days. More accurately, it is 365 days and 6 hours. Every four years, one extra day is added to February to essentially keep everything on schedule. According to Timeanddate, the Republican calendar, an early form of the Roman calendar, had 355 days instead of 12 months. That is around 10 days less than a year. Thus, every two or three years, a leap month was added to the schedule. Then, in 45 BC, Julius Caesar issued an order to modify. "The story is that when he was in Egypt, during his famous affair with Cleopatra, Egypt had a better calendar than Rome. But Egypt



refused to do anything about the uneven number of days. He, or his astronomers, realised that by adding a leap day regularly, the calendar would remain in tune with the seasons."

How would life be without leap years? In 40 years, the seasons would be out of line with the date by 10 days. In about 700 years or so in the Northern Hemisphere, you could have snow in July and celebrate Christmas during the heat of summer. The dates of hunting seasons and other events tied to the seasons would also need periodic adjustments.

## Animal or plant source — which protein helps lose weight faster?

People are more concerned than ever with reaching their protein targets but where your protein comes from is just as essential as how much of it you consume. The body requires protein to function, and it may be found in a wide range of foods, from tofu to low-fat dairy. But not every source of protein is made equal. In general, there are two ways that people can obtain protein: either from plant-based sources like nuts, lentils, beans, or whole grains, or from animal sources like chicken, fish, and eggs. Furthermore, despite the fact that most people identify protein with meat, experts suggest that plant-based solutions can be the healthiest choice, especially for those trying to control or reduce weight. "The data has started to demonstrate more and more that plant protein is equally efficacious in

terms of providing the nourishment needed for the human body," Amanda Velazquez, MD, director of obesity medicine at Cedars-Sinai, told Health. "With plant-based protein, there's more benefits as a whole compared to animal protein."

Experts concur that obtaining protein from plant sources is generally better for the body as a whole. To start, compared to animal protein, plant-based protein sources typically contain more fibre.

"When it comes to weight loss, it's especially important to be not only having high protein in the diet, but also a high fibre diet," said Velazquez. "Animal protein is not going to have as high fibre as plant-based proteins." According to Amber Schaefer, MS, RDN, clinical nutrition lead and nutrition instructor at the

Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science, while plant-based protein may be the best choice, this does not imply that a person must become a vegetarian or vegan right once. Instead, whenever you can, create substitutions. "We do recommend at least getting three servings of some form of legume, whether that be lentils or chickpeas, or if you like, beans," said Schaefer. "Just switching out maybe the red meat from that week so you're reducing the amount of saturated fat that you're getting." In general, people should try "leaning towards plant-based proteins," Velazquez said, but leaner proteins such as fish, seafood, chicken, and turkey are also good options if people do want to stick with some animal protein. "The important thing to know is that quality matters," she said.



## Health



## Shehbaz Sharif's bureaucracy team back in PM Office

ISLAMABAD: The process of redeployment of former Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's bureaucratic team in the Prime Minister's Office has started through appointment and transfer in the federal bureaucracy. Before Shehbaz Sharif becomes the Prime Minister, an important appointment has been made in the Prime Minister's Office and Sameer Ahmed Syed has been transferred from the Punjab Government to Federal Government as Joint Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office. Sameer Ahmad Syed was appointed as Principal Staff Officer of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Secretary to Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, he will also perform the duties of Principal Staff Officer (PSO) to Prime Minister. Meanwhile, Grade 22 Officer Pervez Ahmed Junejo and Grade 20 Officer Ayesha Zareen Siddique, awaiting appointment in Establishment Division, have been made Officer on Special Duty (OSD) Establishment Division. Additionally, OSD Muhammad Saleem Deputy Secretary Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis has been appointed while the services of Deputy Secretary Ministry of Religious Affairs Muhammad Razi National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Deputy Secretary Finance Division Military Finance Wing Kashif Rasheed have been returned to Auditor General Pakistan. Deputy Secretary Overseas Pakistanis Division Abdul Wahid Thahim has been instructed to report to the Establishment Division.

