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Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication  
**Dr Umar Saif**

## Security forces kills Daesh ring leader in Khyber District

### IBO: ISPR



RAWALPINDI: The security forces on Sunday conducted an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in the Khyber District and reportedly killed a high-profile terrorist and ring leader associated with the banned organization Daesh.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the security forces conducted the operation in the Khyber District on the reported presence of high-profile terrorist, Surat Gul alias Saif Ullah of Daesh, who was killed during an intense exchange of fire.

The law enforcers recovered weapons, ammunition and explosives from the possession of the killed terrorist commander.

The ISPR spokesperson revealed that the terrorist was actively involved in activities, including target killing of innocent civilians as well as extortion and was wanted by the law enforcement agencies.

"Sanitization operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area. Locals of the area appreciated the operation and expressed their full support for the security forces to eliminate the menace of terrorism," the ISPR said.

In a separate incident yesterday, a policeman was martyred as terrorists opened fire on the police vehicle in Darazanda Dera Ismail Khan.

As per details, Additional SHO Deen Muhammad Sherani embraced martyred when terrorists attacked a police mobile in Darazanda area of DI Khan. The police officials further stated that during the exchange of fire three terrorists were also gunned down. PR

## Pakistan strongly condemns the terrorist attack at a military base in Somalia

### FO Spokesperson Muntaz Zahra Baloch says Pakistan rejects terrorism in all its forms & manifestations

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly condemned the Saturday's heinous terrorist attack against the UAE military trainers and under training Somali soldiers at a military base in Mogadishu.

Foreign Office Spokesperson Muntaz Zahra Baloch in a statement issued on Sunday said that we offer our deepest condolences to the Governments and the people of the UAE and Bahrain and to the families of victims and pray for the early recovery of all the injured.

She said that Pakistan rejects terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stands in firm solidarity with the Government of Somalia in combating terrorism. SABAH

## Election Commission of Pakistan receives results of 264 out of 266 constituencies of National Assembly

Independent candidates have secured 101 seats, PML-N 75, PPP 54 & MQM-Pakistan 17

### VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has received results of 264 out of 266 constituencies of National Assembly. Results of Constituency NA-8 could not be issued as there elections were adjourned whereas results of constituency NA-88 were stopped.

According to the election results announced for the National Assembly (NA), or the lower house of the country's parliament, independent candidates got 101 seats, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif got 75 seats and the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) of former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari got 54 seats.

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-Pakistan) got 17 seats, the Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Pakistan (JUI-P) got four seats, the Pakistan Muslim League got three seats, the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party and Balochistan National Party got two seats each, while Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen Pakistan, Pakistan Muslim League (Zia), Pashoonkhwa National Awami Party Pakistan, Balochistan Awami Party, Pashtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party and the National Party got one seat each.

The election body of the country postponed voting for one seat due to the death of a candidate and withheld the result for one seat



and announced partial re-voting for it. In the Sindh Assembly, Pakistan People's Party has emerged as the largest party with 84 seats, followed by MQM-Pakistan 28, Grand Democratic Alliance and Jamaat-e-Islami two each. Independents won 13 seats in the provincial assembly.

In Punjab Assembly, the PML-N secured 137 seats, PPP 10n, Pakistan Muslim League eight, Istehkam e Pakistan Party, PML-Z and TLP one each while 138 independents also remained successful.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly election, out of 112 seats, 90 independents emerged

victorious. JUI (P) bagged seven, PML-N five, PPP four, Jamaat-e-Islami three, PTI Parliamentarians two and Awami National Party one.

In Balochistan Assembly, Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians and JUI (P) lead the tally with 11 seats each, followed by PML-N with 10 seats each. Balochistan Awami Party secured four, National Party three and Awami National Party two seats. Independents also remained successful on six seats. Balochistan National Party, Balochistan National Party (Awami), Haq Do Tehreek Balochistan and Jamaat-e-Islami secured one seat each.

## My confidence in our brilliant future has been strengthened as the people have not only spoken but have shouted out their will: President Alvi

Says nothing can crystallise unless this huge mandate of my citizens is respected and recognized



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has said that my confidence in our brilliant future has been strengthened as the people have not only spoken but have shouted out their will. In a statement issued on twitter on Sunday, President Dr. Arif Alvi said that "I must congratulate the people of Pakistan, specially the women for coming out in huge numbers, withstanding all pressures and standing up for democracy". He said "the youth deserve a special mention, and I praise them for having decided to take charge of the country by participating peacefully in the voting process. They have put their faith in democracy. This belief is very precious, it will write history and must be recognized".

President Dr. Arif Alvi said that a true man-

date is essential to come out of the severe financial crunch, to make difficult decisions, to repair, and to heal the bitterness of the past. "We must celebrate this effervescent new focus and show it to the outside world. My confidence in our brilliant future has been strengthened as the people have not only spoken but have shouted out their will" he said. President Alvi said that nothing can crystallise unless this huge mandate of my citizens is respected and recognized. He said that politicians, their parties, and our institutions must embrace this God sent opportunity. He said that Allah is definitely very gracious to Pakistan. Come rise my people, unite, put everything together, repair and build. The world awaits you, he said. SABAH

## Caretaker govt fulfills its constitutional responsibility by holding polls: Murtaza Solangi

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Sunday said the government had fulfilled its constitutional responsibility by holding free, fair and transparent elections in a peaceful manner.



