



**Jennifer Lopez returns to the Big Apple post birthday celebration**

## Heartland

**PPP Thatta lauds visionary leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari on his 69th birthday**



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**-Zafar Moji is Sad! PSE 100-index down by 439.83 points to close at 78,029.50**



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## SPORTS

**Babar Azam, Rizwan's replacement for GT20 Canada 2024 unveiled**



**Murad Approves Rs16 Million Grant And Vehicles For Pakistan Association Of The Blind**

## FO Slams Modi's 'Counter-Productive' Anti-Pakistan Rhetoric

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) on Friday rejected the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "belligerent remarks" against Pakistan made in Ladakh today where Indian soldiers and top army brass gathered to commemorate the 1999 Kargil conflict. The 1999 Kargil conflict was the last major battle between the two nuclear-armed foes, who have fought numerous wars since their partition into two nations upon independence from British colonial rule. It came just a year after tit-for-tat atomic weapons tests by the neighbours and spurred international alarm that the confrontation risked tipping into all-out nuclear war. Friday marked the 25th anniversary of the conflict's end. During Friday's event, PM Modi held Islamabad responsible for the conflict and said that while "India was trying for peace, Pakistan had once again showed its untrustworthy face". In response to Modi's comments, the FO said in a



statement that "bravado and jingoism" undermine regional peace and were counter-productive for resolution of long-standing disputes between the two countries, especially the core dispute of Kashmir. "The Indian leaders' rhetorical statements cannot deflect international attention from India's heavy-handed approach to suppress the Kashmiri people's just struggle for realization of their fundamental rights and freedoms, particularly their inalienable right to self-determination," the FO said. It added that India should reflect on its campaign of

"orchestrating targeted assassinations, subversion and terrorism in foreign territories" instead of accusing others of terrorism. The foreign office said that Pakistan stood resolute in its intent and ability to safeguard its sovereignty against any aggression, as exemplified by its robust response to India's "reckless incursion" in February 2019. It added that while Pakistan was ready to counter its neighbour's aggressive actions, it remained committed to "promoting peace and stability in the region"—RT/Agency

## Ji Announces Sit-Ins In Islamabad And Rawalpindi Amid Crackdown

ISLAMABAD: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has announced sit-ins at three locations in Islamabad and Rawalpindi following the arrest of its workers and road blockages at D-Chowk. JI workers removed containers at Faizabad and opened the route, allowing a convoy to enter Rawalpindi and set up at Liaquat Bagh.



Ji's central spokesperson, Quaiser Sharif, stated that due to the arrests and barriers at D-Chowk, JI decided to hold sit-ins at three locations. "We will hold sit-ins at Murree Road in Rawalpindi, Zero Point, and Chungi No. 26," he said. The sit-in at Murree Road will be led by Amirul Azeem, Deputy Amir Dr Osama Razi, along with provincial and district leadership. JI chief Hafiz Naemur Rehman will lead the sit-in at Zero Point, with Deputy Amir Liaquat Baloch, Mian Muhammad Aslam, and other provincial and Islamabad leaders joining.

The third sit-in at Chungi No. 26 will be led by Deputy Amir Dr Attaur Rehman, Professor Muhammad Ibrahim, and provincial leaders. These sit-ins will continue until their demands, including the shutdown of IPPs and relief from tax burdens on the salaried class, are met. Quaiser Sharif declared, "Under the direction of JI leader Hafiz Naem, wherever there is an obstacle, participants will hold a sit-in. Jamaat-e-Islami will now hold multiple sit-ins."

He claimed that the police had arrested 1,150 of their workers and subjected dozens to violence. "Seeing the large public turnout at the sit-ins, the government is panicking and resorting to fascism," he added. Police arrested several Jamaat-e-Islami workers ahead of their planned sit-in against inflation, taxes, and electricity bills at D-Chowk in the federal capital. In response, JI altered their strategy, directing workers to gather at H-8 Bridge while a convoy led by JI chief Hafiz Naemur Rehman entered Islamabad.

Hafiz Naem arrived at the Islamabad Expressway sit-in to address the participants. In his speech at the sit-in, Hafiz Naem stated, "Billions are being embezzled, and the IPPs are exploiting this country. Our sit-in has commenced. We have one demand from the government: provide relief to the public and shut down the IPPs."

Media reported that police blocked all routes to D-Chowk with containers to prevent the sit-in, citing security concerns, and detained several workers in Islamabad. Police sources indicated that no formal arrests were recorded; individuals were detained to prevent public disorder. No demonstrations had yet reached the press club, where police had stationed vans and personnel. To stop people from reaching the sit-in, containers were placed at city entry points, and only one lane remained open on major roads, causing long traffic queues and inconvenience for residents. JI workers blocked one side of Murree Road, threatening to block both sides if routes to D-Chowk were not opened. At H-8 Interchange, workers gathered, some wearing masks of JI leader Hafiz Naem, chanting slogans against the government. Heavy police presence at H-8 Interchange attempted negotiations with the workers. JI's strategy shift included relocating all workers to H-8 Expressway, where sound systems and a stage were set up. Thousands of workers had already gathered, and senior JI leaders started arriving. Led by Hafiz Naem, a convoy from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa crossed barriers at Chungi No. 26 to enter Islamabad. Balochistan Assembly member and provincial leader Maulana Hidayatullah Khan Baloch also arrived from Gwadar with supporters.—RT/Agency

## Harris to Netanyahu: 'I Will Not Be Silent' On Gaza Suffering

WASHINGTON: US Vice President Kamala Harris pressed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday to help reach a Gaza ceasefire deal that would ease the suffering of Palestinian civilians, striking a tougher tone than President Joe Biden. "It is time for this war to end," Harris said in a televised statement after she held face-to-face talks with Netanyahu. Harris, the likely Democratic presidential nominee after Biden dropped out of the election race on Sunday, did not mince words about the humanitarian crisis gripping Gaza after nine months of war between Israel and Hamas militants. "We cannot allow ourselves to be numb to the suffering and I will not be silent," she said. Harris' remarks were sharp and serious in tone and raised the question of whether she would be more aggressive in dealing with Netanyahu if elected president on Nov. 5. But analysts do not expect there would be a major shift in US Open policy toward Israel, Washington's closest ally in the Middle East. Israel's retaliatory attack in Gaza has killed more than 39,000 people and caused a humanitarian calamity with



most of the coastal enclave leveled, people displaced from their homes, famine and a shortage of emergency relief. Biden met with Netanyahu earlier and told him that he needed to close gaps to reach a ceasefire in Gaza and remove obstacles in the flow of aid, according to a readout of the meeting provided by the White House. Netanyahu will meet Harris' Republican rival, Donald Trump, on Friday at Trump's Mar-a-Lago club in Florida. A ceasefire has been the subject of negotiations for months. U.S. officials believe the parties are closer than ever before to an agreement for a six-week ceasefire in exchange for the release of Hamas of women, sick, elderly and wounded hostages. "There has been hopeful

movement in the talks to secure an agreement on this deal, and as I just told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, it is time to get this deal done," Harris said. Al-though she bluntly stated that she has mostly echoed Biden in firmly backing Israel's right to defend itself, she made clear on Thursday that she was losing patience with Israel's military approach. "Israel has a right to defend itself. And how it does so matters," Harris said. In March, she bluntly stated that Israel was not doing enough to ease a "humanitarian catastrophe" during its ground offensive in the Palestinian enclave. Later, she did not rule out "consequences" for Israel if it launched a full-scale invasion of refugee-packed Rafah in southern Gaza.—RT/Agency

## Terrorist Eliminated In North Waziristan Operation: ISPR



NORTH WAZIRISTAN: On Friday, security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in North Waziristan District on the reported presence of terrorists, according to the military's media wing. As per a press release issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), after an intense fire exchange, terrorist Khawarji Razzaq was killed during the operation. He was a close associate of Khawarji Gul Bahadur and was actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area, including the targeted killing of Malik Sher Muhammad, grandson of Faqir of Ippi on January 6, 2023, as well as the facilitation of a suicide bombing attack in North Waziristan on March 16, which resulted in the martyrdom of seven soldiers. ISPR stated that a military operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area as the armed forces remain determined to eradicate the menace of terrorism from the country.—RT/Agency

## Ogra Eyes Policy Overhaul For Petrol Pricing

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) is mulling changing the prevailing government policy for deciding fuel prices in the country, sources told media on Friday. It added that Ogra has chalked out two proposals with the first one seeking the authority to decide fuel prices itself as a regulator. Whereas the second one suggests that the market will decide the prices itself which will be monitored by the government body. The petroleum prices in the country are revised on a fortnightly basis where Ogra works out the rates by assessing various factors and forwards the summary to the Finance Division which then consults with the prime minister and notifies the official fuel prices. The prices of petroleum products hold key significance as any change in them eventually has a trickle-down effect on the inflation-weary masses. The government, earlier this month, increased the petrol and high-speed diesel prices by Rs9.99 and Rs6.18 per litre, respectively.



