



**Dua Lipa brands Taylor Swift 'ruthless' for sharing private life in songs**

**Heartland**

**MNA Aijaz Khan Jakhrani meets raped polio worker, assures her of his full support**



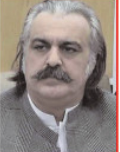
**Money**

**Zafar Moti is Happy! PSE 100-index up by 970.20 points to close at 80,461.33**



**NATIONAL**

**KP Chief Minister Defends Afghan Diplomat's Omission Of National Anthem Protocol**



**SPORTS**

**Pakistan's Asjad Iqbal crashes out of Snooker World Cup**



**Saeed Ghani Credits His Success To His Martyred Father**

## UNGA Passes Resolution Urging Israel To End Occupation Of Palestinian Territories Within A Year

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday adopted a Palestinian-drafted resolution that demands Israel end its unlawful presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory within 12 months.



The resolution received 124 votes in favor, while 43 countries abstained and Israel, the United States and 12 others voted no.

The action isolates Israel days before world leaders travel to New York for their annual UN gathering. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is due to address the 193-member General Assembly on Sept. 26, the same day as Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

The resolution welcomes a July advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice that said Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories and settlements is illegal and should be withdrawn.

The advisory opinion - by the highest United Nations court, also known as the World Court - said this should be done "as rapidly as possible," although the General Assembly resolution imposes a 12-month deadline.

The General Assembly resolution also calls on states to "take steps towards ceasing the importation of any products originating in the Israeli settlements, as well as the provision or transfer of arms, munitions and related equipment to Israel... where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that they may be used in the Occupied Palestinian Territory."

using the tools of diplomacy not to build bridges but to destroy them."

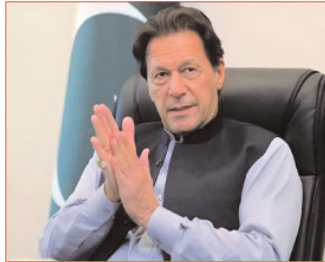
Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem - areas of historic Palestine which the Palestinians want for a state - in the 1967 Middle East war and has since built settlements in the West Bank and steadily expanded them.

The war in the Gaza Strip began on Oct. 7, 2023, when Hamas gunmen stormed into Israeli communities, killing around 1,200 people and abducting about 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies.

Since then, Israel's military has leveled swaths of the Palestinian enclave, driving nearly all of its 2.3 million people from their homes, giving rise to deadly hunger and disease and killing more than 41,000 people, according to Palestinian health authorities. The General Assembly on October 27 last year called for an immediate humanitarian truce in Gaza with 120 votes in favor. Then in December, 153 countries voted to demand - instead of calling for - an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in December. The Palestinian Authority represents the Palestinian people at the UN, where it is a non-member observer state and the delegation is known as the State of Palestine.—RT/Agency

## Imran Claims Constitutional Amendments Aim To Extend Tenure For 'Three Umpires'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has alleged that a constitutional amendments are being pursued to extend the terms of three top officials, including Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, Islamabad High Court chief justice, and the Chief Election Commissioner.



Speaking to the media at Adiala Jail, Imran claimed that the government, despite losing previous political battles, is now resorting to these amendments to safeguard fraudulent election results and protect officials in power.

"They are amending the constitution to extend the terms of three umpires," Khan said.

He warned that if Chief Justice Isa is removed, investigations into the May 9 protests and the alleged rigged elections will be

launched.

Imran expressed concern that if the new chief justice takes office, the true events of May 9 will come to light.

He also criticized the government for undermining Pakistan's judicial and electoral processes and delaying the tribunal decisions on the February 8 election.—RT/Agency

## NAB Amendments: Accountability Court Grants Relief To Former Finance Minister Hafeez Sheikh

KARACHI: An Accountability Court on Wednesday granted relief to former federal finance minister (fin-min) Abdul Hafeez Sheikh and others accused in a corruption case.



The case about the development of software for Port Qasim and other ports was heard in Karachi's accountability court.

In its verdict on the jurisdictional application, the court accepted the plea of the accused and directed that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) reference be

The court further stated that the prosecution lacked evidence showing that the accused received financial benefits. The court added that it was a prerequisite for the NAB reference.

Former federal minister Abdul Hafeez Sheikh and others are charged with abuse of power and corruption, according to NAB.

The accused are alleged to have caused a loss of \$11 million dollars to the national treasury. The NAB filed a reference for recovery.—RT/Agency

## Fazl 'Firmly' Rejects Constitutional Package Despite Coalition Government's Efforts

ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who took the center stage as both the government and the opposition sought his support, has completely rejected the draft of the "controversial" constitutional package, aimed at making changes to Pakistan's judicial and parliamentary systems.



"The draft we were given was reviewed, and it was in no way acceptable," the veteran politician said while talking to journalists after attending a luncheon at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Qaiser's residence on Wednesday.

The government pushed the proposed constitutional package amid speculation about a potential extension in the tenure of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, who is set to retire in October this year, following the PTI's request last month for the early issuance of a notification regarding the appointment of the next top judge.

the 'fate-decider' Fazl, with leaderships of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) holding a flurry of meetings with the cleric, but to no avail.

Despite claims of securing the "magic number" needed to push the bill through, the government failed to table the amendments in parliament and postponed its move indefinitely — a development confirmed by PML-N Senator Inam Siddiqui.

The amendments allegedly include legislation to extend the tenure of CJP Isa as well as an increase in retirement age of the judges. To pass the constitutional amendments, the

said they have completely rejected the constitutional amendments" proposed draft provided by the government "It [the draft] was shared with specific individuals, not with everyone."

"Had we agreed to the constitutional package, it would have been the biggest breach of nation's trust," he added.

For his part, Asad Qaiser castigated the incumbent rulers for "concealing the draft of the constitutional package, which he contained at least 56 amendments, even from its own parliamentarians." "We do not accept this legislation in any respect."