Speaking in a TV talk show on private media, the minister said the caretaker government had extended all-out facilitation to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in holding the polls.

The results of the elections were a testament to the transparency of the elections, he added.

To a query, Solangi said there was a procedure for the transfer of power under the constitution and law.

He said the incumbent speakers would call sessions of all the assemblies as soon as the official results of the general election conveyed to the respective assemblies officially. The caretaker governments would be dissolved when the elected Prime Minister and Chief Ministers would take oaths of their positions, he added. The Ministry of Interior had responded to the queries about the suspension of mobile service on election day, he said, adding the citizens' lives were of paramount importance for the state.

There were threats to the citizens and polling staff, he said in response to another query. "It was important for us to ensure that there was no hindrance to the people's mobility on the election day.

There had always been disputes over the election process and election date, he said recalling such disputes at the time 2018 and 2013 elections. APP

## CM visits P&SHC department, inaugurates fm Radio "Sehat Zindagi"

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi paid a visit to the Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department located at the Birdwood Road and inaugurated FM Radio "Sehat Zindagi" by the health department. CM inspected the studios and various sections of the FM Radio "Sehat Zindagi". Mohsin Naqvi recorded a message for the FM Radio Sehat Zindagi. He stated that launching of FM Radio "Sehat Zindagi" is an appreciable step of the Health department. The people can be provided awareness to prevent themselves from various diseases and undergo their treatment through the FM Radio "Sehat Zindagi".

## Mushaal Mullick for joint struggle to break shackles of Indian slavery

Says Muhammad Maqbool Butt was an icon of resistance movement

ISLAMABAD: While paying glowing tributes to renowned Kashmiri liberation leader Shaheed Muhammad Maqbool Butt, Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick stressed the need that it was high time people of Kashmir should unite on one platform to work jointly for the just cause of Kashmir freedom struggle to turn the dream of dream of breaking the shackles of Indian slavery once and for all.

Speaking at a function organized at Koshar School at refugees camp Mankpiyan to mark 40th martyrdom anniversary of Maqbool Butt, where a special prayer and Quran recitation was held for him, Mushaal Mullick said that the legendary Kashmir liberation leader had been sent to the gallows in New Delhi's infamous Tihar jail on this day in 1984 for his role

in Kashmir freedom movement. However, she lamented that the fascist Indian authorities did not hand over the dead body of the celebrated Kashmiri leader to his heirs despite lapse of four decades, who was buried in the premises of infamous jail.

On the occasion, the participants held special prayer for incarcerated Kashmir leader Yasin Malik and other Kashmir leaders and activists. The SAPM on Human Rights and Women Empowerment stated that Maqbool Butt was an icon of resistance movement who sacrificed his life for the noble cause of freedom of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). She went on to say that people of Kashmir were neither given the right to live nor to die, adding that they were as well as neither they have the right to bury their loved ones. SABAH

## PML-N, PPP agree on political cooperation

LAHORE: In a landmark development, the Pakistan Muslim League-N and the Pakistan People's Party have reached an agreement on political cooperation. Following a high-level meeting at Bilawal House on Sunday, President PPPP Asif Ali Zardari, Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and a delegation, led by former prime minister and PML-N President Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, pledged to cooperate to steer the country away from political instability.

Key discussions centered on the nation's current state and future political strategies, with both parties committing to jointly addressing challenges and honour the mandate bestowed upon them by people. The PML-N delegation, comprising prominent figures including Azam Nazir Tarar, Ahsan Iqbal, Ayaz Sadiq, Rana Tanveer, Khawaja Saad Rafique, Shiza Fatima, Malik Ahmed Khan and Marriyung Aurangzeb, engaged in consultations and exchanged views on recommendations, ensuring comprehensive cooperation.

Moving forward, both parties underscored their determination to work together, with the PPP leadership affirming to present suggestions from the PML-N at the Central Executive Committee meeting. APP

## 'Abu Dhabi Dialogue has focused on enhancing women jobs along with mitigating labour issues'



ABU DHABI: Extending appreciation to the government of UAE for hosting the event, Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Pakistan's Envoy to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) addressed the 7th Ministerial Consultation of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) in Abu Dhabi on Sunday. Pakistan is the current chair of ADD.

Highlighting the role of the forum, the Ambassador said that is a unique dialogue that brings 17 member states from Gulf and Asia together with the core objective to address issues of common interests pertaining to labour mobility. He further said that the platform has a key role in establishing the principle of protecting rights of migrant workers, which is the common responsibility of labour-sending and labour-receiving countries. "Technology is changing demands for various skills and we need to be innovative in meeting changing labour demands. There is dire need for diversifying skill sets and engagement aimed at developing skills mobility partnerships", emphasized Tirmizi.

Faisal Niaz Tirmizi lauded the efforts of Abu Dhabi Dialogue focusing on women in green

jobs and that women can fill critical skills gaps in industries including renewable energy. "Climate change and natural disasters including floods are the gravest challenges that have emphasized the significance of collective efforts to mitigate losses and build back better.

The outcome of COP28 under the UAE's presidency has reaffirmed the need to counter this challenge", underlined the Ambassador. "Migration and future of work, relationship between migration and climate change, and the health of migrants – complement more established Abu Dhabi Dialogue priorities. These require raising standards of recruitment, addressing mutual recognition and certification of skills, leveraging technology to enhance labour dispute settlement mechanisms, and strengthening inter-regional and international cooperation", said Faisal Niaz Tirmizi.

