



Those who had justified complaints regarding the polls would be redressed in accordance with the law

Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs
Murtaza Solangi

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Pakistan strongly condemns Israel's military aggression against Rafah City in Gaza

FO Spokesperson says we urge the int'l community, especially the UNSC, to take urgent measures to bring an immediate end to Israeli aggression

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly condemned Israel's military aggression against Rafah city in Gaza and the resulting destruction and massacre of the Palestinian people.

According to a statement issued by Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch on Monday, Israel's offensive in Rafah violates the provisional measures indicated by the International Court of Justice to protect the people of Gaza from genocide. It will further aggravate the humanitarian disaster witnessed in Gaza over the last 4 months and jeopardize the ongoing efforts for a potential ceasefire, she said. Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that we urge the international community, especially the United Nations Security Council, to take urgent measures to bring an immediate end to Israeli aggression and its incessant crimes against humanity. SABAH

Pakistan envoy meets Belarusian FM; discusses ways to boost bilateral ties



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan in Belarus Sajjad Haider Khan on Monday met with Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik and discussed the ways to further boost bilateral relations.

The ambassador presented the letter by Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani to the Belarusian foreign minister on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations, the envoy wrote on his X timeline.

In the meeting, both sides discussed a range of topics for further boosting bilateral relations in diverse fields including political, trade, defense, cultural, and education. APP



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar talks to national and foreign media in a press conference.

Level playing field enabled independent candidates to emerge as single largest group in general elections: PM Kakar

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday reiterated that the caretaker set-up had provided a level playing field to all political parties during the currently concluded polls and being a 'free and fair' process, a large number of independent candidates backed by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf emerged as the largest single group on the national and provincial assemblies seats.

He stressed that allegations of rigging were generated through social media which were based upon misconceptions and contrary to the ground realities, and said that throughout the country's democratic history, people had always questioned the electoral process.

Such results indicated the transparency and non-interference by any quarters, he emphasised.

Addressing a presser at the PM House, the prime minister said that there might be shortcomings or other minor issues, but by and large, the elections were held in a manner in which the entire nation and the law enforcement agencies deserved kudos despite various security challenges.

"Where the PTI has public support, it got that and they have results never dreamt of during 2018," he said, adding that the loyalists of jailed PTI leaders were emerged as returned candidates in the general elections but no one was appreciating that aspect of the neutrality of the caretaker government. The prime minister, to a question, said that despite various threats prior to the February 8 election day and two terrorist attacks in the Balochistan province, all the stakeholders deserved appreciation over the 'big achievement' for peaceful conduct of the polls.

He also brushed aside any threats to integrity of the country due to certain protests and agitations held by certain parties, saying "it is an absurd chronology" to relate the situation with Dhaka during 1971. "These are the mere rhetoric. Pakistan is a very stable and responsible country. Holding of a peaceful protest is the democratic right of the people," he said, however, hastened to add that no government could allow the situation leading to chaos or anarchy.

Responding to a query, he maintained that over 60 million voters had exercised their constitutional right to elect their favourite candidates under 'a pressure free environment'.

The prime minister said that the delay in the announcement of official results were caused by the specific procedures regarding compiling of results at 92,000 polling stations and credited the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for conducting the massive exercise in a smooth manner.

He said that the official results were announced within 36 hours while during the 2018 elections, it took almost 66 hours. There might be irregularities but the relevant forums were available to address those grievances.

In Sweden, the similar exercise almost took 10 to 11 days while in Indonesia, almost a month was consumed to furnish results, he added.

To another question, the prime minister said that mobile phone services were suspended on the polling day due to security threats as the government could not compromise on the security of people.

On the other hand, the broadband internet services were available on that day, enabling the people to get connected, he said and rebuffed the allegations that the move was aimed at managing the social media. He said there were other occasions throughout the year, when the mobile services had been suspended to avert security threats.

President Alvi congratulates Alexander Stubb on election as President of Finland

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Monday congratulated Alexander Stubb on his election as President of Finland. The president, in a post on X, said, "Congratulations to Alexander Stubb on his election as President of Finland."

Look forward to working together to further advance our longstanding and friendly relations, and growing cooperation in education, green energy transition and technical & vocational training."

Shah Faisal mosque to be renovated, says Gohar Ejaz



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior and Commerce Dr. Gohar Ejaz on Monday said that 40 years ago, the government of Saudi Arabia gave a gift of Shah Faisal Mosque to Pakistanis, now the mosque would be renovated to make it more beautiful.

He expressed these views on the occasion of visiting Shah Faisal Mosque along with Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Pakistan, Nawaf Saeed Al Maliki. Federal Interior Secretary, Aftab Akbar Durrani, Chief Commissioner Islamabad and CDA officials were also present at the occasion.

