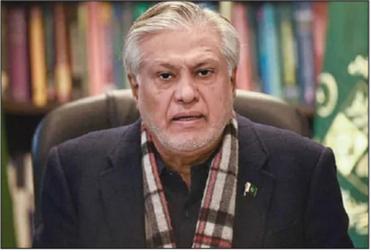




The entire team of 'The Asian Telegraph' extends heartfelt greetings of Eid Mubarak to our valued readers and the entire nation of Pakistan! all Pakistanis a joyous Eid al-Fitr. Let's celebrate with loved ones, share blessings, and build a stronger Pakistan together
Eid Mubarak

Dar appointed leader of the House in Senate



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar was appointed as leader of the House in the Senate on Tuesday, according to a notification issued by the Senate Secretariat. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who is also the president of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), appointed Dar to the post. "Dar will act as leader of the House on behalf of the Prime Minister to represent Government and to regulate Government business in the Senate with effect from April 9, 2024," said the notification.

PM Shehbaz, Qatari Amir exchange Eid greetings; discuss bilateral ties



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday held a telephonic conversation with the Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, and extended greetings on the occasion of Eid ul Fitr. Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated the close fraternal ties between Pakistan and Qatar and reaffirmed Pakistan's desire to closely working with Qatar in all areas of common interest. He reiterated his government's commitment to deepen economic and trade relations between the two countries. The Amir of Qatar warmly reciprocated Eid greetings and conveyed his best wishes to the people of Pakistan. The prime minister reiterated his invitation to the Amir of Qatar to undertake an official visit to Pakistan who assured that he was keen to visit Pakistan at an early date. Both leaders renewed their commitment to work closely with each other and further broaden the cooperation in all mutually beneficial fields. Last year marked the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations. Later, the prime minister wrote on X that during the conversation, they prayed for the unity of the Muslim Ummah and for the prosperity of Pakistan and Qatar. Besides, they also expressed their resolve to further deepening and solidifying relations between the two nations. APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets a student of Danish School, Jand, Attock in the ceremony at the proposed site of Danish School.

PM announces Daanish Schools expansion to realise Quaid's Pakistan dream

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday announced that the federal government would establish Daanish Schools in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan and remote areas of Balochistan and Sindh to fulfill the aspiration of Quaid-e-Azam's Pakistan by delivering quality education to children coming from economically disadvantaged families. "This is not the fault of the poor children if their parents cannot afford quality education despite working hard or those who are orphans... If the iron gates of the Aitchison College or Grammar School are obstructing their way (to quality education), the door of Daanish Schools are open for them," the prime minister said addressing a ceremony of inspection of site for Daanish School being established in Kuri area of the federal capital. To be established over 30 acres of land, the school will provide free education and accommodation to the children from the capital city and its suburbs with a vision to provide equal opportunity for quality education. Calling the alarming figure of 26 million out-of-school children a "criminal negligence", the prime minister said Quaid-e-Azam's dream about Pakistan would remain unfulfilled with-

out making arrangements for their education. "There can be no bigger national service or the fulfillment of the responsibility than enrolling these out-of-school children," he said and announced that the federal government would fully bear the expenses of constructing Daanish Schools in AJK, GB, remote areas of Balochistan and Sindh. Prime Minister Shehbaz also announced that the federal government would declare an education emergency in the country and would dole out all possible resources to educate particularly the children from disadvantaged families. He told the gathering of federal ministers, bureaucrats, heads of international institutions, educationists and students that the Daanish Schools project was initiated under PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif's vision and that the students were making an impact in debate, sports and other fields internationally. Recounting the journey of the visionary project, the prime minister said they resisted the immense criticism of the initiative just to support the children from low-income groups with quality education at par with elite-class education institutions. He also recalled that under Nawaz Sharif's leadership, the PML-N government in the past gave away laptops to the students which became an earning tool for them. Besides, the

then Punjab government also recruited around 200,000 teachers purely on merit. He said the groundbreaking of Islamabad's Daanish School would be performed soon and asked the education ministry to ensure its completion within 6-8 months. He also announced to personally inaugurate the Daanish Schools to be established in AJK, GB and Balochistan. In his address, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui lauded the vision behind Daanish School and said the scope of the project was being expanded to other parts of the country. He requested the prime minister to declare an education emergency to address the challenges and shortcomings in the education sector and that every vacant building should be used for teaching purposes. Comparing the aging nations of the US, Japan and Germany, he said Pakistan was rich with youth bulge and the government should utilise its resources to skill train them to make them employable in the international market. Chairman of Benazir Income Support Program and Akhuwat Foundation Amjad Saqib recalled the journey of the establishment of Daanish Schools aimed at addressing the disparities in the society and lauded the Punjab Education Endowment Fund which benefited around 450,000 students in Punjab.