The Ambassador expressed gratitude on behalf of the Government of Pakistan for all the support extended by the ADD Secretariat and the advisory committee during the current chair's cycle. SABAH

## Roadmap made for promotion of digital economy for upcoming govt: Dr Saif

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif has said that a roadmap has been made for the promotion of the digital economy for the upcoming government.

Addressing the Town Hall meeting arranged by IT Association (PASHA) in Karachi he said, the country could generate billions of dollars in revenue if the upcoming government continues the initiatives taken by the caretaker government in the IT sector. He said the SIFC forum has also proven to be a great support for the upcoming elected government in the process of building and developing the country, and the elected government will also reap the benefits of the measures taken by the caretaker gov-

ernment. "We are confident that with the presence of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), the upcoming government will also be able to make timely decisions for the country's development and public interests because we mustn't compromise on our economic stability and public interests," he said. The minister said, "We need to avoid departmental obstacles. Instead of unnecessary delay tactics, quick and effective decisions must be taken in the interest of the country and the nation. For this purpose, SIFC is the most effective forum." Dr. Umar termed IT and telecom sector as a backbone of the country's economy. He said that in the past 60 days, policies of the IT ministry have led to

a record 32% increase in IT exports. Furthermore, he mentioned that ICT export remittances have increased by US\$ 64 million (8.99%) to US\$ 1.455 billion during July to December 2023 of FY2023-24, compared to US\$ 1.335 billion reported for the same period last year. In December 2023, he added, ICT services export remittances surged to US\$ 303 million, marking a remarkable increase of 22.67% compared to US\$ 247 million in December 2022. Compared to the previous month of November 2023, ICT services export remittances increased by US\$ 44 million in December 2023, representing a month-to-month increase of 16.99%. The minister further said "We have achieved 13 out of 15 important targets for the promotion of the IT &

Telecom sector in a short period of 5 months in the caretaker set-up. Chairman of PASHA, Zohaib Khan, expressed gratitude to Dr. Umar Saif for his unwavering dedication and exemplary service to the IT sector. He lauded Dr. Saif's initiatives, which have instilled renewed confidence within the industry and paved the way for unprecedented export growth. Khan noted, "Dr. Umar Saif's visionary leadership and strategic foresight continue to chart a course toward a vibrant and prosperous digital future for Pakistan." Ayesha Morani, Additional Secretary MOITT, Nadeem Malik, General Secretary PASHA, and a representative from the IT Industry were also present at the event. APP

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Dr Naazir Mahmood

# Chronicles of an election foretold

The results of the general elections held on February 8 have once again shown that political engineering before or during elections does not help the country or its democracy, which has remained nascent throughout Pakistan's existence of 77 years.

Such engineering is even more harmful if done after the elections to install a government that does not command the public mandate. In simple words, political engineering may refer to any attempt to design a certain political outcome in society. In the process we see certain institutions going beyond the pale of their original responsibility in society to achieve some desired results.

This is an old story that deserves retelling so that we can understand why most elections in Pakistan became the chronicles of an election foretold. Such political engineering in Pakistan started immediately after Independence, resulting in the delayed formulation of the first constitution in 1956. This prevented any general elections for over a decade. But even after the promulgation of the first constitution, political engineering continued, mainly stemming from the President House which became an embodiment of shenanigans by the civil and military bureaucracy. Per the 1956 constitution, the country had to go through its first general elections to install a popularly elected government. The people of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) defeated the Muslim League in provincial elections and in the next general elections parties such as the Awami League (AL) and the National Awami Party (NAP) were poised to win a majority. Alas, that was not acceptable to the President House and all that it represented. First, they kept postponing elections and then an outright martial law became the destiny of this nation in 1958. But no political engineering has been able to wipe out the parties that command the support of the

people. Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA) General Ayub Khan ruled with an iron hand for 11, and during that period, all elections – be it for 'basic democracy' (local bodies), for assemblies, or to elect the president himself – were far from being transparent. Political parties became a target of suppression but they survived, much to the chagrin of the manipulators. The ambition to obtain certain desired results is a hallmark of all political engineering. The 1960s witnessed arm-twisting, bribery, corruption, and direct interventions by state machinery to divert the political stream to a preferred direction. After 11 years of dictatorship, General Ayub Khan realized that all his attempts were in vain as the people of Pakistan were not ready to forsake their aspirations for democracy in the country. Sensing the turning tide, General Yahya Khan eased him out to usurp power directly as another CMLA and self-appointed president.

Another general election could have given the country its first elected prime minister but the results of those elections were too good to accept. The refusal to follow the results had dire consequences for the country, which ended up losing its eastern wing that ultimately emerged as an independent country – Bangladesh.

The military action in East Pakistan led to the death of a united country for sure. All major political parties survived because they had the support of the people; the military dictatorship of General Yahya Khan could not.