The minister along with the Saudi Ambassador offered Zuh prayer and latter visited the main hall and spacious courtyard of the mosque. Talking to the media persons, the minister said that when he assumed charge of the minister, he offered Jumma prayer at the mosque and latter he met with the Saudi ambassador and informed him that the mosque needed to be renovated.

"We are grateful to the Saudi Ambassador who took personal interest and decided to renovate the Shah Faisal Mosque, which will begin soon" the minister said. Nawaf Saeed Al Maliki said that the Shah Faisal Mosque was given as a gift to Pakistanis by the Saudi government.

Now the renovation work of this mosque would be started soon, he added. DNA

US ambassador calls on health minister



ISLAMABAD: Health Minister Dr. Nadeem Jan Calls on U.S. Ambassador Donald Blome-Pak, U.S. collaboration in Health discussed. Federal Minister of Health Dr. Nadeem Jan met with US Ambassador Donald Blome. Issues pertaining to health sector and of mutual interest were discussed in the meeting. The US Ambassador appreciated the actions and reforms taken by the Health Minister in a short period of time. Dr. Nadeem Jan took important steps to keep

the country and world safe from epidemics and diseases, said the US Ambassador. The Minister informed that the Government of Pakistan has successfully organized the Global Health Security Summit in Islamabad.

The US ambassador appreciated the vision of the Global Health Security Agenda and said that this was the need of the hour. In this context USA will cooperate to advance the agenda of global health security. The situation of nutrition in Pakistan was also discussed between the both dignitaries. Dr. Nadeem Jan informed that Ministry of Health has formulated an integrated strategy to control malnutrition. A task force on nutrition has been formed which will ensure coordinated actions between the federation and the provinces, donors, stakeholders, said the Health Minister. The Health Minister also informed that we have formulated an integrated strategy to eradicate polio. DNA

Two terrorists killed in Mardan IBO: ISPR



RAWALPINDI: The security forces on Monday killed two terrorists during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted in Mardan District.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), after intense fire exchange, the two terrorists were killed during the conduct of operation. Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area, it said.

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

'Justified complaints' regarding polls to be redressed: Solangi

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Monday said that those who had justified complaints regarding the polls would be redressed in accordance with the law.

The complaints related to the polls were being heard at the relevant forum, the minister said while speaking in a private news channel talk show.

To a query, he said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had already explained the reasons for delay in the results of the elections.

There were weather and security challenges in some areas, he said, adding that the caretaker government, particularly the Interior Ministry, had fulfilled its responsibility by holding the biggest democratic exercise in the country in a free, fair, transparent and peaceful manner. He said around 18,000 candidates took part in

Around 18,000 candidates took part in the elections, while 90,000 polling stations were set up that enabled more than 60 million persons to cast their votes

the elections, while 90,000 polling stations were set up that enabled more than 60 million persons to cast their votes. APP

We hope the new govt in Pakistan will bring more progress & prosperity to the people of Pakistan: Reza Amiri Moghadam

Jalil Abbas Jilani, Murtaza Solangi, Allama Sajid Naqvi, Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori, Liaqat Baloch, others attend ceremony

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam has said that last year, the trade value between Pakistan and Iran exceeded 2.5 billion dollars, and the two countries aim to reach the figure of 5 billion dollars. Reza Amiri Moghadam congratulated the people and the Government of Pakistan on the successful holding of the nationwide election. We hope that the new government in Pakistan will bring more progress and prosperity to the people of Pakistan, he said.

On the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the Glorious Victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran and the National Day a ceremony was held at the local hotel of Islamabad. The ceremony was hosted by

Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam and his Spouse. Caretaker Foreign minister Jalil Abbas Jilani, Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi, Allama Sajid Naqvi, Governor Sindh Muhammad Kamran Khan Tessori, son of later Maulana Samiul Haq, Hamidul Haq, Deputy Chief of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Liaqat Baloch, SAPM Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Pir Nageebur Rehman, civil and military high officials, diplomats of other countries and a large number of people belonging to different walks of life attended the ceremony. The cake was also cut on the occasion. The children of Iran and Pakistan presented the national anthems of both countries.



While addressing the ceremony, Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam said "I would like to express my sincere appreciation for giving us the honor of

attending this ceremony on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the National Day of Iran". "You are most welcome. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all of you for attending this ceremony". Reza Amiri Moghadam said that it is an honor to celebrate this occasion in the friendly, brotherly, and neighbourly country of Pakistan. The existence of numerous historical, geographical, ethnic, linguistic cultural, and religious commonalities and links has created deep and unbreakable relations between Iran and Pakistan. Iran was the first country to recognize the independent Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan was the first country to recognize the Islamic Republic

of Iran after the victory of the revolution. The ties between the two countries have been established in such a way that there has been no territorial and border dispute between the two, and now we have strong relations in various fields, he said.

