

1,31,97 candidates to contest LG polls

ISLAMABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission (AJK EC) on Wednesday issued the final list of candidates contesting local government election, declaring nomination papers of 13,19,7 candidates valid while 438 papers were rejected on different grounds. According to the commission, candidates have filed nomination papers for the seats of district councillor (one from each union council), town committees, municipal committees, and municipal corporation members and union council members in 10 districts of the region. The polls are being conducted after the new local bodies act. —APP

ECP adjourns hearing of contempt case against Imran till Nov 10

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Wednesday adjourned the hearing of contempt proceedings against PTI Chairman, Imran Khan and other party leaders Asad Umer and Fawad Chaudhry, for using inappropriate language against the commission, till November 10. A four-member bench headed by ECP member Nisar Durrani conducted the hearing on the contempt case filed against Imran Khan and other PTI leaders, while Advocate Anwar Mansoor appeared on the party's behalf. —APP

Pak for respecting, implementing Indus Water Treaty

NEW YORK: Pakistan has called for respecting and implementing the Indus Water Treaty between Islamabad and New Delhi, in letter and spirit. Speaking at a preparatory meeting for the UN Water Conference 2023, in New York, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Munir Akram said any changes on the other side of the border have a direct impact on Pakistan.

"Besides climate change," Ambassador Munir Akram said, "Pakistan's water-vulnerability is also flow from its status as a lower-riparian state." "Many of our catchment areas and their ecosystems traverse boundaries," he told a large number of delegates attending the meeting. "Changes on the other side of the border have a direct impact on us," the Pakistani envoy said, referring to India. "It is essential that water sharing agreements — such as the Indus Water Treaty — should be respected and implemented in letter and spirit," he added.

Pakistan is among the top 10 water scarce countries in the world, and has also been among the top ten climate vulnerable countries. Recurrent spells of extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, glacial lake outbursts, cyclones, and heat waves have taken a heavy toll on both life and property and adversely affected Pakistan's economic growth, Ambassador Akram said.

Some 1,200 scientists, representatives of the private sector and civil society are meeting at UN Headquarters in New York to discuss potentially game-changing ideas related to water and sustainability. —DNA

KSrelief distributes shelter kits in flood-hit people

ISLAMABAD: The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief) has distributed 520 shelter kits among survivors of floods in Sindh province.

Unprecedented monsoon rains and floods have killed at least 1,725 people, affected 33 million and cost Pakistan more than \$30 billion in economic losses since mid-June.

In response to the flood devastation, KSrelief last month established an air bridge to deliver humanitarian assistance to flood-hit Pakistan. "The shelters were delivered to 3,640 people as part of KSrelief's ongoing operations to aid people in flood-hit areas of Pakistan," Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported on Wednesday. KSrelief has provided humanitarian and development aid in more than 80 countries over four continents. Pakistan is the fifth-largest recipient of assistance and has received over \$120 million in aid since 2005. —APP

Germany extends grant assistance worth €7.5m to Pak

ISLAMABAD: Germany has extended grant assistance worth Euro 7.5 million to Pakistan through Social Health Protection Phase-III project to help improve health status of population. The Financial Agreement was signed between Secretary, Economic Affairs Division Dr. Kazim Niaz and Country Director, German Development Bank, Sebastian Jacobi in Islamabad on Wednesday.

Out of the total assistance, Euros 1.785 million has been provided for Gilgit Baltistan and Euro 5.72 million grant for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, according to press statement issued by Economic Affairs Division (EAD) here. According to the statement, the overall goal of this programme is to improve the health status of the population, especially the poor through providing safety net, and to reduce poverty through reduction of out-of-pocket payments for health expenditures.

It is likely to improve access of the poorest population in the programme region through reduction of financial barriers and strengthening of qualified service provision. At the same time, the project would contribute to identify solutions for sustainable health system financing. Speaking on the occasion, the EAD Secretary appreciated the government and people of Germany for their support with the assurance of extending all necessary facilitation for more meaningful cooperation between the two sides in future. —DNA

National Drug Use Survey Pakistan 2022-24 launched

ISLAMABAD: Today, the Ministry of Narcotics Control, Government of Pakistan, US Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime jointly launched the National Drug Use Survey Pakistan 2022-24 in Islamabad.