In the 1970s, Pakistan witnessed another general election amid a usual crackdown on the opposition as the largest opposition party – the NAP – found itself banned and its leadership in jail. The results of the 1977 elections reflected another political engineering that derailed democracy once again. General Ziaul Haq's military takeover and the subsequent judicial murder of ZA Bhutto

did tremendous harm to democracy and politics. For another 11 years, General Zia looked for his desired results which he dubbed 'musbat nataij' (positive results). He kept postponing elections because he wanted just the 'positive results' that could keep him in power forever. Eleven years of political engineering by constitutional mutilations, press censorship, and severe crackdown on political activists, journalists and leaders could not produce the results Gen Zia wanted. And after his death, the PPP did manage to win elections despite all the manipulations by Gen Zia's successors. Once again the President House became a centre of activities that looked more like conspiracies against civilian supremacy and democracy in the country. The 1990s also witnessed the repeated removals of prime ministers just to obtain some 'positive results' – in the words of Gen Zia who was no more around but his legacy survived.

By the turn of the century, the country was under yet another military dictatorship. Gen Musharraf assumed power and aimed for similar results that his predecessors repeatedly tried to obtain at the cost of political stability. The 2002 elections became another example of political engineering, which reminded people of the tactics that Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan and Ziaul Haq had used but repeatedly failed. More than two decades later, the Supreme Court of Pakistan has now declared Gen Musharraf a usurper by upholding his death sentence; may his soul rest in peace.

The story of the past 16 years is, in one way or the other, a continuation of the same chronicles. But the credit is due to General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani who by and large did not target any political party during his six years as the army chief. He did manage to get an extension and served for two terms but overall his tenure did not meddle in the two general elections of 2008 and 2013.

Both elections brought to power two different political parties: the PPP and PML-N which managed to complete their terms in office though their prime ministers lost their offices by the orders of the Supreme Court. It does not mean that the second decade of the 21st century did not see any political engineering. The story of the PTI and its rise to power is well known now. A leader who commanded little or no support in 2010 suddenly emerged as a rising star of Pakistani politics, and it was not his hard work alone. The 2016 to 2022 period was replete with attempts to obtain 'positive results'. Now the election results of 2024 have once again displayed the point in clear terms that once a political party manages to earn public support, it is hard to wipe that party out. Be it General Zia's party-less elections of 1985 or independent candidates winning in 2024, all prove that the people of Pakistan do not like political engineering – direct or indirect. We all remember the way the last Senate elections witnessed the turncoats change their loyalties. Observers should now look at the election results and see how they may or may not turn into 'positive results'.

The overwhelming number of independent candidates winning on Feb 8 is a testimony to the desire of the electorate to forestall any 'positive results' if they stem from any political engineering. The people of Pakistan have spoken in no uncertain terms that only they have the right to decide who to vote for. Even those who do not have any sympathy left for the PTI or its leaders are against the highhandedness on display lately. People do not want to engage in manufactured elections anymore. Let it be a fair game, and the players must also steer clear of any foul play.

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## Developing countries need debt relief to act on climate change

VERA SONGWE & ISHAC DIWAN

If developing economies found it hard to manage their debts in 2023, they are likely to face even more formidable challenges this year. Though most possess relatively small debt stocks and are not considered insolvent, many are in dire need of liquidity. As long as this remains true, they will struggle not only to manage their debts, but also to invest in the green transition.

Developing economies have faced a series of external shocks in recent years, including the COVID-19 pandemic, war-related disruptions of food and energy supply chains, and an uptick in global inflation. Moreover, their access to capital markets has been curtailed, preventing them from rolling over maturing loans, as they would do in normal times. As a result, countries have been forced to channel a large share of their tax and export revenues to service their debt, avoiding default at the cost of priorities like infrastructure investment, social welfare programs and climate action. The outlook for these countries is likely to worsen in the next few years. According to estimates by the Finance for Development Lab, large debt payments are coming due in 2024 and 2026 for at least 20 low- and lower-middle-income countries. As countries hit this "debt wall," their already fragile fiscal positions will deteriorate further. This does not bode well for climate action.

Climate change is not some distant menace; its effects are already being felt worldwide, especially in climate-vulnerable developing economies. But international summits on the topic last year sent a disappointing message: While developed economies pledged to increase climate financing by 2030, developing economy policymakers are struggling against severe fiscal constraints. With medium-term strategies being used to address a short-term threat, developing and emerging economies have been expressing frustration, including at the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact that was held in Paris last June.

Multilateral development banks can provide an essential lifeline, but their capacity would have to be strengthened — and quickly. According to World Bank data, the new concessional loans the world's poorest countries received from these banks in 2022 were smaller than these countries' debt service payments, a large share of which went to private and bilateral creditors. Increasing capital flight from the developing world — driven not least by monetary tightening in advanced economies — will intensify the needs of illiquid lower-income countries. But it is not only a matter of financial capacity. Multilateral development banks have so far been inconsistent, at best, when it comes to supporting countries struggling to repay their debts. For example, both Kenya and Ethiopia have been under pressure to repay their private and Chinese creditors, which are now collecting more in debt service payments than they are providing in new loans. But only Kenya received enough support from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and others to refinance its debt that is maturing this year. By contrast, assistance to Ethiopia has declined in recent years. As a result, it recently defaulted on its external debt, even though it amounts to just 25 percent of gross domestic product. While the Kenya approach is not the solution — providing similar levels of support to all illiquid countries would require a tripling of multilateral development bank flows — this is clearly unacceptable.