The PTI leader further said that the future course of action will be decided after consultation with all opposition parties. However, he mentioned, they will table this matter in tomorrow's lawyers' convention in Lahore Responding to a question about any contact from the government in this regard, Qaiser said that no formal contact was made from the other side.

Speaking on the occasion following the meeting, Fazl

government is short of 13 votes in the National Assembly (NA) and nine in the Senate.

The PTI and JUI-F, which have been arch-rivals traditionally, found common ground after the February 8 general elections and expressed mutual concerns over the alleged interference and manipulation during the polls.

Former NA speaker Asad Qaiser hosted a luncheon in honour of the JUI-F head in Islamabad today, which was also attended by other PTI lawmakers including Omar Ayub, Barrister Gohar and former president Arif Alvi.

Speaking to journalists following the meeting, Fazl

position, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar pointed out the alleged contradiction in statements of ruling coalition partners — Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto—

"In the assembly, Khawaja Asif stated this is the draft, whose contents have been shared [on social media]; however, Bilawal Bhutto said this is not the same draft; it's a different one," Gohar said and added, "Whatever the draft is, both parties [PTI and JUI-F] have rejected it."

However, he remarked, if the government provides the opposition a new draft, they will reconsider it.

In response to a question regarding PTI founder's stance on alliance with JUI-F, Gohar claimed that they "came close to Maulana Fazlur Rehman" on Imran Khan's directives. A day earlier, former president Alvi called on Maulana Fazlur in an effort to sway him, as the government-opposition tussle over the proposed judiciary-centric constitutional amendments continues.—RT/Agency

## COAS Reaffirms Pakistan's Commitment To Strengthen Defense Relations With Russia



RAWALPINDI: Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Alexei Overchuk called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir at the General Headquarters on Wednesday.

During their meeting, they engaged in productive discussions on matters of mutual interest, regional security dynamics, and bilateral cooperation across various sectors, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement.

The COAS reiterated Pakistan's commitment to fostering traditional defence ties with Russia. Both sides reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen security and defence cooperation in multiple domains.

The visiting dignitary praised the Pakistan Armed Forces' pivotal role in combating terrorism and their tireless efforts to promote peace and stability in the region.—RT/Agency

## Russia To Support Pakistan's BRICS Membership Bid: Russian Deputy PM

ISLAMABAD: Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk stated on Wednesday that Moscow supports Pakistan's inclusion in BRICS.



During a joint press conference with Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar in Islamabad, Overchuk responded positively to questions about Pakistan's request to join the group of leading emerging market economies.

Recognising Russia's historically strong ties with the Muslim world, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and its stance on the Palestine conflict, Dar appreciated Russia's position that freedom of speech should not be used to disrespect revered figures or religions, as it could hurt the sentiments of the Muslim Ummah.

Dar stressed the potential for energy cooperation with Russia and expressed Pakistan's eagerness to develop connectivity projects, including rail and road networks, between the two nations and beyond.

On his part, Deputy Prime Minister Overchuk discussed the prospects for collaboration between Pakistan and the Eurasian Economic Union, which includes Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia.

Regarding regional cooperation, he highlighted that Pakistan views Russia as a key player in West, South, and Central Asia, and strengthening mutually beneficial relations with Russia is a priority for Pakistan's foreign policy.

He noted that they discussed opportunities for implementing a free trade agreement between Pakistan and these five countries, looking forward to further discussions to finalise the agreement.

Overchuk also stated that the upcoming intergovernmental commission meeting later this year in Russia would provide an opportunity to enhance trade and economic relations between the two countries.

He added that their goals and visions for development and economic ties within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are well aligned, particularly regarding connectivity, climate agenda, food security, energy transition, and energy security.

Morever, Pakistan and Russia agreed to enhance dialogue and cooperation in various sectors, including trade, industry, energy, connectivity, science, technology, and education. This consensus was reached during delegation-level talks between Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and his Russian counterpart in Islamabad today. Deputy Prime Minister Overchuk's visit aligns with the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Vladimir Putin to transform bilateral relations into a strong, mutually beneficial economic partnership.—RT/Agency

## £190m Case: IHC Prohibits Trial Court From Final Verdict On Imran's Petition



ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday stopped the accountability court from issuing a final verdict in the £190 million settlement case against incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi.

A two-member bench of the high court comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the couple's acquittal plea in the said case.

The PTI founder on September 7 had filed a plea seeking acquittal in the £190 million case after the Supreme Court's verdict in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) amendments case wherein the court accepted the intra-court appeals filed against last year's verdict which struck down the changes made to the National

Accountability Ordinance (NAO).

The couple is accused of causing billions of rupees loss to the national exchequer.

The former premier and the ex-first lady also approached the IHC against the accountability court's ruling, seeking acquittal and pleading with the court to stop the trial court's proceedings until the case remains pending in the high court.

After hearing arguments, the IHC ordered the trial court to complete proceedings, however, it should not issue a final judgment.

The IHC bench also directed Khan and Bushra's lawyers to submit relevant documents. It also issued notices to the respondents over the couple's acquittal pleas and adjourned the hearing till September 26.—RT/Agency

## ECP Postpones Intra-Party Election Case Till October 2 As PTI Requests Additional Time

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has adjourned the hearing of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) intra-party election case until October 2, following a request by PTI for additional time to submit required documents. A three-member bench, led by ECP Member Sindi Nisar Durani, presided over the proceedings, with PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar representing the party. During the hearing, ECP Member Balochistan questioned whether PTI's intra-party elections were



conducted in Chamkani, Peshawar, to which Barrister Gohar clarified that the elections took place in Islamabad. Gohar also sought a 10-day extension to finalise the docu-

mentation. The Director General of Political Finance warned that if the results of the intra-party elections were not recognised, PTI could face an uncertain future without an organisational structure.