In 2012 and 2013, UNODC in collaboration with the Ministry of Narcotics Control, the US Department of State's Bureau of INL, and other national stakeholders conducted a national survey on drug use to estimate the extent and patterns of drug use in Pakistan. The overall results of the survey revealed that approximately six percent of the population — 9pc of the adult male population and 2.9pc of the adult female population — equivalent to 6.7m people — had used a substance other than alcohol and tobacco in the preceding year.

This year the World Drug Report 2022 revealed an estimated 284 million people worldwide had used drugs in 2020.

Cannabis remains by far the world's most



ISLAMABAD: Police officials stand guard at the PIMS Hospital during post-mortem of Arshad Sharif.

Diemer Basha Dam a significant project for economy: Shah

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshed Ahmed Shah has said that Diemer Basha Dam is a significant project for the national economy, as this will store water for irrigated agriculture, help mitigate floods and generate environment-friendly and low-cost hydel electricity.

He expressed these views while visiting Diemer Basha Dam, being constructed by WAPDA on River Indus, downstream of Chilas town, said a press release. He was accompanied by Advisor to PM on KA&GB Qamar Zaman Kaira, Special Assistant to PM on Water Resources Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha, Federal Secretary Water Resources Hasan Nasir Jamy and Chairman WAPDA Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd). The minister reviewed excavation at right abutment of the dam and construction work on diversion system and permanent bridge. The minister, while assuring the full support of the Ministry, directed the project management to expedite their efforts for completion of the project as early as possible.

Earlier, CEO Diemer Basha Dam Company along with the GM, PD, the consultants and the contractors briefed the minister about progress on the project. Construction work is being carried out on 10 different sites, which include excavation of dam abutments from the top, diversion tunnel, diversion canal, power intake, permanent access bridge and access roads.

Scheduled for completion in 2029, Diemer Basha Dam will have a gross water storage capacity of 8.1 MAF to irrigate 1.23 million acres of additional land. It will have installed power generation ca-

capacity of 4,500 MW, and provide 18 billion units of green and clean hydel electricity to the National Grid per annum.

Later, the minister inaugurated 3 MW-Thak Hydel Power Station - a small power house, sufficient to fulfill energy requirements of 1500-1800 households. This has been constructed by WAPDA with a cost of Rs.1.309 billion as one of the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). An independent 26-Km long transmission line has also been constructed with a cost of Rs.469.039 million for evacuation of electricity from the Hydel Power Station to Harpan Das model village, Chilas.

Addressing the local elders, Syed Khurshed Ahmed Shah said that the Federal Government is committed to socio-economic uplift of the people in the project area. He said that a sum of Rs.78.5 billion is being spent on resettlement of affectees and CBMs in health, education and infrastructure development. The Federal Minister reiterated that the locals will always be accorded priority in employment opportunities on Diemer Basha Dam Project.

Romania, Pakistan cooperation in defence expanding

Ambassador of Romania Nicolae Goia has said Romanian Armed Forces, completely reformed and modernized up to the NATO and European Union standards are assigned to foreign missions, contributing alongside of the allied and partner countries to the common effort of keeping peace and stability worldwide.

In compliance with the commitments deriving from the international treaties, agreements and memoranda whose signing party is, Romania had contingents of

different sizes from all services — Army, Air and Naval Forces — available to multinational coalitions authorized to carry on peace support, humanitarian assistance, collective or individual operations in the framework of UN, NATO, OSCE and EU-led Observing, Monitoring, Liaison and Training teams.

Ambassador Goia expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of the Armed Forces Day of Romania. He along with Defence Attache Col Cristian Raducu hosted a reception. Mal Gen Fiaz Hussain Shah was the chief guest.