A better approach would focus on closing the gap between short-term debt concerns and long-term investment needs by unlocking net positive inflows for countries facing liquidity constraints. As the Finance for Development Lab has proposed, an agreement among debtors, creditors and multilateral development banks to permit countries to reschedule debts coming due — delaying maturities by five to 10 years — would create the fiscal space for climate-friendly investments, financed by multilateral development banks.

For this liquidity bridge to work, the banks would have to accelerate progress on implementing existing reform plans and increase funding substantially, while the IMF helps manage debt rollover risks. Importantly, private and bilateral creditors would have to agree to the rescheduling. That is why, compared to the Debt Service Suspension Initiative that the G20 introduced in 2020, the proposal includes stronger incentives for private sector creditors to participate, in addition to longer time horizons. There are good reasons to believe that creditors can be convinced to join the program voluntarily. It is, after all, in their best interest to remain invested in solvent countries with strong growth prospects; no one benefits from debt crises like those that have ensnared Zambia and Sri Lanka. In any case, creditors would continue receiving interest payments and, as global interest rates fall and economic growth prospects improve in the coming years, debtors may well be able to return to capital markets and resume repayment of the principal. Shaping a workable blueprint along these lines is a task for upcoming international gatherings, such as the G20 Summit in Brazil later this year. Logistical and financial coordination will be needed to ensure sufficient liquidity. Coordination among the IMF, the World Bank and regional development banks will also be essential to ensure that participating debtor countries pursue investments that genuinely support green growth.

If nothing is done to help countries facing liquidity crises, the world will risk a wave of destabilizing debt defaults and progress on the green transition will be severely undermined, with catastrophic implications for the entire world. Because promising solutions like the liquidity bridge can prevent such outcomes, they deserve broad global support.

Vera Songwe is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and the Finance for Development Lab. Ishac Diwan is research director of the Finance for Development Lab. ©Project Syndicate

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## Today in History

### History of Pakistan



QUAID-I-AZAM MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH

Meanwhile, three Round Table Conferences were convened in London during 1930-32, to resolve the Indian constitutional problem. The Hindu and Muslim leaders, who were invited to these conferences, could not draw up an agreed formula and the British Government had to

announce a 'Communal Award' which was incorporated in the Government of India Act of 1935. Before the elections under this Act, the All-India Muslim League, which had remained dormant for some time, was reorganized by Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who had returned to India in 1934, after an absence of nearly five years in England. 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.

To be continued....

## Showbiz

## Tech

# Taylor Swift praised for bringing diversity to football stadium

Arnold Schwarzenegger lauded Taylor Swift for her energy at NFL

Taylor Swift has garnered praise from Arnold Schwarzenegger for introducing the National Football League to a new audience. The Terminator actor recently spoke with Yahoo Entertainment on the influence the singer has had on the league since her relationship with Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce became public at the start of the season, as well as football's increasing global appeal. "Football itself draws the hugest crowd because it's the most popular sport. But then to have someone like her be there and watch the game adds another kind of a thing that [attracts] a different audience," Schwarzenegger said. "Especially younger girls are now more into football, they know the rules and all of



that stuff, so it's really amazing." Swift made her Chiefs debut in September, and since then, the singer of "Cruel Summer" has generated a lot of controversy in the league and among fans. Some fathers claimed it has given them and their kids something to bond over, despite criticism from some quarters regarding the NFL's decision to air images of her at the games. Adele recently defended Swift during one of Swift's residency performances in Las Vegas. "All of you complaining about Taylor being at the games, get a fucking life," she could be heard telling the crowd in videos shared on social media. "She's actually made it a bit more enjoyable to watch."

# Sam Altman to raise \$7tn to make super AI chips in 'wildly ambitious tech initiative'

OpenAI Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Sam Altman is in talks with various officials including the government of United Arab Emirates, to raise billions of dollars, to increase the world's ability to build cutting-edge semiconductors and fuel artificial intelligence AI. According to a Wall Street Journal report, Altman's "wildly ambitious tech initiative" would need to raise nearly \$7 trillion, Fox News reported. As part of his pitch to investors, Altman has suggested constructing hundreds of semiconductor foundries, which would thereafter be managed by already-established chip manufacturers like Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC). He plans to solve issues that hinder OpenAI's growth, such as the scarcity of semiconductors that power AI models such as ChatGPT. According to the report, Altman has been meeting with different high officials, such as

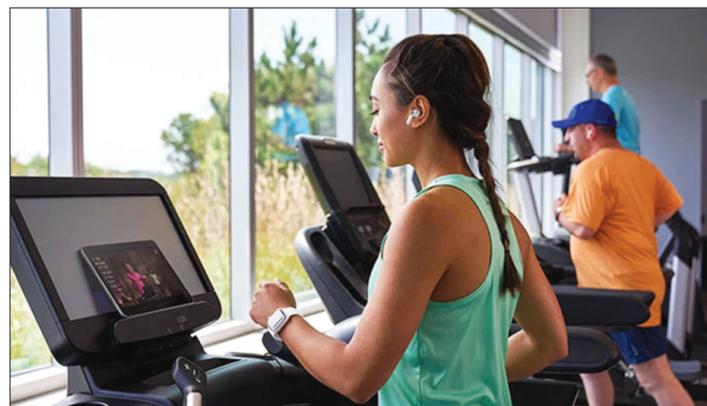
SoftBank's chief executive Masayoshi Son, TSMC executives, and United States Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. While numerous countries have announced plans to support domestic semiconductor production, global supply is still dominated by a handful of firms, including Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) and California-based NVIDIA. A spokesperson from OpenAI said that they've had "productive discussions about increasing global infrastructure and supply chains and would share more details at a later date." Altman, with his visionary approach, has made a name for himself in the field of AI and has become one of the most recognised faces. In November, the 38-year-old entrepreneur was fired from the start-up he co-founded, only to be reinstated several days later after protests by employees and investors.