The prices, as per the statement issued by the Finance Division, were assessed on the basis of price variations in the international market by Ogra. Following the price hike, petrol and diesel are being sold at Rs275.60 and Rs283.63 per litre, respectively. Sources say that it is also possible that the oil marketing companies (OMCs) will be given the authority to decide fuel prices — a proposal on which the petroleum dealers have expressed their reservations. However, there's a risk that empowering OMCs to fix prices might lead to a monopoly in the market, the sources warned. The prospective change in policy comes in light of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's directions to get rid of the responsibility of deciding fuel prices. Stressing that all the criticism is on the government for the increase in the prices of petroleum products, sources have said that the government does not set the price of anything except petroleum prices. Ogra's suggestions will be tabled in a high-level meeting, will be duly consulted with the Petroleum Division and subsequently will be approved by the prime minister. The Petroleum Division is expected to reach a final decision on the said issue within one week.—RT/Agency

## President Zardari Approves Ad Hoc Judges For Supreme Court

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has approved the appointment of ad hoc judges to the Supreme Court of Pakistan. According to a statement issued by the Presidency on Friday, the president gave his approval under Article 182 of the Constitution. Following the president's approval, former Supreme Court Justices Sardar Tariq Masood and Justice Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhel will be appointed as ad hoc judges to the Supreme Court. A JCP meeting was held on last Friday to consider the nominations of both retired judges, with Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa pre-



sidings. By a majority vote of 8 to 1, the JCP approved the nomination of Justice (retired) Sardar Tariq Masood as an ad hoc judge of the apex court. The nomination of Justice (retired) Mazhar Alam Miankhel was approved by a majority of 6 to 3.—RT/Agency

## Ambreen Jan Named Federal Secretary For Information



ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Friday appointed Ambreen Jan, a senior officer of the Information Group, Grade 21, as the Federal Secretary for Information and Broadcasting. The Cabinet Secretary's Establishment Division issued a notification confirming Ambreen Jan's appointment to the position of Secretary for Information and Broadcasting. Prior to this appointment, Ambreen Jan served as the Executive Director General of the External Publicity Wing within the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Her appointment was made under Section 10 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973, the notification added.—RT/Agency

## Tajikistan Ambassador Holds High Stakes Meeting With PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan Sharifzoda Yusuf Toir Friday paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the PM House. The prime minister welcomed the ambassador and wished him a successful tenure in Pakistan. While fondly recalling his recent visit to Dushanbe earlier this month, the prime minister said he was touched by the warm welcome extended to him and hailed the friendly and productive discussions with President Emomali Rahmon during the visit. Expressing satisfaction at the MoUs/agreements signed between the two sides during his visit, PM Shehbaz Sharif urged that timely implementation and follow-up would help strengthen bilateral ties even further. He renewed his invitation to President Rahmon to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at his earliest convenience, while adding that Pakistan was looking forward to Tajikistan's participation in the SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting in Islamabad in October this year. The Tajik Ambassador briefed the prime minister on a number of proposals aimed at enhancing bilateral cooperation in various fields including education, agriculture and defence as well as connectivity through land and air routes. While noting the proposals, the prime minister tasked relevant ministries to get in touch with the Tajik Ambassador for further discussions. Regional connectivity projects including CASA-1000, also came under discussion. The Tajik Ambassador thanked the prime minister for receiving him, conveyed greetings of his President to him and expressed his country's desire to further enhance its relations with Pakistan.—RT/Agency



# THE HEARTLAND



LARKANA: Leaders of the Larkana Social Alliance are protesting against prolonged load shedding of gas and electricity in Larkana.—RT

## Chairman District Council Sukkur Syed Kumail Haider Shah chairs budget session

By Absar Alvi

SUKKUR: The eighth budget meeting for the fiscal year 2024-25 was convened at the District Council Hall, presided over by Chairman Syed Kumail Haider Shah. During the session, council members tabled various proposals, which were subsequently approved by a majority vote. Key approvals included a grant of Rs 20 million for free medical treatment of underprivileged patients at Sukkur Blood Bank Hospital, as well as Rs 5 million for the construction of an additional emergency ward at Sukkur Civil Hospital. The meeting gave the green light to a proposal to levy new taxes on industrial establishments, cold storage facilities, fueling stations, LPG outlets (registered), poultry farms, and other commercial ventures in Sukkur. Furthermore, the meeting approved a revision of the existing tax structure and rental fees for shops of District Council. It also approved to establish mud checkpoints to enhance the security of police personnel. A proposal for transportation facilities for students from rural areas enrolled in Aror University's Art and Architecture



programs was presented in the council, and a bus was approved by a majority vote. Earlier, a lucky draw was held for Umrah tickets for District Council employees (grades 1-11), in which two employees, Allah Bakhsh Khatpar and Kazim Sarohi, were declared winners. Addressing the session, Chairman Syed Kumail Haider Shah said, that several beneficial proposals are being considered, including the Sukkur to Karachi air ambulance service, which are currently under discussion with relevant parties. He assured that the District Council is making every effort to utilize its available resources to provide maximum facilities to the public in all union councils of Sukkur. He announced that rural households will be equipped with solar panels, complete with batteries, fans, sewing machines, and water pumps. Furthermore, the District Council Sukkur has collaborated

## PPP Thatta lauds visionary leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari on his 69th birthday



By Khuda Bux Brohi

THATTA: Leaders, workers and well-wishers of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) gathered at Zamin House to celebrate the 69th birthday of President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari. Born on July 26, 1955, in Nawabshah, Zardari has been a pivotal figure in Pakistani politics and is recognized for his unwavering dedication to democracy and his significant contributions to the country's political landscape. Zardari's efforts have ensured the stability and endurance of democracy in Pakistan and set a high standard of wisdom, tolerance and decency in politics. His dedication to reconciliation and democratic principles has been instrumental in navigating Pakistan through immense challenges, securing a prosperous future for the nation.



HYDERABAD: Activists and leaders of PTI are holding a protest demonstration for the release of PTI Founder Imran Khan, at Hyder Chowk.—RT

## CMC students end their strike after DC Larkana's assurances

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: Deputy Commissioner Larkana Dr. Sharjeel Noor Channa and SSP Larkana Mir Rohail Khan Khoso have resolved the issues of the protesting students at Chandka Medical College by accepting their legitimate demands and ending their protest. Dr. Sharjeel Noor Channa and SSP Mir Rohail Khoso held discussions with the college administration and the protesting students, where the students presented their demands. During the meeting, the DC assured the students that all their legitimate issues would be addressed. He promised



that students would be provided with essential facilities such as water, gas, and a mess in the hostel. Air conditioning would be installed in the library, and students would be provided for winter. Additionally, a Zameer Somro, other officials and students.

## TMK newlyweds demand protection



By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: In Deh Nakhari Farm, Taluka Bulri Shah Karim, the couple Najma Kolhi and Khuda Dino Kolhi from the village Chakar Kalu told journalists that they got married of their own free will. However, their families have become hostile towards them, forcing them to live a life of hardship. Najma further explained that her previous husband, Asghar Kolhi, had passed away, leaving her

## Ongoing clash amongst Junejo, Kalhoro and Bhutto communities settled on Pir Sahab Pagara's orders

By Abdul Qudoos Khilji

PIR JO GOTH: With the efforts of Pir Sahab Pagara and Syed Pir Muhammad Rashid Shah, a settlement has been reached regarding the deadly conflict over land ownership between the two communities of Junejo, Kalhoro, Bhutto and local landowners in the Kachho area of Kongri. The conflict resulted in 3 deaths, 6 injuries and damages amounting to a total of 2 crore 83 lac 88 thousand rupees. The land involved in the dispute will be seized. According to the report, the spiritual leader Pir Sahab Pagara and his son Syed Muhammad Rashid Shah facilitated the resolution of the ongoing tension in the Junejo, Kalhoro, Bhutto and local landlord communities in the Kachho area. The de-

cision was made by the Darbar Sharif Pir Jo Goth's decision committee, led by Mir Abid Khan Jatoti and Pir of Bharchundi Mian Abdul Khaliq. The committee included Riaz Chando, Najaf Kamario, Moazzam Ali Abbasi, Aijaz Ali Bughio, Mir Shehnawaz Khan Talpur, Syed Gul Muhammad Shah Rashidi, Dur Muhammad Sangi, Syed Ali Haider Shah Rashidi, Divyan Topan Das and Azhar Kamario, among others. The ruling stated that the Bhutto community would be paid 50 lac rupees for the murders of Azizullah Bhutto and Amir Bhutto, 6 lac rupees for the injuries of Muhammad Safar and Musal Narejo, 50 lac rupees for the firing on Sardar Amir Bux Khan Bhutto's residence, 50 lac rupees for damages to honor, 48 lac 80 thousand rupees in total damages. This amount will be paid by the Junejo and Kalhoro communities to the Bhutto community. 25 lac rupees will be paid for the death of Ghulam Mir Kalhoro, 9 lac rupees will be paid for the injuries of 3 individuals. In total, a fine of 2 crore 83 lac 80 thousand rupees was imposed, and the land in dispute in Deh Rajoo Dero and Deh Dosoo Dara will be seized. After the verdict, prayers were offered. It is worth noting that three months ago, a dispute over land ownership in the Kachho area between the Junejo, Kalhoro, and Bhutto communities resulted in 3 deaths, 5 injuries and the burning of the local landlord community's standing wheat crop, shelters, and solar panels.

