



# The National Assembly of Pakistan Gazette



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## Chief Editor's Note

In the National Assembly, April was a busy month. It can be construed from the legislative business performed during this month. Two bills were passed while one government and ten private member bills were introduced in the National Assembly. Besides, two ordinances were laid and four resolutions were passed during the said month. However, the most important political activity at Parliament House was the successful hosting of 17<sup>th</sup> Speakers' Conference by the National Assembly of Pakistan. During the Conference, the Presiding Officers of the country's legislatures critically deliberated on an extensive agenda, pertaining to the legal, administrative & procedural business. They reviewed the implementation status of the 16-Point Agenda of the previous 16th Conference and also discussed the 11 issues, as raised in the current Conference Agenda. In its deliberations, the delegates had fruitful exchange of ideas on numerous issues, including Points of Order, reporting of expunged remarks and the sustained efforts in strengthening parliamentary institutions.

The Conference resolved to institutionalize the parliamentary practice of "Zero Hour" to facilitate the Members so that the Points of Order could be raised as per rules only. The Conference also stressed on strengthening the institutional capacity of Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) for much more improved delivery of services by the parliamentarians to the people of Pakistan. Moreover, need for a Parliamentary TV was felt and discussed. It was informed by the Honorable Speaker of National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq that the Parliament of Pakistan would host the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's next Conference in 2015. The delegates welcomed the move and assured joint support to make the international event a success story.

Another important event was the visit of the President of German Bundestag (Parliament), Prof. Dr. Norbert Lammert along with a Parliamentary Delegation arrived in Islamabad on 29th April, 2014 on a 3-days official visit to Pakistan. The President of German Bundestag visited Pakistan on the invitation of Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq. During various official meetings, the matters pertaining to enhance cooperation between the National Assembly of Pakistan and German Bundestag and possibilities of economic cooperation between both the countries were discussed. President of German Bundestag also addressed Members of Pak-German Friendship Group. All these events portray a healthy picture of democracy in Pakistan which is becoming strong day by day.

Thank You

*Ch. Mukhtar Ahmed*



# LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

## Session

National Assembly was summoned by the President to meet on Monday, the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 4.00 p.m. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of the First Parliamentary Year of the 14<sup>th</sup> National Assembly. The Session was prorogued on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014. The important legislative business of the 10<sup>th</sup> Session during the April 2014 is summarized herewith:

## A. Bills

### Bill Passed

Two bills were passed by the National Assembly:

#### 1. The Protection of Pakistan Act, 2014

The Bill provides for protection against waging of war against Pakistan, prevention of acts threatening the security or Pakistan and for speedy trial of offences falling in the Schedule annexed to the Bill and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

#### 2. The Service Tribunals (Amendment) Act, 2014

Some of the provisions of Federal Service Tribunal Act, 1973 are ultra vires to the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973 as held by Honourable Supreme Court of Pakistan in its judgment dated 25.03.2013 in Constitution Petition No.53/2007. Judicial procedure is involved in FST cases, therefore, it is imperative that appointments of Chairman and Members, FST should commensurate with qualifications and experience in the

relevant field in line with the procedure adopted for appointment in judiciary. Presently FST does not have power to spend its budget independently, therefore, there is need to make it financially autonomous. Presently Secretary, Law & Justice Division is Principal Accounting Officer of FST. FST does not have the power to get its orders/judgments implemented, therefore, appellants approach respective High Courts for implementation of the orders/judgments of FST, thus, creating extra burden for the High Courts. Thus, provision of such power for FST would not only make it an effective judicial forum but also reduce the burden of the respective High Courts.

## Government Bills Introduced

Only one bill was introduced by the government in the National Assembly during the month of April, 2014:

#### 1. The State Bank of Pakistan (Amendment) Act, 2014

The purpose of amendments in the SBP Act 1956 is to bring the existing legislation in conformity with the international best practices of a modern central bank.

## Private Members Bills Introduced

Ten bills were introduced by private members in 10<sup>th</sup> Session of National Assembly:

#### 1. The Constitution (Twenty-Second Amendment) Act, 2014

As per Article 25 of the Constitution discrimination is not permissible. Even otherwise every citizen of Pakistan has equal



political rights as per various Articles of the Constitution. Our country's economy has always been considerably supported by overseas Pakistanis, whose allegiance to Pakistan should not be in doubt. It has been a long-standing demand of the overseas Pakistanis that there should be no impediment in their way to run for elections for the Parliament. They are deeply concerned with events in Pakistan and are keen to play an effective role and want to contribute to national cause. Therefore, through proposed amendment in Article 63(l)(c), the constitutional bar on the dual nationality holders to be members of the Parliament is required to be lifted.

### **2. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2014**

Section 489F was added to check the menace of issuing cheques without making arrangements of funds for honouring such cheques by their bankers. However, deterrent effect of section 489F is losing its importance where the amount payable through cheques amount is in millions of rupees. Consequently, the punishment is neither proportionate to amount of cheque and even where there amounts in millions of rupees, makers of such cheques prefer to stay in prisons instead of showing any interest in repayment of their loans or other liabilities, etc., during business transactions. Thus, it is necessary to provide more effective punishment proportionate to amount of cheques so that section 489F should remain an effective measure to establish financial discipline and fulfillment of financial liabilities as the civil claims are not suitable remedy due to lengthy litigation subordinate judiciary level.

### **3. Islamabad Rent Restriction (Amendment) Act, 2014**

There is a decade old demand of tenants & landlords in the Federal Capital to have the Islamabad Rent Restriction Ordinance, 2001

amended to meet their concerns. The amended bill entails that every agreement between landlord and tenant shall be presented before the Controller for record keeping. Any payments related to the tenancy agreement shall be made through cross cheques or with an official receipt/acknowledgement. The rents of residential and non-residential buildings shall be annually increase by ten percent automatically unless the parties decide to the contrary in writing. For dispute resolution between the landlord and tenant there shall be a Mediation Council to be presided by the President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce or his nominee as its Convenor. A representative of the tenant and the landlord will both constitute as members of the council. The Controller, before proceeding with a case shall refer it to the Mediation Council. In case of no settlement, the Controller shall proceed with the case. In case of a settlement, the order passed by the Controller in accordance with the decision of the Medication Council shall be considered final.

### **4. National Air Transportation Safety Board Act, 2014**

This law provides for setting up an authority answerable to the public through the parliament that will have the expertise and the power to investigate, report and recommend the changes that need to be made to ensure appropriate safety mechanisms for prevention of air accidents as well as to determine compensation and ensure payment of such compensation within reasonable time after proper investigations and inquiries.

### **5. Acid and Burn Crime Bill, 2014**

Acid throwing & burn crimes are increasing year by year. Hundreds of women and children fall victim to this horrendous crime, with no possibility to seek justice and



support. Due to the socioeconomic circumstances pertaining to victims, the fear and stigma they are facing as well as the highly complex nature of acid & burn injuries, a specific and comprehensive legislation is needed. This will result in perpetrators facing effective deterrent, victims accessing and obtaining justice, availing free relevant medical and psycho-social rehabilitation services.

It is imperative to redress a crime, which constitutes one of the most heinous violations of human rights. We need to ensure the protection and dignified life of Pakistani citizens within the spirit of the international Conventions signed and ratified by the Pakistani state. These include UDHR, CEDAW, CRC, ICCPR. These efforts to address this crime in an effective manner are fully in accordance with the principles of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973.

#### **6. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2014**

In the existing section 379 of the Pakistan Penal Code, there is provision of 3 years imprisonment of either description, or with fine or both. However, the said punishment has failed to control the crime of theft or to create an effective deterrent. Nowadays, there are gangs of thieves who are not operating locally as well as inter-district or inter-provincial level making it difficult to control such crime when the police is equally inefficient or in collusion with such gangs. Consequently, the general public is the worst sufferer as there are either no punishment which neither creating any deterrence nor punishment in punitive effect reforming such offenders. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce system of punishment with quantum and financial implications of the offence so that it may be creating an effective deterrent as well as make theft a non-beneficial activity.

#### **7. National Database and Registration Authority (Amendment) Act, 2014**

Since this House has unanimously passed the resolution on 04-03-2014 to the effect that National Identity Cards be provided to the citizens free of cost in the country, therefore the proposed amendments have become indispensable

#### **8. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2014**

Women are prevented from casting their votes in most of the areas in the country during election to the National Assembly and Provincial Assemblies etc. in this way, half of the population of the country is deprived of their fundamental rights of franchise as guaranteed in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. This Bill seeks to protect their fundamental rights and enable them to use their rights of vote and express their opinion freely.