Reza Amiri Moghadam said that having been built upon such solid foundations and given Iran's foreign policy to accord priority to neighbors, ephemeral incidents can never fluctuate the relations between the two countries. Reza Amiri Moghadam said that our two countries have close viewpoints on many regional, international, and Islamic world issues, and closely cooperate and mutually support each other in the regional and international organizations and forums. SABAH

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What is Pakistan's urban future?

DR MUHAMMAD IMRAN

The 2024 general election was unique in the sense that the manifestos of the major political parties (PML-N, PPP and PTI) recognized the importance of urban planning for promoting sustainable development in Pakistan. It is interesting that their manifestos promised similar institutional structures, policies and regulations, and even projects. The PML-N, PPP and PTI promised to transform and empower the local government, which is a foundation of urban planning. They have promised to establish the local governments' financial autonomy and administrative capacity and develop it as "the third tier of government".

The PML-N manifesto even promised to merge development authorities and companies into an integrated city government responsible for transport, housing, the environment and disaster management. As an urban planning academic, I welcome these promises. We know that New York, London, Paris, and others would not appear on the global prosperity and liveability scales if they had not developed fully functioning local government systems.

The PML-N, PPP and PTI promise to prepare national and local climate change plans that guide cities' Master Plans to strengthen urban planning, and to develop a comprehensive regulatory framework that addresses environmental degradation, and outlines emission targets, reporting requirements, and penalties for non-compliance.

The PPP manifesto even called the environment "a human rights" issue which should be addressed by integrating all aspects of policymaking and budgeting and promoting inclusive and adaptive development. All three political parties wish to promote fuel efficiency, electric vehicles and public transport to improve resilience.

Public transport has received special attention. The PML-N, PPP and PTI have a consensus to develop rail or BRT-based mass transit systems in large cities and establish a public transport system in the second- and third-tier cities to promote sustainable mobility, clean air and women's mobility.

The PTI manifesto further promoted transit-oriented development and value capture as innovative mechanisms to fund public transport projects. China and India have used this strategy to revitalize their urban areas and develop a stable source of funding for local governments to invest in transport. Stable funding is key to promoting large-scale public transport projects. Housing has had the attention of political parties and their successive governments over the last 75 years. Housing as 'a human right', 'shelter for all' and 'affordable housing' are key slogans targeting overcrowded and substandard living conditions in urban areas. These promises will be fulfilled by developing small towns and satellite towns, building large-scale housing projects and regularising katchi abadis. Through zoning and land use regulations, cities will implement urban boundaries, which promote mixed land use, high-rise housing and commercial development.

The importance of urban planning has not been recognized explicitly by Pakistani's institutional and political systems. One factor contributing to this is the absence of a consensus regarding cities as a subject of provincial autonomy and the absence of a federal-level urban development ministry.

The urban planning parts of the manifestos of the three major political parties are a welcome sign for Pakistan. They have a consensus on institutional reforms, policies, regulations and projects, despite their other differences. Urban planning can take Pakistan into the 21st century if these political parties sign a 'Charter of Urban Future'. This charter is important, as urban planning and infrastructure issues take longer than any political party's tenure of five years to bear fruit.

Moreover, Pakistani cities contribute to over 70 per cent of the country's greenhouse gas emissions. Their urban land area will double in 2024-2050, and building new infrastructure requires a vast amount of natural and financial resources which transform agricultural land and ecosystems and are ultimately vulnerable to climate change.

Although the ministries of climate change, housing, communication, and planning deal with federal-level urban policies, these institutions are insufficient, tend to focus on single issues, and fail to convey the multifaceted ways in which cities can shape Pakistan's future. A country-level 'Federal Urban Commission' can support parliaments and ministries in designing appropriate legislation, court systems, policies, regulations, and innovative funding mechanisms. Micro-level urban planning happens locally under development authorities, the DHAs, municipal corporations and provincial urban units. However, local and provincial actions need to be guided by Pakistan-level analyses, reflection, and responses. The Federal Urban Commission would develop national guidelines, funding and projects that would help national, provincial and local governments coordinate their responses.

The Federal Urban Commission will work as an urban science-policy-society interface to connect the dots and coordinate political and institutional systems to bring the urban revolution Pakistan needs urgently. The consensus of the parties provides clear support for developing modern urban planning institutions, policies and processes in Pakistan.