Where will top politicians celebrate this Eid

VOM Report

LAHORE: Top politicians including PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari are all set to celebrate this Eidul Fitr at their hometowns. According to sources, PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will celebrate Eidul Fitr in Lahore while President Asif Ali Zardari will offer Eid prayers in Nawabshah. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi will celebrate Eid in Lahore and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto will offer Eid prayers in Larkana. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Gohar Ali Khan will offer Eid prayers in Buner and Leader of Opposition Umar Ayub Khan will celebrate at Haripur. Parvez Khatak will offer Eid prayers in Nowshera. MQM convener Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui will offer Eid prayers in Karachi and JUL-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman will celebrate Eid in DI Khan. Senate chairman candidate Yousuf Raza Gilani will celebrate Eid in Multan and National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq will offer the prayers in Lahore. NA Deputy Speaker Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah will celebrate the event at hometown, Nawabshah. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif will offer Eid prayer at Jati Umrh, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah at Sehwan Sharif and KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur in DI Khan. Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti will celebrate Eid in Quetta. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif will offer Eid prayers in Sialkot, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar will offer Eid prayers in Lahore and Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani will celebrate Eid in Chagai. Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman will celebrate Eid in Lahore, Balochistan Governor Abdul Wali Kakar in Quetta, Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori in Karachi and KP Governor Haji Ghulam Ali will offer Eid prayer at the Governor House Peshawar. Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Ahmad Khan will celebrate Eid in Kasur, Sindh Assembly Speaker Owais Qadir Shah in Sukkur, KP Assembly Speaker Babar Saleem Swati in Mansehra. KP Assembly leader of opposition Dr Ibrara Rehman will celebrate Eid in Shargha. Azad Kashmir President Barrister Sultan will offer Eid prayer in Mirpur, Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Anwarul Haque in Bhimbar and Azad Kashmir Speaker Latif Akbar will offer Eid prayers in Muzaffarabad. PML-N Punjab President Rana Sanaulah will offer Eid prayers in Faisalabad and Sunni Ittehad Council chief Sahibzada Hamid Raza will celebrate Eid in Faisalabad. Former federal minister Syed Khurshid Shah and provincial minister Nasir Hussain Shah will offer Eid prayers in Sukkur.

PTI treading on path of chaos, destruction, alleges Khawaja Asif



ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Tuesday alleged that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was treading on the path of chaos and destruction by inciting the politics of denial, violence and hatred. Talking to media outside the Parliament House, the Defence Minister expressed his stance on the Sunni Tehreek-PTI led Opposition in the Senate to boycott the Chairman and Deputy Chairman Senate elections.

Khawaja Asif said the decisions of the majority could not be rejected as in order continuation of the democratic system, no one's decisions could be imposed on the other. He said that there should be a dialogue and reconciliation between the political parties and opponents to resolve issues instead of contestation. "The PTI wanted to take the path of confrontation and we will not be an accomplice in chaos and violence. If the Opposition wants to make decisions, do it for the interest of democracy, country and the common man," the minister said. "Will not support decisions made by one person or others for personal interest as unilateral decisions cannot be imposed on us," he added. APP

ECP asks political parties to submit election expenses details by April 22

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has instructed political parties to submit information on expenditures incurred during the general elections and disclose their list of donors by April 22. In a statement released on Tuesday, the commission asserted that all political parties participating in the general elections 2024 are required, as per Section 211 of the Elections Act, 2017 to provide a roster of donors who have contributed one million rupees or more towards the election campaign. Furthermore, it stated that political parties must submit reports of election expenses within 60 days from the publication date of returned candidates' names in the official gazette. The deadline for submitting both documents is April 22, 2024. APP

Tarar felicitates Gilani, Saidal over election as chairman, deputy chairman Senate



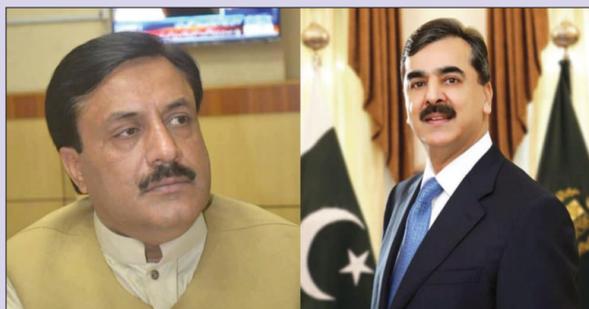
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Tuesday congratulated Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and Saidal Khan Nasar on being elected Chairman and Deputy Chairman Senate respectively.

In a statement, the minister said that today, the democratic process had also been completed in the Senate. "The election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman (Senate) is a reflection of the confidence of the people of Pakistan, the minister remarked. The minister said that both Syed Yusuf Raza Geelani and Saidal Khan were experienced and seasoned politicians. Tarar said that the upper house had an important role for the strengthening of the federal units and following the democratic values. He expressed the hope that Yusuf Raza Gilani and Saidal Khan will continue to play their constructive role for the supremacy of the Constitution and the development of the country. APP

Yusuf Raza Gilani, Saidal Khan Nasir elected Senate chairman, deputy unopposed

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Saidal Khan Tuesday were elected as the Senate chairman and deputy chairman "unopposed" amid protests by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). No candidate submitted nomination papers against them for the coveted Senate posts. Earlier today, 41 newly-elected senators took oath as PTI members protests on the floor of the house, terming the process of election of chairman and deputy chairman as "unconstitutional" due to an "incomplete house". President Asif Ali Zardari had summoned the house to meet for its inaugural session today for the oath-taking of newly-elected members and the election of the Senate chairman and deputy chairman. When the session began today with Sen-