## Khairpur traders host reception in honor of SSP Zubair Nazir Shaikh

Reception By Naeem Shaikh

KHAIRPUR: The Traders Association of Luqman Phatak organized a prestigious ceremony in honor of SSP Khairpur Zubair Nazir Shaikh for his outstanding performance in the district. The event was attended by prominent political and social leaders, including the President of the Traders Association Khairpur, Haji Lala Abdul Ghaffar Shaikh, Shahzeeb Phulpot, Haji Yar Muhammad Shaikh, Haji Altaf Memon, Syed Kamal Shah, Altaf Lashari, DIB Incharge Ali Gul Mallah, SHO Syed Azhar Shah, SHO Sikkandar Panhwar, Mazhar Shaikh, Faheem Shaikh, and many traders



from Luqman. The host of the ceremony, Javed Ahmed Shaikh, President of the Traders Association Luqman Phatak, presented SSP Khairpur with a traditional Sindhi cap and Ajrak as gifts. SSP Khairpur Zubair Nazir Shaikh, SHO A Section Syed Azhar Shah, SHO B Section Sikandar Panhwar, and Incharge Luqman Chowki Wali Muhammad Memon were awarded honorary shields for their excellent performance."

## Birthday of MPA Nawab Taimur Talpur celebrated with zeal in Umerkot



By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: On the occasion of PPP MPA Nawab Taimur Talpur's birthday, a celebration was held at Anand Pump in Umerkot, organized by PPP leader and Vice Chairman of the Municipal Committee Umerkot, Kumar Talwani. The event was attended by numerous PPP leaders and workers, including Jai Chouhan, Manthar Arisar, Sarwan Singh,

## Larkana man kills his cousin over a domestic matter

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: In the Murad Wahan neighborhood of Larkana city, within the limits of the Darri Police Station, Sheeraz Wagan shot and killed his 19-year-old cousin, Koonj Wagan, over a familial dispute and then fled. The police arrived at the scene, gathered details about the incident, and later

transferred the deceased's body to the Trauma Center, where doctors confirmed her death. The victim's brother, Babar Wagan, stated that three years ago, his sister Koonj's engagement was arranged with her cousin Faisal Wagan, but Faisal was an addict and did not work, which led them to send him to Karachi for employment. Following this, today Faisal's brother, Sheeraz Wagan, entered their home and shot Koonj, killing her before fleeing. Babar Wagan demanded the arrest of the accused Sheeraz Wagan and called for justice. Meanwhile, after the postmortem, the victim's body was handed over to the family. No case of the incident was lodged till the filing of this news.



HYDERABAD: Police officials are arresting activists and leaders of the PTI during their protest demonstration for the release of PTI Founder Imran Khan, at Hyder Chowk.—RT

## Umerkot man commits suicide after his wife gets angry at him

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: In the village of Abdullah Khan Kapri near Samaro, a 28-year-old young man named Jeevo, son of Somji Kolhi, committed suicide inside his house due to his wife's anger. Upon receiving the information, Samaro police arrived at the scene, took the body into custody, and transported it to Taluka Hospital Samaro. After completing the necessary formalities, the body was handed over to the family.



HYDERABAD: Activists and leaders of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) are holding a protest demonstration at the Hyderabad Press Club against the Supreme Court's decision in the Mubarak Sani case.—RT

# NATIONAL



## Legal Action Announced Against Creators Of Deep Fake Video Targeting Azma Bokhari

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information Technology Shaza Fatima has vowed to identify and take legal action against those responsible for creating and spreading a deep fake video of Azma Bokhari.

Speaking at a press conference with Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) women leaders, Shaza Fatima condemned the use of deep fake technology to malign Azma Bokhari and announced a crackdown on those involved in the dissemination of such propaganda. The Minister stressed that legal measures would be pursued against individuals creating fake photos and videos.

PML-N leaders alleged that a specific political party



was behind the negative campaign against Azma Bokhari. Shaza Fatima emphasized that social media would not be tolerated as a platform for such propaganda.

PML-N leaders expressed concern over the misuse of Islam by certain political groups to further their agendas. Shaista Pervez, a PML-N leader, reiterated the party's commitment to supporting women affected by political propaganda and called for an end to the use of such tactics against women.—RT/Agency

## Maryam Announces Expansion Of Safe City Project To 18 More Cities



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has pledged to extend the Safe City project to 18 additional cities across the province.

Speaking at a ceremony organized by the Safe City Authorities on Friday, CM Maryam described the Safe City project as a key initiative of the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N). She emphasized the project's role in enhancing public safety through advanced surveillance and response systems.

The Chief Minister noted that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had launched a similar pilot project in Lahore and expressed her intention to request further support from the PM to expedite the project's rollout across Punjab.

CM Maryam also highlighted the Women and Children Virtual project, which began three months ago with 1,200 personnel from the Dolphin force involved. She assured that female employees' concerns, particularly regarding hotel accommodations, would be addressed promptly.

"The welfare of our people is our top priority. Punjab is setting new benchmarks in development and aims to surpass previous records of growth," she said, adding that cities benefiting from the Safe City project would also offer free public Wi-Fi.—RT/Agency

## Punjab Approves Solarisation Project For Agricultural Tube Wells

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has approved a new initiative to solarize agricultural tube wells across the province.

Under this project, farmers with at least 25 acres of agricultural land will be eligible for solarisation. The government will cover 67% of the project costs, leaving farmers responsible for only 33% of the payment.

In the first phase, approximately 7,000 tube wells will be converted to solar energy. The project will expand in the second phase, aiming to solarize around 10,000 additional tube wells in collaboration with the federal government.

Currently, operating a tube well on diesel costs around Rs. 3,000 per acre, whereas using electricity costs approximately Rs. 1,500 per acre. This initiative aims to reduce these costs and promote sustainable energy use in agriculture.—RT/Agency

## PA Speaker Announces Vacancy Of Opposition Leader Position Following SC Verdict

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan has announced that the position of Opposition Leader is currently vacant due to the Supreme Court's recent verdict on reserved seats.

At a press conference on Friday, the Speaker explained that the Opposition Leader, who represented the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), no longer holds the position since SIC is no longer recognized as a parliamentary party in the Punjab Assembly following the court's decision.



The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has now assumed the status of the parliamentary party.

"The office of the Opposition Leader is now vacant because SIC has been replaced by PTI as the parliamentary party," Speaker Malik Ahmad Khan stated. "You cannot continue as Opposition Leader when your parliamentary party status has changed."

He also addressed the issue of conduct within the Assembly, stating that he holds the authority to suspend the membership of any MPA who uses abusive language. He expressed his disapproval of such behavior, particularly when it involves family members, and emphasized his commitment to ending this abusive culture.

The Speaker announced the formation of an ethics committee, which will soon present its findings to the Assembly. He also noted that 26 seats are still under legal scrutiny, but assured that the government's stability would not be affected if the verdict favors the opposition.—RT/Agency

## Amir Muqam: Provincial Government Responsible for Maintaining Peace and Law & Order

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan, and SAFRON, Engineer Amir Muqam, asserted on Friday that maintaining peace and law and order is the responsibility of the provincial government.

Speaking at a joint press conference with Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Atta Tarar, Amir Muqam emphasized that there is currently no ongoing operation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). He dismissed Opposition allegations of false and unfounded, affirming that these claims are fabricated.

Muqam highlighted that law enforcement agencies are effectively maintaining peace in KP. He noted that political forces had united under the National Action Plan and that the previous Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government had authorized the establishment of Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) offices in KP to address security challenges.—RT/Agency



## PTI's 'Neeli Pari' Sent To Jail On Judicial Remand

LAHORE: A local court in Lahore on Friday sent Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) activist Aneela Riaz, also known as Neeli Pari, to jail on judicial remand.

The court's decision came after the Lahore Police had requested a physical remand for Riaz, who was presented before the judicial magistrate. The request was denied, and Riaz was instead remanded to jail for further proceedings.

Riaz's arrest on Thursday followed an incident where she allegedly assaulted stage artist Tahir Anjum outside the Punjab Assembly. The altercation occurred during a PTI symbolic hunger strike protesting the incarceration of party founder Imran Khan.

According to the complaint filed by Anjum, Riaz stopped his vehicle and physically attacked him. Media footage shows Riaz slapping Anjum, who was subsequently rescued by party workers.

The case against Riaz was registered after the incident, leading to her arrest and subsequent judicial remand.—RT/Agency

## Balochistan CM Vows to Depoliticize Police And Levies Force

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister (CM) Mir Sarfraz Bugti announced the complete depoliticizing of the police and levies force and to make them capable of ensuring protection of citizens and the writ of the law across the province.

He directed the IG Police from the floor of the assembly to appoint SPs, DPOs, SHO on merit and other provinces for posting in Balochistan if needed. He said no member of the assembly and politician would interfere in the police department's affairs and would not ask for the posting of blue-eyed SP and SHO. Addressing the Provincial Assembly, Sarfraz Bugti said that the government would inter the tenure of police officers until and unless they don't hurt the privileges of parliamentarians and self respect of a common man. "We are depoliticizing and providing free environment, would also keep accountability in the police department," he added.

The chief minister said that police would be equipped with modern tools and would provide facilities to the police as the crime prevention is the top priority of the government. He directed the IG Police to launch operation in collaboration with Levies force against organized crime and ensure security on national highways to curb the lawlessness in the province. Sarfraz Bugti said that the province is facing the challenges of terrorism and terrorists have launched organized RAW-driven war against the country and the province. He said that there is initiated a systematic conspiracy against Pakistan, one group is using violence in Balochistan and another group is defaming the state institutions through social media.—RT/Agency

## Governor Kundi: Art Key To Boosting Pakistan's Soft Image

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Friday highlighted the remarkable talent of the people of Pakistan and stressed the importance of encouraging individuals involved in the arts. He said this while speaking at an art exhibition held at the Pakistan National Council of Arts in Islamabad, accompanied by Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and Punjab Provincial Assembly member Aminia Sheikh.

