

DEMOCRACY VIBES

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Devolution in Punjab

A PROCESS, dragged out for two years, is nearing conclusion as Punjab becomes the fourth and final province to instal elected local governments at the district and sub-district levels. Elections for mayor and chairperson slots held in

December provide ample confirmation of the PML-N's dominant position in the province: Lahore plus all 10 municipal corporations will have PML-N mayors. Preliminary results show 33 district councils out of 35 electing a PML-N chairperson,

with only Pakpattan and Attock falling to independent candidates backed by opposition parties. Out of the 171 small towns known as municipal committees, 106 were won by PML-N

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Dialogue on electoral reforms ahead of next year's elections

With just a year more to go as country holds its next General Elections to elect the new parliament, a dialogue on electoral reforms took place in federal capital Islamabad on January 3, 2017. Organized by Democracy International Reporting an organisation working to promote political participation of citizens and

the development of democratic institutions worldwide, the event invited parliamentarians from both sides of the aisle and civil society representatives who spoke on electoral reforms. The event which was chaired by Honourable Chairman Senate, Mian Raza Rabbani, began with the interim

analysis of the Draft Elections Bill 2017 presented by DRI Country Representative in Pakistan, by Hassan Nasir Mirbahar. He emphasised that prompt passage of the Draft Elections Bill, 2017 is essential to allow sufficient time for its implementation.

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Punjab Youth Parliamentary Caucus wants civic education in syllabus

LAHORE: Punjab Youth Parliamentary Caucus General Secretary MPA HinaPervaiz Butt on Fri-

day submitted a resolution in the assembly secretariat. In her resolution, the lawmaker asked

for inclusion of subject of civic education in the syllabus from

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Democracy is most vital element for economic development and prosperity of any country.

Some electoral reforms

THE Parliamentary Committee on Electoral Reforms (PCER) deserves credit for finalising its proposals for reform of the election system before next year's polls. The National Assembly speaker had perhaps been unduly ambitious when he had asked the committee, set up 29

months ago, to complete its work in three months. The committee's broad mandate reflected the concerns over deficiencies and flaws in the election system voiced by various stakeholders. It included, but was not limited to, "making recommendations in respect of electoral reforms, re-

quired to ensure free, fair and transparent elections, including adoption of the latest technology, available for holding elections, along with draft legislation, including constitutional amendments, if required for this purpose".

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Panama case: A legal perspective

The newly-constituted five-member bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan is hearing the Panamagate case on a day-to-day basis to expeditiously conclude this complex case. However, instead of promptly solv-

ing the so-called Panama riddle, this case has given rise to a number of legal complexities and controversies in the country. It has just opened a Pandora's box of allegations and counter-allegations. Eve-

ryone is openly discussing and commenting on this free-for-all case. In the absence of any definite legal approach adopted by the apex court so far

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Electoral reforms and policy on reserved seats

The long awaited draft Election Bill 2017, prepared by the Parliamentary Committee on Election Reforms (PCER), which brings together several laws related to the conduct of elections into a single manual, is a subject of wide interest and debate. The PCER's openness to suggestions that can be sent electronically is also appre-

ciable because there is always room to improve. To start with, in Pakistan's context where the concept of 'power to the people' has remained under threat due to manipulations, the bill would bring the direction and meaning to focus, if a strong reiteration to this effect is added. The danger remains that without a

mention of the ultimate purpose, the conduct of election may be taken as an administrative function or occasion. Therefore, open to manoeuvring of the process by the powerful, as practices in the status quo suggest. The language of the law must inspire confidence and ownership of the common

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Census: Benefits and need

Studies suggest that the word 'Census' is derived from Latin word 'Censere' which means 'To Estimate'. The word estimate is often used to determine quantity. In ancient periods when inva-

sions and war were common and there were no particular forces for wars, a census was taken to ascertain how much manpower was fit or available for warfare. A few kings conducted it for reve-

nue generations or tax collection as well. The history of conducting census is primordial and vast. China, Egypt, Medieval Europe and Greece
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Ombudsman's powers

THE recent decision to reduce the powers of the federal ombudsman is a disturbing development. The government has pre-

pared a bill with amendments to the legislation that created the office of the ombudsman. Under these, the federal ombudsman

will be unable to set up regional offices, or allow the existing mechanism
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Election Animation

Pakvoter learning resources carries a section 'animations' that is constituted of four election animations developed on different topics to educate voters to vote responsibly. These animations included 'voting for brighter Pakistan rather than cast based

or personal benefits', 'tolerance in democratic and voting behavior & difference', voting and disability rights, and one animation for voting procedure. These animations are prepared creatively and objectively keeping in mind the voting trends observed dur-

ing general elections. In these animations, messages are created focusing on marginalized voters. These animations are about 30 seconds to 1-minute duration.
[View Complete Section](#)

Pakvoter Activity

Date of Event: January 27, 2017

Venue: Government Degree College Shewa, Swabi

Type of Event: Introductory session with students

SeSession was arranged with students of Government Degree College Shewa, Swabi. Total 35 students were briefed about the Pak Voter website. A visual presentation of Pak Voter was also run. Students were introduced with different sections of the website in detail. They also raised different questions regarding the website. A detail discussion was also held on civic and voter education.

