



"May Allah forgive me for my shortcomings and reward me for the good deeds I may have done" wrote Arif Alvi

PM Shehbaz Sharif 'likely' to finalise cabinet in 24 hours

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is likely to finalise his cabinet in the next 24 hours, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader said Saturday.

During an informal interaction with journalists in Islamabad, the PML-N leader claimed that all the matters had been settled with the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P).

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif has also directed the premier to finalise the federal cabinet at the earliest and start implementing the party's manifesto, as per sources.

The directions were made during an important meeting of the ruling party headed by the three-time former prime minister. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leadership, including PM Shehbaz, was present in the meeting. Current political and economic situation, national and international issues and other matters were discussed in the meeting.

Currently, the people's expectations from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) are high, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo told the participants, adding that the new government, however, had to face challenges like a mountain.

"Reducing in [skyrocketing] inflation is also inevitable," sources said, quoting Nawaz. Lamenting the challenges faced by the new government such as soaring inflation, Nawaz said: "Prime minister, you should form the cabinet soon and start implementing the [party's] manifesto."

The huddle also deliberated over the induction of PPP's members in the upcoming federal cabinet. PM Shehbaz told the meeting that he would talk to Zardari after his election as the president.

"Will request Asif Ali Zardari after he is elected president," sources said, quoting the PM. As per the sources, key ministries of defence, foreign affairs, and finance are likely to be handed over to two Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) bigwigs — Khawaja Asif and Ishaq Dar — and a renowned banker Muhammad Aurangzeb, respectively, the sources said.

Likewise, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)'s Secretary General Ahsan Iqbal would be given the ministries of planning, and development, as well as privatisation, as per the sources.

The insiders also revealed that Tarar is expected to be given the information and broadcasting ministry, whereas, another Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) stalwart — former interior minister — would be made special assistant to prime minister (SAPM) on interior affairs. DNA



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif being welcomed by President-elect Asif Ali Zardari upon his arrival at Zardari house. APP

Asif Ali Zardari secures 411 votes; Mahmood Khan Achakzai 181 votes in presidential election

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari has been elected 14th President of Pakistan while securing 411 votes. Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) Chairman and joint candidate of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) Mahmood Khan Achakzai remained the runner up while securing 181 votes. Asif Ali Zardari secured 255 from Senate of Pakistan and National Assembly; meanwhile Mahmood Khan Achakzai secured 119 votes from Senate of Pakistan and National Assembly. The final result of the presidential election has been announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan. Voting to elect the 14th president of Pakistan for next five years was held in the Senate, and national and provincial assemblies on Saturday. The voting concluded at 4:00 PM and counting began. The voting was held from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM without break.

The first vote for the presidential election was cast by Amer Talal Gopang and Abdul Aleem Khan cast the second vote. Two polling booths and two counters had been set up in the National Assembly for the voting process. The joint candidate of the ruling coalition, Asif Ali Zardari, secured 246 votes while Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) candidate Mahmood Khan

Achakzai got 100 votes in the Punjab Assembly. Overall 352 lawmakers cast ballots, while six votes were rejected by the presiding officer. Asif Ali Zardari clinched 151 votes, while PTI-backed SIC candidate Mahmood Khan Achakzai got 9 votes in the Sindh Assembly. PTI-backed SIC candidate Mahmood Khan Achakzai bagged 91 votes in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly against his rival PPP's Asif Ali Zardari. Zardari managed to get only 17 votes in the provincial legislature. As many as 109 KP Assembly members out of a total of 118 cast ballots while one vote was rejected. Ruling alliance joint candidate Asif Ali Zardari secured 47 electoral votes from Balochistan Assembly, while PTI-backed SIC candidate Mahmood Khan Achakzai could not secure a single vote in the provincial assembly, according to a result announced by a presiding officer. Meanwhile the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) turned down the application filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-backed Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) presidential candidate Mahmood Khan Achakzai seeking a delay in the election of the head of state.

"In exercise of powers conferred upon it [commission] under Articles 218(3) and 41 of the Constitution read with Second Schedule and further read with Presidential Election Rules, 1988, decline to delay the Election to the office of the President and reject the application of the petitioner," the electoral body's order signed by Chief Election Commissioner

Sikander Sultan Raja and others read. Achakzai on Friday had written to the CEC seeking a postponement in presidential polls slated for Saturday contending that the electoral college as "prescribed by law and Constitution" for a presidential election was "still incomplete" because "some reserved seats" in the National Assembly and all provincial assemblies are still vacant.

The presidential candidate, who was contesting against Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) Asif Ali Zardari for the top office, added that the electoral college cannot be completed till the seats are filled. He added that till the seats are not filled the presidential polls would be "illegal, unlawful and against the spirit of the Constitution". He also mentioned the Peshawar High Court (PHC) stay order on the reserved seats which he believes would give a "clear verdict" in favour of the PTI-backed party. The ECP, in its detailed order, said that the electoral college cannot be deemed to be incomplete for any vacancy (ies) under present circumstances. "Although the provision of section 130 pertains to the election of members of the Senate there is no direct provision on the same issue in the Constitution or the Presidential Election Rules, the Honourable Supreme Court of Pakistan in a plethora of judgements has held that if no provision pertaining to an issue is available in the Constitution or statute, then reference can be made to other provisions of the Constitution or the Statute for the purpose of interpretation.

