



Opposition should wait for 2023 elections

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Senate passes Biden's \$1.9t COVID-19 Bill on party-line vote



One killed, several injured as Karachi Express derails near Pannu Aqil

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: A woman was killed while several others sustained injuries when Lahore bound 15-Up Karachi Express derailed near Pannu Aqil between Sanghi and Mando Dero railway stations in the wee hours of Sunday.

According to Pakistan Railways sources, rescue operation was started immediately and the injured were shifted to the nearby hospitals for first-aid. The Rescue teams and Pakistan army soldiers reached the spot and conducted rescue operation. Inspector General railways Arif Nawaz said that investigation would be carried out to know the real cause accident. Meanwhile, Railways Minister Azam Swati has ordered an inquiry into the accident, adding the inquiry report would be presented in 4 to 5 days. He said that strict action would be taken against those officials who were found guilty of negligence.

The PR has established helpline numbers at Lahore central office (042-99201692), Karachi Control Office (021-99213529) and Sukkur Railway station (071-9310087).

The restoration work of the track is underway, however, rail traffic is being operated through the alternative track.



ROHRI: Railway workers repair a rail track at the scene of a train accident near Panu Aqil.

Imran knows how to cope with challenges: Ali

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Ali Muhammad Khan has said Prime Minister Imran Khan's 25 years long political struggle was full of challenges and he knew well how to cope with them to provide relief to the masses and to bring change in their living standard.

Imran Khan was committed with his promise from day one to continue ongoing accountability process across the board against the corrupts and plunderers, he said talking to a private news channel. The minister said, for the first time in the history of country, a sitting brave Prime Minister has sought fresh vote of confidence, adding although he (PM) was not bound by Constitution or law to get vote of confidence. "I am proud of the parliamentarians who have expressed confidence on the leadership of Imran Khan," he added. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Leader Kanwal Shauzab congratulated the whole nation as the prime minister had made a history by winning vote of confidence from the National Assembly.

Imran Khan had taken sincere efforts to strengthen democracy, improved performance of national institutions and provision of immediate relief to poor segments of society, she stated. She said the negative and dirty politics of the opposition parties had completely rejected by the public. —Online

COVID-19 claims 39 lives, infects 1,780 more people

LAHORE: The national tally on Sunday of total active COVID-19 cases recorded 18,055 with 1,780 more people tested positive for the deadly virus and 1,038 people recovered from the disease during the last 24 hours.

Thirty-nine coronavirus patients have died during past 24 hours, 37 of them were under treatment in hospital and two in their respective quarantines and homes on Saturday, according to the latest update issued by the NCOC. Out of the total 39 deaths, 20 people had died under treatment on ventilators.

During the last 24 hours, most of the deaths had occurred in the Punjab followed by Sindh. The maximum ventilators were occupied in four major areas including Multan 17 percent, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) 30 percent, Peshawar 21 percent and Lahore 36 percent.

The maximum Oxygen beds (alternate oxygen providing facility other than ventilator administered as per medical requirement of COVID patient) was also occupied in Four major areas of Gujrat 94 percent, Peshawar 40 percent, ICT 27 percent and Multan 29 percent. Around 216 ventilators were occupied elsewhere in the country while no COVID affected person was on ventilator in AJK, GB and Balochistan. Some 38,887 tests were conducted across the country on Saturday, including 10,591 in Sindh, 15,862 in Punjab, 6,712 in KP, 4,084 in ICT, 366 in Balochistan, 413 in GB, and 859 in AJK. —LTTP

Second SEZ starts with Rs53.6b investment: BOI

ISLAMABAD: The Board of Investment (BOI) has said that second Special Economic Zones (SEZ) of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) begins with Planned Rs.53.6 billion investment in Faisalabad to attract the foreign and local investors with state of art world standard facilities.

After the launch of CPEC's first Rashakai SEZ, colonization of the CPEC, Allama Iqbal Industrial City (AIIC) Faisalabad begins with planned Rs.53.6 billion investment, said a press release issued by BOI here on Sunday.