## Training of Hujjaj continues at tehsil, district levels across country

ISLAMABAD: Initiated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, the first phase of training for intending pilgrims continues at the tehsil and district levels across country. Spokesperson of the ministry of religious affairs, Muhammad Umar Butt said that the comprehensive programme launched on February 12 would continue until March 10, in a bid to equip pilgrims with essential knowledge and skills vital for their pilgrimage journey. He said the training sessions encompass a wide array of topics crucial for the spiritual and logistical preparedness of pilgrims undertaking the sacred journey of Hajj and Umrah. These sessions were designed to provide comprehensive guidance on various aspects, including rituals, safety measures, health precautions, and logistical arrangements, he added. Muhammad Umar Butt said with meticulous planning and coordination, officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony are conducting these training sessions across different regions, ensuring accessibility for intending pilgrims from all corners of the country. He said the training was being held at the grassroots level, in tehsils and districts, ensuring that even those in remote areas receive the necessary information and guidance. The spokesperson of the ministry highlighting one of the primary objectives said this initiative was to enhance the pilgrims' understanding of the religious rituals associated with Hajj and Umrah, enabling them to perform these sacred duties with reverence and adherence to tradition. APP

## IIUI's rankings progressed due to research based approach: Dr Samina

ISLAMABAD: Rector, International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Prof. Dr. Samina Malik has said that the university has made progress in various recent rankings due to giving priority to research. This was stated by her while addressing the concluding ceremony of a 10-day long workshop on research methodology in social sciences organized by Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue (IRD) in collaboration with Directorate of Graduate Studies. The workshop was attended by around 100 scholars from various universities including IIUI, QAU, Minhaj University Lahore, Air University Islamabad, BUTEMS Quetta, Qurtaba University Peshawar, Hamdard University Karachi and the Women University of Multan. The workshop was designed in physical and online mode. Prof. Dr. Samina Malik said that the trends in the research of social sciences have changed in previous years and it is the need of time to raise our standards according to the ones that are being practiced by academicians globally. She

stressed upon the scholars to focus on research methodology as she opined that it is the most important part of research. She hailed the IRD for inviting the best resource persons for the participants. The Rector IIUI added that the university is eager to provide ideal platform for academic excellence and research. IIUI Rector distributed the workshop completion certificate among the participants, while shields were also presented to the resource persons. The resource persons included Dr. Sham Haider, Dr. Sajid Yousafzai, Dr. Yasir Hussain, Dr. Rabia Ali and Dr. Qandil Abbas. In the workshop, the scholars covered various important topics such as introduction to research, data collection procedures and tool, formulation of smart research objectives, qualitative research methods, data analysis and methods of keeping research on track. The closing ceremony of the workshop was also attended by Director IRD, Syed Hassan Aftab, Incharge Directorate of graduate studies, and Dr. Suhail Abdullah and coordinating team of the IRD. INP



ISLAMABAD: Newly elected Members of National Assembly Omar Ayub Khan and Barrister Gohar Khan arrives to attend 1st session of 16th National Assembly at Parliament House. APP

## Identifying agro-ecological zones vital to maximize agri products output: Minister

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for National Food Security and Research (NFS&R), Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik has said that identifying agro-ecological zones holds significant importance for maximizing output of agriculture products as well as to achieve sustainable economic growth in the country. While addressing the launching ceremony of the updated "Agro-Ecological Zones of Pakistan" here on Thursday, he commended the efforts of Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) scientists and also emphasized the importance of establishing a dissemination mechanism to engage all stakeholders. Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik said that the report offered a comprehensive overview of Pakistan's updated agro-ecological zones, considering changing environmental conditions,

adding that it was prepared under the directive of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, categorizing Pakistan's ecology into various zones and sub-zones with a specialized database. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali highlighted its significance updated agro-ecological zones in identifying appropriate crops for diverse ecological conditions nationwide, which would help tailor agricultural practices to specific environmental conditions, maximizing crop productivity. Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali said that understanding these zones could lead to more sustainable and profitable farming methods, better resource allocation, contributing to food security and economic growth in the region. INP



SEHWAN: Security personals stand alert during annual Urs of Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar at shrine of Sufi saint Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, at Sehwan Sharif. ONLINE

## Opportunities for Pakistan, China energy collaboration

ISLAMABAD: The on-going Solar Pakistan International Solar Exhibition, 2024 will boost opportunities for Pak-China energy collaboration the exhibition is underway at the Lahore International Expo Center from February 27 to 29.

According to Gwadar Pro, the event serves as an exclusive platform for presenting the latest solar innovations and the region's most prominent solar projects, offering opportunities for establishing partnerships with both government and private sectors.