Governor Faisal Kundi underscored that artists play a crucial role in presenting a positive image of the country through their works. Faisal Kundi noted that, now more than ever, there is a need for artistic exhibitions and other positive activities. He expressed deep interest in the displayed artworks and praised the performance of young artists, encouraging them to align their craft with current trends and to continually improve their skills.

The Governor stressed the necessity of developing an effective strategies and measures to enhance the field of fine arts in Pakistan. He urged artists to stay informed about contemporary trends and explore new dimensions in their work. Governor Kundi also congratulated the organizers for the successful exhibition and expressed hope that similar events will soon be held in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which he believes will surely attract public interest. Governor Kundi said that such exhibitions inspire students to advance and work harder, enhance their intellectual and creative skills, and contribute to societal reform.—RT/Agency

## Women's Rights Protection Is A Top Priority For Punjab Government: Hina Parvez Butt

RAWALPINDI: Chairperson of the Punjab Women Protection Authority, Hina Parvez Butt, emphasized on Friday that safeguarding women's rights is a top priority for the Punjab government. She noted that the government is implementing anti-violence measures to ensure women can contribute to society with full legal protection and freedom.



Speaking to the media after visiting the Women Command and Control Room at the District Women Protection Center, District Women Protection Center, and Social Welfare Complex, Hina Parvez Butt highlighted that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz is a staunch advocate for women's rights. She stated that the development of a country is incomplete without the active participation of women in all sectors of life.

At the District Women Protection Center, women victims of violence and abuse are provided comprehensive protection, she added. Hina Parvez Butt emphasized that, like across the province, the Punjab Women Protection Authority in Rawalpindi is actively working to ensure timely responses to protect women.

She also mentioned that virtual Women Police Stations operate around the clock to address any incidents of violence and that a Women Protection Counter is functioning in the Command and Control Room at the Police Line for addressing women's complaints.

During her visit, Hina Parvez Butt reviewed the facilities and arrangements at the District Women Protection Center and the Social Welfare Complex. She was briefed by SP Headquarters Benish Fatima about the special women's counter, complaint cell, and virtual women police station established in the command and control room.

She noted that women's complaints are promptly addressed, and their safety is ensured. Director Social Welfare Rawalpindi Rana Shahid, District Women Protection Officer Rizwana Bashir, and other officials were present during her visit.—RT/Agency

## Madrassa Student Brutally Beaten By Teacher In Faisalabad



FAISALABAD: A disturbing video showing a madrassa teacher violently beating a student has gone viral, sparking outrage on social media. The incident occurred in Faisalabad's Thikriwala area.

Following a complaint from the boy's father, Rashid, the police have filed a first information report (FIR). The case has been registered under Sections 328A (exposure and abandonment of a child under twelve years) and 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

According to the FIR, the teacher, Mohammad Rizwan, a cleric at Jamia Ghousia Rizvia, began beating the student on July 24 after Zuh prayers for reasons that remain unclear. Two other students, Mohammad Raza and Munawwar, intervened, pleading with Rizwan to stop.

When Rashid confronted Rizwan about the incident, the teacher reportedly became enraged and began verbally abusing him. The police investigation is ongoing.—RT/Agency

## SOUTHERN PUNJAB

### AC Ali Sameer Monitors Vegetable and Fruit Prices in Toba Tek Singh

By Abid Mehmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: Acting on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sindh, Assistant Commissioner Headquarters Ali Sameer conducted an early morning inspection of the vegetable and fruit market. During his visit, he reviewed various market sections, monitored auctions, and checked the issuance of price lists.

Assistant Commissioner Sameer emphasized that strict action is being taken against those involved in hoarding and creating artificial inflation. He noted that continuous monitoring and enforcement of district administration-set prices are in place, with price control magistrates conducting regular visits.

He urged shopkeepers to prominently display price lists and sell goods at the rates prescribed by the district administration. Non-compliance will result in stringent action. Additionally, he advised citizens to report any instances of overpricing to the Assistant Commissioner's office for immediate intervention against inflation-related issues.



## METRO KARACHI

### Sindh Lifts Ban On Issuing Arms Licenses

KARACHI: The Sindh Home Department on Friday lifted ban on issuance of arms licences at Deputy Commissioners offices across the province with effect from August 01, 2024.

"With the approval of Minister for Home, Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Criminal Prosecution Sindh, ban on issuance of Arms licences has been lifted with effect from August 01 at Deputy Commissioner's offices across the province as per existing quota/ceiling as mentioned in Rule 4.1 of Sindh Arms Rule 2018," stated a notification issued here.

The Additional Chief Secretary Home Department Muhammad Iqbal Memon has issued a notification in this regard.

The ban was imposed by caretaker government led by Chief Minister Maqbool Baqar in October 2023. The Interior secretary issued a notification on the direction of caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Maqbool Baqar. The notification stated that the ban would be imposed on the issuance of licenses of arms from the district commissioner offices and the interior ministry.—RT/Agency

### PTI Postpones Islamabad Protest To Monday



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had previously imposed Section 144 in the capital and sealed the red zone following PTI's initial protest and announcement.

Earlier on Friday, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) reserved its verdict on PTI's plea to stage the protest. The court directed the district administration and PTI leaders to negotiate the details of the protest within two hours.—RT/Agency

### One sentenced to death, another murderer jailed for life in Toba Tek Singh

By Abid Mehmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: Additional District and Sessions Judge Gojra Abbas Rasool Warich has sentenced Abid Mahmood to death and his accomplice, Zeeshan alias Shani, to life imprisonment for a murder that occurred three years ago in the jurisdiction of the City Police Station. Abid Mahmood was found guilty of the murder of Sheeraz Butt, who was killed in 2021 over allegations of being a police informant. His accomplice, Zeeshan alias Shani, received a life sentence. The other accused—Falak Sher alias Baloch, Galsher, and Arif alias Aft—were acquitted due to insufficient evidence.

Strict security measures were enforced at the court premises during the announcement of the verdict. The court acquitted three other ac-

EDITORIAL



Founders: Late Kazi Saeed Akbar, Late Kazi Jawad Akbar, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher: Kazi Sajjad Akbar

Saturday, July 27, 2024

The Right To Peaceful Protest Must Prevail

The recent wave of protests led by Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) in Islamabad highlights a fundamental right that is intrinsic to every democratic society: the right to peaceful protest.

The decision to limit JI protestors to Zero Point and the subsequent arrests of several JI workers aiming to stage a sit-in at D-Chowk underscore a government strategy more suited to autocracies than modern democracies.

government out of touch with the realities and hardships faced by its citizens.

The imposition of Section 144 across Punjab and Islamabad, banning public gatherings and rallies, is a blunt instrument intended to stifle dissent under the guise of maintaining law and order.

The inconvenience caused to residents, with severe traffic jams and restricted movement, further alienates the populace and adds to the growing discontent.

Jl's call for a protest against the hike in power tariffs and inflated electricity bills is a legitimate expression of public discontent.

Arresting protestors, raiding homes, and even targeting guests underlines a fear-driven response that is more about silencing opposition than ensuring public safety.

This crackdown reflects an administration desperate to maintain control in the face of mounting criticism and diminishing public support.

In a true democracy, the right to protest is a vital mechanism for citizens to hold their leaders accountable.

REGIONAL TIMES THE HEARTLAND. Includes a grid of four images: a couple embracing, two women in traditional attire, a mosque, and a rural landscape.



LARKANA: Members and leaders of the Larkana Social Alliance are holding a protest rally against prolonged electricity and gas load shedding in the district, at Jinnah Bagh-RT

HESCO SDO Ajiz Ghulam Ali Jamali leads operation against power theft in Daulatpur

DAULATPUR: On orders of the SE Farman Ali Dahani and XEN HESCO Aziz Ahmed Bhutto an operation was carried out by the HESCO (Hyderabad Electric Supply Company) officials under the leadership of SDO (Sub-Divisional Officer) Ajiz Ghulam Ali Jamali and Line Superintendent Ali Asghar Mallah.

FFC, Agriculture Dept hold an awareness seminar in Dadu

DADU: A seminar on profitable paddy cultivation was organized by Fauji Fertilizers Company and the Agriculture Department of Dadu. The event featured several distinguished guests, including Director General of Agriculture Extension Department Munir Ahmad Jamani, Chairman of District Council Dadu Syed Muhammad Shah.

Regional Head of Federal Ombudsman's Secretariat holds an Open Katchery in TMK

BHAVANI, and officials from all provincial and federal departments of the district attended the event. Dr. Rizwan Ahmed used his special authority to listen to complainants against various provincial departments, including issues such as HESCO sending unjustified bills under over-reading.

Case registered against former Nawabshah SHO and Police personnel for theft and assault

NAWABSHAH: Following the orders of Second Additional Sessions Judge Shahid Awan in Shaheed Benazirabad, a case has been registered at the A-Section Police Station based on a complaint by Mrs. Shabana, daughter of Sadiq Malik, residing in Gofimar, Nawabshah.

Children take out a mourning procession for Shahzada Ali Asghar (AS) in Tando Allahyar

TANDO ALLAHYAR: In commemoration of the martyrdom of the 6-month-old son of Hazrat Imam Hussain Shah Kazmi, Main Bazaar, MCB Chowk, Sheedi Muhalla, Zaman Shah Muhalla, Court Road, Unar Muhalla, Mir Ka Goth, Choodi Muhalla, Bara Pard (Imambargah Jano Shah), Dargah Mai Hajra, and Imambargah Syed Sakhi Mouj Darya, eventually returning to Mithan Shah Muhalla at the residence of Qambrani, Azam Qambrani and Naem Qambrani.