Pak Armed Forces, with support of the nation, fully prepared to defend territorial integrity & sovereignty of our motherland against full spectrum of threat: COAS Syed Asim Munir

Says Armed Forces should always remain prepared against any misadventure by the enemy



RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI(M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) visited troops engaged in Field Exercise in training area near Rahim Yar Khan. COAS

was briefed about exercise 'Shamsheer-e-Sehra'. According to the statement issued by ISPR on Saturday, the aim of the exercise was to enhance professional skills and battlefield procedures required to meet future challenges in operational environment.

COAS witnessed integrated fire and battle maneuvers of various elements including Armour, Infantry, Mechanized Infantry, Artillery, Air Defence, and Anti-Tank Guided Missiles. Pakistan Airforce Aircrafts also participated in the exercise. The exercise also incorporated Electronic Warfare capabilities and Information Operations required to subdue enemy's communications capabilities and disinformation campaign during war.

COAS spent complete day with the troops in the exercise area. While interacting with the troops participating in the exercise COAS lauded the training standards, operational preparedness and high morale of all ranks. He emphasised that Armed Forces should always remain prepared against any misadventure by the enemy.

"Pakistan Armed Forces, with support of the nation, are fully prepared to defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of our motherland against full spectrum of threat," COAS concluded. Earlier, on arrival in the field area, COAS was received by Corps Commander Karachi and Inspector General Training and Evaluation. PR

Security forces kill 10 terrorists in two separate engagements in North Waziristan District: ISPR

ISPR says security forces of Pak determined & remain committed to secure its borders & wipe-out the menace of terrorism from country

RAWALPINDI: On 8-9 March 2024, 10 terrorists were killed, while three were injured in two separate engagements by the security forces in North Waziristan District.

According to the statement issued by ISPR, four terrorists were killed during an intelligence based operation on 8 March. Whereas, during the follow up sanitization operation, four more terrorists were successfully neutralized by the security forces.

In a separate operation in North Waziristan District, movement of five terrorists, who were trying to infiltrate Pakistan-Afghanistan border, was picked up by the security forces. After an intense fire

exchange, two terrorists, Terrorist Hazrat Umer and Terrorist Rehman Niaz were also killed, while three other terrorists got injured.

Pakistan has consistently been asking Interim Afghan Government to ensure effective border management on their side of the border. Interim Afghan Government is expected to fulfill its obligations and deny the use of Afghan soil by terrorists for perpetuating acts of terrorism against Pakistan. Security forces of Pakistan are determined and remain committed to secure its borders and wipe-out the menace of terrorism from the country. PR

Senator Faisal Saleem becomes first Pakistani on IMF, World Bank boards

ISLAMABAD: In a historic development for Pakistan, Senator Faisal Saleem has been elected as a member of the Boards of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. This marks the first time in the country's history that a Pakistani parliamentarian has attained such a position of influence within these prestigious international institutions.

Senator Saleem, representing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ascended to the upper house in March 2021 and is slated to serve until March 2027. His election to the Parliamentary Board of the IMF and the World Bank is a significant milestone, as he joins the ranks of influential figures from around the globe in formulating recommendations for poverty alleviation and economic stability. With 140 countries worldwide participating in the Parliamentary Network on the IMF and the World Bank, Senator Saleem's appointment underscores Pakistan's growing prominence on the global stage. His role is expected to contribute to shaping policy discussions and reforms aimed at addressing pressing economic challenges and fostering sustainable development. INP

UK & Pakistan are working closely together to further gender equality: British HC Jane Marriott



fair in Islamabad, female entrepreneurs demonstrated the work they are doing on artificial intelligence, medical technology and smart apps.

ISLAMABAD: The UK has convened women in tech, business and trade to highlight their achievements and discuss shared challenges.

The theme for this year's International Women's Day is: Invest in women; accelerate progress. At a trade fair in Islamabad, female entrepreneurs demonstrated the work they are doing on artificial intelligence, medical technology and smart apps.

Umama Nadir, a student from Lahore who was selected to be "Ambassador for the Day", shadowed the High Commissioner around her engagements. British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott CMG OBE, said: "The UK and Pakistan are working closely together to further gender equality. It is a priority that runs through all of our work. Economic reform is at the heart of progress in Pakistan, and women are the heart of the economy". There is overwhelming evidence that investing in women and girls and breaking down the barriers they face accelerates development, especially when women are helped into the workforce. If women had the same role in labour markets as men, an estimated 26%, or \$28 trillion, could be added to global GDP. SABAH

Diplomacy is about strengthening bonds between people & building trust amongst nations: Sardar Masood Khan

WASHINGTON: "Trust is the key ingredient of diplomacy, and you have to build it, it's not a given," said the Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States Sardar Masood Khan. "We start with acquaintances then turn those acquaintances into friendships developing trust between two individuals, two communities, and two nations, and then we start transactions of all kinds whether economic transactions or political transactions," said Masood Khan. Sardar Masood Khan made these remarks while addressing a jam-packed hall with a large number of women participants during an event held at the Embassy of Pakistan celebrating Pakistan's cultural treasures and the stunning landscape featuring traditional apparel, delicious cuisine, and exquisite artwork.