Energy companies from China, including JA Solar, YC Solar, and Sineng Electric, actively participated in the event, exploring opportunities for collaboration between China and Pakistan in the field of solar energy.

At the exhibition, numerous Chinese companies signed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with their Pakistani partners, expressing their preliminary intentions for collaboration. "The collaboration between China and Pakistan in the field of solar energy holds tremendous potential. Currently, Pakistan heavily relies on coal, oil, gas, nuclear, and hydroelectric power sources, with solar energy contributing less than 1% to the energy mix," stated exhibitor of YC Solar. The company showcased its high-efficiency YCM-N series photovoltaic modules, which achieve higher photovoltaic conversion efficiency and lower costs through innovations in cell structure, material selection, and manufacturing processes. JA Solar presented its flagship product, the



DeepBlue 4.0 Pro series, known for its high efficiency, high power output, and excellent adaptability to high-temperature environments. Additionally, these modules offer advantages such as bifacial generation and attenuation characteristics, maximizing Pakistan's abundant solar resources and generating higher electricity yields for photovoltaic projects.

"JA Solar has previously supplied high-efficiency modules to several major solar projects in Pakistan, including a 100MW Solar Project in Punjab, the 103MW Zhenfa Solar Project, and the first n-type solar power station project.

We will further develop our cooperation with Pakistani partners to providing efficient and reliable green electricity, supporting local green and sustainable development," said the representative from JA Solar.

Pakistan enjoys an average of nine and a half hours of sunlight daily. According to the Integrated Energy Plan for 2047 (IGCEP2047), Pakistan's photovoltaic capacity is projected to reach 12.8GW by 2030 and 26.9GW by 2047. Collaboration between China and Pakistan will contribute to the country's clean energy transition, reducing reliance on traditional energy sources, and achieving sustainable development. DNA

## Ex PM Gilani resigns from senate

ISLAMABAD: Seasoned politician and former Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani has resigned from his Senate seat. This move comes amidst speculation about his potential appointment as the Chairman of the Senate, a position he narrowly missed securing in 2021. Gilani formally submitted his resignation to Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani, who subsequently accepted it and issued an official notification. This development coincides with Gilani's recent oath as a Member of the National Assembly, fueling speculation about his future political trajectory. It's worth noting that prior to his resignation, rumors circulated about Gilani's potential elevation to the Senate Chairmanship, with several years remaining in his Senate term. However, his decision to step down suggests a strategic shift, potentially paving the way for a more prominent role within the National Assembly. The reasons behind Gilani's resignation remain unclear, but it has undoubtedly sparked discussions and ignited curiosity within Pakistan's political landscape. The coming days might offer further insights into his motivations and future political plans. INP

## CDA taking steps for untreted water supply in capital city

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA), Water Management Wing has expedited work on several projects to meet the water shortage in the capital city. In this regard, the Water Management Wing has been completely resolved all the repair work and complaints like leakages, including replacement of old and rotten pipes in the Simli Water Filtration Plant and Mai Line.

It should be noted that the timely action of the Water Supply Wing has not only saved 800,000 gallons of water per day but also increased the water pressure in the pipelines. Similarly, complaints like leakages in water supply lines have been addressed in Sector G-7/3. The water level in other dams including Khanpur dam has decreased due to lack of required rains in monsoon. Therefore, before the arrival of summer, the water supply department is busy around the clock to meet the shortage of water so that the citizens get adequate water supply.

Additionally, the installation of 4 new tube wells in Sector F-10, F-11, G-10, G-11 will also be started soon by the Water Supply Department. So that in case the water reserves in Khanpur Dam decreases, the water shortage can be met with tube wells.

In this regard, tenders have been published in newspapers so that water shortage can be controlled before the arrival of summer. Apart from this, work will be started soon to eliminate water leakages in other water networks including main condition lines at a cost of 60 crore rupees so that more water can be saved. Similarly, water tanker service has also been alerted by the water supply department in view of the current situation. Considering the situation of the citizens, helpline number 9202218 has also been issued by the Water Supply Wing. Similarly, citizens can register their complaints on WhatsApp number 0335775444. It should be noted that timely redressal of received complaints will be ensured in all circumstances. INP

## Farooq Rehmani condemns JKMC Ban, SIA charges against Abdul Hameed Lone

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Farooq Rehmani, senior leader of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC-AJK), has strongly condemned India's ban on Muslim Conference in IIOJK, fabricated cases against Sarjan Barkati, confiscation of properties and houses of civilians in Ganderbal, Kupwara and charges against Abdul Hameed Lone under unlawful Activities Act and digital surveillance of people across Jammu and Kashmir.