The ambassador further said Romania celebrates each year, on October 25th, the Day of the Romanian Army. October 25, 1944, the Romanian Army Day, signifies the date of complete liberation of north-western Transylvania from foreign ruling and administration. 'The liberation of the entire national territory of Romania was achieved by the heroic fights in the World War II of over 525,000 fully employed troops between August 23 and October 25, 1944. Nearly 58,000 of them were killed or injured. Losses incurred on the enemy stood at 89,934 troops, 76,275 of whom were taken prisoners. It is worth mentioning that after 25th of October the Romanian army had continued to fight until the end of the war contributing substantially to the liberation of Hungary and Czechoslovakia'.

Ambassador Goia said, the years of contribution to foreign missions meant for the Romanian Armed Forces the maintenance, almost continuously, of a military force of variable sizes, integrated into UN, OSCE, NATO and EU missions carried out in Africa and Asia, in the theatres in

Tunisian envoy, APTMA agree to strengthen bilateral trade

LAHORE: Borhene El Kamal, ambassador of Tunisia, and the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) leadership Wednesday agreed to strengthen efforts to enhance bilateral trade relations in the larger interest of the two countries.

The ambassador visited the APTMA Northern Zone office where he was welcomed by Kamran Arshad, senior vice chairman, Asad Shafi, vice chairman, Raza Baqir, secretary general, and other senior members of the Association. Former central chairman APTMA Abdul Rahim Nasir, along with other senior members, was also present. The visiting envoy said the online negotiations on a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) had started three years ago and authorities of both the countries are in contact with each other to finalising the agreement. He hoped for breakthroughs after signing of

the PTA, which would lead to upsurge in bilateral trade.

According to him, a Tunisian business delegation was also planning to visit Pakistan to look for the business opportunities in the coming months. It would visit APTMA and other trade associations, he added. Senior Vice Chairman APTMA Kamran Arshad appreciated the role of the Tunisian embassy in pursuing PTA with Pakistan. He assured him of persuading the Commerce Ministry of Pakistan by APTMA to expedite the process.

He said the APTMA would welcome the delegation in the coming months to negotiate joint ventures (JVs) between the two countries. Both the countries might have JVs in areas like man-made fibres, denim, twill, drill, shirting materials and other technical textiles, he added. Earlier, he highlighted the significance of cooper-

ation, collaboration, and JVs of the industrial sectors of the two countries. He said an early signing of the PTA between the two countries would be beneficial to the textile sectors of the two countries. Also, he suggested signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between APTMA and the Embassy of Tunisia.

Vice Chairman APTMA Asad Shafi said Pakistan's exports to Tunisia stood at \$24.5 million with 31 percent component of cotton and imports were at \$2.4 million in 2021. He said there was a strong potential for expansion in bilateral trade between the two countries, in particular, in the fields of textile, food, and chemicals.

According to him, the emerging status of Tunisia in the African countries and the geostrategic location of Pakistan could be beneficial to each other. He also extended a vote of thanks to the visiting

IK march is for appointing COAS of choice: Nawaz

The Business Report

LAHORE: Former Prime Minister and Pakistan Muslim League — Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif while reacting to the PTI chairman Imran Khan's announcement on the long march date, said that Imran Khan's long march is not for any revolution but to appoint the army chief of his choice.

Taking to Twitter, the former PM penned that "People have seen Imran Khan's revolution in his four-year tenure, and this long march is not for revolution but to appoint the army chief of his choice." Nawaz Sharif further said that "Imran Khan, who called others thieves, himself proved to be the biggest thief in history with irrefutable evidence of foreign funding, Toshakhana cases."

Minister assures support to ICCI for new estate

ISLAMABAD: Murtaza Mahmud, Federal Minister for Industries and Production Division assured that he would provide all possible assistance and support for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region as it would boost production activities and benefit the local economy.

He said that soon a meeting of all stakeholders including the Ministry of Commerce, Board of Investment and CDA would be convened to get their input on this important project. He said that ICCI should identify 2-3 sites for industrial zone to analyse and assess their potential for the project. He said this while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry that called on him led by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President.

Murtaza Mahmud said that ICCI's demand for representation in various attached departments of the Ministry of Industries would also be given due consideration to enhance the role of the private sector in them. —DNA

Envoy invites Pak businessmen to explore Tunisia

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Ambassador of Tunisia Borhene El Kamel has invited Pakistani businessmen to join hands with their Tunisian counterparts and explore trade and investment opportunities in his country.