ator Ishaq Dar as the presiding officer, the PTI members launched the protest and demanded adjournment of the house till the election of senators from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Speaking on the floor of the house, PTI leader Senator Ali Zafar demanded the Senate election be deferred as Article 59 of the Constitution requires 96 members to be present in the house for the election of its chairman and that the "process would be unconstitutional till the house is complete". "We will not accept this illegal election till the senators from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are duly elected and are present here," he insisted. Lamenting that Senate polls in Punjab were held excluding the reserved seats, the PTI leader said that the election of the house's chairman and deputy chairman are being made "controversial". "We wanted to participate in the election [of chairman and deputy chairman],



however, we would not be part of it where it is ultra vires of the Constitution," Senator Zafar added. Blaming the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for making controversial decisions, he called for the Senate session to be adjourned till senators

from KP are elected. 'House is complete' In response to the objections raised by the opposition members, Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeem Tarar stressed that Article 60 of the Constitution provisions elections for the posts of the Sen-

ate chairman and deputy chairman as soon as the key posts are vacated. Stressing that the term "duly constituted" was only used as the Senate simply didn't exist in our legislative system before the 1973 Constitution. However, he added, that the framers of the Constitution didn't include the said term with the election of the chairman. "The word 'duly constituted' is also not used in Article 53, which pertains to the constitution of National Assembly as it was already in existence when the [1973] Constitution was formulated," Tarar said. Lamenting the reasons behind the postponement of Senate polls in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the law minister said that the elections weren't postponed due to any calamity. He added that it was the KP government's failure as it didn't abide by the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) orders wherein it had directed to ensure

administering of the oath to MPs elected on reserved seats in the province. "Had it been a case of force majeure, where the senate polls weren't held [in KP] due to any natural disaster, this House would've decided whether to wait for them [senators elected from the province]," Tarar added. Recalling the election of Senate chairman and deputy chairman in 2015 where Raza Rabbani and Abdul Ghafoor Haider were elected to the said posts, respectively, the law minister said that even then an objection was raised against the election owing to the absence of four senators hailing from the then Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). However, the House proceeded nevertheless as Article 67 states that the absence of any member(s) doesn't invalidate the proceedings of the Senate, Tarar added.

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A digitized aerospace

RAZA HAIDER

The aerospace industry has embarked on a rapid journey towards digitalization, embracing the principles of Industry 4.0 by integrating emerging technologies into its industrial processes. Technologies showing the most promise for extensive industrial application include 3D manufacturing, robotics, augmented reality, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital twin simulation. The aerospace industry, being a high-tech sector, is best suited to reap multiple benefits from such emerging technologies. Within the manufacturing domain, 3D manufacturing and robotics stand out as pivotal technologies enhancing industrial setups by improving accuracy, production rates and cost-efficiency. For example, aircraft Wind Tunnel Test (WTT) models are now produced through 3D printing, achieving high precision and simplicity in processes traditionally marked by complexity and high costs. Similarly, robots are being extensively used for repetitive tasks like aircraft riveting, fastening, welding, painting and inspection. In the software domain, AI and Simulation are key areas with big data as their raw material. One such AI application is the Integrated Vehicle Health Management System (IVHMS) which uses AI algorithms-based, data-driven decisions for predictive maintenance of aircraft which is more user-friendly and accurate for safe flight and currently in use on many aircraft like the F-35 or JF-17 aircraft. Another significant software application is the 'digital twin', a virtual replica of a physical aircraft that serves as a valuable tool for prototyping, diagnostics, fatigue testing and fleet life cycle management. This technology offers cost-effective monitoring techniques, enhancing efficiency and predictive maintenance. Similarly, Augmented Reality (AR) is a powerful tool for training pilots, engineers, and technicians involved in aircraft operations and maintenance. It seamlessly combines the digital world with the real environment, resulting in reduced training time and expense, while enhancing the effectiveness of the instructions. Companies have reported up to 30 per cent reduction in maintenance time by leveraging AR real-time information techniques. Although emerging technologies offer numerous advantages to the aerospace industry, there are significant challenges that come with them. Digitalization is a costly endeavour that requires substantial expenditure in obtaining equipment, software, data centres, and

In the software domain, AI and Simulation are key areas with big data as their raw material

frequent software updates. This level of investment may not always be feasible for small enterprises. The process of digital transformation also necessitates digital talent which is either not easily available in the market or very difficult to retain due to brain drain. Digitalization in the aerospace industry is also focused on data, making it vulnerable to cyber-attacks for which potent cyber security management systems would be mandatorily required. All of these challenges are real and comprehensible, but it is vital to acknowledge that without digital transformation, both traditional and emerging industries will struggle to sustain themselves. As a way forward, small enterprises could adopt the Block Building Approach which offers a viable strategy for investment, hiring digital talent and ensuring the seamless integration of current work ethics and practices. Within the framework of Pakistan's aerospace sector, it is important to implement comprehensive measures that guarantee the indigenization and digitalization of every phase of aerospace design, development and production. Although Pakistan has made significant strides in the domain of aerospace production, there is still a need for improvement on the design and development side, which is facing multiple challenges including brain drain and financial constraints. However, this is achievable through the implementation of a comprehensive self-reliance policy at the national level. Such a policy should be aimed at indigenization and digitalization of the current aerospace industrial infrastructure to enhance competitiveness on the global stage and save money that is presently being spent on foreign procurement. Insights may be drawn from China's 'Made in China 2025' policy, which focuses on smart manufacturing technologies and digital transformation of ten critical industries, including the aerospace equipment industry. The global aerospace industry has already begun to embrace digital transformation by integrating emerging technologies. This shift towards modernizing outdated sectors is essential for future success and sustainability. In addition to lowering production costs, this can boost product performance and quality, positioning companies to be competitive in the international market. Pakistan, like many other nations, must undertake measures to transform its aerospace industry, among which the formulation of a national-level policy to facilitate industrial digitalization is a most critical aspect.