Shortage of water intensifies in Hingorja's branches

HINGORJA: In the Hingorja area, farmers and laborers have taken to the streets in protest against the severe water shortage in the three branches including Machhar Mines, Benazir Mines and Mehrab Branch. Due to the failure to control water theft, the farmers and laborers, led by Haji Muhammad Hassan Mangnejo, Sardar Hussain Mangnejo and Comrade Ali Khan Mangnejo staged a protest demonstration.

ADC-I Ghulam Dastagir Shaikh chairs meeting of District Mirpurkhas' Benevolent Fund Board



By Younis Chandio

MIRPURKHAS: Following the instructions of the Deputy Commissioner and Chairman of the District Benevolent Fund Board Mirpurkhas, a board meeting was held in the office of Additional Deputy Commissioner-I, Ghulam Dastagir Shaikh. During the meeting, 190 applications for the benevolent fund from the relatives of deceased employees of various government departments were reviewed and approved for payment.

Lower staff of Education Dept to launch protest movement against lack of facilities

SAKRAND: A crucial meeting of the Sindh Lower Staff Education Taluka Sakrand was held under the chairmanship of District President Manzoor Jamal in Sakrand. The meeting concluded with a decision to initiate a protest movement from July 30, Tuesday, if their demands for promotions, uniform allowances, and other legitimate issues are not addressed.

SSP Asif Raza Baloch listens to issues facing Umerkot's cops

UMERKIOT: The SSP of Umerkot, Asif Raza Baloch, conducted an Orderly Room (OR) for police officers and personnel stationed at various police stations, units, and sections. The OR focused on show-cause notices, performance reports, transfer postings, and reports of absenteeism.

Khairpur man killed after being hit by a train

KHAIRPUR: A person was killed in a train collision near Khairpur Railway Station, and the deceased has not yet been identified. According to reports, a collision occurred between the Multan Express, traveling from Karachi to Punjab, and a pedestrian near Khairpur Railway Station within the jurisdiction of B-Section Police Station. The person died on the spot. The B-Section Police arrived at the scene, took possession of the body, and transferred it to the Civil Hospital Khairpur, where it is currently kept in the morgue.

SPORTS



Jason Gillespie reacts to PCB's stance on players' workload management



LAHORE: Pakistan's newly-appointed Test coach Jason Gillespie backed the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) stance to ensure the workload management of the all-format players.

Earlier, the cricketing body denied the No Objection Certificates (NOCs) to Naseem Shah for the Hundred and also to Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Shah Afridi for the Global T20 Canada 2024.

Meanwhile, Gillespie, in an interview with ESPN Cricinfo, said that the centrally contracted players are compensated well and thus the management has the right to instruct the players to rest, considering their availability for the national team.

"Players are centrally contracted and getting compensated really well. We have the right to be able to say, 'Look, in this situation, we need you to rest or have some downtime to give your body and mind a break, be ready for the next challenge for Pakistan'" Gillespie said.

Jason Gillespie, however, acknowledged the importance of the franchise leagues for the players to get exposure but if that participation impacts a player's readiness for national duty then a discussion and a decision would be essential.

"We want players to go and play in these leagues and have these great experiences. But if we believe it's going to be to the detriment of representing Pakistan in an upcoming series, then we'll have a discussion and have a decision to make."

"These are honest and difficult conversations. Ultimately, we're tasked with doing what's right by Pakistan cricket."

"If being honest is telling a player something you will hear, well, then I'm willing to do that. I want to help them be the best player and person they can be."

It is worth mentioning here that the Pakistan men's team will embark on a busy international calendar 2024-25 with a two-match home Test series against Bangladesh, scheduled to take place from August 21 to September 3.—Agency

Australian swim coach avoids being kicked out of Olympics



PARIS: An Australian swimming coach who backed a South Korean rival to beat two of his countrymen avoided being kicked out of the Olympics Friday, with officials deciding it would be too disruptive.

Michael Palfrey told South Korea media this week he hoped Kim Woo-min won gold instead of Sam Short and Elijah Winnington in the men's 400m freestyle.

The trio -- all former world champions -- will face off on Saturday in the opening day of action at La Defense Arena.

Head coach Rohan Taylor blasted Palfrey as "un-Australian", deeming his actions "extremely disappointing".

But he stepped short of following through on a threat to send him home, saying athlete welfare across the 41-member pool team factored into his decision.

"We took the time to consider the two options -- for Mick Palfrey to stay, and for him to be sent home," he said in a statement.

"After extended conversations with athletes, the athlete leadership group, and coaching staff we have made the decision for Michael to stay."

"It is not one we have taken lightly and I stress this is an ongoing discussion for when we return home."

Palfrey works with Australian swimmers Zac Incerti, Abbey Connor and Alex Perkins, but also mentored Kim while he was training in Brisbane ahead of the Games.

According to The Sydney Morning Herald, Palfrey was wearing Australian team colours when he was interviewed by South Korean journalists and declared "Go Korea" while talking about his hopes for Kim.

"I support Rohan Taylor and his team and the decision they have taken in the interests of the swimming team," said Australian chef de mission Anna Meares.—Agency

Babar Azam, Rizwan's replacement for GT20 Canada 2024 unveiled

LAHORE: Vancouver Knights have announced replacements for Pakistan's white-ball captain Babar Azam and wicket-keeper Mohammad Rizwan for the ongoing Global T20 (GT20) Canada 2024.

Pakistan's most reliable batting duo was scheduled to represent Vancouver Knights in the GT20 Canada 2024, however, they failed to secure the No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).

According to the cricketing body, the three all-format players were denied NOCs, in light of Pakistan's busy and packed cricket calendar in the period from August 2024 to March 2025 which includes ICC Champions Trophy 2025.



"The PCB had received NOC requests from Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Afridi for the Global T20 event, amongst other players," stated PCB.

"The three are all-format cricketers and their services are expected to be required in the upcoming eight months during which Pakistan will play nine Tests, 14 ODIs, and nine T20Is.

"As such, and in line with the PCB's workload management policy, it is in the best interest of Pakistan cricket and the players that they skip the upcoming event in Canada so that they are in their best mental and physical shape for the season which commences with the two-Test series against Bangladesh."

Khawaja led the Vancouver Knights in the GT20 Canada 2024 opener against the Toronto Nationals.

While batting first, the Knights were bowled out for a meagre 110, thanks to Junaid Siddiqui's four-fer. Toronto Nationals' captain Colin Munro led his side to a comfortable victory with a 44-run knock.—Agency

Shoaib Malik urges India to visit Pakistan for Champions Trophy 2025



LAHORE: All-rounder Shoaib Malik urged India to visit Pakistan to participate in the Champions Trophy 2025 which is set to take place in the country from February to March next year.

"I think there are many players in the Indian team who haven't played in Pakistan, so it would be great for them. We are good people. We're very hospitable people, so I'm sure the Indian team should come."

Three venues - Karachi, Rawalpindi and Lahore - will host the matches of eight matches and according to PCB's proposed schedule to ICC, all of India's matches will take place in Lahore. Except India, all eight teams that will participate in the Champions Trophy have already played in Pakistan and the PCB believes that India does not have a strong reason not to come here.—Agency

Paris ready to host 2024 Olympic Games under enhanced security

PARIS: France aims to wow the world on Friday with an extravagant Olympics opening ceremony through the heart of Paris, officially kicking off a Games fraught with security risks at a time of heightened geopolitical tensions.

Some 45,000 police, 10,000 soldiers and 2,000 private security staff will ensure the safety of the parade along the river Seine, its banks and surrounding monuments, in an unprecedented display of security.

A procession of barges will take nearly 7,000 athletes along the river past Paris's most famous landmarks, while more than 300,000 spectators will watch from the banks.

Since the last Olympics in Beijing in 2022, wars have erupted in Ukraine and Gaza, providing a tense backdrop to the Games.

As part of a vast security operation, authorities have turned to power passed under an anti-terrorism law, placing 155 people under surveillance measures that strictly limit their movement, according to official data and a Reuters review of cases.

Meanwhile, Israeli competitors are being escorted by elite tactical units and from events and given 24-hour protection throughout the Olympics, officials say.

Scores of world leaders will be in Paris for the opening ceremony, which will be protected by snipers on rooftops. The Seine's riverbed has been swept for bombs, and Paris' airspace will be closed.—Agency



highest level of security - though officials have repeatedly said there is no specific threat to the opening ceremony or the Games.

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Rafael Nadal suffers injury scare ahead of Paris Olympics opener



PARIS: Rafael Nadal suffered an injury scare ahead of his first round of the singles match against Hungary's Marton Fucsovics which is set to be played on Sunday.

Nadal, a 22-time Grand Slam winner, will face his old rival Novak Djokovic in round two should he beat Fucsovics in the opener.

However, just two days before his doubles with Carlos Alcaraz, Nadal sustained a setback in training and according to his coach, Carlos Moya, they will give the Spaniard 48 hours before making a decision on his participation in the tournament.

"It has been a setback and we have decided that Rafa should rest today and not the first time they have played together and it will be something his tennis going to give ourselves 48 hours. I can't say anything for sure. We have to wait."