"Peace, security, and prosperity are our shared responsibility," Ambassador Masood Khan later posted on X (Twitter) while appreciating the role of THIS for Diplomats. "You are an international community in miniature representing different nations here in the United States and THIS for Diplomats turns these foreigners into a family so that you can connect and understand each other's perspective in a better way," he added. Highlighting the huge potential for tourism in Pakistan, Ambassador Masood Khan invited participants to visit Pakistan and experience the timeless beauty of Pakistan's ancient civilizations and natural wonders, from snow-capped peaks to pristine coastal areas, and enjoy the delicious Pakistani cuisine. "Pakistan has been home to many ancient civilizations



like the Indus Valley Civilization and the Gandhara civilization, but we also have a very dynamic and resolute people who are friendly, hospitable, and welcoming. You must go to Pakistan to experience the hospitality of the people of Pakistan,"

said the Ambassador. Terming it the beginning of a relationship between the Embassy of Pakistan and THIS for Diplomats, Ambassador Masood Khan thanked all the participants for joining in the celebration of Pakistan's rich

culture and applauded the invaluable role of THIS for Diplomats in creating a global family of diplomats, fostering connections, and bringing people together to celebrate diverse cultures. Speaking to the occasion, Ms. Peggy Letter, the President of THIS for Diplomats expressed profound gratitude to Ambassador Masood Khan for the invitation to the embassy, showcasing the vibrant culture of Pakistan, an experience that will be treasured by all. THIS for Diplomats also thanked Ambassador Masood Khan in a tweet on its official X (Twitter) handle. The Embassy of Pakistan welcomed esteemed guests including diplomats from different countries i.e. Spain, Germany, Malaysia; Switzerland, Iraq, France; Canada, Egypt Kyrgyzstan, Singapore, Hungary, Japan, Korea, Brunei,

Uzbekistan, Chile, and Sri Lanka alongside distinguished dignitaries from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union (EU), and World Bank to experience the rich cultural traditions and breathtaking landscapes of the country. The event was organized in collaboration with THIS for Diplomats, a non-profit organization that promotes international understanding and friendship through educational, informational, and cultural exchanges with members of the diplomatic community in Washington, D.C. Press and Culture Attaché, Zaigham Abbas briefed the audience about the abundant natural and historical riches of Pakistan with award-winning travel magazine Travel + Leisure declaring Pakistan as one of the top 50 destinations to visit in 2024. SABAH

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Empowered women, empowered nation

ABDULLAH KHALID

Pakistan, a nation striving for a more robust and inclusive democracy, faces the crucial challenge of harnessing the full potential of its citizenry. While significant strides have been made, women's participation in governance, particularly at the local level, remains an underutilized resource.

We argue that empowering women in local governance is not just a moral imperative, but a strategic necessity for strengthening Pakistan's democratic infrastructure.

Local governance, encompassing issues like sanitation, education, and healthcare, directly impacts the lives of ordinary citizens. Women, often the primary caregivers within families and communities, possess an intimate understanding of these local needs.

Their inclusion in decision-making processes ensures policies and programmes that are responsive to the specific challenges faced by women, children and families.

Examples from around the world underscore the positive impact of women in local governance. In Rwanda, a country that tragically emerged from genocide, women now hold over 60 per cent of parliamentary seats.

This remarkable achievement has seen a tangible focus on social welfare programmes, including healthcare initiatives targeting women and children. Pakistan can learn from neighbouring countries that are making significant strides in promoting women's political participation. Bangladesh, for instance, has seen a steady rise in women's representation in local councils, leading to increased spending on education and healthcare. In Afghanistan, despite recent challenges, women's rights activists continue their fight for inclusion in the political process, recognizing the importance of their voices in shaping the nation's future.

Similarly, in India, reserved seats for women in local panchayats (village councils) have led to increased payout on education and sanitation projects, areas traditionally neglected by male-dominated bodies. Pakistan has taken some positive steps towards women's inclusion in local governance. The Local Government Act mandates a 33 per cent quota for women's representation in local councils. However, the reality paints a more complex picture. Cultural norms, societal bias, and a lack of support structures often prevent women from effectively participating or even contesting elections, resulting in little to no women's engagement at the local government level.

A concrete plan to address these challenges and unlock the potential of women in local governance is crucial. This can be achieved via extensive awareness campaigns, targeting both men and women, which are crucial to dispel myths and encourage women to participate in the political process. Educational programmes can equip women with the knowledge and skills needed for effective leadership, public speaking and campaign management. Training programmes can equip women with the necessary skills in governance, budgeting, and project management. Mentorship programmes, connecting experienced women politicians with aspiring leaders, can provide invaluable guidance and support. Ensuring the physical safety of women during campaigning and while holding office is also paramount. This requires robust security measures and awareness programmes for law-enforcement personnel. Rigorous enforcement of the 33 per cent quota for women's representation is essential. Support structures, such as childcare facilities and flexible working hours, can enable women to balance their political responsibilities with family commitments close together. Supporting and amplifying the voices of women's rights organizations and local civil society groups working to promote women's leadership is crucial.

Local governance strengthens democracy in several ways for women. They bring diverse perspectives to the decision-making table, ensuring policies are more inclusive and responsive to the needs of all citizens. Studies suggest that women leaders are more likely to be transparent and less susceptible to corruption. Women often prioritize social welfare programmes that benefit the entire community, fostering greater social cohesion and stability.