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Mosharraf Zaidi

An accountant's approach to NFC?

A lot has been written recently about the need to revisit and reduce the share of the provinces in the 7th National Finance Commission Award, but sadly most of it is informed by assumptions that are misplaced, or worse, absent any hard evidence at all. In a public discourse coarsened and contaminated by the constant insertion of inorganic political narratives by 'non-political actors', a reliance on arguments lacking relevant data is not surprising. The arguments in favour of a revision of the NFC are, on the aggregate, about the fiscal difficulties that the federal government faces. The anti-NFC crowd argues that if the formula in the 7th NFC were to be revised, the federal government's economic difficulties would be ameliorated. There is a wide range of scholars that have tackled this line of argument. Indeed, even the grand vizier of the anti-NFC crowd, former finance minister and the genuinely pro-reform Dr Miftah Ismail, admits that the solution to fiscal difficulties is fiscal measures (more and better taxation) – but then he puts the onus of this taxation on the supposedly inefficient provincial governments – a decidedly politics and service delivery solution to what he himself frames as an accounting problem. This, in a nutshell, is the problem with the fiscal argument for revisiting the NFC. It adopts an accountant's argument to solve a politics and service delivery problem. The 7th NFC Award was a politics and service delivery solution to a politics and delivery problem. It never sought to be, was never intended to be, and will never be an accounting solution. Dr Ismail knows the perils of letting accountants have their way with Pakistan's economy – so his anti-NFC position is especially troubling. Since he is now among the prime movers of the economic discourse in the country, the wider debate around the NFC suffers from focusing on the wrong thing. Arguments for or

against the current formula of the 7th NFC need to be about politics and delivery. Let's take the example of education – an issue on which many in the anti-NFC ranks have the right instincts. First, some context. For decades, one of the most vexing problems in Pakistan's education sector was the quality of teachers in the public sector or government schools. This problem was so severe by the late 1990s that a large cohort of Pakistani families had already exited the public sector education system, birthing a tsunami of private schools that now dominate the education discourse. At the heart of the large-scale migration of parents and families away from government schools (and toward private schools, including low-cost and low-quality private schools) was the low quality of government schoolteachers – especially at the primary school level. This low quality was baked into government, and government schools across the entire country thanks to something called the PTC. The PTC stands for Primary Teaching Certificate. It was the instrument through which political patrons (including the military regime of General Ziaul Haq and General Pervez Musharraf) distributed jobs to those 'matric-pass' candidates that had the eyes, ears or wallets of local political and administrative bosses (MNAs, MPAs, commissioners, DCs etc). To become a primary school teacher, you had to prove that you had passed 'matric' and would one day complete the PTC. Many did, many did not – but the institutionalization of 'matric-pass' primary schoolteachers essentially stripped government schools of any kind of quality education. The government later added a CT (Certificate of Teaching, for 'inter-pass' candidates to be able to teach middle and high school students). Not surprisingly, the market responded with en-masse migration (for those who could afford it) away from government schools. As government schools became the last refuge for only the very poorest families, learning outcomes at govern-

ment schools kept plummeting. This happened throughout the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. And then, in 2010, came the 7th NFC Award and the 18th Amendment. Many Pakistanis forget that in 2009, just a couple of years before the most recent wave of the coarsening and contamination of the public discourse by 'non-political actors' (that began in earnest in October 2011), political parties had learnt to come together for meaningful reform. The parliamentary committee that delivered the 18th Amendment drew from the full spectrum of politics, including PML-N, PML-Q, PML-F, ANP, MQM, JUI-F, Jamaat-e-Islami, PPP(S), JWP, NPP, PKMAP, BNP-A. This committee was trying to solve a wide array of politics and service delivery problems – and the solution they devised was the 18th Amendment (and in parallel, and consonant to it, the 7th NFC Award). One of the most divisive and lively debates this committee had was on education. The final consensus of the group insisted on the delivery of education being unambiguously devolved to the provinces (codified through the deletion of the concurrent list in the fourth schedule of the constitution), and the establishment of education as a right for every child in Pakistan between the ages of five and sixteen (codified through the insertion of Article 25-A to the constitution). Naturally, the increased share of the provinces in the 7th NFC was aligned to help service the new responsibilities of the provinces. The generic education report card for Pakistan is an F-for failure. But the anti-NFC crowd really don't want a deeper assessment of what lies beneath such generic declarations. To be clear: Pakistan is suffering from a severe crisis in learning and education. But where was the country in 2010-2011 – the last fiscal year prior to the 7th NFC Award (and the 18th Amendment) – and where is it today? The total enrolment of students from Class I to Class X in 2010-2011 was 25,039,395. The corresponding number for 2020-2021 was: 31,181,896. This translates to a net increase of 25