The bench instructed the DG Political Finance to provide further assistance on the matter to which he explained that under Section 208 of the Election Act, there should have been two intra-party elections, with Barrister Gohar expressing his agreement.—RT/Agency

# THE HEARTLAND



**NAWAB WALI MUHAMMAD:** Faqir Ali Nawaz Hashmi is addressing the Mehfil-Milad at Dargah Faiz Hashmi (RA).—By M Yousif



**JAM NAWAZ ALI:** Molvi Akhtar Ali Chishti, Bilal Marri, Mehar Khaskheli and others are leading a rally which was taken out from Faizan Mosque to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) in Berani.—Photo by Hakim Baloch



**TANDO ADAM:** Members of a religious organization are participating in a rally to celebrate the Jashn-e-Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Mumtaz Thahim



**BADIN:** Leaders and members of the Jamaat Luari Sharif are taking out a rally to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Jibran Talpur



**NAUKOT:** Mufti Pir Jan Agha Sarhandi, Khalifo Abdul Hakim Chandio and other Ulema are leading a rally to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Mushahid Nohrio



**TANDO ADAM:** Police officials are seen alert on duty during the Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) celebrations in Tando Adam.—Photo by Mumtaz Thahim



**SUIJAWAL:** Allama Hafiz Ghulam Mustafa Qadri is addressing a rally which was taken out by the Jamaat Ahle Sunnat to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Kamran Hidayat



**THANA BULA KHAN:** Dawat-e-Islami leaders and members are taking out Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) Rally in Siri town.—Photo by Shoukat Khaskheli



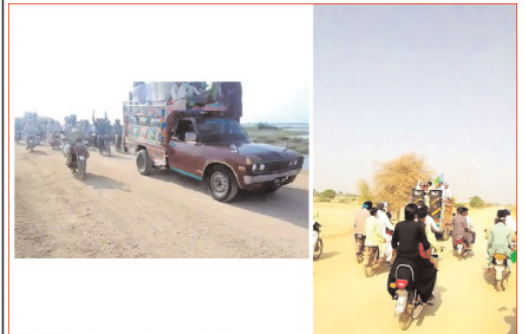
**TANDO ADAM:** Leaders of different religious organizations are taking out a rally to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Mumtaz Thahim



**NOORABAD:** Leaders of the Ahle Sunnat Wa Jamaat are leading a rally to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Shams Palari



**JHOL:** Chairman of Jhol Town Committee Rana Arshad Ali Rajput and other leaders are leading a rally to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Mehtab Shar



**UMERKOT:** SSP Asif Raza Baloch and leaders of religious organizations are participating in a rally to celebrate the Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by M Bachal



**TANDO ALLAHYAR:** Leaders of Central Jamaat Ahle Sunnat are taking out a rally to celebrate the Jashn-e-Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Afaque Khanzada



**DAULATPUR:** Members of Jamaat Ahle Sunnat are taking out a rally from village Mitha Khan Jokhio to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Aijaz Jokhio



**JAMSHORO:** Leaders of different organizations are participating in a Jashn-e-Milad Rally in Jamshoro.—Photo by Shaikh Sindhi



**UMERKOT:** Dr Muhammad Usman Shaikh, Seth Zafar Mehmood, Town Chairman Muhammad Jahangir Baloch, Abdullah Rind, Councilor Ghulam Muhammad, Ashiq Shar and others are participating in rallies to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) in Shadi Palli.—Photo by M Bachal



**DADU:** Leaders and members of the International Roothani Tehreek, Anjuman Sarfaroshan-e-Islam Pakistan are taking out a rally to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Javed Laghari



**UMERKOT:** Molvi Ghulam Mustafa Sabir Saeedi and other officials and leaders of different organization are cutting a cake to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) in Samaro.—Photo by M Bachal

REGIONAL TIMES

# THE HEARTLAND



## IG Sindh's special team arrests four drug dealers near Nauabad

**By Imtiaz Laskani**  
 NAUABAD: Under the leadership of DSP Dr. Muhammad Moosa Abro, the IG Sindh's special team conducted a large-scale operation near Jam Nawaz Ali, Nauabad and other areas. During this operation, more than 10 police mobiles, including Berani, City, BC Section, Dilore

## JUI-F's Maulana Mir Muhammad Mirak demands arrest of Javed Bhutto's killers



**By Sajjad Chang**  
 HINGORJA: Four months have passed since the murder of shopkeeper Javed Bhutto, and the police have yet to arrest the killers. For the past 40 days, the victim's family has been running a protest camp demanding justice. Recently, central leader of JUI-F, Maulana Mir Muhammad Mirak, visited the protest camp with a large number of supporters to offer condolences to the family. While

# SOUTHERN PUNJAB

## Railways Police issues weekly report of welfare services

**By Dr Mirza MB Qamar**



GUJRANWALA: The Railways Police has issued the details about the weekly welfare activities. According to the details, 26 missing and runaway children were handed over to their heirs. All eight divisions of Railways Police provided passenger service and other facilities during the second week of September from 09 to 15 September 2024 and safely handed over 26 runaways and missing persons including children, boys and girls to their relatives. Apart from this, 30 passengers were safely and honestly handed over their valuables worth around Rs 748,000. Similarly, wheelchairs and first aid facilities were also provided to 414 passengers, including the disabled and injured. Rawalpindi Division stood out as usual in terms of welfare performance in the weekly operation which handed over 07 runaway children to their

heirs. Rawalpindi Division returned 10 passengers with their valuables worth around Rs 5 lac. Apart from this, wheelchair and first aid facilities were provided to 118 passengers. In this context, Peshawar Division handed over 2, Rawalpindi 7, Lahore 3, Multan and Sukkur 22 and Karachi Division 10 children/girls. In the form of return of lost goods and other assistance Peshawar Division assisted 96 passengers, Rawalpindi 128, Lahore 05, Multan 28, Sukkur 25, Karachi 121 and Quetta Division 3 passengers. Apart from this, Karachi Division assisted 1 lac 51 passengers. Handed over valuable lost goods worth thousands to the passengers.