In this regard, a meeting of the AIIC, SEZ Committee held here, which accorded approval to 15 applicants and allotted land of 320 acres. According to press release issued, the applicants include a Chinese Firm Zheng-bang Agriculture Pakistan Private Limited with a plan Rs. 800 million investment in agri sector. Amongst the other 14 local firms, Zahid Jee Textile Mills, Ocean Ceramics, and Ittehad Metals to initiate business establishments worth Rs.11.8 billion, Rs.11.2 billion and 7.5 b respectively. —Online

Masses support PTI in struggle to uphold democracy: Shibli

■ Says PM Imran Khan believes in politics of principles

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz on Sunday said Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) believed in democratic norms and fighting for upholding the democratic principles as well as ethical values.

People acknowledge endeavours of the incumbent govt and supported Prime Minister Imran Khan in this struggle, the minister said while addressing a press conference here. He said PM Imran Khan believed in the politics of principles and decided to get a fresh vote of confidence though legally there was no need for it. The National Assembly reposed confidence in the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan with even more votes than the 2018, he stated.

Senator Shibli Faraz said a wave of jubilation and celebration was witnessed not only inside Pakistan but also thousands of felicitation messages were received from abroad after he secured the trust vote.

Shibli Faraz said Imran Khan's victory in the vote of confidence has given a new spirit to people who understood that the designs of dark forces were defeated. The minister said opposition parties especially the Pak-

istan Democratic Movement believed in politics of self-interest, bullying and sale and purchase of loyalties and they had damaged the entire social, economic and political system during the past four decades.

He said some of the opposition leaders entered into politics in 1985 party-less elections and introduced the culture of bribery and horse trading to come to power.

Shibli Faraz said due to the political approach of the past rulers the country faced severe challenges which added in the sufferings of masses whereas they plundered national wealth and built properties not only inside Pakistan but in Europe and other parts of the world. They turned politics into business and used it for self-interest and not for the interest of country, said the minister. He said the PTI has gradually emerged on the political horizon of the country and in the 2013 election it formed govt in KPK, adding that due to its good performance people showed their confidence on it and PTI came into power in 2018 with masses' support.

Now after the Senate election it has become the single largest party in both the National Assembly and Senate having representation in all four provinces as people have supported its ideology of ending the

status quo. He said in last general elections people rejected the politics of self-interest and the PPP and PML-N have been confined to only one province each.

He said the narrative of opposition parties has been changed with the situation and if they won the elections, they term it as free and fair elections. In the case of defeat, they started hue and cry by alleging of rigged elections. The information minister vowed to continue to struggle against the elements which socially, economically and democratically damaged the country.

He said the PDM candidate won the Senate elections from Islamabad not on merit but through unfair means for which they did not deserve any credit. He said they want to come to power to restart the ugly business of loot and plunder and wanted to get relief in corruption cases but they would not get it as PM Imran was a bold and upright person who would not make any compromise on principles. He said Imran entered in politics not for the sake of power but for serving the nation. He said the PTI govt took practical steps for bringing transparency in the electoral system so that people could be elected on merit and not through use of ill-gotten money.

Pakistan committed to promote tourism: Omar

— Says govt to ensure provision of enabling environment

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Energy Omar Ayub Khan on Sunday said the government, in collaboration with the private sector, would counter the anti-Pakistan propaganda of adversary by promoting tourism activities.

The nature bestowed the country with picturesque views, healthy environment and lush green beauty which could attract domestic and international tourists throughout the year, he said. "India has a nefarious design to undermine Pakistan, God forbid, in the media for which it [adversary] had set up hundreds of false websites. We have to counter these by holding such recreational events to promote tourism in the country," he said while addressing a panel

dialogue titled "Scope of Adventure Tourism in Pakistan" on the final day of the Tourism Expo & Family Festival that started here at the Fatima Jinnah Park on March 5.

Renowned mountaineer Nazir Sabir, Paragliding Pilots Ahmed Kamal and Brad Sander, Ski Divers Jahanzeb Noorzai and Sakina Zeeshan, besides Microlight pilot Fawad Abdullah participated in the panel discussion, shared their experience and gave useful suggestion to promote adventure tourism in the country. The minister thanked the national leadership for ensuring coordinated efforts in holding such a mega event, which would open up new avenues of adventure tourism in Pakistan.