The writer is a professor of transport and urban planning at Massey University, New Zealand.



Muhammad Mustafa Arif

Saving the electoral process

(ECP), a decision that was upheld by the Supreme Court upon appeal. This decision, occurring in a country with an estimated 62 per cent illiteracy rate, raised suspicions of attempts to sow confusion among voters and potentially hinder the PTI's electoral success.

The election process, which represents the people's collective voice and will, is the cornerstone of democracy. It stands for the essential idea that every person has the right to influence how their community is governed.

Elections that are free, fair, and transparent allow voters to voice their opinions, choose representatives, and hold those in authority responsible.

In anticipation of the new year in 2024, Pakistan stood at the threshold of a significant milestone: the opportunity to shape its governance through democratic elections. After a period of anticipation, the Supreme Court of Pakistan set the date for the elections as the 8th of February, a moment eagerly awaited by the nation. The elections symbolized more than just a routine political event; this was an opportunity to chart the course of the nation's future. Among the myriad of choices, the call for "haqeeqi azadi" resonated deeply with many Pakistanis, finding expression through the support of Imran Khan and his vision.

As election day approached, the nation brimmed with anticipation, with citizens eagerly preparing to cast their votes and participate in the democratic process. It was a testament to the enduring commitment of the Pakistani people to democracy and their unwavering belief in the power of their voices to shape the course of their nation. Regrettably, events preceding the elections and unfolding during the results announcement have cast a shadow of doubt on the legitimacy of the entire electoral process.

In the lead-up to the elections, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), one of the nation's prominent political parties, faced significant challenges, including the denial of its iconic bat symbol by the Election Commission

Furthermore, PTI members were compelled to contest the elections independently, albeit with PTI support but without official party affiliation. This arrangement implies that even if these members secure votes, they could switch allegiance to other parties without facing significant consequences. In a political landscape prevalent with corruption, this scenario raises concerns about the possibility of independent members forming alliances with rival parties, potentially preventing PTI's path to power despite electoral support.

The obstacles faced by the PTI extended beyond the denial of its electoral symbol and the requirement for members to contest elections independently. Senior PTI figures, including party founder Imran Khan, were arrested, with Khan himself barred from participating in the elections. Furthermore, key PTI members, such as Dr Yasmin Rashid, had to engage in the electoral process while incarcerated.

These actions collectively raise serious doubts regarding the legitimacy of the electoral process, fueling perceptions of premeditated outcomes. The orchestrated series of impediments faced by the PTI not only undermines the principles of democracy but also calls into question the fairness and transparency of the electoral landscape in Pakistan.

The return of Nawaz Sharif, who had previously been sentenced to 10 years in prison and disqualified for life from holding public office, coupled with the Supreme Court's decision to lift the lifetime ban on him, added another layer of scepticism. This development raised concerns about a tilt in favour of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) to facilitate their return to power. Such actions contribute to a perception of unfairness and undermine public trust in the electoral system.

Despite the challenges and controversies surrounding the electoral

process, the people of Pakistan demonstrated remarkable civic engagement by turning out in large numbers to cast their votes, fueled by the hope that their mandates would be respected, and their desired outcomes achieved.

Initial indications suggested a surge in support for independent candidates, with unofficial results reflecting their sweeping victories across the polls. However, as midnight approached, an abrupt halt in the release of results arose, prolonging the wait for official outcomes. This sudden delay fueled suspicions among the populace, raising concerns of potential electoral rigging or manipulation.

When questioned about the delay in releasing election results, the Election Commission attributed it to the nationwide closure of internet and mobile services. The ECP had assured that it wouldn't hinder voting, as the applications used for tallying votes didn't rely on internet connectivity. Despite the assurance, until 2am on Friday, several constituencies had barely tallied 10 per cent of the vote, according to local media reports.

Section 84 of the Pakistan Election Rules, 2017 also required Returning Officers (ROs) to submit scanned Form 47 with provisional results electronically by 2am after polling day. In case of failure, they are required to inform the ECP of the reasons for the delay and the RO must send compiled provisional results by 10am; however, there has been a failure by the ROs and the ECP to meet these requirements.

Pakistan, seen as the fifth largest democracy globally, continues to grapple with challenges in upholding democratic principles. The act of casting a vote is often an expression of hope, yet the reality often proves disheartening. Such was the case in Pakistan on Friday, where the electoral landscape witnessed abrupt transformations overnight. Candidates like Bilawal Bhutto, Salman Akram Raja, Yasmeen Rashid, Rehana Dar, and others appeared to be securing significant leads, only to find their substantial margins evaporate, ultimately leading to the victory of opposing candidates. This sudden

reversal of fortunes has ignited widespread suspicions of electoral rigging, casting a shadow of doubt over the integrity and fairness of the electoral process.