per cent. In 2010-2011, there were 679,829 government schoolteachers in Pakistan. Fifty per cent of these teachers were either PTC (266,592 matric pass) or CT (72,078 inter pass). Only 20 per cent had a Bachelors (91,899) or a Masters (39,501). In 2020-2021, there were 746,733 government schoolteachers in Pakistan. Eighty-five per cent of them have a Bachelors (182,113), Masters (449,447) or a PhD (6,238). The system still has the good old PTC and CT folks – but they now make up a mere 12 per cent of the entire cohort of government schoolteachers. On the quality of teachers in the public sector alone, provinces have completely transformed the realm of the possible. This happened in large part due to one province taking the lead and setting an example, and the rest of the provinces learning from it and following suit. The instrument of change in this case was the elimination of a patronage-based system of teacher recruitment and the introduction of a merit-based hiring process through something that has come to be known as the National Testing Service. Matric and inter-pass candidates simply cannot pass the NTS test. The dramatically higher quality of government schoolteachers – pioneered by Punjab in 2009 under the then chief minister Shehbaz Sharif – has not yet translated into dramatically improved learning outcomes. But it has come at a substantial financial cost. In the Basic Pay Scale of 2011, the salary of a BPS-14 government employee (the level at which middle school teachers are paid) ranged from Rs8,000 to Rs26,300. In the Basic Pay Scale of 2022, the salary of that same BPS-14 government employee ranges from Rs22,530 to Rs74,730. The upper limit (high end of BPS-16) for a high school teacher has risen from Rs34,000 in 2011 to Rs95,870 in 2022. This essentially represents a 3x salary escalation across the board, since the 7th NFC Award.

The writer is an analyst and commentator.

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



General Yahya Khan (left), with US President Richard Nixon
The Election Commission registered 24 political parties, and public meetings attracted many large crowds. On the eve of the elections, a cyclone struck East Pakistan killing approximately 500,000 people, though this event did not deter people from par-

ticipating in the first ever general election.[111] Mobilizing support for their Six Points manifesto the Awami League secured electoral support in East Pakistan.[111] Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party asserted itself even more. Its socialist rationale, roti kapda aur makaan (food, cloth, and shelter) and the

party's socialist manifesto quickly popularised the party.[111] The conservative PML, led by Nurul Amin, raised religious and nationalist slogans all over the country.[111] Out of a total of 313 seats in the National Assembly, the Awami League won 167 seats but none from West Pakistan[111] and the PPP won

88 seats but none from East Pakistan. While the Awami League had won enough seats to form a government without the need for any coalition, West Pakistani elites refused to hand over power to the East Pakistani party.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Zendaya candidly stresses having intimacy coordinators on sets

Zendaya felt 'safe' around working with the intimacy coordinator on the sets of 'Challengers'

Zendaya recently spoke about the importance of having intimacy coordinators in her latest film, Challengers. In the sports-themed movie, the 27-year-old actress played the role of Tashi Duncan, an aspiring tennis player who gives up her career after a major injury. At the film's premiere in Rome, Zendaya praised the intimacy coordinator, who helped her feel safe during the filming of intimate scenes. She co-starred with Mike Faist and Josh O'Connor in the movie. "We had an intimacy coordinator which was fantastic and very helpful because it was important that we felt safe," she told The Hollywood



Reporter. The Euphoria star added, "I spoke with my colleagues so that we could find a way to feel at ease. We played tennis together, we went out together, we rehearsed together. We got to bond and feel good with each other." In agreement with Zendaya, Mike said that their "unstructured time" together was crucial to building a strong relationship and depicting a "believable" romance on television. "We were able to spend time together during rehearsals and beyond, especially with Josh. We were able to get to know each other as people before we could get into the film. We created a real friendship that created the basis of the film," he elucidated further.

Tech

WhatsApp testing new feature to suggest new chats

WhatsApp is rolling out a new update through the Google Play Beta Program. The messaging app is testing a new feature in its beta program for Android that suggests contacts you might want to chat with. The feature aims to enhance communication by suggesting contacts for initiating new conversations. It also helps users rediscover contacts they may have inadvertently overlooked or forgotten about. When you open the app, you might see a new section at the bottom of your chats list. This section will show suggested contacts who you have not chatted with before. Thanks to the latest WhatsApp beta for Android 2.24.9.5 update, which is available on the Google Play Store, we discovered that WhatsApp is now rolling out the feature to suggest contacts to chat with. — WABetaInfo website



Previously, WABetaInfo reported that WhatsApp was developing a contact suggestion feature. Now, the update is available to some beta testers. Some lucky beta testers are already experiencing this handy feature, which suggests new contacts to chat with directly from your address book. Beta testers will notice a new section in their chat list. It is for some people to test the app before it will be available to everyone. The update helps you find new people to talk to easily. Just look at the bottom of your chats list, and you'll see suggestions of who to chat with. It's like WhatsApp is saying, "Hey, why not chat with these people?" These suggestions are also presented to new users during their initial registration with WhatsApp, helping them establish connections from the start.

Health

3 meals for better mental health

Mental health can be improved by consuming nutritional diet

Our physical and emotional well-being are entirely dependent on the food we eat. According to research, those who consume a diet high in fruits, vegetables, seafood, and whole grains are actually 25% to 35% less likely to suffer from depression than persons who follow a Western diet, which is high in fat, sugar, and ultra-processed foods. "Many people don't realise the link between food and mental well-being," said Signe Svanfeldt, lead nutritionist at Lifesum. "A nutritious, balanced diet positively impacts our energy and mood, as well as our gut microbiota,

which influences our mental wellbeing," she added. Following are three essential diet nutrients needed for a good mental health, according to Yahoo Life. Broccoli, spinach, carrots, quinoa, brown rice, beans, lentils, and chickpeas are examples of prebiotic foods. According to Svanfeldt, probiotics and prebiotics help lower inflammation, which raises serotonin levels in the body, a neurotransmitter that controls mood and lessens signs of stress and anxiety. Other diets contain Omega-3 foods, which include walnuts, salmon, trout, tuna, chia seeds, hemp seeds, and flaxseed.