#### **9. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 2014**

It is proposed to replace the use of ballot papers with electronic voting machines to registrar elector's vote in the election process in Pakistan. The counting and re-counting of ballot papers is not only archaic and tedious but leaves a strong element of human error in reaching the fair and acceptable election results. Electronic voting technology can speed the counting of ballots and can provide improved accessibility for disabled voters. The vote-counting is very fast and it is said that the results can be declared within 2 to 3 hours as compared to 30-40 hours, on an average, under the ballot-paper system.

#### **10. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2014**

Extortion is becoming the order of the day and an alternative source of quick riches and wealth for criminal persons at the cost of



hard earned money of innocent persons. The businessmen, traders and people in the society as a general are mostly being threatened telephonically, electronic or by use other techniques of information technology to extract money from them. Innocent persons are put under fear of serious consequences including threats of murder, abduction, kidnapping or causing injury to moveable and immovable properties, etc. Such activities are creating unrest and fear in the society depriving the people from their peace of mind. Therefore, it is necessary to create deterrence by such actions offence punishable with harsh punishment.

## **B. Ordinances**

Two ordinances were laid in the month of April 2014, namely, Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2014 and Sales Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2014.

## **C. Resolutions**

The following four resolutions were moved in the National Assembly during the month of April.

**1. Govt. should take steps to improve and regulate "Madrassah" Education (1st April 2014)**

“This House is of the opinion that the Government should take steps to improve and regulate “Madrassah” education.”

**2. Govt. should take steps to impose ban on telecasting of immoral programmes on T.V. Channels**

“This House is of the opinion that the Government should take steps to impose immediate ban on telecasting of immoral programmes on private and Government T.V. channels in the country.”

**3. Extension of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 (No. X of 2013)**

“That the National Assembly resolves to extend the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 (No. X of 2013) for a further period of one hundred and twenty days w.e.f. 29th April, 2014 under the proviso to sub-paragraph (ii) of paragraph (a) of clause (2) of Article 89 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan”

**4. The Govt. should take measures to reduce indirect taxation**

“This House is of the opinion that the Government should take measures to reduce indirect taxation in the country.”

## **CALLS ON**

### **Foreign Secretary of Argentine Calls On Speaker National Assembly**

Speaker National Assembly has said that Pakistan values its multi-dimensional and decade old friendship with Argentina which has witnessed positive development over the years. He said that Pakistan strongly desires to further cement its ties through enhancing

parliamentary and economic ties with Argentina. He was talking to Foreign Secretary of Argentine Mr. Eduardo Antonio Zuain who called on him in Parliament House, on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2014. The Ambassador of Argentine Mr. Rodolfo Martin-Saravia was also present during the call on.



The Speaker said that parliaments of both the countries could bring both the nations more closer. He was confident that parliamentarians from either side would help strengthen people-to-people contacts and create better understanding between the two countries. He was confident that



H.E. Mr. Eduardo Antonio Zuain, Foreign Secretary of Argentina called on Speaker NA, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House on 03.04.2014

parliamentarians from either side would help strengthen people-to-people contacts and create better understanding between the two countries. The Speaker apprised the visiting dignitary about the reconstitution of Pak-Argentine Friendship Group in National Assembly of Pakistan. He welcomed the relaunch of Argentine-Pakistan Parliamentary Friendship Group in the Parliament of Argentina and appreciated Argentina's support to Pakistan on multilateral forums. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that present parliament consists of progressive forces, a vibrant opposition which was playing a constructive role in the Parliament. The Speaker said both the sides of aisle were on the same page on issues of national importance and concerning masses. He said that the revival of economy and creating conducive environment was on the top of the agenda of the present democratic government. He said that pro-investment policies have been devised which has built up the trust of the investors and generated economic activity in the country. The Speaker stressed the need to enhance interaction between business communities of

both the countries. He said that greater interaction would result in identifying fields of mutual interest since lots of potential exists on either side. He said that economies of both the countries were agro-based, therefore, collaboration in the fields of Agriculture, food processing, fisheries and

agricultural machinery manufacturing would be beneficial. Praising the Ambassador, the Speaker said that friendship between both the countries has intensified during his tenure. He asked the Ambassador to facilitate visits of Argentinean investors to Pakistan for expansion of bilateral economic ties.

Appreciating the remarks of the Speaker, the Foreign Secretary Mr. Eduardo Antonio Zuain said that Argentine is not only a dear friend of Pakistan but a strategic partner. He said that his country values its historic friendship with Pakistan and wants to further strengthen it through enhancing people-to-people and Parliamentary contacts. He said that Speaker of the Argentinean Parliament would visit Pakistan along with a delegation in the coming year. He said that Argentine will continue its support to Pakistan at international fora. He agreed for enhancing commercial ties with Pakistan. He informed the Speaker about protocols signed between Pakistan and Argentine for cooperation in cultural promotion and investment during his current visit.



### Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Calls On Speaker National Assembly

Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Asad Qaiser called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Parliament House, on Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

Various issues of mutual interest besides strengthening of cooperation between National and Provincial Legislature came under discussion.

Mr. Asad Qaiser appreciated the holding of 17th Speakers' Conference in Islamabad and suggested that it should be held on regular basis. He regretted his non-participation in the conference since he was holding the Charge of Acting Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during those days. He said that regular discourse between Presiding officers of National and Provincial legislatures and officers would help share experiences and best practices. While welcoming the Provincial Speaker, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq reassured his cooperation to strengthen the democratic and parliamentary traditions. He said that he would ensure regular holding of the Speakers' Conference during his tenure as Speaker. He said that a follow-up mechanism is being developed on the



Mr. Asad Qaiser, Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, called on Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House on 22.04.2014

recommendations of the Conference which would ensure implementation of the decision of the Conference. He also informed the Speaker about the measures initiated for restructuring of the National Assembly Secretariat, automation of the official record and creation of paperless environment. He said that Parliament of Pakistan would have a unique distinction being powered by Solar Energy by the end of this year. He said that provincial legislatures should follow the suit and assured his and National Assembly Secretariat's all-out support in that regard. Mr. Asad Qaiser praised Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for his sagacious leadership and said that indeed it would be a privilege for the provincial legislatures to replicate the measures taken by the National Legislature to strengthen the democratic institutions. He also apprised the Speaker about the ongoing developmental work going on in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Mr. Asad Qaiser also invited Speaker National Assembly to visit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and witness the proceedings of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly which he accepted.

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## 17<sup>th</sup> SPEAKERS' CONFERENCE

### Inaugural Session

The Speakers' Conference was inaugurated at the Parliament House Islamabad on 13<sup>th</sup>

April 2014. The Honourable Speaker, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq opened the three day Conference which aims at strengthening the democratic values in the country.



In his inaugural address, the Honourable Speaker highlighted the smooth transition of power from one elected Government to another. Referring to the Conference as an important milestone in the history of legislatures in Pakistan, the Honourable Speaker expressed his gratitude to all the participants for showing solidarity of the democratic forces.



NA Speaker and Chairman of the 17<sup>th</sup> Speakers' Conference, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq presiding inaugural session

a number of former Speakers & Deputy Speakers of the National Assembly which included Syed Yousaf Raza Gillan, Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Ch. Amir Husaain, Ilahir Bukhsh Soomro, Syed Fakhar Imam, Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Ch. Jaffar Iqbal, Faisal Karim kundi & Leader of the Opposition Syed Khurshheed Ahmed Shah.

### Dinner in Honour of the delegates

The honorable Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq

Speaking of the occasion, the Honorable Speaker termed the gathering as "Historic". He lauded the services of all the former



NA Speaker hosting dinner in honour of delegates of 17<sup>th</sup> Speakers' Conference

hosted a sumptuous dinner in honour of the delegates of the 17<sup>th</sup> Speakers' Conference last night. The hallmark was the presence of

Speakers in ensuring and protecting the sovereignty, supremacy and independence of the "Most August Institution of the



Country”. A few of the former Speakers also spoke on the occasion by highlighting some unforgettable memories of their times.

The Speakers praised the evolving practice of following annual calendar of sessions and committed to abide by their



Group photo of presiding officers of National & Provincial Legislatures and Legislative Assemblies on the occasion of inaugural ceremony of 17<sup>th</sup> Speakers' Conference at Parliament House

### Speakers Discuss Issues Confronting Legislatures

The Presiding Officers of the country's legislatures had a field day as they critically deliberated on an extensive agenda, pertaining to the legal, administrative & procedural business. They reviewed the implementation status of the 16-Point Agenda of the previous 16th Conference and also discussed the 11 issues, as raised in the current Conference Agenda.

In its deliberations, the delegates had fruitful exchange of ideas on numerous issues, including Points of Order, reporting of expunged remarks and the sustained efforts in strengthening parliamentary institutions. The Conference resolved to institutionalize the parliamentary practice of “Zero Hour” to facilitate the Members so that the Points of Order could be raised as per rules only. The Conference also stressed on strengthening the institutional capacity of Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) for much more improved delivery of services by the parliamentarians to the people of Pakistan.

respective schedules as a step forward to the best time management of the legislators.