# Can your fitness level really be determined by DNA?

Spitting into vials in the hopes of discovering more about their genes is a common practice among millions of people worldwide; however, their search goes beyond simply learning about their lineage as they have curiosity about how their DNA might impact their diet, risk of injury, level of fitness, and overall health. According to a Grand View Research market analysis report, the worldwide market for direct-to-consumer genetic testing is expected to grow rapidly over the next several years, leaping from

\$1.9 billion in 2023 to \$8.8 billion by 2030. With 60.5% of the market, North America leads the way, but the data indicates that over the next six years, Europe will increase at the highest rate. According to a study analysis, roughly 20 companies were offering direct-to-consumer genetic tests in 2013 that targeted sports performance and injury risk. By 2019, that number had increased to about 70. Furthermore, a 2020 study that was published in the Indian Journal of Orthopaedics revealed that

Australia's National Rugby League players use DNA testing to customise their workouts for sprinting or explosive powerlifting, while China and Uzbekistan use genetic testing in their Olympic talent identification programmes, according to CNN. However, there are a plethora of other variables that influence athletic ability and achievement, including nutrition, sleep patterns, motivation, training regimens, socioeconomic status, and even experiences during pregnancy.



## Health



## PML-N & MQM agree to move forward together in the interest of country & nation

Nawaz Sharif & Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui led the PML-N & MQM-Pakistan delegations

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-Pakistan) have agreed to move forward together in the interest of the country and the nation.

Leaderships of both the political parties agreed on the basic points during a meeting between the delegations of the two parties at Jati Umra Raiwind residence of Nawaz Sharif in Lahore on Sunday.

PML-N delegation was led by PML-N Quaid and former prime minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, whereas Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui led the MQM delegation. From PML-N, the delegation included President Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz Shairif, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhry, Rana Sanaulah Khan, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Khawaja Muhammad Saad Rafique, Maryam Aurangzeb and Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan.

The MQM delegation included Governor Sindh Muhammad Kamran Khan Tessori, Dr. Farooq Sattar and Syed Mustafa Kamal. The consultation process between the leaders of both the parties continued for almost an hour and detailed discussions were held on the current political situation.

Meanwhile, PML-N Spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb said in a post on X, that there was an agreement in principle on the basic points that both the parties will move ahead together in the interest of the country and the nation. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif from Pakistan Muslim League (N) and Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui from MQM led the delegation. In the meeting, there was a detailed consultation on the situation and suggestions were exchanged. The leaders also confided in each other regarding the overall political situation and the contacts made so far.

## Nation has spoken & given mandate to the same coalition that steered Pakistan out of bankruptcy in 2022: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Secretary General Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhry has said that the nation has spoken and given mandate to the same coalition that steered Pakistan out of bankruptcy in 2022 and put it on the path of economic stabilisation for completing the unfinished agenda. In a statement issued on twitter on Sunday, Ahsan Iqbal said that PML-N, PPP and MQM major partners got 113 seats in 2018, these parties have secured 152 seats in 2024. Despite consuming their political capital for saving Pakistan from default these parties have earned a bigger mandate in 2024, he said. Ahsan Iqbal said that democratic forces have won, fascist slogans lost. Time for healing the wounds of polarization and developing a consensus on the future economic agenda and reforms has started, he said. SABAH

## Significant economic tasks await incoming administration

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, the former president of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), stated on Sunday that the new administration will have major economic issues like debt servicing and inflation. The middle class is shrinking and the underprivileged are facing severe hardships due to continued inflation which cannot be tamed despite best efforts, he said. He said that after the transition to power, the rulers would have to pay close attention to the economy so that the country's threats could be reduced and the people could experience some relief. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that, at present, inflation is on the rise despite having interest rates at the highest level of twenty-two percent; price shocks have made life very difficult for the middle class and people experiencing poverty, and inflation has made survival very difficult. He said the new government should avoid deciding to seek quick popularity and focus on

achieving long-term results. He added that electricity, oil, and gas prices are bleeding the public white.

The business leader said that interest rates have made it impossible to do business; foreign debt has reached \$128 billion, while this year, about \$28 billion and \$77.5 billion loans to August 2026 need to be paid.

Repaying these loans is only possible with the new IMF program, and getting loans will become equally difficult and expensive over time. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that the annual expenditure of the government is over Rs14 trillion, which is much higher than its income, so funds have to be borrowed.

Tax revenue, exports, and remittances must be improved to run the country. He said that while the population is constantly increasing, the youth need jobs, which is becoming a problem. A small segment has been robbing domestic resources for decades, which has pushed the country to the brink. DNA



ISLAMABAD: Labourers along with their tools sitting on roadside waiting for clients to be hired for work during morning time. APP

## China-Pak coop constructing smart city through AI tech

ISLAMABAD: In the context of the joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Chinese and Pakistani researchers are helping Pakistan build smarter and safer cities through the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technology.