In addition to the election proceedings, candidates have come forward with alarming allegations regarding the conduct of Returning Officers (ROs). They assert that the results were not disclosed in the presence of the candidates as mandated, and a troubling inconsistency has emerged between Form 47 and Form 45. This conflict has created a cloud of uncertainty not only among the candidates themselves but also among the broader public.

Candidates, deceived by the promising figures on Form 45 indicating their victory, were bewildered to find conflicting outcomes on Form 47, signaling their defeat. This absurdity has sparked widespread disbelief about the transparency and fairness of the electoral process.

Consequently, a growing chorus of voices, encompassing both political aspirants and concerned citizens, has begun to question the legitimacy of the election results. As these claims echo across the nation, they underscore deeper concerns about the integrity of Pakistan's democratic institutions and the imperative for thorough scrutiny and accountability in the electoral process.

The electoral process seems to have lost the confidence of the Pakistani populace, casting a shadow of doubt over the very foundations of democracy in the country. The loss of confidence in the integrity of the electoral system highlights a grave need for reform. In the face of these challenges, it is imperative for politicians driven by ambition to regard the voice of the people and gracefully accept electoral outcomes, recognizing that the ultimate authority lies in the hands of the public.

As Pakistan navigates through this turbulent period, fostering a culture of accountability, transparency, and respect for democratic principles is vital in restoring faith in the electoral process and safeguarding the future of democracy in the nation.

The writer is a freelance contributor.

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



He, therefore, opposed the Indian National Congress when it was founded in 1885 and advised the Muslims to abstain from its activities. His contemporary and a great scholar of Islam, Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928), shared his views about the Congress, but, he was not opposed to Muslims organizing themselves politically. In fact, he organized the first significant political body of the Muslims, the Central National Muhammadan Association. Although, its membership

was limited, it had more than 50 branches in different parts of the subcontinent and it accomplished some solid work for the educational and political advancement of the Muslims. But, its activities waned towards the end of the nineteenth century.

THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

At the dawn of the twentieth century, a number of factors convinced the Muslims of the need to

have an effective political organization. Therefore, in October 1906, a deputation comprising 35 Muslim leaders met the Viceroy of the British at Simla and demanded separate electorates. Three months later, the All-India Muslim League was founded by Nawab Salimullah Khan at Dhaka, mainly with the objective of safeguarding the political rights and interests of the Muslims. The British conceded separate electorates in the Government of India Act of 1909 which con-

firmed the Muslim League's position as an All-India party. Attempt for Hindu Muslim Unity The visible trend of the two major communities progressing in opposite directions caused deep concern to leaders of All-India stature. They struggled to bring the Congress and the Muslim League on one platform. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948) was the leading figure among them.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Johnny Depp will not take lead role in Pirates of the Caribbean 6

Johnny Depp may reportedly not be returning as Captain Jack Sparrow in Pirates of the Caribbean 6



Talks about Johnny Depp's return to the Pirates of the Caribbean franchise have taken a new turn after it emerged that the actor was pitched a role in which he would not be the lead. According to a well-known leaker MyTimeToShineHello's post on X, it was revealed that the new location of the set for Pirates of the Caribbean 6 was in Haiti and that there would be a Haitian female protagonist. Additionally, the post went on to add that Depp was not offered his titular role as Captain Jack Sparrow. Read More: Ayo Edebiri to replace Johnny Depp as lead of Pirates of the Caribbean 6? "I looked into it and Pirates of Caribbean 6 will be set in part in Haiti and the female protagonist will be Haitian." This development came in line with reports claiming that The Bear star Ayo Edebiri was in talks of being roped in as the lead after Depp was dropped by Disney when he was accused by his ex-wife Amber Heard of domestic abuse. Since proving the claims to be false, following a highly public libel case in the US, fans were hoping to see the actor return to the big screen in his iconic role.

Tech

Dubai to host world's first jet suit flying race

Have you ever imagined that you could fly with the wind touching your face as you soar between the clouds?

Well, now you can actually get to do it by participating in the Jet ski suit race on February 28 at the Dubai Harbour as part of the Dubai Boat Show, Fox News reported.

In what will be the first sporting contest in the world featuring opponents who go aerial without the aid of an aircraft, competitors will rely instead on suits equipped with jet engines to navigate a predetermined course. The chairman of the Dubai Sports Council, Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, stated that Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed's support is making the innovative event possible which is the first of its type in the world.