According to Rehmani, these actions are based on "fake cases" registered by the Indian police in the "occupied territory." Rehmani's condemnation highlights broader concerns about the Indian government's use of illegal measures to suppress political dissent in Jammu and Kashmir. SABAH

## Siraj calls for national dialogue for transparent election mechanism

LAHORE: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Sirajul Haq has expressing concerns over the future of democracy in the country has urged a national dialogue among political stakeholders to establish a transparent election mechanism. Addressing a press conference at Mansoorah on Thursday, he said the JI's Working Committee in its Wednesday meeting has unanimously deemed the Election 2024 as rigged and controversial, vowing to expose it democratically. Sirajul Haq had presided over the session of the JI's Majlis Aamal which discussed election and post-election's situation and future strategy. He said that the JI has already started efforts for holding of national dialogue to save the democracy and in this regard, it hosted a session of the observers and members of civil society. The JI leader emphasized the importance of announcing results based on Form 45, asserting that any government formed on a fake mandate would fail to address the country's crises. The nation demanded the poll results should be announced on the basis of Form 45, he said. He

criticized institutions for falling short of the nation's expectations regarding election impartiality. He called for the resignation of the chief election commissioner, saying the latter has failed to protect the democratic rights of the people of Pakistan. The JI demanded a transparent audit of the 2024 elections through an independent judicial commission inclusive of political party representations, he said.

Siraj asserted that the JI's mandate was stolen in Karachi and results tampered with in other parts of the country, declaring the party's commitment to never remain silent on the theft of public mandate.

He urged the government to provide emergency relief to the rain-affected people of Gwadar. Appealing to Muslim world leaders, the JI chief called for tangible steps to aid the people of Gaza, condemning the prolonged Israeli bombings that resulted in a significant death toll. He stressed that only a strong stance from the Muslim world could bring an end to the atrocities committed by Zionist forces. INP

## ICCI delegation visits POF to explore business opportunities

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) led by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President visited the Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF) and held a meeting with Lt. Gen. Syed Tahir Hameed Shah, Chairman POF to explore business opportunities for the private sector in the defense industry.

Lt. Gen. Syed Tahir Hameed Shah, Chairman, POF briefed the ICCI delegation about the role of Pakistan Ordnance Factories, which is the country's premier defense production organization. He said that besides meeting the defense needs of the country, POF exports its products to several countries around the world. He said that POF imports many parts and equipment to produce its finished products and said that POF would welcome local vendors who can supply it with parts and equipment according to the required standards. He said that POF is the largest defense industrial complex comprising 14 ordnance factories and three commercial subsidiaries. He said that the surplus products of POF are sold in the civil market and

the standards of POF products are not less than any international company. He said that good care is taken in maintaining the standards of all products of POF and its subsidiaries. He said that the business community should explore prospects of joint ventures in various projects of defense industries operating under the umbrella of POF. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islam-

abad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) lauded the role of POF in making the defense of the country stronger. He said that POF is playing a key role in moving towards self-sufficiency and in meeting the growing demands of our defense sector and civilian security agencies, which is a source of pride for us. He lauded the efforts of POF for capturing foreign markets by improving its efficiency, adopting quality finan-

cial management practices, and digitizing its processes to transform itself into a self-sustainable and progressive defense-industrial complex. He assured that the business community is ready to provide all possible support and cooperation to POF in its objectives and goals.

He said that the ICCI has established a display center on its premises and is ready to provide space in that facility to POF for displaying its products. He discussed the prospects of private sector collaboration with POF on a public-private partnership basis.

Zafar Bakhtawari former President and Secretary General UBG Pakistan said that defense exports are not only an important source of earning foreign exchange, but they also help in improving Pakistan's relations with other countries. He stressed that Pakistan should focus on SAARC, ECO and D-8 countries for promoting defense exports.

Maqsood Tabish, Sheikh Muhammad Ejaz, Ch. Muhammad Ali, Faseeh Ullah Khan, Ameer Hanzla, Khalid Chaudhry, Saif ur Rehman Khan, Ms. Fatima Hassan, and others were in the delegation.