The Speakers' Conference expressed gratitude to the Parliament of Pakistan for amending the Constitution on its recommendations to curtail the time for assenting to a Bill by the President under Article 75(1) and to define a Party Head under Article 63A(1). There was consensus on enhancing the research and automation facilities in all legislatures. The Conference decided to form a Technical Committee comprising the IT managers of all the legislatures, headed by the Director General IT of the National Assembly with the task to propose an integration plan for IT and “Online” Library facilities. The Committee will submit its report within one month.

The need of a dedicated Parliamentary TV Channel in the changing times was also felt with an aim to apprise the electorate of the legislatures' working, thus ensuring transparency and free access to information.

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq emphasized to have the Parliamentary Service of Pakistan to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Secretariats of all Houses. There was



unanimity of views in bringing conformity to the Service Rules of all Houses. With specific reference to the Article 87 of the Constitution, the Conference, therefore, formed a Committee, headed by the Secretary Senate to propose uniform

The Speakers' Conference also constituted a Secretaries Committee to ensure follow-up of the decisions of the Conference by regularly holding six-monthly meetings thereof.



17<sup>th</sup> Speakers' Conference in session

Service Rules. This Committee will submit its Report within six months.

It was also decided to ensure the implementation of the Supreme Court's decision, which declared employees of the Parliament and Assemblies as Civil Servants. The Conference stressed that the employees of the legislatures should not be denied of any concession, privilege or right which is admissible to the respective Federal and Provincial Government Employees/Civil Servants.

It was informed by the Honorable Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq that the Parliament of Pakistan would host the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's next Conference in 2015. The delegates welcomed the move and assured joint support to make the international event a success story.

Agha Siraj Durrani, the Hon'able Speaker of the Sindh Assembly cordially offered to host the next Speakers' Conference in Karachi, which was accepted by all with gratitude.

### **Former Speakers Knock History Doors**

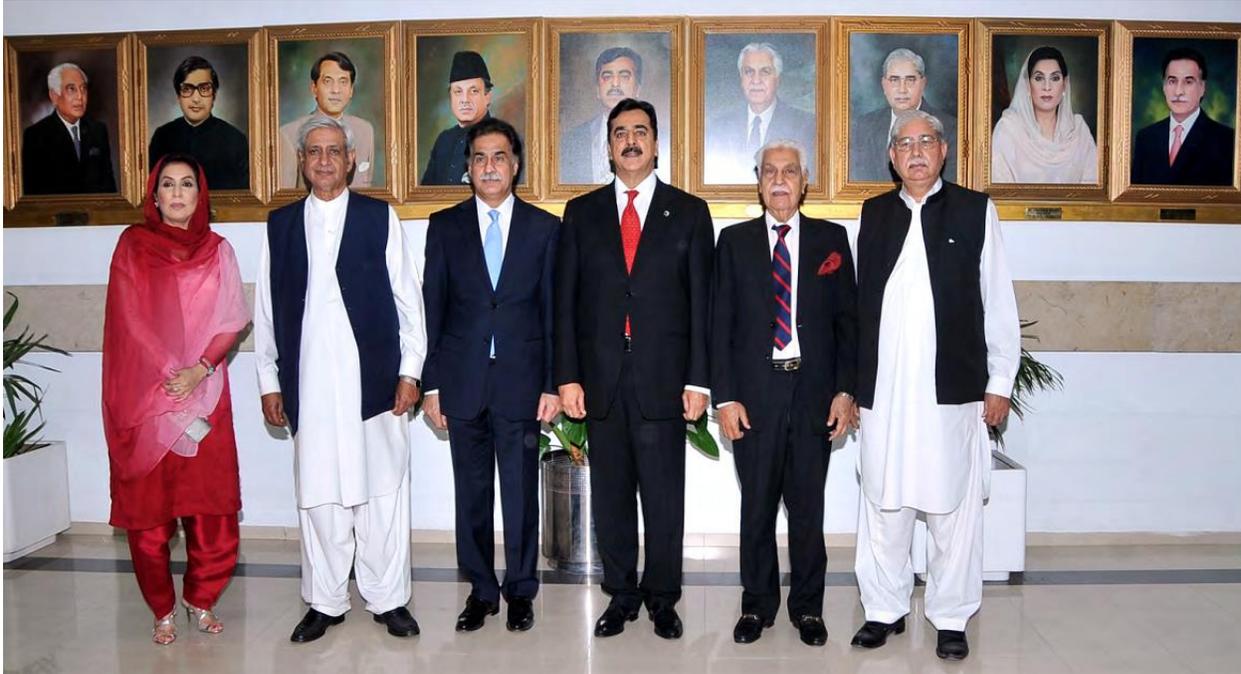
Speaker Ayaz Sadiq surely created history when on his invitation at least five of his predecessors graced the Dinner as "Guests of Honour", which was hosted by the Speaker on April 13's night for the delegates of the 17th Speakers' Conference. Held in the tastefully decorated Banquet Hall of the Parliament House, the event was attended by the Deputy Chairman Senate, the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, all Speakers and Deputy Speakers of the four provincial assemblies, AJ&K and Gilgit-Baltistan. Senior officials of all



national, provincial and regional legislatures were also present.

The highlight, nevertheless, was the presence of Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, former Prime Minister and Speaker from

she had to comply with the orders. This set the principle which later benefitted all, including Mohtarma and her spouse Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, when he was in prison. Syed Fakhar Imam, who was elected Speaker by the 1985 National Assembly,



Group photo of Speaker National Assembly with former Speakers of National Assembly

1993-96, Syed Fakhar Imam (1985-86), Mr. Illahi Bukhsh Soomro (1997-99), Ch. Amir Hussain (2002-2007) and Dr. Fehmida Mirza (2008-2013). Speaker Ayaz Sadiq paid rich tributes to the services and acumen of all his predecessors and called them “legends”. On his request, the audience gave a standing ovation to the former Speakers.

While recalling his days as Speaker, Syed Yousuf Raza elaborated how tolerance of the government of the day was essential for the growth of parliamentary traditions and principles. In this regard, he referred to the issuance of production orders by him for the imprisoned Members under Rule 90 of the then Rules of Business (now Rule 108). This, Mr. Gillani recalled, was initially resisted by the then Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto however on the persistence of the Speaker,

recalled his unexpected election by the Non-Party House and his famous Ruling, which forced the then military dictator to lift the Marshal Law on January 1, 1986. Mr. Imam was taken by a pleasant surprise when he was informed by Speaker Ayaz Sadiq that this Ruling, along-with all the Rulings from 1947 to 1997 had been compiled and published as a book while 90% work had already been carried out in compiling the rest till today, which would shortly go into print. Mr. Illahi Bukhsh Soomro quipped in a lighter tone his encounters with the former Prime Minister and the then Leader of Opposition, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. Chaudhary Amir Hussain who served as the Speaker during the presidency of former military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharaf, reminded the gathering that while all



other Speakers had served in democratic regimes, he had to face difficult times as during his tenure, there were “more than one centres of power” and the Speaker had to play the balancing role among them. This had brought immense pressure on him, especially from the Opposition in the House. He, nevertheless, lauded the Opposition's role, which had shown respect and grace to the Chair despite numerous showdowns.

Dr. Fehmida Mirza, the first woman Speaker of Pakistan and the Muslim World, recalled her famous ruling on the question of the disqualification of the

sitting Prime Minister as Member of the House. She said that while dictating this Ruling she had extensively consulted noted jurists and numerous court decisions. It was her opinion that the office of the Speaker was not a “mere post office” and the Speaker had to “apply his mind”. The Ruling, therefore, should have been treated as the “final word”, in accordance with the “spirit of the law and constitution.”

The occasion was cherished by all, who praised Speaker Ayaz Sadiq's suggestion of inviting and involving the inputs of the former Speakers in the Speakers Conference on permanent basis.

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### Meeting of the Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat

The Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat met on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 in Parliament House, Islamabad under the Chairmanship of Rana Muhammad Hayat Khan, MNA to consider the following agenda:

- i) To discuss the matter regarding comparison of air-fair between PIA and other airlines on account of Umrah;
- iii) Any other item with the permission of the Chair.

The M.D, PIA briefed that PIA, in line with industry practice has implemented Automated Revenue System with multiple booking class fares for each sector. The availability of seats against each booking class is adjusted continuously and dynamically by the Automated Revenue Management System based upon overall market demand and competitor fares, thereby ensuring optimum utilization of space. He added that Umrah season commenced from mid-December, 2013

onwards. PIA has two types of flights uplifting Umrah passenger i.e schedule flights and the extra sections which are specially mounted to cater to Umrah demand. However, the Committee did not satisfy with PIA response regarding reason for increase in Umrah. The Committee directed the PIA that detail and number of the Umrah pilgrims and income being generated there from may be furnished by 4th April, 2014.