Eight contestants from different countries, including Ahmed Al Shehhi of the United Arab Emirates, will fight for the top prize, and the athletic extravaganza will highlight Dubai's prominence as a venue for important



international events.

Sheikh Mansoor said: "This race signals the beginning of a new era of exciting aerial sporting action globally and it is a true reflection of Dubai's soaring spirit of enterprise as well as the human capacity to overcome challenges."

"The event also goes to highlight Dubai's uniqueness and boundless energy in presenting to the world novel ideas that combine innovation, adventure and ambition that push the boundaries of human imagination and open the way for still greater achievements and innovations across the world."

How does memory really work with age?

Our brain processes incalculable amounts of information throughout the day, and there's simply no room for all of it to be stored

The recent chatter about the mental capabilities of United States President Joe Biden and former president Donald Trump has sparked a massive conversation about what memory mistakes mean about ageing and brain health, The Washington Post reported.

According to experts, memory lapses are an important part of memory.

Our brain processes incalculable amounts of information throughout the day, and there's simply no room for all of it to be stored.

How do our memories work?

When it comes across new information, our brains encode it with changes in neurons in the hip-

pocampus, an important memory centre, as well as other areas. These groups of cells work together to hold onto the specific information of memory, creating a memory trace known as an engram.

A significant portion of this data is lost unless it is retained during memory consolidation, which frequently occurs as we sleep and strengthens our memories over time. When the event occurs, these neurons become active, and later when we recall the memory, they turn active again.

In contrast to a computer, our memories are not set in stone. A memory may alter every time we access and reconsolidate it. Sometimes, when we have conversations about

memory or see news footage related to it, the mind can recombine these experiences and wrongly store them as memories.

How do memories change as we age?

The most evident effects of ageing on cognition are related to processing speed. It is evident that ageing brings about a variety of changes in cognition. Stress, distraction, and weariness may all exacerbate memory recall, and older brains may be particularly vulnerable to these effects.

Elderly brains frequently have greater skill than younger brains at sifting through unnecessary information and drawing connections between events. "An older brain is a wiser brain.



Health

Former PTI lawmaker assassinated in Rawalpindi



RAWALPINDI: Former member of the Punjab Assembly and independent candidate Chaudhry Adnan was tragically killed in Rawalpindi on Monday. As per the reports garnered, unidentified

assailants shot and killed Adnan near the city's police lines while his car was stopped at a traffic signal. He was rushed to the hospital, but succumbed to his wounds. Law enforcement officials have launched a manhunt for the perpetrators, who remain at large. Details indicate that the fatal attack occurred as Adnan's vehicle stopped at a traffic signal near the police lines. The police are actively investigating the incident to apprehend the assailant and bring them to justice.

The deceased had recently contested the elections as an independent candidate for NA-57 Rawalpindi and PP-19. In the NA-57 constituency, he secured 1820 votes, while earning 2972 votes in PP-19.

Adnan served as a Member of the Punjab Assembly from 2018 to 2023 under the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) ticket. He recently contested the February 8th elections as an independent candidate in both the NA-57 Rawalpindi and PP-19 constituencies, receiving a considerable number of votes. INP

Sirajul Haq resigns from his position as Emir JI

To discuss the situation emergency meeting of Central Executive Committee of JI summoned at Mansoorah on Feb 17

LAHORE: Emir Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul Haq has resigned from his position as Emir JI. According to a statement issued by Secretary Information Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Qaisar Sharif, Emir Jamaat has written in his resignation that despite his hectic efforts and struggle, Jamaat-e-Islami could not prove to be successful in the general elections as per desire. May Almighty Allah accept his efforts. Emir Jamaat has said that while accepting his failure, he is resigning as Emir of Jamaat-e-Islami.

To discuss the situation Secretary General Jamaat-e-Islami Ameerul-Azim has convened emergency meeting of Central Executive Committee at Mansoorah on February 17. SABAH



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, comprising of Mr. Raof Hassan and Mr. Umair Niazi, called on President Dr. Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

First phase of mandatory Hajj ritual training begins

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: The first phase of mandatory Hajj ritual training for prospective pilgrims of the Government Scheme commenced, with Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Aneeq Ahmed joining the session in Hyderabad.

Aneeq Ahmed, speaking on the occasion, mentioned that Hajj training programs will be conducted nationwide, spanning from Karachi to Khyber.

He emphasized that Allah Almighty judges our intentions, and it is imperative to perform Hajj with utmost devotion.

"Hajj is a form of supplication to Allah." This year, the Pakistani government has expanded facilities for pilgrims compared to the previous year, resulting in a reduction of expenses by Rs 100,000 from the previous year.