At the beginning of year 2022, the CPInS Lab was officially established at Pakistan National University of Science and Technology (NUST), with joint efforts of NUST and Guangzhou Institute of Software Application Technology.

At present, various researches are in progress in an orderly manner, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday. "We have made great progress in areas such as UAV control systems and AI recognition localization. Our lab is starting the application of smart cities in Pakistan," Dr. Wu Jun, the Director of CPInS Lab, told Gwadar Pro.

"Through this platform, our mature research results could be deeply connected with local projects in Pakistan, providing smart city-related products and intelligent solutions according to local conditions. We are able to effectively implement core technologies and products such as smart street lights and smart videos to improve local urban governance ability."

"Sci-tech cooperation is of great importance to Pakistan's socio-economic development," Seemab Latif, Head of the Pakistani side of the lab and Associate Professor at the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (SEECs) at the NUST, indicated that China's

"We have made great progress in areas such as UAV control systems and AI recognition localization. Our lab is starting the application of smart cities in Pakistan," Dr. Wu Jun, the Director of CPInS Lab, told Gwadar Pro

AI industry leads the world, as well as Pakistan's scientific and technological development has huge potential, thus by deepening bilateral cooperation, Pakistan can make great progress in the field of Sci-Tech, by which own the potential to become an AI development center in South Asia.

According to Latif, that the lab is using technology from China to develop smart city projects such as efficient traffic management systems and infrastructure monitoring systems in Pakistan. At present, on the basis of local conditions, the license plate recognition system and intelligent security system developed by the lab have begun to be piloted in Pakistan.

"More Pakistani residents will be able to experience the safety and convenience brought by the application of intelligent systems." Up to now, the results of cooperation are mushrooming. Dr. Wu told the reporter that considering that Pakistan is often threatened by floods, scientists from both sides pooled their wisdom to develop an vital result "UAV-assisted edge framework for real-time disaster management", which provides a more scientific and effective solution for local flood fight.

Apart from bringing technology overseas, talent exchange and training could be said to be another key purpose of establishing the lab. Nowadays, the lab has recruited four outstanding postdoctoral fellows from Pakistan to work in Guangzhou for a long time, and will continue to recruit students in years to come.

"We are working on a variety of exciting projects with Chinese counterparts, including activity detection, gait recognition, automatic license plate detection and real-time recognition, as well as waste management," said lab researcher Sahar Ershad.

As an emerging economy, Pakistan's infrastructure is booming day by day. A large number of road cameras and other equipment have not been intellectualized yet, which shows that the CPInS Lab has a great potential in the future.

Generally speaking, the field of artificial intelligence in Pakistan has not yet formed an industry, but the country is never short on sci-tech talents. "Through further cooperation with China, Pakistan is fully capable of becoming an artificial intelligence development hub in South Asia and the wider region," Wu concluded, full of confidence. DNA

## Body of Gaza girl trapped under Israeli fire found after 12 days

GAZA: Relatives found the body on Saturday of a six-year-old Palestinian girl who had begged Gaza rescuers to send help after being trapped by Israeli military fire, along with the bodies of five of her family members and two ambulance workers who had gone to save her. The Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) accused Israel of deliberately targeting the ambulance it sent to rescue Hind Rajab after she had spent hours on the phone to dispatchers begging for help with the sound of shooting echoing around. "The occupation deliberately targeted the Red Crescent crew despite prior coordination to allow the ambulance to arrive at the site to rescue Hind," the Red Crescent said in a statement. Israel's military did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the Red Crescent statement. Family members found Hind's body along with those of her uncle and aunt and their three children still in a car near a roundabout in the Tel al-Hawa suburb of Gaza City, the official Palestinian Wafa news agency reported.

The PRCS released a photo of the ambulance, seen almost completely burned out. Al Jazeera footage of the scene appeared to show the ambulance only steps away from the car they said the family was in, a damaged black Kia Picanto riddled with bullet holes. The plight of Hind, revealed in harrowing audio clips of her terrified conversation with rescue workers 12 days ago, underlined the impossible conditions for civilians in the face of Israel's four-month assault on Gaza.

The war began on Oct. 7 when Hamas fighters attacked Israel, killing 1,200 people and seizing 253 hostages according to Israeli tallies. Israel's military has since overrun most of the tiny Palestinian enclave under an intense bombardment in a conflict that has killed more than 28,000 people, according to Gaza health authorities.

## Country's upper, western parts to be gripped by cold weather conditions: PMD

ISLAMABAD: The upper and western parts of the country will remain under the grip of cold wave conditions during the next 24 hours, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD). A shallow westerly wave was present over western parts of the country and likely to grip most parts during the next 24 hours. Mainly cold and dry weather is expected in most parts of the country, while very cold and cloudy in upper/western parts.