MNAs Ms. Parveen Masood Bhatti, Ms. Nighat Parveen Mir, Ms. Shahnaz Saleem, Ms. Farhana Qamar, Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, Mr. Abdul Rehman Khan Kanju, Mir Aijaz Hussain Jakhrani, Mr. Roshan Din Junejo, Ms. Nafeesa Inayatullah Khan Khattak, Mr. Muhammad Rehan Hashmi were present in the meeting.

### Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Chairs Meeting of the NA Finance Committee

The Finance Committee of the National Assembly met under the chairmanship of Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National



Assembly in Parliament House, on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

The Committee approved the proposed budget of the National Assembly Secretariat for the fiscal year 2014-2015 amounting to Rs.2,609,390,000/-. The Committee was informed that there was no variation between the revised estimates and sanctioned budget for the year 2013-2014 despite additional expenditure due to the grant of 10% Adhoc Relief by the government, and increase in the rates of POL with resultant increase in rates of various commodities and services etc. The said expenditure has been absorbed and will be met through the budgetary allocation for the year 2013-2014, the committee was informed. The Committee was further informed that the savings /unspent amount would be surrendered to the government within the time stipulated by the government.

The Committee appreciated the prudent leadership of the Speaker for initiating austerity measures and maintaining financial discipline in the

expenditures of the National Assembly Secretariat during current financial year. The Speaker also apprised the committee about the formulation of

HR policy whereby promotions would be made subject to performance, creation of paperless office, conducting of energy audit as well as electrification of Parliament House on Solar with the assistance of development partners.

The Committee also approved the waiver/write off of loans/advances of the

two deceased Staff Car drivers of the National Assembly Secretariat amounting to Rs.476,598/-. The committee was informed that the above said amount was outstanding against both deceased employees in respect of advances/loans of House Building/Motor cycle.

The meeting was attended by MNAs Ch. Armaghan Subhani, Sardar Muhammad Amjad Farooq Khan Khosa, Syed Imran Ahmad Shah, Mian Abdul Manan, Ms Ayesha Raza Farooq, Ms Leila Khan, Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah, Khawaja Ghulam Rasool Koreja, Secretary, National Assembly, Additional Secretary M/o Finance & Revenue and other senior officers of the National Assembly Secretariat.

#### **Meeting of the National Assembly House & Library Committee**

NA Standing Committee on House and Library has expressed grave concern over the substandard maintenance work at Parliament Lodges and Government Hostel and non-implementations of decisions of the Committee. The Committee also expressed

its displeasure over the supply of low quality furniture and fixtures in the Parliament Lodges. The Committee met under the chairmanship of Deputy Speaker,

National Assembly Murtaza Javed Abbasi in the Parliament House on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> April.

The Committee while discussing the agenda item regarding the poor maintenance of Parliament Lodges and Government Hostel the Committee expressed its reservation over the quality of maintenance work carried out by the CDA in Parliament Lodges and



Mr. Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker NA, chairing the meeting of the Standing Committee on House & Library of the National Assembly at Parliament House on 08.04.2014



Government Hostel. It also expressed annoyance over the cleanliness and seepage in the Parliament Lodges. The members observed that due to the seepage the roofs and walls of the family suites of the Parliament Lodges are in pathetic state. The Deputy Speaker expressed displeasure over the non-implementation over the decisions of the Committee and directed CDA to address the complaints of the members of the Committee in letter and spirit. The Deputy Speaker instructed the CDA to take prompt action on the complaints made by the Parliamentarians and strictly monitor the quality of food and tidiness in the cafeteria at Parliament Lodges. He also directed CDA to sort out a complete survey for permanent solution of seepage at Parliament Lodges.

The Committee also took a serious note over delay in construction of additional family suites and directed the CDA to make concrete measure to complete the construction of the said family suites before November, 2014. The Deputy Speaker also directed CDA to investigate the matter pertaining to misappropriation in the substandard maintenance work of Parliament Lodges and low quality furniture provided to Parliamentarians at Parliament Lodges and submit report to the Committee within 10 days. The Committee also expressed its reservations over the unauthorized occupants in the Parliament Lodges and directed CDA to take action to vacate the family suites in Parliament Lodges and Government Hostel from unauthorized occupants.

The Committee also took a serious note about the false report by the CDA staff to Deputy Speaker about the action against unauthorized occupants in Government Hostel and directed CDA to take strict actions against the responsible. The Committee also expressed its reservation over the absence of Chairman, CDA from the Committee meeting and directed to

ensure his presence in the next meeting of the Committee.

The members who attended the meeting were MNAs Dr. Mehreen Razzaq Bhutto, Mrs. Shahida Rehmani, Mr. Mehboob Alam, Mian Abdul Manan, Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah, Syed Imran Ahmad Shah, Special Secretary (A), National Assembly Secretariat Syed Munwar Abbas, Member (Engineering) CDA and other senior functionaries of National Assembly and CDA.

### **Meeting of the Standing Committee on Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage**

Eighth meeting of the Standing Committee on Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage (IB&NH) was held on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April at 10:30 a.m. in Constitutional Room (old Committee Room No. 05), Parliament House, Islamabad. The meeting was presided over by Ms. Marvi Memon, MNA/Chairperson of the Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee discussed the Recommendations by the Media Commission appointed by the Supreme Court 2013, and gave the following recommendations unanimously:-

1. In the age of independence of media, globalization, IT and Information it is important to have a specific role of the Ministry of Information for policy setting, to facilitate media development with freedom and accountability.

2. Review of the existing 64 laws on Media is critical. New laws are equally required, specifically for advertising regulation, convergence, cross media ownership negative impacts, and self-regulation. The Standing Committee will be having special meetings with legal experts on this critical subject soon and will be appointing a Media Laws Review Taskforce with a 6 month mandate to examine 64 laws and to propose



amendments as well as new laws where required.

3. The existence of a Ministry of Information is important. However, its restructuring is critical. The Ministry and bodies under the purview of the Ministry have assured the committee that their restructuring plans will be presented within one month to the committee.

4. Ministry of Information and IT can be merged due to new areas of convergence. A new name for the Ministry to be Ministry for Public Information, Media and National Heritage.

5. Make PEMRA truly autonomous and accountable to Parliament and not to the Executive. Thus a change in mode of appointment of chairperson and its members along the lines of the ECP is recommended.

6. Create a single new integrated regulatory body by merging PEMRA, PTA including cinema on the lines of OFCOM in the UK.

In the cinema sector there is a need to ensure inter provincial harmony in the implementation of censorship rules in the provinces. All imported films to be censored by the Federal government.

Provincial censor boards should include federal representation.

7. Policy to ensure minimal time for Pakistani content on TV and Radio to be strengthened.

8. Public, regular, structured dialogue of government and regulatory bodies with all stakeholders relevant to electronic media is necessary. Similar Regular structured

dialogue with non-media stakeholders i.e. civil society is extremely important.

9. Judiciary should conduct expeditious and conclusive disposal of the large number of stay orders obtained by TV and Radio against PEMRA as at present even non licensed TV channels are operating freely.

10. Actual compliance should be ensured by media of their own Codes and transparency by appointing Internal Ombudsman and Compliance coordinators to respond to complaints and concerns of citizens.

11. Temporarily Freeze (except community licenses) issuance of licenses for new TV channels as cable TV distribution capacity is already saturated and until transition to digital technology.

12. Ensure effective actions by government authorities to prevent smuggling and sale of DTH set top boxes.

13. Ensure licenses are issued for valid, eligible community radio stations and community TV channels with safeguards.

14. PTV, PBC APP should be transformed into genuine public service entities which are even handed and fair for them to be

consistent with Article 19. New system to should be introduced for appointment of Chairman, CEO and Board of Directors. Government should look into options for restructuring the ownership of PTV, PBC and APP to make their ownership more broad based and public service oriented.

15. A new Law is required within which self-regulation by media can be conducted in a transparent and accountable manner, so



Ms. Marvi Memon, Chairperson Standing Committee on Information, Broadcasting & National Heritage Chairing the Committee meeting at Parliament House on 16.04.2014



that self-interest doesn't substitute self-regulation in media.

16. The funding for Press Council to be equitably shared by media proprietors (such as APNS) and other segments in order for it to be independent.

17. Alleged corrupt practices indulged into by media and government should be investigated and discouraged.

18. There is a need for more effective practice of existing Codes by media themselves.

19. Strict effective action is needed by PEMRA and Press Council to prevent excesses by media against public figures, thereby preventing unfair defamation or ridicule of public figures. Strict action needs to be taken by the Councils of complaints appointed by PEMRA which could include parliamentarians to prevent unfair defamation.

20. Forensic audits should be conducted to determine whether corruptions occurred in award of advertising contracts by NAB, FIA etc.