He expressed that Hajj pilgrims serve as fortunate ambassadors of Pakistan, tasked with upholding the nation's honor in Saudi Arabia and keeping Pakistan in their prayers.

Assembling such a significant number of pilgrims in a single location poses considerable challenges, thus the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Government of Pakistan are exerting maximum effort to guarantee a seamless experience for the pilgrims.

They are providing comprehensive information regarding transportation, accommoda-



tion, and provisions for food and beverages. It's worth noting that more than 69,000 pilgrims under the government scheme will receive training in two stages across different districts of the country.

The second phase of training will commence after the conclusion of the holy month of Ramadan. Successful intending pilgrims will receive details of the training schedule through mobile messages and the Hajj app. Pilgrims will have the opportunity to attend training workshops at convenient local venues.

The training has prioritized instruction on Hajj rituals, as well as addressing discipline and administrative matters. The ministry

has already finalized the training curriculum.

Hajj training will take place across seven Hajj camps located in different districts. The comprehensive new training program will encompass the 'Pak Hajj' mobile app, advice on Hajj preparations, comprehension of rituals, addressing Hajj challenges, and offering general instructions.

At the training centres, model tents resembling the style of Mina Valley have been erected.

Pilgrims will be guided by Master Trainers through 3D videos and interactive question-and-answer sessions.

SC declares the appeal filed by federal govt in a case related to SJC proceedings against retired judges of superior judiciary as maintainable

Court decides to appoint senior lawyers Makhdoom Ali Khan, Khawaja Haris Ahmed & Barrister Khalid Javed Khan as amicus curie

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court of Pakistan has declared the appeal filed by federal government in a case related to Supreme Judicial Council proceedings against retired judges of superior judiciary as maintainable.

The court has decided to appoint senior lawyers Makhdoom Ali Khan, Khawaja Haris Ahmed and Barrister Khalid Javed Khan as amicus curie. The court directed Attorney General Barrister Mansoor Usman Awan, adjourned hearing of the case till next Monday. The head of the bench Justice Aaminuddin Khan remarked that does any judge want to retire with respect or wants to retire with baggage. Whereas Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail has said that this is very difficult petition as we are deciding our own future and every judge wants to retire with respect. He said we are sitting on a very fragile chair.

Five-member larger bench headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan and comprising Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Musrarrat Hilali and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan conducted hearing on the petition filed by federal government for revisiting the Aafia Shehribano Zia case judgment. One application was filed through secretary Ministry of Law and Justice while second application was filed by Aafia Shehribano Zia. In the applications, Supreme Judicial Council and others have been made party. Attorney General Barrister Mansoor Usman Awan appeared before the court on behalf of federation while Waqas Ahmed Mir appeared on behalf of Aafia Shehribano Zia through video link from Supreme Court Lahore Registry. Attorney General of Pakistan in his arguments said that on the last hearing the bench had issued questions on the issue of limitation. Justice Irfan Saadat Khan said that a new application has been filed, adding that in the case attorney general has to be issued notice. The court while issuing notice to federation has made it party.

Attorney General argued that under Article 209 of the Constitution, President of Pakistan could not file reference with the Supreme Judicial Council against any judge of the Supreme Court or High Court without the advice of prime minister and federal cabinet. Attorney General further said two-member bench of Supreme Court while explaining Article 209 of the Constitution declared that proceedings cannot be carried out against the retired judges or the judges who resigned and Supreme Court cannot regulate proceedings of the Supreme Judicial Council.

He further said that two-member bench issued this verdict without issuing notice to anyone. He further said if proceedings against some judge are underway in the Supreme Judicial Council and he resigns then the question mark will remain intact. Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi said two judges can be affected from this case, continuing should they not be made party and whether their representation should not be done and should they not be given right of defense. The court adjourned further hearing of the case till February 19. SABAH

Jahangir Tareen quits politics

ISLAMABAD: Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party Patron-in-Chief Jahangir Khan Tareen has decided to quit politics and also step down from the party office.

Tareen announced his decision in a post on X while thanking everyone for their support during the recent election and felicitating his opponents.

"I have immense respect for the will of the people of Pakistan. Therefore, I have decided to resign from my position as Chairman IPP and step away from politics altogether," Tareen posted.

He expressed his gratitude to all the members of the party and wished them the best. "By the Grace of Allah, I will continue to serve my country to the best of my ability in a private capacity," the post added further.

The IPP leader had contested the recent general election from NA-149 Multan, where he was defeated by independent candidate Amir Dogar, as well as NA-155 Lodhran, where he lost to PML-N candidate Siddique Khan Baloch.

Reacting to this announcement, IPP President Abdul Aleem Khan expressed sadness, saying Tareen will always be the patron-in-chief for the IPP and all of them. He further said that Tareen's presence in any government was an honour for that government.