"He had some discomfort yesterday [Wednesday 24th July] morning. In the afternoon he was more limited and before it got worse he decided to stop. I can't guarantee anything, neither that he won't play or he will play. At the moment he needs to rest, undergo treatment. He is obviously very excited to play these Olympics. It has been something marked on his calendar for years. He is a born competitor and wants to play singles and doubles. He is very excited about the doubles with Alcaraz. It will be the first time they have played together and it will be something his tennis going to give ourselves 48 hours. I can't say anything for sure. We have to wait."

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Jasprit Bumrah praises Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli's leadership skills

India pacer Jasprit Bumrah lauded the leadership skills of two veteran cricketers, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, after the Blues ended their 11-year-long ICC trophy drought by lifting T20 World Cup 2024 in West Indies.

Bumrah was key to India's success in the tournament as he bagged 15 wickets and was also named the Player of the Tournament due to his heroics, especially in the final when all hopes were just for Sharma's men.

"The speedster was asked how his favourite Indian captain is to which he hilariously picked himself.

"My favourite captain is me because I have captained a few games. Obviously, there are great captains, but I will take my name. I am my favourite captain," Bumrah told The Indian Express.

After sharing some laughter, Bumrah went on to praise Sharma for the way he has been leading the team. Especially during the five-Test against England where India played several youngsters.

"In the recent England series, when the youngsters came, Rohit made the atmosphere very comfortable," Bumrah said. "He took extra effort, he will take them out, he will talk to them about the game; he will try and push them to take the responsibility, as the youngsters should think all are equally important, there is no senior or junior."

"A captain needs to have empathy towards bowlers and Rohit Sharma is one of the few captains who has empathy for bowlers."

"Playing in the IPL as well, I even used to go and tell Rohit that 'You set the field, I am going to bowl this ball. You set the field, and I trust you whatever you feel is right. You set the field,' Bumrah revealed about his early days at Mumbai Indians.

The pacer also hailed Kohli, who retired after T20 World Cup win, saying that he brings energy and passion to the team.

"Virat is energy-driven, his heart is on his sleeves. He pushed us in terms of fitness. He changed the narrative that way. Even though Virat is not the captain, he is still the leader," Bumrah said of the 35-year-old.—Agency



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REGIONAL TIMES ENTERTAINMENT

Jennifer Lopez returns to the Big Apple post birthday celebration



Jennifer Lopez is back in the New York City after her big birthday bash.

The 55-year-old singer was spotted at Balhazar in Manhattan on Thursday, July 25.

According to People, the This Is Me... Now singer was pictured with her longtime manager, Benny Medina, as she walked down the busy SoHo streets in a sophisticated summer dress.

As reported by the earlier publication, Lopez donned an oversized white blazer with cut-outs on the sleeves, and she paired the linen jacket with a white crop top and light-wash blue barrel jeans.

In regards to the accessories, she kept it minimal by carrying a black purse while wearing nude and white platform heels and a pair of light brown oversized aviator sunglasses.

Furthermore, the Wedding Planner actress went for a slick-back ponytail and neutral makeup.

As per the reports by People, while at the popular eatery, she was with a "small, talkative group of people" and then she headed to a nearby hotel in the New York City neighborhood, where she hung out with her mother Guadalupe and another intimate group.

Before returning to the city, Lopez also celebrated her Bridgerton-themed garden birthday party in the Hamptons on Saturday, July 20.

Jennifer Aniston wishes Matt LeBlanc in true 'Friends' style



Jennifer Aniston hopes Matt LeBlanc spends his birthday doing "nothing" as Friends star turned 57 on Thursday, July 25.

It is worth mentioning that His co-star Jennifer Aniston who played Rachel Green on the show posted a story of her Instagram in order to wish him happy birthday.

In regards to the caption, the Murder Mystery actress wrote, "Happy Birthday @matleblanc," while adding a white heart emoji.

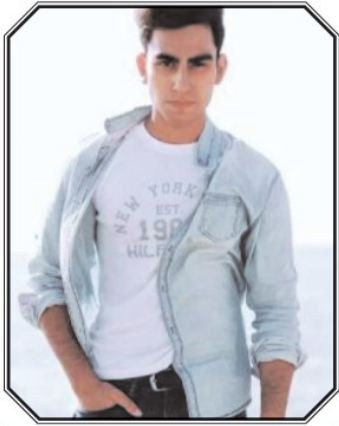
She continued by saying, "I hope you're doing so much nothing today. LOVE YOU."

Furthermore, alongside the sweet note, Aniston also added an interview video of Friends star who played Joey on the show, in which he stated, "My favorite thing in the world to do, my absolute favorite thing in the world to do, is nothing. I'm great at it. I should be a professional nothing. That's what I could be. I could be really good at that. Because it's so easy! There's no rules. 'What are you gonna do today?' I'll tell ya, 'Nothing.' Pretty simple."

According to People's reports, Aniston had previously shared the same video on her Instagram page back in March, as she agreed with him saying, "Same @matleblanc same."

Moreover, both of the stars have appeared together on a beloved sitcom Friends along with who died at age 54 in October 2023, between 1994 to 2004.

Face of the Day



Name: Ali Khan  
Location: Karachi  
About me: Strike a pose if you love modeling like me!  
Please email us your photo for our Model Watch and Kids' Corner section at regionaltimes10@gmail.com

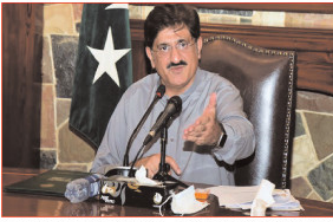


# METRO KARACHI



## Murad Approves Rs16 Million Grant And Vehicles For Pakistan Association Of The Blind

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has approved a Rs16 million grant and vehicles for the Pakistan Association of the Blind, Sindh, to facilitate the transportation of blind children from their homes to school.



During a meeting with the association's delegation, the Chief Minister emphasized the implementation of the five percent quota for differently-abled individuals in government jobs. The meeting was attended by PSCM Agha Wasif and Secretary DEPD Tauha Farooqi. The delegation included Association President Riaz Memon, Senior Vice President Ghulam Dastgir, General Secretary Saad Noor, and Secretary Finance Mohsin Ali.

The Chief Minister noted that President Asif Ali Zardari had directed him to address the issues faced by visually impaired individuals. Riaz Memon, President of the Association, men-

tioned that Zardari had previously granted a travel concession card for PIA and Railways, which was revoked after his tenure. Memon also noted that support from the PPP government under Yousaf Raza Gillani was discontinued after the change in government. The association requested that CNICs for blind individuals reflect their vision impairment. The Chief Minister assured that he would discuss the issue with NADRA authorities. In response to the association's request for an

## Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin Meets President Asif Ali Zardari



KARACHI: The head of the Dawoodi Bohra community, Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, met with President Asif Ali Zardari at Bilawal House on Friday.

During the meeting, President Zardari praised the Bohra community for its significant contribution to Pakistan's socio-economic development. He highlighted the community's active participation in the nation's economy and business sectors.

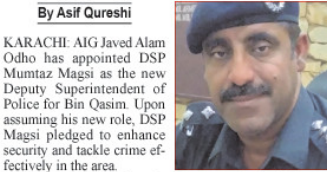
## FIA And Drug Control Authority Shut Down Unregistered Pharmaceutical Company



KARACHI: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and Drug Control Team, with police assistance, conducted a significant operation against a fake and unregistered pharmaceutical company. SHO Quaidabad Ghulam Hussain Pirzada reported that in the Quaidabad area of Gulshan-e-Bohaira, a counterfeit drug factory was operating under the pretense of being a mosque and madrasa.

The factory was producing harmful and narcotic drugs. Acting on a tip-off, an intelligence-led raid resulted in the arrest of eight individuals, including the owner Abdul Wahab, who also serves as the Imam of the mosque and madrasa.

## Mumtaz Magasi Assumes Charge As DSP Bin Qasim



KARACHI: AIG Javed Alam Odho has appointed DSP Mumtaz Magasi as the new Deputy Superintendent of Police for Bin Qasim. Upon assuming his new role, DSP Magasi pledged to enhance security and tackle crime effectively in the area.

In a media statement, DSP Magasi emphasized his commitment to providing security and addressing criminal elements with a firm approach to reduce the crime rate in Bin Qasim.

## High-Rise Building Catches Fire On Shakra-e-Faisal

KARACHI: A fire broke out at a high-rise building on Shakra Faisal near Metropole on Friday, leaving at least six people, including rescue officials, unconscious. The blaze affected the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th floors of the 16-storey building and was extinguished in a rescue operation involving one snorkel and 12 fire tenders, including those from the Pakistan Navy and Rescue 1122.



Of the six unconscious individuals, two are women who have been transported to the hospital for medical assistance.

The track from Jinnah Hospital to Metropole, which was closed due to the blaze, has now been reopened for traffic. Initially, traffic police diverted vehicles from FFC to Kala Pul.

The fire department reported that the blaze was contained, preventing further spread, and all 50 people in

the building were safely evacuated. No one else was reported to be inside the building.

Earlier, police suggested that some people might be trapped inside due to heavy smoke, leading to a temporary halt in the rescue operation.

This marks the third significant fire incident in Karachi this month. On July 15, a fire broke out in Karachi University's Mass

Communication Department after an air conditioner caught fire in its audio-visual room, prompting the immediate evacuation of attending students. On July 8, a blaze on the fourth floor of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) building halted trading for two hours. Five fire tenders, one snorkel, and a bowser were used to tackle the blaze, which was caused by a short circuit.—RT/Agency

## Faqeerabad Town Chairman Nisar Hussain Khaskheli Commits To Honoring Election Promises

By Rahib Gaho  
KARACHI: Faqeerabad Town Chairman Nisar Hussain Khaskheli has reaffirmed his commitment to fulfilling the promises made to the people during the 2024 election, in line with the vision of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.