When women actively participate in political processes, it sets a powerful example for future generations, encouraging a more inclusive and participatory democracy. On International Women's Day, the theme 'Invest in women: Accelerate progress' rings true for local governance. Empowering women at the local level unlocks a talent pool, diverse perspectives, and deep community understanding. Pakistan can create an environment where women can thrive as leaders, shaping a more vibrant, inclusive, and truly democratic future. Pakistan's success in this endeavour holds immense significance beyond its borders. It can serve as a powerful example for other nations striving to strengthen their democracies and harness the full potential of their citizenry. Empowering women in local governance is not just a matter of rights; it is a strategic investment in a brighter future for all.

The writer is a researcher associated with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute.



Rida Tahir

AI and gender equality

same biases that humans hold, including gender bias. Further, AI depends on existing data to train algorithms. There is a lack of sufficient gender-balanced data due to historic discrimination against women. Since the databases reflect existing gender inequalities, it can lead to biased decisions when AI learns from them.

The use of AI is rapidly becoming more prevalent in workplaces. This can negatively influence women's employment opportunities and their roles, status, and treatment at the workplace. For example, if the data mostly shows men in certain jobs (for example, only two women serve as supreme court judges in Pakistan), then AI might unfairly favour men for those roles in the future.

Across the world, there is a gender pay gap, women in the labour force earn less than men for similar work. Women spend more time undertaking caring roles within the family, including unpaid childcare. AI-based technology can reinforce existing gender stereotypes against women. For example, virtual assistants such as Alexa and Siri exhibit female voices and features. Further, they are used to perform secretarial tasks which are traditionally assigned to women. Unfortunately, due to traditional gender roles assigned to women, it is believed that women lack leadership skills.

Women are already underrepresented in senior positions and leadership roles at workplaces. In Pakistan particularly, the female labour force participation stands at 25 per cent. It is well below rates for countries with similar income levels. The use of AI for workforce management has been rapidly increasing in the world of work. This can integrate gender bias in decisions regarding recruitment, task assignment, performance evaluation and promotion in workplaces that are utilizing AI for workforce management. The biases regarding gender, race, religious beliefs, or disability embedded in the technical specifications of recruitment tools can lead to biased evaluations of candidates.

Therefore, it is essential to ensure that the use of AI in the workplace does not cause discrimination against women. Pakistan already has a legal framework that prohibits discrimination against women. Article 25 of the constitution provides for equality before the law and the equal protection of the law and states that there shall be no discrimination based on sex. Further, Article 25(3) allows the state to make special provisions for the protection of women. Additionally, the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010 (and the 2022 Amendment) prohibits discrimination based on gender. It states: "discrimination on the basis of gender, which may or may not be sexual in nature, but which may embody a discriminatory and prejudicial mindset or notion, resulting in discriminatory behaviour on the basis of gender against the complainant."

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and ratified by Pakistan on December 3, 1996. Article 2 of CEDAW states that "States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms." Further, Article 11 states that "States parties shall take all appropriate mea-

asures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular: (a) the right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings. (b) the right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment."

Therefore, Pakistan has national and international obligations to ensure that gender discrimination does not arise in the workplace. This can be interpreted to include discrimination arising in the workplace due to the use of AI. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that currently, the use of AI in the workplace remains unregulated in Pakistan. We must ensure that we are effectively harnessing the power of AI to narrow the existing gender equality gaps as opposed to perpetuating and exacerbating them. We must aim to design and develop novel technologies that help close the existing gender gaps. This includes training AI on datasets which can serve as tools for women's empowerment in the workplace. Workplaces must be proactive in ensuring that emerging technology advances gender parity. On this Women's Day, and going forward, we must raise our voices to forge a gender-equal world by utilizing the power of technological advancements so that we can eliminate gender inequality rather than exacerbate it.

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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



The Muslim League could not win a majority of Muslim seats since it had not yet been effectively reorganized. However, it had the satisfaction that the performance of the Indian National Congress in the Muslim constituencies was bad. After the elections, the attitude of the Congress leadership was arrogant and domineering. The classic example was its refusal to form a coalition government with the Muslim League in the United Provinces. Instead, it asked the League leaders to dissolve their parliamentary party in the Provincial Assembly and join the Congress. Another important Congress move after the 1937 elections was its Muslim mass contact movement to persuade the Muslims to join the Congress and not the Muslim League. One of its leaders, Jawaharlal Nehru, even declared that there were only two forces in India, the British and

the Congress. All this did not go unchallenged. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah countered that there was a third force in South-Asia constituting the Muslims. The All-India Muslim League, under his gifted leadership, gradually and skillfully started organising the Muslims on one platform.

TOWARDS A SEPARATE MUSLIM HOMELAND

The 1930s witnessed awareness among the Muslims of their separate identity and their anxiety to preserve it within separate territorial boundaries. An important element that brought this simmering Muslim nationalism in the open was the character of the Congress rule in the Muslim minority provinces during 1937-39. The Congress policies in these provinces hurt Muslim susceptibili-

ties. There were calculated aims to obliterate the Muslims as a separate cultural unit. The Muslims now stopped thinking in terms of seeking safeguards and began to consider seriously the demand for a separate Muslim state. During 1937-39, several Muslim leaders and thinkers, inspired by Allama Iqbal's ideas, presented elaborate schemes for partitioning the subcontinent according to two-nation theory.