He also praised sponsors from both public and private sectors for making the three-

day event successful. Main features of the festival were paragliding, skydiving, wingsuit flying and trike flying, which mesmerized the visitors. The minister said the government would ensure provision of enabling environment and make all-out efforts to attract the attention of tourists as well as adventurers from across the globe to exploit the country's real potential in the tourism sector.

"We have the mission to promote paragliding and skydiving sports, and keep all the sites open besides exploring more sites in potential areas," he said. Omar Ayub said Pakistan had such sites where paragliding and skydiving activities could be carried out at any time due to mostly 'conducive' weather conditions. "We are committed to promote domestic and inter-

Shab-e-Mairaj to be observed on Thursday night

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Shab-e-Miraj-un-Nabi (SAW) would be observed across the country on Thursday night (March 11) with religious fervor, great respect and devotion.

The word Meraj of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is derived from Arabic word Urooj, which means 'height,' or 'ascension.' It is celebrated on Rajab 27th in the Islamic calendar.

During Meraj, the command for five daily prayers (Salat) was also given to the Holy Prophet (SAW). In most of the mosques, large gatherings would be avoided this year also aiming to contain the spread of deadly coronavirus pandemic. Muslims every year on (Rajab-ul-Marajab 26), the night of 27th of Rajab (Islamic calendar) observe Shab-e-Miraj in which the Holy Prophet (SAW) went on a special journey to meet Allah Almighty, crossing seven skies on the heav-

Bilawal asks for probe into claims vote of confidence

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Sunday asked that allegations, that the prime minister's vote of confidence took place a day earlier in the National Assembly with fewer than the 178 members reported, must be looked into.

The PPP chairman was addressing the media after a meeting with Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly Hamza Shahbaz. The PPP leader met the PML-N leader at his Model Town residence in Lahore in the first meeting between the two leaders since Hamza's release from jail.

Bilawal, in his media address, claimed that Prime Minister Imran Khan was "neither voluntarily voted for as the prime minister by the Members of the Assembly, nor was he voluntarily voted for in this vote of confidence."

He termed the move to seek a trust vote "a joke". "He ran a race alone and declared himself the winner," the PPP chairman said, adding: "But even this was rigged."

"This allegation raised by a member of the opposition present in the Assembly, that the number of votes announced do not match the number of people in attendance, must be investigated," said Bilawal. Bilawal, in his briefing, also heaped scorn on the Punjab government, criticising it for incarcerating the leader of the opposition in the provincial assembly. "Lahore's progress used to be a shining example for the rest of the country."



LAHORE: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari and Hamza Shehbaz address a press conference after a meeting.

Pakistan providing low-priced petroleum products in region

From Our staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Despite financial constraints and substantial increase in the prices of petroleum products at the international market, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government has not passed on its impact to the common man by maintaining the rates at lowest level as compared to regional countries.

Pakistan is standing atop in providing the low-priced petroleum products for the welfare of its masses among regional countries, and on the 18th position in a list of 167 countries of the world, according to an official document available with APP.

The present petroleum rates in Pak-

istan are lowest in comparison to the regional countries including Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and India where per liter price of petrol varies from \$0.83 to \$1.26, while the commodity in Pakistan is available at \$0.70 per liter. As per a comparative statement, the price of per liter petrol in Pakistan is \$0.70, Sri Lanka \$0.83, Nepal \$0.95, Bangladesh \$1.05, India \$1.26, China \$1.03, United Kingdom \$1.70 and Germany \$1.64.

Meanwhile, a senior official privy to petroleum sector developments told APP that petrol rates in India were revised on a daily basis transmitting even a minute's variation in global oil prices to the public and dealers. Contrary to it, he said, the petroleum

prices in Pakistan were reviewed fortnightly with the government's utmost efforts to bear the burden of upward fluctuation in the international market by its own, but sometimes a slight portion had to be passed on to the masses in extreme compelling situations.

This also reflected for the current fortnight when PM Imran rejected a summary of Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) to increase the petroleum prices, saying the people must be given relief. OGRA had proposed an increase of Rs 6.22 in the price of Motor Spirit Petrol, Rs 6.82 in the price of High-Speed Diesel, Rs 6.37 raise in the price of Kerosene Oil, and Rs 5.78 hike in Light Diesel Oil.