Omega-3s are good fats that have been demonstrated to lessen brain inflammation that has been connected to mood problems. As a result, they may aid in enhancing well-being, as per Svanfeldt. Additionally, foods high in polyphenols include peppers, red cabbage, spinach, walnuts, hazelnuts, kiwi fruit, and red cabbage. "Polyphenols promote healthy blood flow to the brain and can protect it from oxidative stress and inflammation," Svanfeldt said. "This may affect mental health, by reducing depressive symptoms and increasing overall mental wellbeing."



Chairman J&K People's Freedom League extends Eid greetings to Muslims

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Farooq Rehmani, Chairman of J&K People's Freedom League and former Convener of All Parties Hurriyat Conference AJ&K Chapter, extends his heartfelt Eid greetings to all Muslims who fasted during Ramadan, the month of the Quran's revelation on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), offering guidance to humanity.

Talking to APP, he called on Muslim leaders to reform their policies and mindset, and urged the UN to enforce its Charter and resolutions to prevent the devastating consequences of war perpetrated by inimical powers and their allies. He emphasized that Muslim governments should uphold the principles of Eid and adhere to the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah if they aim to lead the Muslim world.

Rehmani, warned of grave challenges facing Muslims in regions like Palestine, Jammu and Kashmir, and Myanmar. He cautioned against the horrors of racism and fascism, urging vigilance and solidarity.

Highlighting the reasons behind modern imperialism's aggression towards Muslims, he emphasized Islam's global popularity despite organized propaganda by fanatics.

This has unsettled imperialist forces, leading to aggressive measures aimed at hindering Islam's progress and denying humanity its benefits. He compared the tragedy in Jammu and Kashmir to that of Palestine, stating that India's Modi regime, akin to the Zionist regime, has massacred around one hundred thousand Kashmiri Muslims over the last three decades before annexing Kashmir as a Union Territory.

He criticized the abrogation of State laws in Kashmir, including the Residence Law, which now allows non-state Indians to obtain Kashmiri domicile, violating UNSC resolutions and longstanding citizenship laws. Basic human rights and civil liberties are suppressed, turning the state into a concentration camp.

Maharashtra is the first Indian state to acquire land near Srinagar airport for its own State Bhawan, with other states set to follow. The BJP-led government has established 1,250 schools in the Valley to indoctrinate Muslim children with Hindutva ideology, aiming to replace Islam with Hinduism in Jammu and Kashmir.

He stated that killings, both targeted and widespread, are common, with thousands of Kashmiris held in Indian jails for years. The existing laws violate fundamental rights and grant intelligence agencies unchecked authority to arrest Kashmiri youth or charge individuals with treason.

He accused India of seeking to destabilize the region through conflict with Pakistan, alongside ongoing oppression of Kashmiris and persecution of its Muslim minority through methods like lynching and the implementation of the newly adopted Citizens Amendment Act (CAA).



MULTAN: Vendor busy making flower garlands to attract customers. APP

Pakistan pushes UN Security Council to ensure implementation of its Gaza ceasefire resolution

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has urged the UN Security Council to take appropriate steps to ensure implementation "in letter and spirit" of its resolution (2728) that called for a ceasefire in besieged Gaza.

Speaking in the General Assembly, Ambassador Munir Akram said that as agreed at the Arab-OIC Summit in Riyadh, the 15-member Council should impose an immediate ban on the export of weapons and ammunition to Israel and hold it responsible for its crimes against the Palestinian people in the enclave. The 193-member Assembly met to debate "the use of veto on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question."

At the same time, Ambassador Akram reiterated Pakistan's unflinching support for the admission of Palestine as a full member of the United Nations, saying, "This step will make a Palestinian State a political reality and inevitability."

The UN General Assembly meeting was called following the veto of a draft resolution, documented as 2024/239, submitted by the United States, prompting a discussion on the situation in the Middle East, particularly concerning the Palestinian question.

Acknowledging the subsequent adoption of Security Council resolution 2728 (2024) calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the Pakistani envoy expressed disappointment in Israel's non-compliance with the resolution, emphasizing the binding nature of Security



Council resolutions under Article 25 of the UN Charter.

Noting that the vetoed resolution contained several positive elements, he said there were significant deficiencies in it, particularly the absence of a demand for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, which had the overwhelming support of the entire UN membership, as expressed through the adoption of the two General Assembly resolutions.

The Pakistani envoy also criticized the vetoed resolution for its failure to address Israel's military actions adequately, including the killing of innocent Palestinians and the absence of reference to the ICJ's preliminary findings and recommendations. He also noted the resolution's lack of opposition to the threatened Israeli ground offensive in Rafah. Referring to Israel's military campaign against Gaza, Ambassador Akram emphasized the

urgency of a ceasefire, condemning Israel's actions that resulted in the loss of thousands of innocent lives, targeting of essential infrastructure, and obstruction of humanitarian aid. He underscored the necessity for any decision by the Security Council to prioritize an immediate cessation of hostilities and the lifting of barriers to humanitarian assistance. Reiterating Pakistan's support for the two-state solution, Ambassador Akram said that the establishment of an independent State of Palestine, with Al-Quds as its capital, was the only viable path to lasting peace in the Middle East.