## Kohsar Welfare Trust organizes a free medical camp in TBK

**By Shoukat Khaskheli**

THANA BULA KHAN: Kohsar Welfare Trust Kohistan organized a one-day free consultation clinic, GFG Memorial, at Shrimati Hassi Bai Dharmshala in Thana Bala Khan. Renowned neurologist Dr. Bhojomal A. Khaikani examined and provided treatment to the patients. Patients from Kohistan and other parts of Sindh attended the clinic, where a total of 148 patients were checked and advised on their treatment. On this occasion, Dr. Odar Mal Lakhmiyani, chairman of Kohsar Welfare Trust, and



Pervaiz Yousuf Memon expressed their gratitude to Dr. Bhojomal for generously giving his valuable time to serve the needy of his birthplace without any commercial interest. They also appreciated the volunteers who dedicated their entire day to

## DHO Jacobabad still continuing to work despite being transferred

**By Hashim Brohi**

JACOBABAD: In the case of the sexual assault of a polio worker in Jacobabad, the removed District Health Officer (DHO) remains in office despite being transferred by the Sindh Government. The DHO, Dr. Irshad Sarki, was transferred due to negligence related to the incident, but he has not yet relinquished his position and continues to work as the DHO in Jacobabad. When contacted, Dr. Sarki claimed that he had not received any official transfer letter and would leave the position only upon receiving it. It is important to note that



Sindh's Provincial Health Minister, Azra Pechhuho, had previously announced in a press conference that the Deputy Commissioner, SSP Jacobabad, and the DHO had been transferred due to their negligence in handling the matter.

## More than 80 rallies taken out to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) in Toba Tek Singh

**By Abid Mehmood Ch**

TOBA TEK SINGH: More than 80 large and small rallies were taken out in connection with the blessed birth of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SAWW) at two places throughout the tehsil, and many events were also held. While at night, in connection with Eid Milad-ul-Nabi, beautiful, decorative lighting, lamps and mountains were also made throughout the city. A large number of citizens came to see the lighting and mountains. A large number of men, women and children turned to the markets, the heavy crowding of the people on the markets, intersections, and highways con-



tinued till late at night, while a torch-bearer procession was also taken out under the auspices of Tehreek Forogh-e-Darood-e-Salam. Due to the very poor security arrangements throughout the city, fights and air firing incidents also took place in most places. Events were also organized with reference to Hayat Tayyaba, in which scholars shed light on the importance of the birth of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SAWW) and the importance of Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW). Sweets and langar were also distributed amongst the people.

## Shia community observes Unity Week

**By Dilzar Samo**

TANDO ADAM: In Tando Adam, under the guidance of the leader of Qaid Millat Jaffaria in Pakistan, Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi, the week of 12th to 17th Rabi-ul-Awal is being observed as the Unity Week. In this context, a celebration of Jashn-e-Sadiqeen Aale Muhammad (SAWW) and Eid-e-Shuqaa was held at the Central Imambarahgah Bara Pir Tando Adam, chaired by Raees Habib Khan Marri. The event featured a special address by research scholar Professor Engineer Agha Asad Raza al-Hussaini. Professor Hussaini noted that the month of Rabi-ul-Awal is extraordinary, being the month of the birth of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SAWW), Imam Jaffar al-Sadiq (AS) and according to some traditions, the month of



the Prophet's (SAWW) migration to Medina. The month also marks the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hassan al-Askari (AS) and the beginning of Hazrat Imam Mehdi's (SAW) Imamate on the 9th of

## Jacobabad youth kidnapped near Begari Canal



**By Hashim Brohi**  
 JACOBABAD: A young man named Saddam Kharani from Jacobabad has allegedly been kidnapped. His car was found in a ditch near the Begari Canal. In response to the abduction, the family and community members staged a sit-in protest at Zero Point on the bypass. The angry protesters set tires on fire and chanted slogans against the police and the prevailing lawlessness. The protest led to the suspension of traffic for several hours between Sindh and Balochistan. At the

## Commissioner Syed Naveed Haider Sheerazi reduces fares for public transport in Gujranwala

**By Dr Mirza MB Qamar**

GUJRANWALA: Commissioner Syed Naveed Haider Sheerazi has said that public transport fares have been reduced by 5% in all districts of Gujranwala and Gujarat Division. Notification of deficiency has been issued. The purpose of the initiative is to benefit the public after the recent reduction in the prices of petroleum products. The Commissioner Gujranwala directed that the administration of the districts and the concerned



Secretary Road Transport Authority should ensure the implementation of the newly fixed fares and action should be taken against those who are overcharging as per the law. A notification has been issued by the administration of the districts of Gujranwala and Gujarat Division, after the reduction in fares.

## NADRA, Bedari Organization help MPK residents with acquiring their CNICs

**By Younis Chandio**

MIPRURKHAS: Bedari Organization is working on raising awareness and providing training to individuals with disabilities, as well as men and women, in the areas of Tehsil Shujabad and Tehsil Hussain Bux Marri in Mirpurkhas. The organization is focusing on establishing strong connections with institutions to facilitate their work. In this regard, a camp was set up in collaboration with NADRA for issuing national identity cards in the villages of Murid Kapri,



Nawab Rafiq, Pathan Goth, Mohan Bheel, and other villages in Tehsil Hussain Bux Marri. A large number of women registered for their national identity cards at the camp. During the camp, Bedari Organization's District Coordinator Advocate Anjum Shehzadi, Project Manager

## SEPCO disconnects hundreds of illegal power connections in Khanpur Mahar



**By Shad Mahar**  
 GHOTKI: A team from SEPCO Khanpur, led by Riaz Abbasi, Abdul Samad Kalhoro, Zafar Kalhoro, and Shaikat Ali Chacher, conducted operations in various neighborhoods of Khanpur Mahar, including Somra Muhalla, Hindu Muhalla, and Shaikh Muhalla. During these operations, several illegal electricity connections were used for power theft were disconnected, and the wires were confiscated. Regarding the operations, Riaz Abbasi, the team leader from SEPCO Khanpur, stated that actions against electricity thieves are ongoing. He emphasized that electricity theft is a serious crime and warned people to refrain from using illegal connections (commonly known as kundas). He further added that those who do not comply with SEPCO's directives will face strict legal action, and cases will also be registered against the electricity thieves.