21. There is a need to rationalize the principles on the basis of which advertising rates are determined for placement of government advertising in print and electronic media so as to end the discrepancies. Government should propose single transparent policy for awarding advertisement.

22. There is a need to reform the system by which advertisements of federal and provincial governments are placed by restructuring the audit bureau of circulation and inducting reputed firms from private sector to make ABC credible; and by other methods such as possible decentralization.

23. ECP is urged to implement recommendation of media commission to ensure transparency in use of funds for advertising in the forthcoming local governments.

24. PEMRA should facilitate preparation of options for new revenue model for TV channels to reduce existing 100% dependence on advertising.

25. More Effective regulatory actions are required to reduce imbalanced interruptions, disruptions intrusions of advertising on TV and radio.

26. Secret funds have been abolished. Second list will be presented to the committee and to the public after audit or as per SC instructions.

27. It is considered opinion of the committee that PEMRA has not satisfactorily addressed the concerns raised by the Media Commission Report regarding: the restructuring of PEMRA, Autonomy of PEMRA from Executive, Direct Parliamentary Purview & Oversight of PEMRA, Review of the PEMRA Act 2002 (Amended 2007) and Private Monopolies in Media created as a result of the Amended PEMRA Act 2007. Unfortunately without addressing these core issues it is difficult to conceive that PEMRA will be able to respond to the challenges it faces as an independent media regulator. It is therefore recommended that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting should undertake an immediate examination of these concerns, with a clear deadline in mind, to suggest the best ways and means to implement the recommendations of the Media Commission.

28. Ministry of Information has committed itself to help improve security for journalists and media. However it has not presented any coherent plan so far. It needs to present an over-view of its Security Plan which it has designed after its consultations with the various media organizations. Ministry also needs to give action plan on the Committee of Information recommendations on the same.

29. The existing reliance on an predominantly big cities audience



measurement system to determine TV ratings should be replaced with new alternative options which accurately reflect the countries demographic realities.

30. As per commitment made by PBA to the media commission the actual rates charged by PBA members, (e.g. election advertising) should be placed on the internet and transparency ensured on the assets, income, expenses of media proprietors and senior journalists including TV anchors.

Ms. Arifa Khalid Pervez, Ms. Parveen Masood Bhatti, Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, Ms. Belum Hasnain, Mr. Imran Zafar Leghari, Dr. Muhammad Azhar Khan Jadoon, Mr. Murad Saeed, Ms. Saman Sultana Jafri, Ms. Naeema Kishwer Khan, MNAs and Minister of Information & Broadcasting & National Heritage attended the meeting. The meeting was also attended by senior Officers of Ministry of Information, Broadcasting & National Heritage and all Heads of all its attached Departments and Ministry of Interior & Narcotics Control. Senator (R) Javed Jabbar, Mr. Khushnood Ali Khan, Mr. Hamid Mir, Mr. Absar Alam and Dr. Moeed Peerzada attend the meeting as special invitees.

#### **Meeting of the Standing Committee on Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development**

Standing Committee on Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development met on Monday, 21st April, under the Chairmanship of Mir Aamir ali Khan Magsi, MNA to discuss the briefing on the functions and performance of the Employees Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI).

The Committee took serious notice of the meager pension being paid to EOBI's employees and recommended to enhance it from Rs. 3600/- to 6000/- per month. The Committee asked EOBI to submit complete detail of its collection from 2008 to 2013. The Committee inquired about

promotions made in EOBI after firing 358 employees under allegation of illegal appointments and facts finding report of 2010-2011. The Committee also inquired about the impact on EOBI's budget after recruiting above mentioned 358 employees along with a comparison of income and expenses of the Department.

The Committee appreciated EOBI's Facilitation System for the employees and its efforts to further introduce bio-metric system in near future.

Earlier, the Committee was briefed by Chairman EOBI about the functions and performance of its Department and the efforts to make it more viable/facilitative in future.

Besides, Pir Sadruddin Shah Rashdi, Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development and following MNAs, Rana Muhammad Afzal Khan, Ch. Abid Raza, Ms. Sabiha Nazir, Ms. Shakila Khalid Luqman, Ms. Shagufta Jumani, Mrs. Suriya Jatoi, Sheikh Salahuddin, Ms. Aliya Kamran, Ms. Aisha, MNAs, attended the meeting, besides officials of the Ministry.

#### **Meeting of the Standing Committee on Commerce**

A meeting of the Standing Committee on Commerce held on Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> April, in Parliament House in Committee Room No. 7, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Siraj Muhammad Khan, MNA regarding briefing on National Tariff Commission (NTC) and briefing on Pakistan Institute of Trade & Development.

The Chairman, National Tariff Commission (NTC) briefed the Committee about the functioning and performance of National Tariff Commission. NTC resolve the matter between Traders and Importers. NTC advised the Government about the improving its competitiveness and promoting export from Pakistan, recommend proposal of Tariff measures and



also made recommendations from removal of Tariff anomalies relating to over 1000 tariff lines in several budget proposals. The Director General of Pakistan Institute of Trade & Development briefed the Committee that there was no specialized training Academy like all other occupational groups of Civil service. It was deemed essential by the Ministry of Commerce at that time to establish this institute for specialized training of the Commerce & Trade Group Officers. The Status of the institute is autonomous body under the administrative control of Ministry of Commerce having its own Board of Governors headed by the Minister for Commerce and Secretary Commerce as Vice Chairman of the Board.

The meeting was attended by Choudhry Muhammad Shahbaz Babar, Ch. Asad-ur-Rehman, Mr. Muhammad Pervaiz Malik, Mr. Waseem Akhtar Shaikh, Mian Muhammad Rasheed, Ms. Tahira Aurangzeb, Ms. Shahzadi Umerzadi Tiwana, Dr. Mehreen Razaque Bhutto, Mr. Nazir Ahmed Bughio,

Committee Room No. 7, Parliament House, Islamabad, under the chairmanship of Syed Naveed Qamar, MNA/Chairman.

The Committee discussed budgetary proposals of Ministry of Railways and its attached Departments relating to the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) for the next financial year 2014-15 which were presented by the Ministry.

The Hon. Chairman showed his displeasure for including again the projects of low priority in the proposals. He emphasized that Pakistan Railways should focus on prioritizing their projects and directed to allocate funds in accordance with the actual amount to be provided for PSDP budget 2014-15. He directed that only financially viable projects may be included in the PSDP proposals. He further asked the Ministry to utilize its own resources (like Railways lands, other assets, etc.) and private sector may be brought in with the best possible terms to increase its revenue.

Hon. Syed Naveed Qamar, Chairman of the Standing Committee directed the Ministry to



Syed Naveed Qamar, Chairman Standing Committee on Railways, chairing the committee meeting at Parliament House on 22.04.2014

Ms. Sajida Begum, Ms. Tahira Asif, Mr. Sanjay Perwani, Alhaj Shah Jee Gul Afridi MNAs, besides seniors Officers from Ministry of Commerce.

### Meeting of the NA Standing Committee on Railways

6<sup>th</sup> meeting of railways was held on Tuesday, 22nd April at 1:00 p.m. in

provide a complete and consolidated Project report according to the allocated budget within one week, which would be submitted to the Committee.

Ch. Jaffar Iqbal, Sardar Muhammad Irfan Dogar, Rana Zahid Hussain Khan, Rai Mansab Ali Khan, Engr. Hamid-ul-Haq Khalil, Mr. Amjad Ali Khan, Syed Asif



Hasnain, Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad, Mr. Ramesh Lal, Qari Muhammad Yousaf, Ms. Naseema Hafeez, MNAs attended the meeting. The meeting was also attended by the senior officers of the Ministry of Railways.

### **Chairman NA Standing Committee on Petroleum & Natural Resources Visits PARCO Corporate Headquarters**

National Assembly Standing Committee on Petroleum & Natural Resources appreciated the outstanding performance of PARCO and applauded the efforts of its Management in making PARCO amongst the best professionally managed organizations in Pakistan. This view was expressed by Chairman of the NA Committee on Wednesday, 23rd April, while visiting the Corporate Headquarters of PARCO.

Earlier, while briefing the committee, Mr. Tariq Rizavi, Managing Director PARCO, gave a presentation on the Company's operations including its Mid Country Refinery, cross country pipeline network and marketing activities. Mr. Rizavi also gave a detailed overview of PARCO's history, its human resource management initiatives, its growth and diversification strategy including recent acquisitions and future projects and how PARCO is fulfilling its social responsibilities as the leading integrated petroleum company in Pakistan.

Chairman of the NA Committee offered all possible assistance to PARCO in its request to the Government for increasing the PARCO pipeline tariff to bring it at par with Railway Tariff, a decision already approved by the ECC.

In response to a question, MD PARCO explained that PARCO's growth and success is due to its human capital. The Company has a scientific performance management system, undertakes recruitment on merit, focuses on employee development and

training, and offers competitive salaries based on industry surveys.