"As a younger brother and IPP president, I pay tribute to him and his philanthropic activities. May Allah bless them with health, safety and success. Amen," he added in a post on X. Aleem Khan had emerged victorious in both NA-117 and Lahore's provincial assembly constituency PP-149, securing a significant mandate from the electorate.

According to the official tally, in NA-117, Aleem Khan secured a resounding victory with 72,519 votes, establishing a clear lead over his competitor, Ali Ejaz Buttar, who garnered 31,586 votes.

Similarly, in PP-149, the IPP president clinched victory with 51,756 votes. His rival, independent candidate Hafiz Zeeshan Rasheed, closely followed with 47,998 votes. INP

CDA to develop housing scheme with participation of private firms

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to develop a housing scheme with the participation of a private firm. The housing scheme, to be named 'Kurri Enclave Housing Scheme', would be developed over an area of 10,000 kanals in Kurri village.

According to sources, the land is owned by the CDA but the project costing billions of rupees would be developed as a joint venture with some leading real estate developer or with a consortium of more than one firm.

The board of CDA had already approved to launch and develop housing schemes with the participation of the private sector. The civic body had also invited Expression of Interests (EOIs) for the selection of reputed firms to execute the project. The selected real estate firm would invest while developing and planning the project. DNA

Need to eliminate violence against women stressed

MULTAN: Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women, Nilofar Bakhtiar stressed the need to eliminate violence against women and restore their respect and integrity.

Speaking at a seminar titled "Countering Gender Based Violence in light of Dukhtran-e-Pakistan Narrative" at BZU here on Monday she stated that addressing women's issues is essential and that if we give them their rights and respect, society will progress.

We aim to restore the dignity of women collectively and Mother's Lap is the first institution. If a mother provides a good upbringing, the future is bright. The role of teachers is also crucial in this connection, she noted.

"When I went to Balochistan, it saddened me to see the rate of female literacy." Ms Nilofar recalled. There are many examples of violence in our society, including physical, mental, and economic while 51 percent of women



do not consider themselves secure, and 27 percent of women are inevitably victims of violence in their lives, she maintained. BZU Director of Islamic Research Institute, Dr Abdul Qudoos Suhaib informed that they keep on holding sessions on this topic adding that Ms Nilofar is working actively for Women's rights and creating awareness in the society. APP

PPP's CEC express confidence over Asif Zardari, Bilawal



ISLAMABAD: The members of the Central Executive Committee of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) on Monday expressed confidence in the leadership of President PPP Asif Zardari and Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

The CEC met here under the chair of Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari which was attended by the Central President of the PPP Women Wing and all the members of the CEC, said a press release.

The committee started by paying homage to the martyrs of democracy.

The members of the Central Executive Committee of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) on Monday expressed confidence in the leadership of President PPP Asif Zardari and Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari

During the meeting, a discussion was held on the general elections and the reaction of the masses regarding it. The members have made various suggestions regarding the political, economic and governmental situation of the country. APP

PML-N has simple majority in Punjab, says Ata Tarar

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz has gained simple majority in Punjab to form its government, PML-N leader Ata Tarar said on Monday.

Addressing a news conference he said the PML-N has emerged as the single largest party adding that the members joining the party.

He said that six MPAs have joined the PML-N and the number of the party's MPAs in Punjab has reached to 146.

He said that the members' count will reach to 150 today thus the number required for formation of government in Punjab will be reached.

Ata Tarar said that the PML-N will announce the prime minister's name after consultation with the People's Party and the MQM. "We are also holding consultations with other parties along with the PPP and MQM for formation of the federal government," he said.

He said the opponents announced their victory over 25 percent results, while Nawaz Sharif given his victory speech after announcement of 90 pct results.

PML-N's Javed Latif, Shaikh Rohail Asghar, Khawaja Saad Rafique and Rana Sanaullah have also lost the election, but we have accepted results in good stead.

"We have emerged as single largest party in



Punjab and the centre, our government in Punjab is likely to be established," he said. It is to be mentioned here that five independent candidates, who won elections on February 8, on Monday joined the PML-N. Sardar Shamsheer Mazari, who won the NA-189 seat as an independent candidate joined PML-N after meeting the party's president Shahbaz Sharif. Imran Akram, MPA-elect from PP-195, Sohail Khan, PP-240, Khizar Hussain Mazari, PP-297 and Sahibzada Muhammad Gazain Abbasi, MPA-elect from PP-249 also joined Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz. On the occasion, PML-N President Shahbaz Sharif welcomed the newly elected members into the party. INP