PAKISTAN RESOLUTION

The All-India Muslim League soon took these schemes into consideration and finally, on March 23, 1940, the All-India Muslim League, in a resolution, at its historic Lahore Session, demanded a separate homeland for the Muslims in the Muslim majority regions of the subcontinent. The resolution was commonly referred to as

the Pakistan Resolution. The Pakistan demand had a great appeal for the Muslims of every persuasion. It revived memories of their past greatness and promised future glory. They, therefore, responded to this demand immediately.

CRIPPS MISSION

The British Government recognized the genuineness of the Pakistan demand indirectly in the proposals for the transfer of power after the Second World War which Sir Stafford Cripps brought to India in 1942. Both the Congress and the All-India Muslim League rejected these proposals for different reasons. The principles of secession of Muslim India as a separate Dominion was however, conceded in these proposals.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Dakota Johnson regrets signing up for 'Madame Web'?

Dakota Johnson's Madame Web was a box office failure following its release last month

Dakota Johnson recently revealed that she will probably pull out from the genre after playing the titular superhero role in Sony's Madame Web. Speaking exclusively to Bustle, Dakota shared that she is not surprised with the way things turned out for the film at the box office.

The Fifty Shades of Grey alum admitted that she is "not surprised that this has gone down the way it has."

Madame Web, that is a part of Sony's Spider-Man Universe, was largely panned by critics, tanking at the box office. The superhero film is followed by two Venom films and Morbius.

The film that failed to impress the masses, recently became the talk of the town after Madame Web Reaction Hideo Kojima's mini-review of Madame Web went viral on social media. Commenting on the film's poor reception, the actress said: "It's



so hard to get movies made, and in these big movies that get made — and it's even starting to happen with the little ones, which is what's really freaking me out — decisions are being made by committees, and art does not do well when it's made by committee. Films are made by a filmmaker and a team of artists around them."

Johnson assured that "it was definitely an experience for me to make that movie. I had never done anything like it before. I probably will never do anything like it again because I don't make sense in that world."

She went on to explain that it ended up proving to be a "real learning experience" for the actress' portfolio. Dakota concluded her statement by adding that she wouldn't prefer to be a "part of something that's ripped to shreds."

Tech

How old is 'oldest dead galaxy' of Universe?

The oldest dead galaxy in the Universe has been found by astronomers with the help of recent observations acquired from the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST). This newly discovered dead galaxy, also known as JADES-GS-z7-01-QU, is said to have challenged the popular design of the early Universe, according to Space.

It also stopped creating stars more than 13 billion years ago, during a time when the Universe was only 700 million years old.

Despite being rich in dust and gas, which are needed for the formation of stars, astronomers are perplexed by the dead galaxy's apparent halt.

"The first few hundred million years of the universe was a very active phase, with lots of gas clouds collapsing to form new stars," Tobias Looser, lead author of the study from the University of Cambridge, said in a statement. "Galaxies need a rich supply of gas to form new stars, and the early Universe was



like an all-you-can-eat buffet."

The dead galaxy had a speedy burst of star formation lasting between 30 million to 90 million years, but it stopped doing so between 10 million and 20 million years, just before it was observed by the JWST, as per the data from JWST Advanced Deep Survey (JADES).

Though, there have been many dead galaxies, which have been discovered to have formed no stars, but JADES-GS-z7-01-QU is the oldest dead galaxy found at only 700 million years after the event of the Big Bang.

Health

Daily 20 seconds of self affirmations can improve mental health

Affirmations are usually optimistic sentences or words aimed at making you feel better

Affirmations, which are a form of positive self-talk, are usually optimistic sentences or words aimed at making you feel better. A study conducted by the University of California Berkeley and published in the journal Behaviour Research and Therapy found that daily affirmations are linked to improved mental health, Fox News reported. The study involved 135 college students who practised self-affirmations for 20 seconds a day for a month.

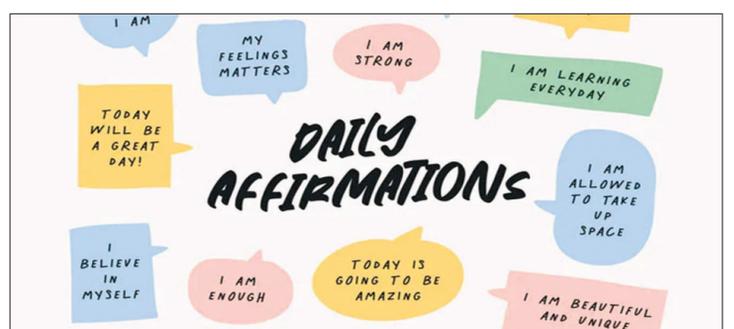
Study's co-author and psychology researcher Eli Susman explains that self-affirmations are "essentially a practice of being a caring friend to yourself when reflecting on moments that evoke being hard on yourself."

The students were told, "You're invited to allow your eyes to close ... Bringing to mind a recent mistake or a failure, or something about yourself that has been bothering you lately, or has made you feel unworthy, unloved, or not

enough ... and notice what arises in your body as you bring this to mind." "Sending kindness and warmth to yourself by bringing one hand to your belly and the other to your chest with the energy of hugging yourself, allow yourself to embrace what arises in your body."