Regarding pipeline losses, MD elaborated that these losses are much below the internationally allowed limits. Besides, pilferage incidents are also reducing due to closer monitoring and legislation revision which now make oil pilferage a non bailable offence.

The National Assembly Committee meeting was chaired by Ch. Bilal Ahmed Virk, and was attended by other MNAs including Malik Ihtebare Khan, Rana Afzaal Hussain, Syed Muhammad Saqlain Bukhari, Rana Muhammad Ishaq Khan, Mr. Rasheed Ahmad Khan, Chaudhry Khalid Javaid Warriach, Sardar Ali Gohar Khan Mahar, Mr. Abdul Waseem, Mr. Pir Bux Junejo and MNA Makhdoomzada Basit Bukhari along with Additional Secretary, Mr. Arshad Mirza and other officials of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Resources.

### **Meeting of the Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat**

A meeting of the Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat was held under the chairmanship of Rana Muhammad Hayat Khan, MNA, at Allama Iqbal International Airport Lahore, on 25th April, 2014 to discuss the Umara Fares, terms and conditions of Wet and Dry leased Aircrafts, Extension plan of Lahore Airport and performance of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mall.

The Committee members were apprised by the Managing Director Pakistan Bait-ul-Mall about its creation and functioning. He said Pakistan Bait-ul-Mall was created in 1992, on the directions of the Honorable Prime Minister, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and presently Bait-ul-Mall have eight different projects such as vocational Dastkari Schools, Women development and empowerment center etc. He added Pakistan Bait-ul-Mall was providing financial



assistance in different categories to the public of Pakistan.

The Committee appreciated the efforts made by Managing Director Pakistan Bait-ul-Mall and its management regarding to start child Support program, Pakistan Sweet Homes (Caring Centers for the children between ages 4 to 6 years, whose parents were deceased or unable to care them.) The Committee was informed by MD, PBM about a new project with the name of GREAT HOMES, in order to provide home like environment to the old citizens having no source of survival or accommodation.

The Committee suggested that only well reputed NGOs should involve with Bait-ul-Mall projects, MD PBM assured the committee that PBM will be careful to engage the NGOs in this regard.

The Committee was briefed by the Director Marketing PIA about the Umara fares charged by the Pakistan International Airlines with effect from December, 2013, till to date. He informed the Committee that PIA is the only Airline, presently offering sizable Umara capacity in the market other than limited capacity offered by other Airlines. However the Committee was of the view that the role of middle man should be reduced on the sale of Umara and Hajj tickets. The Committee was informed that I.T wing of PIA was already working on this issue. The Committee decided to constitute a sub Committee to look after the affairs of Umara and Hajj issues with effect from 13th December, 2013, till date.

The Committee was informed by the Chairman Aviation Division about the features of DRY, WET and DAMP. He said PIA will induct Eleven (11) new Aircrafts in PIA fleet during current year. He added that deficit of PIA for the year of 2013-14, was Eight Billion Rupees, which has been reduced to Two Billion during current year. It was also told by the Chairman, Aviation Division that an agreement was made in the

former Government regime with Transfer World Association (A company of Dubai) was made, however due to its non-transparent features an inquiry Committee was constituted to probe into the matter and the same has been referred to the NAB.

The Committee was briefed by Director General Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority regarding proposed extension of Allama Iqbal International Airport. He said that the actual plan for construction of said Airport was curtailed by the previous Government, however, now it has decided to implement on its original plan by the extension of International wings for international air traffic and passengers. He added that 6.5 Billion Rupees will be spent on said extension and PC1 in this regard will be submitted to the concerned authorities for approval in near future.

The following members attended the meeting, Malik Ibrar Ahmad, MNA, Ms. Parveen Masood Bhatti, MNA, Ms. Shahnaz Saleem, MNA, Mrs. Seema Mohiuddin Jameeli, MNA, Mr. Muhammad Rehan Hashmi, MNA, Mr. Abdul Rehman Khan Kanju, MNA and Syed Ali Raza Abidi besides Senior officers from PIA, Civil Aviation and Bait-ul-Mall.

### **Meeting of the Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Reform**

The Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Reform met on Monday, 28th April in Parliament House, Islamabad under the Chairmanship of Mr. Abdul Majeed Khan Khanan Khail, MNA to consider the following agenda:-

1. Briefing on:
  - a) Addition of 3rd & 4th Lane Kashmir Highway from Peshawar More to Golra More (Islamabad).
  - b) Construction of new Secretariat Block, Constitution Avenue, Islamabad.
  - c) Establishment of 12 Women Centers / SBBCW in Punjab.



d) Any other item with permission of the Chair.

2. The CDA briefed that addition of 3rd, 4th and 5th lanes to Kashmir Highway from Peshawar More to GT road has been revised by construction of new bridge for the additional carriageway, Islamabad. In addition, rehabilitation and improvement of existing two lanes and construction of three additional lanes on northern and southern carriageway of Kashmir Highway between Peshawar More and GT road measuring 11 km. Similarly, rehabilitation and extensions of six existing bridges, construction of a grade separated intersection at Golra and box culverts to provide under passes at proposed 10th, 11th & 12th Avenues having capacity of six lanes, proper drainage system, improvement of road junctions and footpaths alongwith allied facility. The CDA informed that the project in question will be completed by 30th June, 2014 which to be

inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

3. Director General, Pak PWD briefed on present status of new Pak Secretariat Block, Constitution Avenue, Islamabad. He stated that work on the main building of new Pak Secretariat Block was started on 19th June, 2007 cost of which comes to approx. Rs. 1884 million. He stated that the building is not worth occupation for at least nine months due to defective planning. He assures the Committee that new Pak Secretariat Block to be completed in six month.

4. MNAs Syed Muhammad Athar Hussain Shah Gillani, Dr. Ibadullah, Ms. Shazia Ashfaq Mattu, Mrs. Shamas-un-Nisa, Dr. Nafisa Shah, Mr. Qaiser Jamal, Sheikh Salahuddin, Ms. Asyia Nasir, Mr. Sher Akber Khan and Mr. Iftikhar-ud-Din were present in the meeting.

## FOREIGN VISITS AND DELEGATIONS

### **3-Day Visit of the President of German Bundestag**

President of German Bundestag (Parliament), Prof. Dr. Norbert Lammert along with a Parliamentary Delegation arrived in Islamabad on 29th April, 2014 on a 3-days official visit to Pakistan. The President of German Bundestag visited Pakistan on the invitation of Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq. The delegation was received by Speaker, National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq along with senior officials of National Assembly Secretariat at Nur Khan Airbase, Rawalpindi. This visit of President of German Bundestag was first ever visit of any Presiding Officer of German Bundestag. The President of German Bundestag during his stay in Islamabad met, besides meeting his counterparts, President Mamnoon

Hussain, Chairman Senate Syed Nayyer Hussain Bokhari besides interacting with Pakistani Parliamentarians. During these meetings the matters pertaining to enhance cooperation between the National Assembly of Pakistan and German Bundestag and possibilities of economic cooperation between both the countries were discussed. President of German Bundestag also addressed Members of Pak-German Friendship Group.

In the last leg of his sojourn, he visited Lahore and met Governor of Punjab and Chief Minister Punjab. He also visited the Sacred Heart Cathedral and met the leaders from the Christian Churches in Pakistan. He also paid a visit to historic Badshahi Masjid and other famous monuments in Lahore.



### **President of German Bundestag Meets Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq**

Speaker, National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Prof. Dr. Norbert Lammert President of German Bundestag (Parliament) have agreed for enhancing parliamentary cooperation between National Assembly of Pakistan and German Bundestag. Both the leaders agreed that strengthening of political institutions and democracy is imperative for development of any nation. Speaker, National Assembly was talking to the President of German Bundestag in Parliament House on Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> April.

The President of German Bundestag paid a 3-days visit to Pakistan.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said that Pakistan values its decade's old friendship with Germany and strongly desires to strengthen its parliamentary and economic

cooperation. He said that Germany has been vocal and staunch supporter of Pakistan and has always extended assistance in recent years. He termed the visit of President of German Bundestag, a reaffirmation of the cordial relations between the two countries and for support of its democracy. He also expressed his satisfaction on the pace of political and economic engagement between both the countries. He also appreciated the German assistance for socio-economic uplift in Pakistan.

The Speaker apprised his German Counterpart about the structure of the present parliament. He said that the present parliament consists of progressive forces

and were on same page on all issues concerning national security and welfare of masses. Referring to the peace in the region, the Speaker said that Pakistan believes in peace and good relation with its neighbors and wanted resolution of all contentious issues through peaceful means. The Speaker said that peace and stability is imperative for the progress and prosperity in the region.

He said that Pakistan has badly been affected by the insurgency resulting in disruption of economic activity in the country, however, the award of GSP+ status to Pakistan by European Union was a step forward for generation of economic activity

in the country.

