

LAHORE P3

Immediate polls only solution to current political turmoil

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KSA Crown Prince greets Shehbaz



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PA session halted, PTI MPAs thrash Mazari

LAHORE: The Saturday's Punjab Assembly session called on Saturday to elect new chief minister exploded into violence as the ruling PTI MPAs attacked Deputy Speaker Sardar Dost Mazari who was chairing the proceedings. After the attack, the assembly proceedings were halted for the time being. At the onset of the session, the PTI MPAs surrounded the speaker's dais and raised slogans against the opposition. They then attacked Dost Mazari, hit him with lotas they were carrying, slapped him and dragged him by the hair. Dost Mazari was also kicked and punched after the lawmakers threw him on to the ground. The security men rushed in to save the deputy speaker. They wrestled

him free from the clutches of PTI MPAs and escorted him to safety in his chamber. Police entered the house on the direction of the deputy speaker. PML-Q leader and CM slot contender Ch Pervaiz Elahi who was custodian of the Punjab Assembly objected to the presence of police inside the house saying why did the police force enter the assembly. He said he would summon Punjab IG police and grilled him in this regard. He said he would award a month-long punishment to him for this act. The Punjab IG and home secretary are present in the PA Secretariat. Meanwhile, the treasury members in the Punjab Assembly leapt towards the chair of deputy speaker and occupied it. —APP

PPP not joining federal cabinet, says Zardari

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Co-chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari on Saturday revealed that PPP was not taking any ministry in new coalition government. The former president made these remarks while talking to the media outside Parliament House. "PPP isn't taking ministries in the new government," he said, adding that they [PPP] wants to accommodate friends [allies] first. The central leaders of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) held a consultative session at Zardari House on Friday to discuss the ministries in the new government. The session was attended by Asif Ali Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and senior leaders. The central leaders mulled over the pro-

posal of the foreign minister's slot for PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. They suggested giving the position of BISP to Sherry Rehman, Khursheed Shah Communication, Naveed Qamar Petroleum and the Ministry of Human Rights to Shazia Marri. It is learnt that PPP is likely to get slots of three ministers and four state ministers in the new government led by the PML-N. It was also recommended to give Rana Sanaulah the ministry of interior, Ahsan Iqbal Planning and Development, Marriyum Aurangzeb Information, Khawaja Asif Defence or Water and Power and Miftah Ismail Finance Adviser, whereas, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi is likely to get no ministry in the Centre. —DNA

Pak to 'continue close links' with IMF, WB: Miftah

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Miftah Ismail, reportedly in line to become the country's next finance chief, has said that the newly-established government remains committed to "continue close engagement" with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). "Dr Najy Benhassine, World Bank's Country Director for Pakistan and IMF's Resident Representative Dr Esther Perez Ruiz paid courtesy calls on me," tweeted Miftah. "Pakistan will continue close engagement with these institutions and pursue reforms that result in macroeconomic stability," he added.

Facing depleting foreign exchange reserves, Pakistan heavily relies on funding from international lenders to meet its balance-of-payments requirements. The programme with IMF is especially important as it keeps the door open for Pakistan to tap international markets for additional fund-raising as well. Meanwhile, its foreign exchange reserves have been depleting fast. Reserves held by the SBP fell another \$470 million on a weekly basis to reach a critical \$10.85 billion, revealed central bank data on Thursday. This is the lowest reserve-level since June 2020. Ismail is reported to be among the officials responsible for resuming talks with the IMF over the 7th review of the EFF.