In a recent interview with Daily Ibrat, Khaskheli highlighted the provision of solar panels to poor households, enabling them to receive up to 200 units of electricity. He mentioned that 1,000 solar panels had already been installed in various villages within the town from the town's budget. Additionally, 100 solar street lights were installed in Imambarahs and mosques during Muharram. Khaskheli announced that each ward in the town would receive 115 solar panels, with work orders already issued.

Khaskheli highlighted the PPP's efforts to mitigate the impact of rising inflation by expanding the Benazir Income Support Program and installing solar plants to reduce electricity load shedding. He also mentioned ongoing efforts to create employment opportunities and support the federal government in addressing security and economic challenges.

## Jam Ikramullah Meets Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan

KARACHI: Provincial Minister Dharejo welcomed Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and his delegation during a technical stopover at Jinnah Airport, Karachi. Also present were Turkish Consul General Cemal Sangu and Turkish Ambassador Mehmet Paçacı.



In a brief meeting, Minister Dharejo and Foreign Minister Fidan discussed matters of mutual interest. Dharejo highlighted investment opportunities in Sindh for Turkish investors. Foreign Minister Fidan expressed gratitude for the invitation to Turkish investors and appreciated

the hospitality of Pakistan, especially the Sindh Government. After the meeting, Fidan departed for his destination.—RT

## Rotary and EOC Sindh Join Hands To Combat Polio

KARACHI: The Rotary Foundation Trustee 2020-24 and National Chair Polio Plus, Aziz Memon, organized a meeting with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Sindh to discuss the current polio situation and update Rotary delegates on EOC Sindh's efforts. The Rotary delegation included IPDG Hanif Khan, PP Shahzad Sabir, PP Muneeb Khan, and Asher Ali PNPPC.

The meeting, chaired by EOC Coordinator Irshad Sodhar, was attended by WHO Team Lead Dr. Asif Ali, UNICEF Team Lead Dr. Shokat Ali, N-STOP Team Lead Dr. Shumaila Rasool, and other EOC officers.

Irshad Sodhar welcomed the Rotary delegation and presented an overview of the team's initiatives to eradicate polio. Trustee Aziz Memon emphasized the importance of gaining insights into Sindh's polio eradication efforts and the need for Com-

munity-Based Volunteers (CBVs) to improve community engagement and address vaccine refusals effectively. Dr. Asif Ali provided an update on current polio cases and environmental positive samples in Sindh, reporting two cases: one in Shikarpur and another in the Kemari district of Karachi. He linked the Shikarpur case to low immunity due to malnutrition, affecting 52% of children in Sindh. While local virus circulation has been halted, current cases involve inactivated polio viruses. To prevent spread, mop-up sessions are being conducted in Jamshoro, Dadu, Mirpurkhas, and Badin districts, along with planned IPV and OPV campaigns. Let Injection will be administered to children aged 4-59 months in areas with persistent environmental positivity. Irshad Sodhar emphasized the need for collaboration among PPHI, EPI, EOC,

## SBCA Establishes Help Desk At NKATI To Assist Industrialists



KARACHI: The Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA) is launching a one-window facility to address construction issues faced by industrialists in the North Karachi Industrial Area. This initiative includes setting up a Help Desk at the North Karachi Association of Trade and Industry (NKATI), where SBCA staff will assist the industrial community with various problems related to industrial building construction.

In connection with this effort, Abdul Rasheed Solangi, Director General of SBCA, visited NKATI at the invitation of its President, Faisal Moiz Khan. During the visit, Solangi met with senior NKATI members and officials for a comprehensive discussion. At the meeting, Solangi assured NKATI members that SBCA would provide all necessary support for construction projects while ensuring compliance with legal requirements and building regulations. He emphasized the importance of addressing issues in the North Karachi Industrial Area and committed to expediting the regularization process and taking action against rule violations.

## SITE Industrialists Laud SSGC MD For Dedicated Gas Pipeline

KARACHI: The SITE Association of Industry members praised SSGC Managing Director Muhammad Imran Maniar for the completion of a dedicated 24-inch, 31-kilometer high-pressure gas pipeline for industrial consumers in the SITE area. The new pipeline addresses the long-standing issue of low or zero gas pressure.



At a reception in his honor, MD Maniar explained how the pipeline isolates industrial from domestic connections, ensuring better gas pressure for industries and reducing unaccounted-for gas (UFG) losses. He highlighted the automation of 70% of Karachi's TBS, allowing one-touch regulation of gas pressure.

Discussions also covered RLNG blending, pricing, and billing. Maniar suggested the future might require a shift to LPG cylinders for domestic users to minimize line losses. He answered various questions from the association members. SITE President Muhammad Kamran Arbi and Patron-in-Chief Zubair Motiwala commended Maniar's efforts and achievements. Motiwala urged the elimination of gas blending and the replacement of conventional gas geysers with solar ones, funded through monthly bills. Former President Jawed Bilwani proposed setting up a biomass gas plant in the SITE area. As a gesture of appreciation, a bouquet and shield were presented to Muhammad Imran Maniar. The event was attended by several notable members, including Muhammad Hanif Tawakkal, Abdul Hadi, and others.—RT

## 17 Arrested Following Armed Clash Between Bugtis In DHA

KARACHI: Police arrested 17 people during raids conducted on Friday at various locations in connection with an armed clash that left five people dead in Karachi's Defence Housing Authority (DHA) Deputy Inspector General (DIG) South Syed Asad Raza confirmed the recovery of weapons from three suspects during these raids.



The violent incident occurred between the Fahad Bugti and Ali Haider Bugti groups in DHA's Khayaban-e-Nishat, resulting in the deaths of five individuals and injuries to two others. The deceased and the injured were relatives of the slain Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti.

The deceased were identified as Mir Esa Bugti, Ali, Fahad Bugti, Naseebullah, and Mir Mesum Bugti. Mir Ali Haider Bugti and Qaim Ali sustained bullet injuries and were treated at the hospital. While no first information report (FIR) has been registered yet, DIG Raza stated that two cases will be filed in coordination with both groups. The clash, attributed to an "old family dispute," occurred when both groups, initially meeting for talks, opened fire after their vehicles encountered each other. Heavy weapons were used in the altercation, and Fahad Bugti's body, which had two bullet wounds to the chest, has been handed over to his family. Sindh Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Larjar has taken notice of the clash and requested a detailed report from the Additional IGP Karachi. He reassured the public that all necessary measures will be taken to uphold the law.—RT/Agency

## Probe Launched Against PTA For Failure To Recover Rs78 Billion From Telecom Companies

KARACHI: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Karachi has initiated a probe against the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) for failing to recover over Rs78 billion in dues from telecom companies, media sources reported. According to the sources, the PTA has been directed to submit a response to NAB by July 29. The investigation has revealed that the delay in recovering dues has caused significant losses to the national exchequer. NAB has requested detailed information on the out-

standing amounts, court cases, and all relevant records from the PTA. PTA officials have been summoned to appear before NAB Karachi with the required documents. Sources also mentioned that Long Distance and International (LDI) companies have agreed to pay 100% of the principal amount. However, the recovery of dues has been impeded by court stay orders. To address the issue of dues recovery, the Ministry of IT has formed a steering committee to oversee the matter. In a related development, the Pakistan



KARACHI: Ishaq Baig, President of the Business Forum of the PML(N), hosted a dinner in honor of Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Program. The event was attended by Arif Habib, Senator Jam Karam Ali, Anwar Qureshi, Dr. Junaid Ali Shah, and cricket great Saleem Yusuf.—RT

"Do not compare yourself to others. If you do so, you are insulting yourself."

—Adolf Hitler

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Sanam Javaid On PTI's Reserved Seats List Submitted To ECP

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has submitted a list of the candidates for the reserved seats to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), picking Sanam Javaid, Aliya Hamza Malik, Yasmin Rashid among others for the seats reserved in assemblies for women and minorities, party sources said on Friday.



The development came after the Supreme Court, in its July 12 short order in the reserved seats case, allowed the former ruling party to have reserved seats in assemblies, paving the way for the party to potentially become the largest parliamentary party.

Candidates for reserved seats to the electoral body within 15 days of the verdict. The ECP should then publish the list of reserved seats of the candidates on its website within seven days, the SC ruling stated. Complying with the short order of the top court, the PTI today submitted the list of its candidates for the reserved

seats for women. Meanwhile, Lal Chand Malhi has been nominated by the party for the minority seat in the lower house of parliament, the PTI sources said, adding Dr Yasmin Rashid has been named for the reserved seat for women in Punjab Assembly.

A day earlier the polls regulator declared 39 PTI lawmakers — who contested the February 8 elections as independent candidates and later joined the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) — as PTI members in line with the Supreme Court's ruling. Earlier this week, the PTI submitted relevant documents with declaration of party's affiliation to the Election Commission to be entitled to have reserved seats in

the assemblies in line with the court's order.

Having been deprived of its election symbol, the PTI's candidates contested the February 8 elections as independents. However, these independents were directed by the party to join the SIC to be eligible for the reserved seats. The SIC in multiple petitions, pleaded with the top court to allow the party to have reserved seats in legislature. On July 12, the court announced its short order in the PTI's favour. However, the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) filed a review petition against the SC ruling declaring the PTI eligible for the reserved seats —RT/Agency

Gandapur Pledges K-P Autonomy, Rejects Military Operations

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur criticised the decisions of the past governments, asserting that his administration will make its own decisions and will not allow any operations in the province.