The Speaker also informed his German counterpart about his initiatives for enhancing capacity of the Parliamentarians and support staff for their meaningful participation in the legislative

process. He said that Parliament would have the distinction of being the first Parliament in world to be powered by solar energy. He said that the National Assembly was also in process creating paperless environment by automation of its documents/record and installation of touch screens in the House with the assistance of its development partners.

The President of German Bundestag Prof. Dr. Norbert Lammert agreed with the Speaker and said that parliamentary engagement between the two parliaments would strengthen the existing cordial relations between the two countries. He



H.E. Prof. Dr. Norbert Lammert, President of German Bundestag called on Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly in Parliament House on 30.04.2014



praised the resilience of Pakistan nation which has gone through decades old insurgency. He said that German Bundestag would embark on a pragmatic and issue driven program for enhancing cooperation between both the parliaments. He appreciated the personal determination of Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for initiating practical measures for deepening the relations

between Pakistan and Germany. He assured the Speaker that engagement between parliamentarians would actively continue in the days ahead. He said that this visit helped him and his colleagues to see the reality about Pakistan. He also agreed for enhancing economic cooperation in diverse fields.

## OTHER NEWS

### **NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Congratulate the Newly Elected Office Bearers of APNS**

Tuesday, 1st April, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly have congratulated the newly elected office bearers of All Pakistan News Society (APNS).

In their separate messages to the newly elected President Mr. Hameed Haroon, Senior Vice President Mr. Jamil Ather, Vice President Mr. Umar Mujib Shami, Secretary General Sarmad Ali and other office bearers, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker extended their warmest felicitation on their success. They said that their election was an evidence of trust and confidence of Journalist Community reposed in them.

The Speaker and Deputy Speaker said that freedom of expression was essential for strengthening democracy in the country and free and independent media serve the interest of the people by acting an impartial critic of government policies.

The Speaker and Deputy Speaker expressed the hope that the newly elected body of the society will work for welfare of Journalist Community and freedom of press in the country and the congenial relations between Government and Press will further enhanced.

### **NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Condemn Bomb Blast in Sabzi Mandi, Islamabad**

Wednesday, 9th April, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly have condemned the bomb blast in Sabzi Mandi, Islamabad and expressed heartfelt grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives.

In their separate statements, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker termed it barbaric and shameful act of terrorism. They said that the elements involved in such activities were the enemies of humanity and the country. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker asked the Law Enforcing Agencies to arrest the miscreants involved in this heinous act and bring them to justice. They prayed to Almighty Allah to rest the souls of martyred in eternal peace and sympathized with bereaved families and also prayed for early recovery of injured.

### **“Turkey” Time-Tested Friend of Pakistan”: Says Na Speaker**

Islamabad: April 10, 2014: A Turkish delegation comprising of former parliamentarians, philanthropists and educationists called on Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Parliament House, on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2014.

Talking to the delegation, the Speaker said that that friendship between the two



brotherly countries is time tested and has roots in history. This fact cannot be denied that Turkey has always been a friend in need and stood by Pakistan in difficult times. The Speaker underlined the need for enhanced interaction between the parliamentarians and people of both the countries for further cementing the fraternal relations between the two countries. He said that parliamentarians of the two sides could play a meaningful role in the region as “parliamentary diplomacy could enable the real policy makers to understand each others’ points of view, better.

The Speaker said that “Turkey’s role in October 2005 Earthquake in AJK and KPK and floods in year 2010 throughout the country was commendable and would always be remembered”. He appreciated Turkish support in infrastructure development, transport and power generations sectors in Pakistan.

The leader of the delegation thanked the Speaker for his kind remarks and said that his country will continue its unflinching support to Pakistan in diverse fields. He termed the friendship between his country and Pakistan, “a historic association that was deeply imbedded in the hearts and minds of the people of both the countries”. He said that people of Turkey were in sheer dismay to see the agony of their Pakistani brethren and extended their support when natural calamities struck the country. He said that his government and private sector would assist Pakistan in education and betterment of social welfare. He said that Turkish institutions would also welcome Pakistani students desirous of studying in Turkey in medicine, law, engineering and arts.

Later, the Secretary National Assembly briefed the delegation about the working of the Parliament. The delegations later visited the Hall of the National Assembly. MNA Sahibzada Tariq Ullah was also present during the meeting.

### Deputy Speaker Instructs the Gallyat Authority to Take the Local Population to Confidence Before Operation in Gallyat

Wednesday, 9th April, 2014

قومی اسمبلی سیکرٹریٹ

پریس ریلیز

میڈیا ونگ

ڈپٹی سیکرٹری قومی اسمبلی کی گلیات ڈولپمنٹ اتھارٹی کو گلیات میں ہونے والے آپریشن سے قبل مقامی آبادی کو اعتماد میں لینے کی ہدایت۔  
اسلام آباد، 9 اپریل 2014 ڈپٹی سیکرٹری قومی اسمبلی مرتضیٰ جاوید عباسی نے مقامی آبادی کو درپیش مشکلات کے پیش نظر گلیات ڈولپمنٹ اتھارٹی سے گلیات میں ہونے والے آپریشن کو موثر کرنے کے لیے کہا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ گلیات میں زیادہ تر لوگوں کا روزگار سیاحت سے وابستہ ہے انہوں نے کہا کہ گریجویٹوں کے موسم میں گلیات میں سیاحت کا رخ ہوتا ہے اور آپریشن کی وجہ سے علاقے میں سیاحت بری طرح متاثر ہونے کا اندیشہ ہے جس سے نہ صرف مقامی آبادی کا روزگار چھن جائے گا بلکہ کاروباری سرگرمیاں بھی بری طرح متاثر ہوں گی۔ انہوں نے مزید کہا کہ گلیات میں اکثر عمارتیں انتہائی پرانی ہیں اور آپریشن کی وجہ سے ان کے منہدم ہونے کا خدشہ ہے انہوں نے کہا کہ وہ GDA کی طرف سے آپریشن کے فیصلے کی مخالفت نہیں کرتے تاہم آپریشن سے پہلے مقامی آبادی اور عوامی نمائندوں کی مشاورت انتہائی ضروری ہے انہوں نے گلیات ڈولپمنٹ اتھارٹی کے بورڈ میں عوامی نمائندوں، عوامی نمائندین علاقہ اور تاجر برادری کے نمائندوں کو نمائندگی دینے کے لیے کہا۔ انہوں نے جوہلیاں شہر میں NHA کی طرف سے ہونے والے آپریشن کا حوالہ دیتے ہوئے کہا کہ جوہلیاں شہر میں مقامی آبادی اور تاجر برادری کی رائے کو مد نظر رکھتے ہوئے آپریشن کیا گیا اور اس آپریشن پر کسی جانب سے بھی اعتراض نہیں اٹھایا گیا انہوں نے صوبائی حکومت کو متنبہ کیا کہ اگر مقامی آبادی کو اعتماد میں لیے بغیر کوئی قدم اٹھایا گیا تو اسے شدید مذہمت کا سامنا کرنا پڑے گا اور بحیثیت عوامی نمائندہ عوام کے حقوق کے تحفظ کرنے کے لیے مجبور ہوئے گا۔

### Speaker and Deputy Speaker National Assembly Felicitate Sardar Mehtab Khan Abbasi

Wednesday, 16th April, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly have felicitated Sardar Methab Khan Abbasi on taking oath as Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In their separate congratulatory messages the Speaker and Deputy Speaker extended warm felicitation to Sardar Mehtab Khan Abbasi on taking oath as Governor KPK and said that his appointment was reflective of trust and confidence of the leadership reposed in his abilities and acumen.



The Speaker and Deputy Speaker said that Sardar Mehtab Khan Abbasi is a seasoned politician and under his sagacious leadership province will achieve progress and prosperity. They prayed for his success as Governor KPK.

### **NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Condemn Life Attempt on Hamid Mir**

Saturday, 19th April, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker National Assembly have strongly condemned the attempt on life of senior Anchorperson of Geo TV Hamid Mir.

In their separate statements, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker expressed their grave concern over the ghastly attempt and called for thorough investigation into the incident. They prayed for early recovery of Hamid Mir.

### **NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Extend Warm Felicitations to the Christians on the Eve of Easter**

Saturday, 19th April, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker National Assembly has extended warm felicitations to the Christian Members of the Parliament and the Christian community on the auspicious occasion of Easter.

He said that the Easter is the occasion to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Peace Be Upon Him), the culmination of the entire year's worship and prayers and forty days of fasting by our Christian brethren followed by celebration and jubilation. He said that this joyful celebration of the Feast of Easter may bring happiness and prosperity to everyone in the Christian community.