He called for the revival of the peace process, inclusive of key Arab and OIC countries, saying, "The brutality and bloodshed in Gaza has persisted for too long. They must end now, and their recurrence must be prevented through a durable two-state solution." APP

Army Chief trying to take Pakistan towards improvement

ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Atif Ikram Sheikh has paid tribute to the Armed Forces of Pakistan and other security forces on the occasion of Eid and said that under the leadership of Commander Syed Asim Munir, the Armed Forces of Pakistan have strengthened the defense of the country. While performing the great duty of security, guard the borders of the country, on which the whole nation salutes all of you.

Atif Ikram Sheikh said that Commander Asim Munir is also working to improve the economic situation of the country and a forum like SIFC has been formed which is working tirelessly to bring investment in the country.

President Atif Ikram said that the entire business community is standing side by side with its armed forces and other security forces and wherever in need, we will step by step. While extending greetings on the occasion of Eid, we reiterate that there is no place to hide in our country for destroying peace, terrorists and facilitators. The people of Pakistan who loved most with country, as always, will foil the nefarious design of the forces creating chaos in the country. DNA

Nisar Memon urges political parties, stakeholders to shun differences for fighting pressing national challenges

ISLAMABAD: Former Federal Minister and Senator, Nisar A Memon on Tuesday urged the country's political parties, whether in opposition or in government, as well as newly formed ones, to set aside their differences and refrain from fostering divisiveness in society, and unite in the fight against terrorism.

In an Eid Mubarak message issued here, the veteran politician and senior civil society member commenced his message with the verses of Holy Quran: "As we celebrate Eid, may Allah accept our fasting, prayers, charity and all the good deeds He made it possible for us to perform during the blessed month of Ramadan, as ordained by Him in the Holy Quran - Surah Al-Bakarah 2:85 - and in accordance with Sunnah." Memon said the motherland is currently facing unprecedented challenges. "In these times, let us recall the teachings of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, emphasizing Unity, Faith and Discipline and recommit ourselves to actions to save Pakistan," he said. As an ordinary citizen, he said he urged the federal, provincial and local governments to immediately withdraw all politically motivated cases. Furthermore, he called upon them for release of all individuals held under administrative orders, both from police stations and prisons so that they can celebrate Eid with their loved ones. "This will create an enabling environment for us to come together and address our challenges, turning them into opportunities for social, political and economic progress."

Islamabad Capital Police chalked out comprehensive security plan for Eid-ul-Fitr

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Police have chalked out a comprehensive security plan to maintain peace and tranquility in Islamabad during the Eid-ul-Fitr, a public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Deputy Inspector General Of Police (DIG) Syed Shahzad Nadeem Bhukhari, a comprehensive security plan for Eid Ul Fitr has been finalized. According to the security plan, more than 3000 police personnel including Zonal DPOs, SDPOs will protect Eid prayers to be offered in masjids and imam bargahs which have been categorized according to their sensitivity. Likewise, police personnel will be deployed at Faisal Mosque to provide security cover to the devotees. All the masjids, imam bargahs, religious places, public parks and other important places would be provided maximum security on Eid adding that DIG Operations will monitor all the security arrangements in the city while all security will also be monitored through safe city

surveillance cameras and special police squads. Likewise, the dolphin personnel will be deputed in the city for patrolling at all public and sensitive places while personnel of the special branch will perform their duties during Eid prayer.

Similarly, the Islamabad Capital Police officials are deployed to maintain traffic flow in the city. The Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad will monitor all the traffic arrangements. One wheeling will not be allowed and those violating traffic rules will be dealt with iron hands while public places, parks, playgrounds will be kept under strict vigilance and security cover.

SSP Operation has strictly directed all the zonal officers that a large number of people will gather for Eid prayer and the concerned zonal officers would be responsible of the security around worship places in their respective areas adding that the DPOs and SDPOs and Officer Incharge Police Stations will physically remain in their respective areas.



ISLAMABAD: A view of deserted 7th Avenue due to Eid-ul-Fitr holidays in the Federal Capital. ONLINE

Delegation of Government schools visits Safe City Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, following the special directives of CPO Safe City/Traffic, the director Technical Safe City welcomed the delegation of Govt Jinnah Pilot and Ali Akbar Awan model and secondary school students at the Safe City Islamabad, a public relations officer said.

He said that the delegation visits the command and control center, the data hub unit, modern technology-equipped cameras, and the Police operations center hall. They were fully briefed about the procedures and benefits.

Furthermore, the delegation was informed that Safe City Islamabad is playing a significant role in various departments through modern tech-

niques, including the Police Operations Center, Emergency Control Center, Data Hub Unit, Dispatch Control Center, E-Challan System, and the "Pucar-15" helpline. He emphasized that the student delegation was also apprised of the functionality and benefits of the Safe City cameras in the city. The modern cameras of Safe City are playing a crucial role in ensuring the safety of the city and preventing crimes and safeguarding the lives and property of citizens. 42% of crimes are resolved through the Safe City Command and Control Center. Face recognition cameras have been installed at the entry and exit points of the city which are playing an important role in identifying suspicious elements, he maintained. INP

Twelve Pakistani technicians receive geodetic datum training in China

BEIJING: The second technical training for establishing new generation national geodetic datum of Pakistan was recently completed, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. Some 12 Pakistani technicians participated in the course to improve and update their knowledge and technology of surveying and mapping.