Addressing a peace procession in Bannu on Friday, Gandapur highlighted the historical significance of the Pashtun people in the province, emphasising their crucial role in Pakistan's independence. He stated, "We have shed blood and made sacrifices. We have suffered due to flawed policies influenced by America's wrong strategies."

He further urged, "Identify and fight against corruption and drugs, and I will stand with you."

Gandapur underscored the importance of national duty, adding, "We may disagree individually, but no one will be allowed to insult or hurt the martyrs. The martyrs of the Pakistan Army and police are our martyrs."

He concluded by saying, "There will be development work in the province without any publicity. I promise to build the Bannu ground for you and ensure we get our rightful share".—RT/Agency

CM also addressed misinformation prevalent in society, stating, "Some elements distort facts. The children of madrassas are dear to us. Madrassa children have a share in the budget, and we will provide all facilities, including education, to the children of mosques."

During his speech, he emphasised the importance of self-improvement, warning that those who do not reform will face the consequences. He reassured, "No armed groups are visible to me. My people are my responsibility, and no one will unjustly target them."

ADB Approves \$400M Loan For Pakistan's Flood Rehabilitation

MANILA: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) today approved a \$400 million concessional loan to support the reconstruction of houses and community infrastructure in Sindh damaged by the devastating floods in 2022.



The Sindh Emergency Housing Reconstruction Project will rehabilitate flood-damaged houses and community infrastructure and support livelihood recovery, with a focus on strengthening communities' resilience against climate change-induced natural hazards.

"ADB's support will not only help Pakistan build back better, but it will also promote community-led climate resilience and disaster risk management strategies to better prepare for future hazards," said ADB Director for Water and Urban Development Srinivas Sampath.

This project is a key part of ADB's multifaceted response to Pakistan's flood crisis and forms part of the government's commitment to provide \$1.5 billion in total assistance from 2023 to 2025 to accelerate the country's flood recovery.

The project will support conditional cash grants for the reconstruction of 250,000 houses with multi-hazard resilient and environment-responsive designs. It will also support community-driven construction of infrastructure such as drinking water facilities, sanitation facilities, covered drainage, and renewable energy solutions for 100,000 households in around 1,000 flood-damaged villages in Sindh.

"This project will help rebuild homes and communities, and restore livelihood and basic services in Sindh, the province most affected by the devastating 2022 floods," said ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeny Zhukov. "It is part of ADB's extensive support to help Pakistan recover from the disaster which affected 33 million people and damaged houses and infrastructure across the nation."

"We are coordinating closely with other development partners to support the government's recovery and reconstruction priorities."

Sindh sustained about 83% of the total housing damage inflicted by the 2022

The project supports the government's resilient rehabilitation, reconstruction, and recovery strategy (4RP) and will follow an integrated and sequential approach so that investments across sectors complement each other. A \$500,000 technical assistance grant will further support the government's operational capabilities in procurement, safeguard compliance, and technical and financial management.—RT/Agency

Law Minister Tarar Rules Out Early Elections



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law, Azam Nazeer Tarar, has categorically rejected any possibility of early elections, stating that such a notion is merely a wish of the opposition leader.

In his statement, Azam Nazeer Tarar emphasized that the elections will be conducted as per the scheduled timeline, asserting the government's commitment to constitutional mandates. Tarar highlighted that the constitution clearly stipulates a five-year term for the assemblies, thereby negating any speculations or rumors about early elections. He assured that the current situation does not necessitate premature elections, affirming that everything is functioning smoothly within the political framework. Addressing the stability of the governmental operations, Tarar expressed confidence that, with God's will, the assemblies will successfully complete their designated five-year term. His statement comes in the wake of ongoing discussions and conjectures about the political climate and the potential for early elections. Furthermore, Tarar redirected questions about allegations of spreading animosity between the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) towards Omar Ayub, implying that any clarifications on such matters should be sought from him. This definitive stance by the Federal Minister for Law aims to put to rest any uncertainties regarding the election schedule, ensuring that the focus remains on governance and constitutional adherence. The reassurance is intended to foster political stability and continuity, reinforcing the government's resolve to maintain the constitutional integrity of the assembly's tenure.—RT/Agency

Finance Minister Briefs China On Bold Reforms And IMF Plans

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, during a meeting with high-ranking officials from the Chinese institutions on Friday, briefed them about the government's reform agenda and engagement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).



According to press release issued by finance ministry here, the finance minister and Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari held meetings with Governor of People's Bank of China (PBOC), Pan Gongsheng and Vice Administrator National Energy Administration (NEA), Ren Jingong. Ambassador Khalil Hashmi and officials of the Embassy accompanied the Ministers, according to the press release. The discussions focused on the significant strides made by Pakistan in improving its macroeconomic indicators by focused reforms in taxation, energy and privatization of the state-owned enterprises. The reforms have already started showing their results, particularly, reducing inflation from 38% to 13% marks a substantial achievement for the economy. Additionally, the stabilization of the exchange rate and the bolstering of foreign exchange reserves were highlighted as key factors contributing to the economic upturn.

term stability and fostering sustainable economic growth.

The Governor's recognition of Pakistan's policy measures reflects a broader international perspective on the importance of economic resilience and the positive impact of prudent fiscal management, the statement added. Underlining Pakistan's plan to launch Panda Bonds, Minister for Finance briefed PBOC and other Financial Institutions about the steps taken so far and sought cooperation of the Chinese institutional investors in the capital market and seek benefit from the pro-business policies of the new Government. Lauding President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) both the Ministers noted the achievements during the first phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of BRI, for strengthening the infrastructure in energy, transport sectors along with others.

The Ministers also met Executive Vice President of China Development Bank (CDB), President of National Association of Financial Market Institutional Investors (NAFMII), Chairperson of Silk Road Fund (SRF), Chairman of China International Capital Corporation (CICC). On the instructions of the Prime Minister, the two Ministers paid an official visit to Beijing from 24-26 July 2024 as part of the government's efforts to implement consensus reached at the leadership level during the former's recent visit to China.—RT/Agency

There was consensus was that such reforms are indispensable for achieving long-

private sector playing the central role in the development and economic growth.

Britain Drops ICC Challenge Against Netanyahu And Gallant

LONDON: Britain said on Friday it would not proceed with efforts to question whether the International Criminal Court (ICC) has jurisdiction to issue arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Yoav Gallant.



In May, the ICC's prosecutor said he had requested arrest warrants for Netanyahu, Gallant and three Hamas leaders over alleged war crimes.

Court documents made public in June showed Britain, an ICC member state, had filed a request with the court to provide written observations on whether "the court can exercise jurisdiction over Israeli nationals, in circumstances where Palestine cannot exercise criminal jurisdiction over Israeli nationals (under the Oslo Accords)". Since then, Britain has elected a new government run by the Labour Party, and Prime Minister Keir Starmer's spokesperson said the previous government had not submitted its proposal before the July 4 election. "On the ICC submission... I can confirm the government will not be pursuing (the proposal) in line with our long-standing position that this is a matter for the court to decide on," the spokesperson told reporters.—RT/Agency

Government Still Open For Talks: Tarar Accuses JI Of Sit-In Venue Violation

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar accused Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) of breaching the agreement with the government about concluding their protest against inflation with a rally at Liaquat Bagh. However, the government remains open to dialogue, he added.



"When it was agreed to hold the rally at Liaquat Bagh, the march towards Islamabad is incomprehensible," he said while addressing a press conference alongside Amir Muqam in Islamabad on Friday.

Addressing a meeting of the Special Task Force on Artificial Intelligence, Iqbal urged relevant parties to expedite consultations with stakeholders. He emphasised AI's current role in global advancement, stating, "Artificial intelligence is not the future but the present reality in the world." Iqbal highlighted the PML-N government's achievements in AI, noting the establishment of the National Center for Artificial Intelligence in 2017 and the National Task Force on Artificial Intelligence in 2023. He stressed that these initiatives were crucial for Pakistan's progress in this field.

Tarar emphasised that the government is still willing to engage in talks with Jamaat-e-Islami. Reacting to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's speech at the Bannu rally, Tarar remarked, "We understand his constraints. He reassures in the Apex Committee, but speaks differently in public. After the decision to bring back TTP terrorists, terrorism has increased."

only allowing one lane of traffic. This has resulted in long queues of vehicles and significant inconvenience for residents. Additional containers have been placed under the Zero Point Bridge too, leaving only two lanes open for traffic. A heavy police presence is deployed at Faizabad, equipped with water cannons and tear gas. Operational police units have been issued 10,000 tear gas shells from police lines to manage the protesters. Heads of three government hospitals have been instructed to keep their emergency departments on high alert until Monday to handle any potential emergencies arising from the situation.—RT/Agency

Tarar criticised the CM Gandapur further, saying, "What should have been

Ahsan Iqbal: AI Policy Set For Cabinet Approval Next Month

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal announced on Friday that the final draft of Pakistan's Artificial Intelligence (AI) policy will be presented to the Federal Cabinet for approval in August.

Since then, Britain has elected a new government run by the Labour Party, and Prime Minister Keir Starmer's spokesperson said the previous government had not submitted its proposal before the July 4 election. "On the ICC submission... I can confirm the government will not be pursuing (the proposal) in line with our long-standing position that this is a matter for the court to decide on," the spokesperson told reporters.—RT/Agency