## SGF, SJF hold a seminar on child marriage and forced marriages in Shahdadpur

**By Sajjan Jani**

SHAHDADPUR: Sindh Green Foundation (SGF) and the Social Justice Forum held an awareness program on early child marriage and forced marriages at the Institute of Medical Sciences (SIMS) as part of the national Young Omang Program. The event aimed to sensitize stakeholders about the harmful effects of child marriages and the importance of enforcing relevant laws. Attended by students, teachers, media representatives, social activists, youth, and officials from government departments related to child protection, the program highlighted issues related to early child marriage and forced marriages. Dr. Bashir Ahmed Jamal, Director SIMS, highlighted that child marriages violate human rights and social norms, forcing girls into marriage and compromising their education, health, and social life. Tariq Rahim Lakhro, Deputy Director of the Social Welfare Department and Focal Person for the Sindh Child Protection Authority in Sanghar, gave emphasis to that poverty, lack of education, and outdated customs contribute to child marriages. He shared



that the Sindh Child Protection Authority is actively addressing this issue and has established a helpline to report such cases. He said these programs will help us reach more communities. Noor Muhammad Mangi, Founder and Executive Director, introduced the Young Program in Pakistan, hosted by the Chaman Development Association (CDA). He mentioned that in collaboration with the Indus Resources Center (IRC), a member of Young Omang, they are addressing early child marriages in the Sanghar district of Sindh province. Other speakers, including Dr. Saima Khan, Deputy Director Population Welfare Department Shahdadpur, Dr. Maria Khan, Medical Officer Population Welfare Department, Mehdi Hassan Panjwar, President Press Club Shahdadpur, Peral Ali Hullo, Program Coordinator Social Justice Forum, Niaz Jami Deho, Media Coordinator SIMS, Principal CMW Safina Niaz, Tanveer Akhtar Arain, member of Young Omang, Principal Paramedical School, echoed similar concerns.

## Solar power plant installed at Govt Primary School in Shahdadkot

SHAHDADKOT: The Sindh Government has provided a 6 KV solar plant to the Government Single Section Boys High School, bringing joy to the citizens and students. Recently, technicians sent by the Sindh Government and the Education Department installed the solar plant at the school. The headmaster, Abdullah Tunio, was present during the installation. Speaking on the occasion, Taluka Education Officer Abdul Qayoom Soomro praised the initiative of the Sindh Government and the



education department. He stated that the installation of solar plants in schools located in remote and hot areas is a commendable effort. He expressed his happiness, saying that the solar plant will create a better learning environment for the students, improving

## Oath taking ceremony of SGA Sakrand chapter held

**By Zeeshan Soomro**

SAKRAND: The oath taking ceremony for the newly elected officials of the SGA Sakrand Branch was held under the supervision of Election Chairman Muhammad Hanif Soomro at the office of the Sakrand Branch in the Muhammad Bux Mahar Library. The newly elected President Mahmood Soomro, Vice President Ajaz Ali Keerio, General Secretary Ayaz Ali Mahar, Joint Secretary Khair Muhammad Lakho, Treasurer Mehboob Hussain Rind, Information Secretary Nooruddin Keerio along with



the BMC members including Nisar Ahmed Khaikheli, Qurban Ali Shah, Dr. Prem Chand, Afaq Ahmed Soomro, Masood Ahmed Soomro, Saddam Hussain Magsi, Abdul Malik Noonari, Abdul Wahid Panjwar and Azam Ali Umar took oath. The ceremony was attended by prominent figures such as Ustad Muhammad Alam Keerio, Muhammad Waris Noonari, Azhar Mahar, Aaqib Mughal, Nisar Ahmed Rind and other citizens.

# EDITORIAL



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

Thursday, September 19, 2024

## Does anyone care about the declining health of democracy in Pakistan?

The recent refusal by local authorities to allow Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to hold a public rally in Karachi under the pretext of security concerns raises serious questions about the health of democracy in Pakistan. Time and again, security threats are cited as a reason to suppress PTI's political activities, while other parties continue to function freely. The situation in Karachi, as heard by the Sindh High Court (SHC), paints a troubling picture of how selective security assessments are being used to curtail PTI's political freedoms.

Justice Yusuf Ali Saeed, in a pointed in-

quiry, questioned why only PTI faces such restrictions, while other political parties have been allowed to rally without issue. The fact



that the deputy commissioner East claimed that security clearance had not been granted without providing concrete evidence or explanation further deepens the concern. If security is such an overarching issue, a blanket ban on all political rallies, as suggested by the court, might seem more consistent. Yet,

only PTI's activities are being targeted.

A thriving democracy relies on a level playing field where all political parties are allowed to operate without fear or favor. PTI, like any other political entity, must have the freedom to engage with the public. Selective suppression of political activities, especially on dubious grounds, sets a dangerous precedent for future democratic processes in Pakistan. All political parties deserve equal rights to assembly and free expression, and no institution should hinder these essential democratic pillars in the name of security without clear justification.