The Speaker said that Jesus Christ (Peace Be Upon Him) was ordained by Almighty Allah to preach love, peace, tolerance and brotherhood. He inculcated spiritual values among his followers to work for the Divine pleasure. His eternal message of love for

humanity and for members of all communities and fraternities still holds strength to ensure harmony and peace in today's world. He said that in the day of turbulence in the country, we should forge unity to counter the nefarious designs of the enemies.

He reiterated that the rights and privileges enjoyed by all minorities in Pakistan will be fully safeguarded by the government according to the Constitution of Pakistan and guiding principles of the Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq also extended his appreciation to the Christian community for their deep sense of patriotism and dedicated services for the progress and prosperity of the country. Their unmatched contribution in the process of nation building, especially in the field of health and education was a glowing chapter of our national history, he added.

Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker National Assembly has also extended greetings on his fellow Christian colleagues on the auspicious occasion of Easter.

### **Challenges Confronting Pakistan can be Overcome by Following the Teachings of Allama Muhammad Iqbal: Speaker NA**

Sunday, 20th April, 2014

The vision of Hakeem-ul-Ummah, Allama Muhammad Iqbal was global, encompassing every colour and race of humanity. If we follow his teachings in letter and spirit, the present challenges faced by us could be countered. Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq expressed these views in his message on the occasion of 76th Death Anniversary of Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

The Speaker said that extremism and bigotry had no place in the Allama Iqbal's scheme of things and he wanted Muslims to be moderate, peaceful and enlightened so that their deeds convince non-Muslim to develop penchant for Islam.



He said that prior to 1940, when Pakistan resolution was formally passed; Allama Iqbal's philosophical and poetic writings were instrumental in formation and molding of public opinion. The dream of Allama Iqbal was a great blessing for the Muslims of the subcontinent, he added.

The Speaker said that Allama Iqbal visualized the suffering of Muslim Ummah and masses that led to their melt down and also proposed recipe for their revival and regaining the lost glory of the Muslims. He was the great proponent of unity of Muslim Ummah and reliance on their resources and strength.

### **NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Express Grief and Sorrow Over the Loss of Precious Lives in Roadside Accident Near Sukkur on National Highway**

Sunday, 20th April, 2014

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly have expressed shock and grief over the loss of precious lives in unfortunate roadside accident near Sukkur on National Highway.

In their separate condolence messages, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker conveyed their heartfelt grief and sincere sympathies with bereaved families. They prayed to Almighty Allah to rest the departed souls in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved families to bear the irreparable loss with equanimity. They also prayed for the early recovery of the injured and asked the concern authority to provide best treatment facilities to them.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq asked the provincial government and local administration to investigate the factors leading to the unfortunate incidents and take appropriate action against the persons responsible.

### **Honourable Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Emphasizes the Need for Tolerance to Make Democracy Function**

Wednesday, 23rd April, 2014

While welcoming the participants of National Management Course, Lahore Honourable Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq emphasized the need for tolerance to make democracy function.

The real change is the respect for all constitutional organs by each other he further said Elaborating the results of last general election Mr. Ayaz Sadiq said it is the beauty of democracy that we have different political parties power in center and province.

The current parliament made history when it took power from another elected parliament in 2013. While emphasizing the need for positive interaction between the politician and bureaucracy he said it is job of the politicians to give vision and it is bureaucracy that implement the vision of the government.

He also apprised the audience of various steps taken by National Assembly to reduce the expense of wastage in National Assembly including energy audit, solar power for National Assembly automation and some security related programme are some of them.

The Honourable Speaker also took questions from the participants regarding working of Parliament and other issue of national interest.

### **NA Speaker Constitutes Special Committee on Non-Payment of Taxes by Members**

Friday, 25th April, 2014

Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has constituted a 10-Member Special Committee to investigate the non-payment of Taxes by Members.

The Special Committee has been mandated to investigate the allegations of non-payment of Taxes by the Members and submit its report to the House within 90 days.



The Speaker has constituted the Special Committee under rule 244(B), Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the National Assembly, 2007 consequent to a motion adopted by the National Assembly on 8th April, 2014.

The Special Committee comprises MNA; Mr. Muhammad Pervaiz Malik, Mr. Omar Ayub Khan, Rana Muhammad Afzal Khan, Mian Abdul Manan, Mr. Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh, Sheikh Rohail Asghar, Ms. Shazia Mari, Mr. Asad Umar, Mr. Abdul Rashid Godil and Ms. Asiya Nasir.

### **Speaker NA, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq pays High Tributes to Labourers of the Country**

Wednesday, 30th April, 2014

In his message on the occasion of International Labour Day, Honourable Speaker, National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq paid high tributes to labourers workers of the country who, he said, are engines and drivers of progress and a vital organ in the economy of the country.

The Speaker pledged that the rights of the labour class will be protected by the Parliament as envisaged in the Constitution of the country. They would be provided

protection of job and security after retirement. Islam emphasises the welfare and timely payment of awards and salaries to ensure well-being of labourers, he further added.

"We are observing May Day with a resolve to reaffirm our commitment to the dignity of labour and to pay tribute to the valiant and heroic struggle of the workers of Chicago who sacrificed their lives for the fundamental rights of their fellow workers," he added.

While recognizing their services, the Speaker urged the labour class to work hard with devotion to contribute to the economic development of the motherland.

The Deputy Speaker Murtaza Javed Abbasi, in his message lauded the services of working and labour class for their meaningful contribution towards the economy of the country.

He assured them of government's full support in protection of their rights and also pledged to look after the social welfare. The National Assembly is alive to their problems and will continue to debate their problems in the House, he added.

## PERSPECTIVE

### **Education and the Ground Realities**

**Ashtar Hussain**



I still remember those days during my degree level, where I used to discuss certain issues of our society with my Psychology teacher. Our teacher was of the opinion that different techniques can help people to avoid tension and all related disorders. I would argue

always in contrast to her. One day when I asked her just to compare children outside of the university gate who are searching in the dust-bins, with those who are sitting in the air conditioned cars with their parents, suited booted holding their lunch boxes, ready for their schools. They are un-aware of all miseries of the children who even do



not have their basic necessities. I was of the opinion that there is no such difference among them beyond their looks. If the poor children are provided with such facilities, or even with the moderate ones, they are equally beautiful, handsome and intelligent. And my teacher one day told me jokingly, not to discuss such things in the class to increase her tension.

This is the day to day observation of each of us, and being helpless, we only feel sorrow for them. One day morning while coming to my office, these two photographs I took on main chowk of Taramri Islamabad, where the ‘Success Schooling System’ has placed their advertisement posters. Behind the posters, two innocent children are struggling to collect some papers and other usable items for their livelihood. And here too exists the concept of competition – though fighting – to collect more. Both of the phenomena depict the contradictory situations.

If such situations are prevailing in the Periphery of the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), let alone the rest of the rural areas of the country.

According to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, “the State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law”.<sup>1</sup> But according to Haq (2014), almost half of the Pakistani populace is illiterate e.g. literacy rate is 58%, with 32% of the children of age five to nine are out of schools. This leads Pakistan the second highest number of children out of schools

<sup>1</sup> See Article 25A. of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



after Nigeria, while very much low in the adult illiteracy (Saeed, 2014). Due to such alarmingly worse conditions of education in Pakistan, UNESCO has placed Pakistan on 180<sup>th</sup> position among 221 big or small countries all over the world (Siddiqui , 2013). In the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015, Pakistan is far behind the set targets in all MDGs in general while in primary education in particular. By 2015, Pakistan was to achieve 88% Literacy Rate, and 100% Completion/Survival Rate of Grade 1-5 and 100% Net Primary Enrollment Ratio. While till 2008/09, they were 57%, 54.6% and 57% respectively (See UNDP Millennium Development Goals Report 2011).

When we see the budget allocation towards education, it is very much low as compared



to the international standards. Only 1.9% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is allocated to education in the previous budget, which is to be increased to 4% in order to compete in the current globalized era. Pakistan in current situations is among those countries of the world that spends less than 4% of the GDP on education (Haq, 2013). And when we come to the ground realities, even the allocated budget is not properly utilized. The curse of corruption has not spared even the education sector in Pakistan on each level, which is another topic to be written on.

In order to cope up with the issues in the education sector of Pakistan, Government must adopt strict measures both in short-run as well as in long-run. In the short-run, the existing policies must be implemented

strictly along with the proper check and balance system. While in long-run, the education budget must be increased to bring it to the international standards. International standards in education should be adopted in all aspects, on every level of education. Even now, if the government takes serious steps to eradicate this problem, I think it is not too late. But God forbid, if even now we are not serious about this problem, a situation worse than this would be waiting in the fate of our nation. As the world is becoming a global village one way or another, the scope of hard power is least favored. Today nations with soft power are influencing the international politics, and only education can lead us to attain this. Long live Pakistan!

*(The author is a Young Parliamentary Associate at National Assembly of Pakistan)*

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