Hamza secures 197 votes while PTI's Elahi boycotts election

PML-N Hamza elected CM after worst rowdy scenes

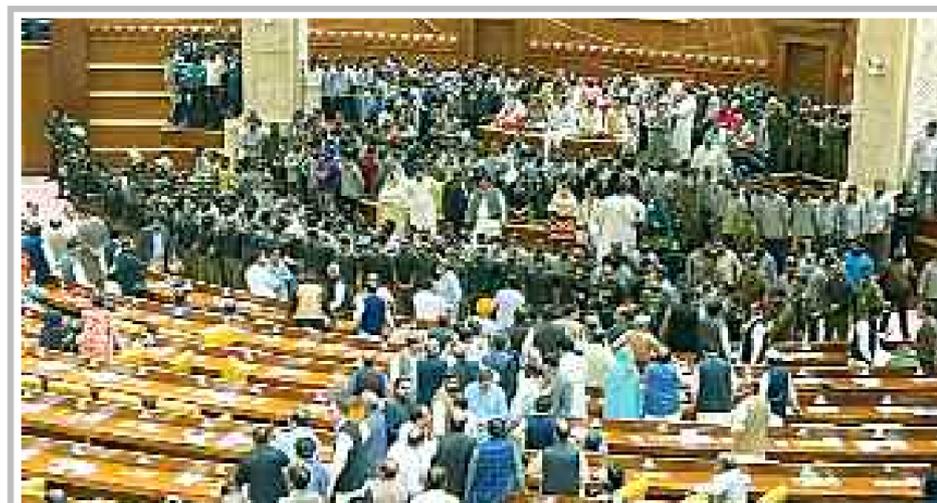
By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: PML-N's Hamza Shehbaz was elected the new chief minister of Punjab on Saturday after a chaotic session inside the legislature caused a delay of more than five hours and saw Deputy Speaker Sardar Dost Muhammad Mazari attacked, while PML-Q leader Chaudhry Parvez Elahi was injured as well. Hamza secured 197 votes while the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) nominee Chaudhry Parvez Elahi boycotted the election. Prior to the resumption of the session, PTI and PML-Q staged a walk-out, following which the deputy speaker started the proceedings for voting. One photo showed a bandage wrapped around Elahi's right forearm prior to the resumption of the session. As soon as Mazari entered the assembly, he was attacked by members of the treasury benches. The members threw "lotas" at him and tried to encircle him. Mazari was then immediately shifted to his chamber by assembly guards. Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leader Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's

(PML-N) Hamza Shehbaz are vying for the seat of Punjab CM. In order to be elected as CM, a candidate would need at least 186 votes in the 371-member house. In the PA, the PTI has 183 lawmakers, PML-Q 10, PML-N 165, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) seven. Five are independent and one belongs to Rah-i-Haq. Ahead of the proceedings, Mazari, while talking to reporters, said that he will ensure fair and transparent elections are held, saying that there might be efforts to further delay the voting but he will not succumb to the pressure. Meanwhile, Section 144 has been imposed in an area up to 500 meters around the PA building, to prevent political party workers from gathering. Strict action will be taken on blocking the Mall and any other road around the PA building. On Friday, a division bench of the Lahore High Court had dismissed the petition of PML-Q leader Elahi and asked Mazari to conduct the election for the new CM Punjab in a transparent and impartial manner on April 16. The bench further directed the deputy speaker to facilitate national/international observers, media persons, repre-

sentatives of PILDAT, Fafen and other organizations during the election. The bench comprising Justice Shujaat Ali Khan and Justice Jawad Hassan ordered the Chief Secretary and the inspector general of police to ensure a fool-proof security plan for the day of election. The bench observed that in the event of any complaint by any side, rapid action shall be taken against the delinquents. The bench observed that since the speaker is unable to preside over the assembly due to his contesting for the post of Chief Minister, the deputy speaker shall exercise the powers of the speaker in terms of section 53(3) of the Constitution. It remarked that Elahi, the speaker, having submitted nomination papers to contest against the portfolio of the CM, is unable to perform his functions as speaker, thus, Dost Muhammad Mazari, the deputy speaker, by the operation of law assumed the role of the Speaker. Treasury members attacked deputy speaker Punjab Assembly (PA) Dost Muhammad Mazari during the assembly session summoned in connection with election of Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Saturday. Sources said the treasury

members Rana Shahbaz and Khayal Muhammad Kastro were the first among the members who attacked deputy speaker. The treasury members while subjecting deputy speaker to violence pulled his hair, slapped him and hit him with lota. Meanwhile the other treasury members climbed on the dais while chanting slogans against the deputy speaker. The treasury members broke the chairs and mike of deputy speaker. Khayal Kastro occupied the speaker chair. Punjab Assembly security continued stopping the treasury members from creating ruckus who did not stop. Police was called in the house. Police took deputy speaker Punjab Assembly out from the assembly. Reacting to entry of police in the house, ruling coalition candidate for CM Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi said police is who to enter into the house. I will award punishment of one month to IG Police. I will summon IG Police Punjab in the house. Some members from combined opposition said police is called when one faces life threat. Had Pervez Elahi so much democratic then he could move forward and



LAHORE: A scene of the members of the treasury and opposition benches protest against each other during the voting of Punjab Chief Minister.

PM strongly condemns attack on Mazari

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday strongly condemned PTI/PML-Q led attack on the deputy speaker of PA, terming it a 'blatant display of violence and hooliganism'. In a tweet, the prime minister said that such an incident reflected Iman desperation and incitement to violence which was rupturing the society. The former PM was attacking the democracy itself, he opined. "PTI/PMLQ MPAs attack on Dy Speaker inside Punjab Assembly must be condemned in strongest terms possible. —DNA

Police arrest five PTI lawmakers

By Our Staff Correspondent

LAHORE: Minutes after the Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Dost Mazari wrote a letter to Inspector General of Police (IGP), Police launched an operation inside the provincial assembly and apprehended five members of the PTI. A chaos ensued in Punjab Assembly after the PTI lawmakers threw "lotas" at Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari as he arrived to chair the session for the election of the Chief Minister. The PTI lawmakers set off a ruckus in the Assembly as they brought "lotas" to the House and started chanting "lota, lota (turncoats)", lashing out at dissident PTI members, who parted ways with the party and decided to support the Opposition.