REGIONAL TIMES

# THE HEARTLAND



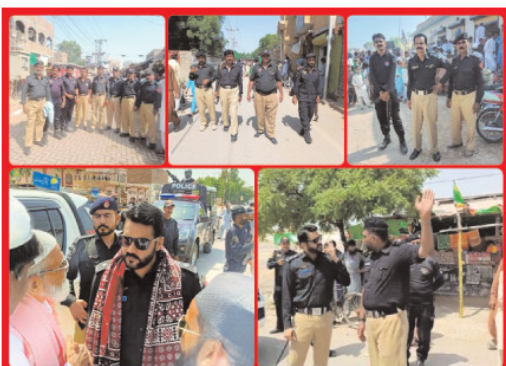
HYDERABAD: SSP Dr Farukha Ali is participating in rallies to celebrate the Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) in Hyderabad city.—Photo by GM Chandio



JOHI: Jamaat Ahle Sunnat leaders including Syed Noor Muhammad Shah, Maulana Ghulam Mustafa Lashari, Hafiz Ghulam Mustafa and others are leading a rally to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) in Johi.—Photo by Roahan Memon



KUMB: Leaders of different religious organizations are addressing the Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) celebrations in Kumb.—Photo by Naz Solangi



JAMSHORO: SSP Zafar Siddique Chhanga is seen reviewing the security measures in the Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) in Jamshoro.—Photo by Munawar Chandio



TALHAR: The Coordinator of the Ismaili Community's Security and Safety Committee in Talhar, Nadeem Ali Khawaja is presenting a traditional gift of a Sindh Ajrak to a Member of the Ismaili National Council.—RT



BADIN: Members and leaders of the Jamaat Luari Sharif are taking out a rally to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) in Badin.—Photo by Jibran Talpur



LARKANA: Sajjadanashin Shafi Muhammad Mashori and other Ulema are attending the Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) celebrations at Dargah Mashori Sharif.—Photo by Nadeem Soomro



HYDERABAD: Mayor Hyderabad Kashif Shoro and other leaders are participating in the rallies to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW).—Photo by Gm Chandio

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Abdul Hayee Shaikh, son of Raheem Bux Shaikh, resident of Gaganpur Chowk, Larkana, hereby declare that the original documents pertaining to my plot, located in Bahria Town Karachi, Plot No. 19, measuring 125 square yards, Registry No. BTKP-UIT0089, have been lost. If anyone finds the aforementioned documents, they are kindly requested to return them to the address mentioned above. Thank you for your cooperation

REGIONAL TIMES  
**SPORTS**

**Champions Trophy 2025: ICC delegation reviews arrangements at Karachi's National Stadium**



KARACHI: An International Cricket Council (ICC) delegation visited the National Stadium in Karachi to assess the ongoing preparations for the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy, set to be held in Pakistan next February.

The five-member delegation, which included key officials from the ICC, is conducting a comprehensive review of facilities across several venues to ensure Pakistan's readiness for the prestigious tournament. The delegation comprised Security Manager David Masker, Event Manager Sarah Edgar, General Manager Cricket Wasim Khan, Event Manager Aun Zaidi, and Broadcast Consultant Mansoor Manj. During their visit to the National Stadium, they inspected the construction work in progress and captured photos and videos for further analysis. Director of International Cricket Usman Wahla and Senior General Manager of the National Stadium Arshad Khan provided a detailed briefing on the construction efforts aimed at upgrading the venue for the global event. In addition to Karachi, the ICC team will visit other key venues in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Lahore during their four-day stay in Pakistan. These inspections will ensure that all facilities are in top condition for hosting the Champions Trophy. The delegation's visit follows a previous inspection conducted by a three-member ICC team in April of this year. The ICC delegation is scheduled to depart for Dubai on September 21, with Pakistan continuing its final preparations to host their first multi-team event since 2008. Remember last week, ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice confirmed that there are currently no plans to relocate the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 from Pakistan.—Agency

**SL vs NZ: Kamindu Mendis equals Saud Shakeel's record**



Sri Lanka's Kamindu Mendis has etched his name into the record books by equalling a world Test record, becoming only the second batter to score 50+ runs in each of his first seven Test matches. Pakistan's Saud Shakeel is the only other batter to achieve this remarkable feat. Mendis brought up his eighth 50-plus score in Tests during the first day of the opening Test against New Zealand in Galle. This milestone also sees him surpass cricket legends Sunil Gavaskar (India), Saeed Ahmed (Pakistan), and Basil Butcher (West Indies), all of whom scored a fifty in each of their first six Test matches. Kamindu's achievement follows a standout series in England, where he registered scores of 2, 113, 74, 4, and 64. He made his Test debut in 2022 against Australia in Galle, where he scored 61 in Sri Lanka's innings victory. However, he did not feature in the Test side for almost two years after that. Upon his return against Bangladesh earlier this year, he showcased his form with scores of 102 and 164 in the Sylhet Test, followed by an unbeaten 92 in Chattogram. In the ongoing Test in Galle, Kamindu reached his fifty off 73 deliveries. He also put on a 72-run partnership for the fifth wicket with Angelo Mathews, who returned to bat after retiring hurt following a blow to his hand.—Agency

**Face of the Day**



Name: Sumair Sheikh  
Location: Karachi  
About me: I'm passionate about taking selfies!  
Please email us your photo for our Model Watch and Kids' Corner section at regionaltimes10@gmail.com

REGIONAL TIMES  
**THE HEARTLAND**

**Director Information Sukkur enquires about health of ailing journalist Liaquat Laghari**

By Adeel Alvi  
SHIKARPUR: The Director Information Sukkur, Fida Hussain Baladi, visited and inquired about the health of senior journalist Liaquat Laghari, who has been bedridden for over a decade due to paralysis. The visit took place at Laghari's residence in Shikarpur, where the director assured him of financial assistance from the Sindh Government. Senior journalist Mir



Mushtaq Mangrio was also present during the visit. Liaquat Laghari, who struggles with speech and has limited use of his left hand, shared his challenges with the Director of Information. The Director assured him of full support, emphasizing that the Sindh Information Department is committed to helping journalists who have dedicated their lives to the field.