Benefits of self-affirming thoughts

According to Dr Zachary Ginder, a psychological consultant, self-affirmations "when practised daily to the point of habit formation, touched with self-compassionate, positive, self-affirming talk or reflection can improve self-compassion and reduce stress and other mental health challenges."



Govt eyes emergency measures to overcome revenue shortfall

ISLAMABAD: In response to the revenue shortfall for consecutive two months, the government has delineated eight emergency measures intended to enhance monthly revenue by Rs 18 billion for the fiscal year 2023-24.

These measures include modifications in the sales tax rates for specific industries, the imposition of a Federal Excise Duty (FED) on sugar, and incremental increases in various taxes.

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has reported a failure to meet its revenue collection objectives for the second month in succession, sparking discussions regarding the government's inclination towards emergency fiscal policies. This continual shortfall requires the generation of an additional Rs 18 billion each month for the fiscal year 2023-24 to address the revenue deficit effectively.

A deviation greater than 1% from the set target might necessitate the introduction of a supplementary budget, a measure aligned with the prerequisites of an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Data indicates that the FBR's revenue collection lagged by 1.3% and 4.6% for January and February 2024, respectively.

Confidential sources have revealed that February witnessed a revenue collection of Rs 681 billion, falling short of the Rs 714 billion target by Rs 33 billion. January's revenue also did not meet expectations, with a shortfall of Rs 9 billion, totaling a Rs 42 billion deficit over these two months. This financial gap has been linked to opposition within the FBR against the Finance Minister's initiatives for reforming and streamlining the tax collection process.

Reports suggest that this opposition has escalated to the extent of strike threats by the FBR's senior management, significantly compromising the integrity and functionality of the institution. Rumors within the FBR suggest an anticipation of improved revenue metrics with the induction of a new Finance Minister, indicating the present downturn as a deliberate tactic to establish authority and leverage favorable terms with the incoming fiscal policy leadership, thus resisting the proposed reforms. INP

Engr Amir Muqam urges transparent inquiry into Shangla tragedy

ISLAMABAD: Amir Muqam, President of PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, urged for an unbiased inquiry into the Shangla incident on February 9, stressing the need to uncover the genuine perpetrators and masterminds involved. Talking to media, Amir Muqam, KP PML(N) President, questions PTT's delayed response to the Shangla incident on February 9, asking about their sudden attention after a month. He stressed the significance of the children who lost their lives in the tragedy, likening them to his own sons. Moreover, he expressed remorse for the incident and urged for an immediate inquiry. In the tragic event that occurred in Shangla on February 9, Amir Muqam said: "we lost two of our brethren/children. We deeply mourn their loss and stand in solidarity with their families during this time of grief." In response to PTT's accusations, he stated that the PTT leadership has only now begun politicizing the tragic incident after a month. APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik, Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan Tapas Adhikari and others posing for group photograph on the occasion of Nepali Army Day, at a local hotel, in the Federal Capital. ONLINE

Health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza says war death toll at 30,960

GAZA STRIP: Palestinian Territories: The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said Saturday at least 30,960 people have been killed in the territory during more than five months of war between Israel and Palestinian militants. The latest toll includes 82 fatalities over the past 24 hours, a ministry statement said, adding that 72,524 people have been wounded in Gaza since the war began on October 7 when Hamas militants attacked Israel. UN Palestinian refugee agency at 'risk of death', UNRWA chief says: The United Nations Palestinian refugee agency is at 'risk of death' after a string of donors suspended their funding over Israeli allegations some staff took part in the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas in southern Israel, UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini said.

"The agency is at risk of death, it is risking dismantlement," Lazzarini told Swiss broadcaster RTS in an interview aired on Saturday. "What is at stake is the fate of the Palestinians today in Gaza in the short term who are going through an absolutely unprecedented humanitarian crisis." Aid ship for Gaza expected to depart Cyprus this weekend: A ship laden with relief supplies for Gaza was preparing to depart Cyprus on Saturday as part of efforts to aid a population on the brink of famine. The European Commission has said a maritime aid corridor between Cyprus and Gaza could start operating as early as this weekend in a pilot project run by an international charity and financed by the UAE. The Open Arms, a vessel owned by a Spanish NGO and more accustomed to rescuing migrants at sea, was expected to be deployed in the first mission. It was still at the port of Larnaca in Cyprus on



Saturday afternoon, live images from Reuters TV showed, and authorities could not give a precise departure time. Cyprus lies about 210 miles north-west of Gaza, or about 15 hours sailing time.