However, rain-wind/thunderstorm is likely in south-western parts of Balochistan. Light rain is also expected at isolated places in Kashmir and adjoining hilly areas during this period. About the fog, the PMD said that shallow fog may likely occur at few places in plain areas of northeast Punjab during morning hours. During the last 24 hours, cold and dry weather prevailed over most parts of the country while very cold in northern parts. The lowest minimum temperatures recorded were Leh -13C, Skardu -09, Kalam -08, Astore -07, Gupis -06, Gilgit, Chitral, Srinagar -05, Bagrore, Hunza and Hunza -04C. INP

## Female teachers express annoyance over unpaid dues

ISLAMABAD: As the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) gears up for the centralized exams of primary and middle standard scheduled to begin on Monday, female teachers assigned to conduct exams have raised concerns over unpaid remuneration for the past three consecutive years and the absence of essential facilities. Despite repeated attempts to address these concerns with FDE authorities, the teachers claim that their issues have not been resolved yet. Teachers complained that they haven't been paid for their exam work for the last three years in spite of assurances by the concerned officials. Expressing their grievances under the condition of anonymity, several teachers disclosed a history of unfulfilled promises and neglect by FDE authorities. Despite assurances of payment for exam duties, teachers lamented that they have not received remuneration for the last three years. A teacher highlighted the financial strain incurred while performing exam-related tasks, including the collection of exam materials. Having personally hired taxis to transport materials to exam centres, she emphasized that neither taxi fares nor transport facilities have been provided by the FDE. DNA

## Alleged rigging: ECP holds final results of four constituencies in KP

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has thrown a curveball in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial election results, preventing the returning officers of four key constituencies (KP73, 79, 80, and 82) from finalizing their results. This decision follows complaints filed by candidates from both PTI and independent parties.

The initial trigger appears to be applications submitted by Taimur Salim (PK79) and Kamran Bangash (PK82), both supported by Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The ECP has not yet disclosed the specific nature of their challenges, but they reportedly concern the validity of the results in their respective constituencies.

Adding to the drama, the ECP has also halted the finalization of results in PK73 and PK80. While details remain unclear, this suggests potential irregularities identified by the commission itself or triggered by other complaints.

This development comes after a separate ECP decision earlier this week, where Jamaat-e-Islami lost its sole victory in Lower Dir (PK-17) to independent candidate Ubaid-ur-Rehman following a recount. This decision was based on discrepancies identified in 11 polling stations.

The ECP's actions underscore their commitment to scrutinizing results and addressing concerns raised by various parties. However, these delays also create uncertainty and raise questions about the final outcome of the elections in these crucial constituencies.

As the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) investigates the complaints and conducts any necessary recounts, it is crucial for them to maintain transparency and communicate effectively with the public. The final results in these constituencies will likely have significant implications for the power dynamics in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, making it vital for a swift and decisive resolution. INP



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan presiding over the meeting regarding the Chitral Express way at CM Secretariat. APP

## Tourists urged to follow traffic rules

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Murree, Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi has urged the tourists to strictly abide by traffic rules to avoid traffic congestion and road mishaps at the hill station.

He informed that the traffic management plan was being implemented to facilitate the tourists. He said that 13 tourist facilitation centers were established at different places in Murree while a control room had also been made fully functional. The DC said that the district administration had made excellent arrangements to promote tourism in the region besides helping and assisting the tourists. A large number of tourists visit, 'Queen of Hills', Murree to enjoy the snowfall in winter, he said adding, solid steps were taken by the district adminis-

tration to provide assistance and guidance to the tourists.

He informed that on the directives of the Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta, the administration was ensuring strict implementation of Murree Contingency Plan to facilitate the tourists.

All the machinery along with the drivers was available round the clock during the snowfall season, he said. According to Murree Contingency Plan, additional staff had been provided to traffic police and related departments. He said that the role of traffic police is most important to regulate the traffic in Murree. Entry of the vehicles would be allowed according to the parking capacity in Murree, he informed. DNA

## Faiz Festival concludes on promotion of 'progressive ideology' note

LAHORE: The three-day cultural and literary extravaganza – 8th Faiz Festival that was held at Lahore Arts Council from February 9 to 11, concluded here at the Alhambra Art Centre, The Mall, on Sunday.

The Faiz Festival concluded with a pledge to spread the social and progressive ideology message of the great poet around the world for generations. The festival promised a cultural extravaganza of literary dialogues, music performances, theatre, book launches, documentaries, dances, drum circles, workshops, open mic sessions and a discussion on the future of Pakistani films. Delegates from around the world arrived for converge of the festival that began with an exhibition, 'Women Artists of Pakistan'.

According to a statement, the inaugural day featured renowned Qawwals Saleem and Waseem Sabri.

On the second day of the three-day festival, 32 sessions are lined up to explore diverse themes in art, literature, language, politics and poetry. On the third and final day, 35 sessions were scheduled, to pay tribute to prominent women from various fields.

The festival reflected delving into world affairs, societal shifts, politics, literary nuances, linguistics, and events shaping different nations. On the final day, the international festival attracted rather big turnout as compared to the inaugural day.



Faiz Foundation Trust Chairperson Salima Hashmi said told the audience that the title of the exhibition had been espoused from a line of a ghazal of Faiz Ahmed Faiz 'Dil Na Umeed Tou Nahi' that talks about hope, struggle, resilience. The exhibition is a homage to the struggle of living women artists, who depict hope and

resilience in their works, she said. Arvinder Chamak, a poet from India, who spoke in Punjabi, held Faiz in high esteem. He said he was from Amritsar, a city where Faiz taught. Chamak said he would eagerly wait for the Faiz Festival every year. Besides Faiz's urdu poetry, his Punjabi poetry was also full of messages for humanity. INP