**Alimah Rania Unar wins Seerat and essay competition in Sindh**

By Farooq Junejo  
SHAHEED BENA ZAIRABAD: Rania Muhammad Adil Unar, resident of village Muhammad Ramzan Unar, is a 'Alimah' (Islamic scholar) from Jamia Rooth Al-Quran Naqshbandia Tahiriya Hala New Branch, Madrasa Makhdoom Sarwar Nooh (RA). In the annual competition of Seerat books and essays held by the Government of Pakistan, she has secured first position in Seerat Essays among Alimaths, professors, and Islamic scholars across the Sindh province, with the prayers of her parents. After this success, she will travel to Islamabad as a state guest to receive her award from the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of Pakistan at the International Seerat Conference, which will be held from 11th to 29th Rabi-ul-Awal (September). This is a great honor for our Sindh province, especially for District Matian, Tehsil Saeeedabad, and the village of Muhammad Ramzan Unar.

**Prince Mir Mehdi Raza Talpur attends Sindh Children's Festival in Khairpur**



By Naeem Shaikh  
KHAIRPUR: During the Sindh Children's Festival at Sindh Children School, the students showcased their talents, with both boys and girls actively participating. The Talpur, presented a Certificate of Excellence in Character to renowned artist and composer Asif Nizamani Raza Talpur, who awarded certificates to all the participants. The event was also attended by the school's owner, Qurban Mangi, along with other notable individuals. The ceremony, attended by students and school administration, began with the recitation of the Holy Quran. Following this, students showcased their talents, with both boys and girls actively participating. The Talpur, presented a Certificate of Excellence in Character to renowned artist and composer Asif Nizamani Raza Talpur, who awarded certificates to all the participants. The event was also attended by the school's owner, Qurban Mangi, along with other notable individuals.

**Pakistan's Asjad Iqbal crashes out of Snooker World Cup**

ULANBAATAR: Pakistani cueist Asjad Iqbal has been knocked out of the IBSF Mongolia Snooker World Cup 2024 after succumbing to a narrow 5-4 defeat against Michael Georgiou of Cyprus in the semi-final. Asjad had an unwanted start to the high-stakes clash as he lost the opening two frames. He, however, made an astounding comeback and took a narrow 4-3 lead to move just one win within touching distance of the victory. Asjad was on course to secure the victory in the eighth frame as he had amassed a 65-point lead but Georgiou responded with a sensational clearance and drew level, forcing the match to the ninth frame. In the decisive frame, Georgiou completely outclassed Asjad and ended his hopes of making it to the final. Asjad Iqbal settled for a bronze in the IBSF Mongolia Snooker World Cup 2024.

The Pakistani cueist then took the lead with a victory in the fourth frame 81(76)-34, followed by a 65-64 victory in the next frame. The Chinese cueist once again levelled the scores with 50(50)-69(69), but Asjad Iqbal triumphed with the victory in the last frame 69-50. Meanwhile, in another quarter-final clash, Iran's Ali Gharahgozlu defeated Pakistan's Awais Munir 4-2. The frame scores were 68-60, 66(58)-64(55), 8-78, 37-65, 66(53)-23, 111(65)-09. Previously, Asjad Iqbal defeated Hong Kong's Chang Yu Kiu in the pre-quarter-final match with a score of 4-1.—Agency

**Markhors defeat Dolphins by 92 runs, record third consecutive victory**

FAISALABAD: Markhors record their third consecutive victory of the Champions One-Day Cup as they defeat the Dolphins by 92 runs in the tournament's sixth game at the Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad on Wednesday. The Dolphins were bundled out by Mohammad Rizwan and Co for 192 runs while chasing a 285-run target. The Markhors had registered 284 runs with a loss of nine wickets at the scoreboard with a century from Kamran Ghulam and notable runs from their skipper. After losing two early wickets, including Bismillah Khan for a duck and Mohammad Faizan for just 1, Ghulam steadied the innings with a superb knock of 113 off 110 balls, including 12 fours and 3 sixes, before being dismissed by Sameen Gul. Skipper Rizwan added 51 off 67 deliveries, while Salman Agha contributed 49 off 47. Despite a few late wickets, the tailenders added crucial runs, with Zahid Mahmood remaining unbeaten on 15 and Akif Javed smashing 6 off the final ball of the innings. Faheem Ashraf was the standout bowler for Dolphins, claiming 4 wickets for 43 runs, including key dismissals of Ifikhar Ahmed, Abdul Samad, and Mohammad Imran. Mir Hamza bagged two wickets. In the chase, Sahibzada Farhan provided a steady start, scoring 24 runs off 35 balls, including three boundaries but he could not convert big. However, his opening partner, Muhammad Hurraira, struggled and was dismissed for a duck after facing 12 balls, caught behind by Bismillah Khan off the bowling of Akif Javed, leaving the team at 12-1. The top order faced further setbacks as Muhammad Akhlaq, the wicketkeeper-batter, managed just 1 run from 2 balls before he, too, was dismissed. Captain Saud Shakeel contributed a valuable 41 runs from 56 balls with three boundaries, stabilising the innings after early losses. He was eventually caught by Akif Javed off 12 balls, leaving the team at 99-5.—Agency

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**Talhar's civil society decries opening of BISP Centre at a government run boys school**