He was speaking at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Chaudhry Zafar Mahmood, Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt and Honorary Consul of Tunisia Mohammad Hameed also spoke on the occasion.

The Ambassador said that Tunisia is a gateway for EU countries and African market and Lahore Chamber should plan a business delegation for Tunisia to identify business opportunities in Tunisian and African market. He said that the direct interaction between the private sectors of Pakistan and Tunisia is the key to explore all potential areas of mutual cooperation and visit of LCCI delegation to Tunisia will be a right step in that direction. He assured that his embassy will facilitate Pakistani businessmen in B2B meetings to make their visit successful.

EU, PRGMEA agree to work on SME sector

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Ambassador of the European Union Dr. Riina Kionka has called for effective implementation of the 27 international conventions as the Pakistan's present GSP Plus status is going to be reviewed in Dec 2023 and more labour and human rights conventions will be added for their implementation.

The European Union Ambassador stated this during her visit to a number of garments' manufacturing units along with the PRGMEA executive committee members, Central Chairman Mubashar Naseer Butt and vice chairman Waseem Akhtar Khan where she also appreciated their performance, calling for product diversity and more value-addition to exploit the full potential of market access to the coun-

PM to upgrade ties with KSA with new realities

Continued from Front page

rebuilding lives, livelihoods and climate resilient infrastructure. Sustainability thus was predicated on climate action now.

The prime minister said Pakistan had many higher educational institutions and some were recognized internationally and proposed that the Future Investment Initiative should consider establishing a satellite center in one of Pakistan's leading universities to explore the rapidly growing Pakistani market and spur entrepreneurial innovation among their young population.

Another report adds: PM Shehbaz Sharif has said that former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan is using tragic killing of Arshad Sharif for petty politics and going to the extent of casting aspersions on state institutions.

In his latest Tweet, the prime minister said that Imran Niazi is playing a danger-

ous game and is using tragic killing of Arshad Sharif for petty politics & going to the extent of casting aspersions on state institutions. Shehbaz Sharif said that he [Imran Khan] should be patient & wait for findings of Judicial Commission instead of resorting to baseless allegations.

PM pays respect at Roza-e-Rasool (SAWW)

PM Shehbaz Sharif paid his respects at the Roza-e-Rasool of Hazrat Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) and prayed for the solidarity of Pakistan and prosperity of its people. Shehbaz along with his delegation also paid respects at the shines of the martyrs of Ghazva-e-Uhad. Earlier, Governor Madinah Prince Faisal bin Salman bin Abdulaziz received the prime minister on his arrival at the Madinah airport.

Shehbaz visit to China on Nov 1 Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will visit China on November 1-2 at

the head of a high-level delegation, including Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. The Prime Minister is undertaking the visit at the invitation of Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. This would be Prime Minister's first visit to China since assuming office in April 2022 and follows his meeting with President Xi Jinping in Uzbekistan on September 16, 2022.

Prime Minister will be among the first leaders to visit China following the historic 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. Prime Minister's visit represents the continuity of frequent leadership level exchanges between Pakistan and China. The Prime Minister will meet with President Xi Jinping and hold delegation level talks with Premier Li Keqiang. The two sides will review the All-Weather Strategic Cooperation Partnership and exchange views on regional and global devel-

opments.

The visit is also expected to advance the wide ranging bilateral cooperation agenda with the conclusion of a number of MoUs/Agreements in diverse areas, and consolidate the momentum of CPEC cooperation in the wake of the 11th meeting of the CPEC Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) on October 27, 2022.

India completely reneged on its solemn commitments: Shehbaz

Today, with a heavy heart, we mark yet another Kashmir Black Day. On 27th October 1947, seventy-five years ago, India forcibly landed its troops in the IIOJK and she continues to forcibly and illegally occupy its territory ever since. To perpetuate its forcible occupation of the IIOJK, India has amassed more than 900,000 armed troops in the territory. The situation has further worsened since India's illegal and unilateral revocation of the special status of