Separately, the United States has said it plans to build a temporary jetty to bring aid into Gaza, which has no port infrastructure. It too plans to initially use Cyprus, which is offering a process for screening cargoes which will include Israeli officials, removing the need for security checks in Gaza. Negotiations on a possible ceasefire in Israel's war against Hamas remain deadlocked. Pallets of rice, flour and protein were being loaded in Larnaca on Saturday in an operation organised by the World Central Kitchen (WCK) charity and mostly funded by the UAE. Aid agencies have warned of a looming famine five months into Israel's campaign against Hamas. Most of Gaza's 2.3 million inhabitants are now internally dis-

placed, with severe bottlenecks in aid deliveries at land border checkpoints. A sea corridor from Cyprus will supplement attempts to boost aid supplies, which have included air-drops of food. The charity WCK has partnered with Spain's Proactiva Open Arms and is sourcing the food. "WCK and partners agree more than one ship will be needed and are working towards a constant flow of aid," it said in a statement, adding that another 500 tonnes of aid was ready to follow the initial shipment. A spokesperson for WCK said the intention was to sail to Gaza, where WCK and partners were building a jetty. It was not related to the U.S. jetty project. Gaza has been under an Israeli navy blockade since 2007, when Hamas took control of the enclave. There have been few direct sea arrivals since then. Larnaca port was used by pro-Palestinian activists, who used small sail boats to get into Gaza harbour in 2008. - Agencies

Outgoing President Alvi says was honoured to 'serve people of Pakistan'

ISLAMABAD: Outgoing President Dr Arif Alvi on Saturday said that it had been an honour for him to serve the people of Pakistan.

In his last post as 13th President of Pakistan, he said he did not doubt that a brilliant future awaited the country.

"May Allah forgive me for my shortcomings and reward me for the good deeds I may have done," wrote Arif Alvi.

The post comes after PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari was elected as the President of Pakistan, following polling at joint session of the parliament and four provincial assemblies held on Saturday.

Zardari became the only civilian president to be elected for a historic second time after bagging 411 votes from the electoral college, beating PTL-backed Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) candidate Mahmood Khan Achakzai.

Dr Arif Alvi was sworn in as the 13th President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 9th September 2018. He is a founding member of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) that came into being in 1996.

Alvi remained a member of the PTT's Central Executive Committee since its inception and has held the offices of PTI President of Sindh (1997-2001), Central Vice President (2001-2006) and Secretary General (2006-2013).

In 2013, Alvi won the first National Assembly seat from Karachi, which he retained in the recent 2018 general election. INP

Iranian Ambassador Reza Amiri Moghadam congratulates Asif Ali Zardari on his election as President of Pakistan for the second time

Wishes for a boost in the all-out relations & ties b/w the Islamic Republic of Iran & the Islamic Republic of Pakistan during his tenure

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam has congratulated Pakistan People's Party Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari on his election as President of Pakistan for the second time. In a statement issued on Saturday, Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Dr. Reza Amiri Moghadam has congratulated Asif Ali Zardari on his elected as the President of Pakistan. "I would like to express my sincere congratulations on the election of H.E. Asif Ali Zardari, as the 14th President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. He reminds us of the glorious and golden days of the relations between the two brotherly, friendly and neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan. Wishing for a boost in the all-out relations and ties between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan during his tenure" the Iranian Ambassador said in the statement.

The Iranian ambassador has also attached the photos of late prime minister of Pakistan Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and newly elected president Asif Ali Zardari along with the statement. SABA

Collective efforts required to ensure gender parity: Ambassador Tirmizi



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates Faisal Niaz Tirmizi on Saturday emphasized the importance of investing in women's empowerment to accelerate progress. He highlighted that addressing women's economic disempowerment is key. He underlined the importance of ensuring inclusivity by engaging women in political, economic and cultural spheres.

The ambassador warmly welcomed participants gathered to commemorate International Women's Day at a grand event held at the premises of the Embassy in Abu Dhabi, a press release said. He said "This day is a reminder for our collective efforts to achieve gender parity and equality in all spheres of life. The current statistics on gender parity highlight the need for more concrete efforts and measures to achieve our goal of women empowerment." Tirmizi said

that the event's most special feature was an in-depth interactive panel discussion with inspiring Pakistani women with acclaimed successes and accomplishments in various fields of life which included Zulfia Nazir, football player/fitness Influencer, Kiran Malik actor/model/entrepreneur, Mehr F. Husain author/journalist/publisher and Shazia Ali Khan filmmaker/professor. The panel discussion was moderated by Saba Karim Khan. The proud Pakistani women stars shared their impactful stories and journeys of untiring struggle, dedication, self-belief and commitment to the passion of what they wanted to achieve in life. The thrilling life story of each individual to reach the zenith of success in their professional careers and endeavors was undeniably impressive.

The ambassador conferred special thanks to the panelists for joining the session and making it truly meaningful. He said that it was a treat to be listening to a bunch of confident, successful and impactful Pakistani women who were role models for young women and girls to get inspiration. He also appreciated Amber, Ms. Sabah Karim Khan, Professor of Anthropology, New York University Abu Dhabi, Kiran Kazmi and Haniya Faisal for their efforts and assistance in making the event a success. A special documentary showcasing dynamic Pakistani women from diverse fields made by Pakistan's Women Parliamentary Caucus was also shown during the event. Another documentary video highlighting the role of Pakistani women in various walks of life, prepared by Haniya with the assistance of Faisal Hussain, was screened during the event. APP

Punjab Police arrest 23 terrorists in massive crackdown

LAHORE: In a significant blow to terrorist organizations, the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab province apprehended 23 suspected terrorists during a coordinated intelligence operation across various cities. According to Additional Inspector General (AIG) of CTD on Saturday, the arrested individuals were actively plotting terror attacks within Punjab. The raids spanned ten cities, including Lahore, Gujranwala, Mianwali, Bahawalpur, Rawalpindi, Rajanpur, Sialkot, Faisalabad, Chiniot, and Bahawalnagar. A CTD spokesperson elaborated that the operation successfully apprehended key facilitators for both Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Al-Qaeda. The spokesperson confirmed the seizure of explosives, hand grenades, detonators, and a significant amount of weaponry on the suspects. Recovered items included ammunition, fuses, and cash. The spokesperson identified some of the arrested individuals as Abdul Karim, Ghafran, Kamran, Shah Muhammad, Shakir, Inuran, Shahi Muhammad, Insafulah, Samar Khan, Aslam, and Qudus. INP