Closure of LNG, oil plants cause of power glitches: PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that country had the capacity of 35,000 MW of power generation, but due to the closure of different power-producing plants, run on gas and oil, different parts of the country had been facing load shedding for the last few days. Speaking in the National Assembly, the prime minister said that about 6,000 MW hydel power could be generated which was linked to the melting of glaciers and the availability of water. But unfortunately, the CPEC coal-based plants and the new LNG plants that could produce about 5,000 MW power, including the one set up during 2019, with a capacity to generate 1250 MW, had been closed for the last four years. It could not produce the power during the previous government. The former government did not give priority to such projects due to their incompetency, corruption and mismanagement, he added. The new plants could not generate power due to the unavailability of gas or expensive oil. The ministries concerned appraised him that

they could not finalise the import of LNG as no one in the previous government was ready to supervise such projects. He said the prices of LNG import had surged manifold and now, it stood around 30-35 dollar per unit. During 2015-16, the previous government of PML-N had reached an agreement with Qatar for the import of LNG and if it had not been done, what would have happened now! The prime minister also appreciated Amir of Qatar's personal intervention to provide LNG at discounted price. The prime minister, however, assured that they have been trying to resolve the serious issues on priority basis. He informed that he had held a number of meetings with the ministries concerned. Criticizing his predecessor, the prime minister said the former government was indifferent to the public issues, calling them as 'stone-hearted'. The country had the capacity to power production, but the former incompetent government had brought disasters in every sector of life. The prime minister referred to the slow-paced construction work on Rawal

Chowk flyover in Islamabad said that the project despite a clear deadline for its completion within two years, had been stalled, multiplying public and motorists' woes. The contract was awarded to a black-listed company by the PTI's government which had been penalized in the past. He said in Punjab province, they had delivered such like projects within 72 days. He also condemned an attack on the deputy speaker in PA, terming it the provincial govt's fascist act. The prime minister also congratulated the newly elected Speaker of the NA Raja Pervaiz Ashraf and expressed the hope that he would uphold the constitution and sanctity of the house supreme. PM, Maulana Fazl discuss political issues Prime Minister Shehbaz and Amir of Jammia-e-Ulema Islam-F Maulna Fazlur Rehman on Saturday discussed important political issues and matters related to the formation of the cabinet. Maulana Fazlur Rehman called on the

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Ramadan
MUBARAK

FIQH-E-HANFIA

SEHR 4:09	IFTAR 6:34
FIQH-E-JAFRIA	
SEHR 3:59	IFTAR 6:44



ISLAMABAD: Raja Pervaiz Ashraf takes oath after being elected unopposed the Speaker National Assembly at the Parliament House,

Raja Pervaiz Ashraf takes oath as NA 22nd speaker

ISLAMABAD: PPP senior leader and former prime minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has taken oath as National Assembly speaker after being elected unopposed on Saturday as no other candidate fielded nominations for the post. Pervaiz Ashraf was the only candidate to file the nomination papers for the speakership. His name was proposed by Syed Khursheed Shah and seconded by Syed Naveed Qamar. Following his unopposed election, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf took the oath as Speaker of the National Assembly. Presiding officer PML-N's Sardar Ayaz Sadiq administered the oath to the newly-elected speaker. The House was also scheduled to take up

no-confidence motion against Deputy Speaker Qasim Khan Suri, but it was put off after he tendered his resignation from the post before the start of the assembly session. After taking the Speaker's seat, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf thanked the party leadership for reposing confidence in him and nominating for the speakership. He also thanked PM Shehbaz Sharif and all allied parties for support in his unopposed election as the 22nd Speaker of the NA. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, a senior parliamentarian, had previously served as the prime minister for a year after his predecessor Side Yousuf Raza Gilani of the PPPP was disqualified by the Supreme Court in 2012-13.

Former speaker of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Asad Qaiser, who was facing no-confidence motion, had announced his resignation at the floor of the House on April 9. MNAs greet Pervaiz Ashraf on winning NA Speaker slot Lawmakers here on Saturday extended heartiest felicitations to newly-elected Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, expressing confidence that he would ensure rule of law, supremacy of the Constitution and the Parliament. Speaking on floor of the NA, senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Khawaja Asif congratulated Raja Pervaiz on assuming charge as speaker of the august House. —APP