In 2011, the Pakistani government requested assistance from the Chinese government to establish a Next-Generation Geodetic Datum of Pakistan.

This Geographic Information System mapping and surveying project is expected to encourage research and innovation in the fields of economy and society. Its linkages would promote cooperation between science and technology, public institutions and government agencies. In May 2017, the Chinese and Pakistani governments signed letters of exchange and the Chinese government pledged financial support for the project. According to the organizer, geodetic datum provides an essential spatial reference framework for mapping and construction activities along China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, ensuring accuracy and alignment with project objectives. INP

Think tank raises alarm against pushing govt to deviate from WHO guidelines

ISLAMABAD: Capital Calling, an Islamabad-based think tank, has raised alarm against the surge in the campaign by multinational cigarette companies to resist the guidelines set by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international bodies regarding budgetary and other checks on their business.

The think tank stated that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has duly recommended to the government that there should be a uniform tax on all cigarettes being manufactured in Pakistan, regardless of their local or foreign brands. The ace researcher on anti-smoking, Dr Hassan Shehzad, from IIUI, said that in reality, cigarette prices are lower in Pakistan compared to other regional countries. He said there is a direct link between reduction in smoking and increase in cigarette prices.

He said it is unfortunate that representatives of cigarette companies dominate public debate, expressing the need for the govern-

ment to contain this practice as per the WHO protocols that require the governments to be vigilant about promotion of cigarette business.

Dr Shehzad, the only researcher IMF has referred to in its recommendations for tax reforms in the country, also urged the anti-smoking groups to carry out genuine research as the data they have been presenting to the policymakers is old, which needs to be re-explained. Similarly, awareness about tobacco is almost non-existent on digital media which is an anachronism in this modern age.

He said that due to these weaknesses that multinational companies conveniently capitalize on to push forward their agenda. He said it has been observed that these companies are competing with one another to increase smoking in the society but they come on the same page to influence the government into facilitating their business, which by and large is a health hazard. INP

Dr Ramesh clarifies CM KPK 's unjust criticism over Gandhara Corridor Bill

ISLAMABAD: Member National Assembly (MNA) Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani has requested Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur to join hands for transforming Gandhara as an international role model for the faith tourism with the active collaboration of federal and all provincial stakeholders.

In a letter addressed to the Chief Minister in response to criticism of the newly introduced bill in the National Assembly for establishing the Gandhara Corridor to connect Pakistan with the Buddhist world, Dr Vankwani clarified that the bill is not at all a part of any conspiracy to snatch or take over the Gandhara Civilization remains in KP, emphasizing that "It is, in fact, to ensure that the provinces receive due facilitation and support from the federal government to promote and market Gandhara for increasing revenue through systematic arrival of international pilgrims via the federal capital Islamabad." He urged that the bill was an attempt at exploring opportunities for strengthening Pakistan's econ-



omy as well as projecting a positive image of the country, as establishing a high-level facilitation center at the federal level to promote Gandhara faith pilgrimage with the collaboration of provinces would not violate the 18th Amendment which ensures provincial autonomy. Dr Vankwani further stated in his letter that Gandhara should not only be limited to the remains or archaeological sites as Gandhara civilisation is actually based on tolerance, harmony and brotherhood among different faiths, communities and segments of human soci-

ety. According to him, Gandhara civilisation comprises several historical archaeological sites spread across Pakistan and has the potential to attract the followers of Dharmic religions of the subcontinent, including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism.

"Last year while serving as Chairman of Prime Minister's Taskforce on Gandhara Tourism, I had identified 50 potential Gandhara sites in all provinces, which already included Mohenjo-daro remains and stupas located in Sindh as well. Out of 50 sites, 38 are related to Buddhism, 10 are of Hinduism and two belong to Jainism," Dr Ramesh responded to the criticism for not introducing the bill on Indus civilization.

"The proposed Gandhara Corridor would also demonstrate that the state of Pakistan supports Non-Muslims to enjoy religious freedom, as guaranteed in the Constitution of Pakistan and international laws," he further explained his role as a minority parliamentarian in the National Assembly.

"It is worth mentioning that the President of Pakistan Mr. Asif Ali Zardari was the man behind the 18th Amendment Bill who signed it to empower provinces," Dr Vankwani wrote, regretting that "it is ironic, baseless and unfair to criticize myself, a minority member of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), for violation of 18th Amendment which ensures Provincial Autonomy."

"I would like to request you to kindly arrange my meeting with all the stakeholders of KP under your leadership at the CM House, Peshawar, on a priority basis to address the reservations that have arisen regarding the Gandhara Bill," Dr Vankwani stated, adding that "I am quite confident that we will remove all kinds of doubts and reservations on the Gandhara Corridor Bill, once we sit at the table." Recently, Dr Vankwani had introduced one of the most significant private member bills in parliamentary history of National Assembly, aimed at establishing the Gandhara Corridor to connect Pakistan with the Buddhist world.