Pakistan embassy hosts flavorful extravaganza in Brussels

BRUSSELS: The Pakistan embassy in Brussels played host to a delectable celebration of Pakistani culture with a Food Festival and Ramadan Bazaar on Saturday, a precursor to the upcoming National Day on March 23. The esteemed event, symbolizing the joyous spirit of Pakistan's National Day, commenced with the inauguration by Pakistan's Ambassador to the European Union, Belgium, and Luxembourg, Amna Baloch.

Highlighting the significance of the festival, Ambassador Baloch expressed, "Our rich and delicious cuisine, rooted in a long historic tradition and culinary excellence, has been evolving since ancient times." The festival showcased a culinary journey through the diverse and palatable offerings of Pakistani cuisine, including signature dishes like Biryani, Chicken Karahi, Naan Kebab, Jalebi, Samosa and much more. The ambassador warmly welcomed the guests, emphasizing how Pakistan's geographical and



cultural diversity is vividly mirrored in its cuisine. The festival served as a delightful platform for diplomatic exchanges, cultural appreciation, and culinary exploration.

The vibrant gathering witnessed a large turnout, with the Pakistani diaspora from Belgium and Luxembourg, as well as diplomats, embracing the opportunity to savor and appreciate the rich tapestry of Pakistani flavors. The event served as a harmonious blend of cultural exchange and gastronomic delight. APP

Ousted SC judge Mazahar Naqvi to be deprived of 'justice' title

ISLAMABAD: A five-judge Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), in a 33-page detailed reason of its opinion released on Friday, concluded that Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi was guilty of misconduct and should have been removed from the office of the judge and the honorific 'Justice' or 'Judge' should not be henceforth used with his name. The SJC found a number of instances of misconduct committed by the judge, thus, damaging the reputation of the judiciary.

While Mr Naqvi had resigned a day before the SJC began proceedings on nine complaints against him under Article 209(6), the council decided to continue with its proceedings, with Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa saying it was "necessary to remove the misperception that the institution of judiciary is above the law".

The CJP-headed SJC, however, commended the Pakistan Bar Council (the supreme supervisory body of lawyers) along with the four provincial bar councils and Advocate Mian Dawood, who filed the complaints in a bid to uphold the rule of law and the

principle of accountability. Greed, impropriety, undue advantage among five allegations established against Mazahar Naqvi. Since at least five allegations levelled by the complainants against Mr Naqvi were established, the council said it was constrained to conclude that the respondent had violated his oath of office which required him to abide by the Code of Conduct for judges by violating several provisions of this code.

The council explained that it could not be stated that Mr Naqvi was "untouched by greed", "was above reproach", his conduct was "free from impropriety expected of a judge" in his official and private affairs and thus he violated Article II and III of the Code of Conduct. According to the SJC opinion, it was clear that he violated Article IV as his actions were swayed by consideration of "personal advantage".

He was involved in his personal advantage in the suit filed by Chaudhary Shahbaz from whom Mr Naqvi had purchased 100 Saint John's Park, Lahore, and had knowingly deprived

some of their valuable property and thus violated Article VI.

According to Article VI, a judge should endeavour to avoid, as far as possible, being involved, either on his own behalf or on behalf of others, in litigation or in matters which are liable to lead to litigation such as industry, trade or speculative transactions. To employ the influence of his position to gain undue advantage, whether immediate or future, is a grave fault. A judge must avoid incurring financial or other obligations to private institutions or persons such as may embarrass him in the performance of his functions.

By receiving substantial unexplained gifts, Mr Naqvi violated Article VI since the gifts included receiving Rs50 million, his sons receiving two commercial plots and two residential plots at a nominal price and his daughter receiving \$5,000.

The prosecution witnesses such as Mohammad Safdar Khan, a businessman and owner of the Lahore Smart City (Pvt) Ltd Zahid Rafique, the SJC said, tried their best during the proceedings to help Mr Naqvi justify the

price for 100 Saint John's Park and the payment of Rs50 million made by the developer to acquire it. But they utterly failed to state, let alone justify, why a registered company would settle its liability of a substantial amount that it allegedly owed to Safdar by not simply paying him the amount, the SJC said. It also noted that for Zahid Rafique, being a longstanding businessman as he claimed he was, and for a well-established company, this was not only inexplicable but also contrary to rudimentary accounting-keeping and would not be legally compliant.

The SJC said it would not place any credence on the testimonies of both Mr Safdar and Mr Zahid whereas Mr Naqvi offered no justifiable reason in his written reply for doing so and also shied away from testifying. In his reply, Mr Naqvi did not disclose why a company had paid a substantial amount to buy 100 Saint John's Park, the SJC noted, adding that a judge accepting such largesse from a property developer who claimed he hardly knew him raised very serious questions of propriety. DNA



HYDERABAD: Workers of People's Party celebrating on the victory of President-elect Asif Ali Zardai outside Press Club. APP