TALHAR: The educational emergency announced by the Sindh Education Department has failed, as a Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) center has been set up in a boys' secondary school, adversely affecting students' education. Civil society as well as political and social leaders have begun criticizing the Deputy Commissioner of Badin for this move. On this issue, Sunil Kumar, a leader of the PPP Minority Wing in Talhar, told the media that while the Sindh government has declared an educational emergency, the Deputy Commissioner of Badin has established an income support center at the Government Boys Higher Secondary School in Talhar. This has severely impacted students' education. Kumar appealed to the Deputy Commissioner to reconsider his decision and relocate the center to another location to prevent further disruption to students' education.—RT

REGIONAL TIMES  
**ENTERTAINMENT**

**Taylor Swift shares heartbreaking breakup admission despite having 'clicked' so well**



Singer-songwriter Taylor Swift has just gotten candid about what it feels like to experience heartbreak despite 'clicking' so well. For those unversed, Swift is currently in a relationship with NFL star and podcaster Travis Kelce however, back in 2011 she sat for an interview with 60 minutes and got candid about the pain she undergoes each time 'fame' becomes a major reason for her breakups. The interview in question, shared in the A Second Look program just resurfaced and features Swift getting candid about what she feels regarding fame and its effects on her love life. According to the singer at the time, "It's so heartbreaking when things click, but your comfort level with fame is so different than [the person you're dating]." Cause while "I don't care," and "it doesn't matter to me who's looking, but it does to some people." At the end of the day, "you couldn't really have a good relationship with someone who cares that much," she added and also made clear, "it seems a little unnecessary to care that much about keeping people out."

**Dua Lipa brands Taylor Swift 'ruthless' for sharing private life in songs**



Dua Lipa has branded 'ruthless' to singers who shares their private life in music for clickbait. While speaking in a recent interview with Anderson Cooper on 60 Minutes, Lipa candidly shared that her lyrics are not for showcasing her personal life just to grab the public's attention. The Levitating singer shared, "It's something that I just naturally hold back." "Some people are just so ruthless with their own private life that they decide to put it all out in a song because they know that it's going to attract people's attention." The three times Grammy award winner added, "She went on to say, 'For me, it was always important to make music that people really loved, not because I was putting someone on blast or not because I'm doing it for clickbait at someone else's expense.'" However, she has not called out any singer's name but her interview left the fans to think that she is pointing out Taylor Swift. Fans took to X, to express their opinion on it. A fan penned, 'Yah I'm gonna go out on a limb and say that this was a thinly veiled, albeit harmless, shot at Taylor Swift!' Another effused, 'Bwa ha ha! Not thinly veiled whatsoever. I'll be glad when Swift crashes and burns. Take a look at Joe Alwyn.'

REGIONAL TIMES

THE HEARTLAND



-Can you believe this?

DSP's guard assaults a Dokri student

By Irfan Morio

DOKRI: A guard of the DSP Dokri physically assaulted a 12th-grade student...



Shoaib Ali Mirani, who was not unjustly detained. They stated that Shoaib was returning home after shopping in Bhattai Bazaar when DSP's guard Ghulam Bughio assaulted him without any

Tando Allahyar Police arrest three Gutka suppliers



By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: Under the leadership of SDPO City and SHO A-Section Mir Afzal Gul Magi, a successful operation was carried out based on secret information...

Daulatpur's Gaincho community protests for Mushtaq Gaincho's recovery

By Aijaz Johkio



DAULATPUR: In the village Haji Ramzan Gaincho near Daulatpur, resident Mushtaq Gaincho has been reportedly abducted and subjected to violence by the police on the orders of influential landlords...

phone, and then abducted him. They strongly condemned this action. The protesters also accused influential landlord Sarwar Dahri of attempting to seize their agricultural land...

Annual Urs of Hazrat Watayo Faqir (RA), Syed Aali Shah (RA) celebrated in Tando Allahyar

By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: The annual Urs of Hazrat Watayo Faqir (RA) and Syed Aali Shah (RA) near Tando Allahyar began on 12th Rabi-ul-Awal. A ceremonial sheet was offered at the shrine to inaugurate the fair...



People used to call Watayo by the name Wato. Umrani emphasized the need for further research on this great saint and suggested establishing a research institution in Tando Allahyar dedicated to Watayo. He also mentioned that he has conducted brief research and published a book on the subject...

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Kandiario youth goes missing

By Usama Ayaz

KANDIARIO: Ayaz Ahmed, the son of well-known vegetable vendor Muhammad Usman Tunio from the Tania Muhalla in Kandiario, went missing on Monday evening after an argument with his family...



deteriorated due to the incident. The family has appealed to the media and authorities for help in finding him.

Secretary Railways Syed Mazhar Ali Shah reviews Thar Connectivity Project

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: In a significant development, Secretary of Railways Syed Mazhar Ali Shah, along with a high-level delegation, visited New Chhor, Umerkot, and Islamkot to oversee the progress of the Thar Connectivity Project...



Works Organization (FWO) and other senior officers of Pakistan Railways. During the visit, the delegation reviewed the progress of the project, engaged with local stakeholders and outlined the benefits of this strategic initiative...

International Literacy Day observed in Mithi



By Ashraf Kunbar

MITHI: On the occasion of International Literacy Day, the Literacy and Non-Formal Education Department of Sindh, in collaboration with Community-Based Accelerated Learning Spaces (KBAL), the REED Foundation Tharparkar, and the Thar Education Alliance, organized a one-day seminar at the Press Club Mithi Auditorium on the topic Promoting Multi-dimensional Education for Harmony and Peaceful Environment...



the Directorate of Literacy and Non-Formal Education Sindh, stated that the development of nations depends on the intellectual capacity of their people, and enhancing intellectual capacity requires everyone to receive education. He emphasized that according to Article 25-A and 37-B of the Constitution of Pakistan and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, every individual has the right to education. Other speakers at the seminar, including Director of Secondary Higher Secondary Mirpurkhas Division Iqbal

Samaro Police recover trader's stolen cash and mobile phone



By Muhammad Bachal

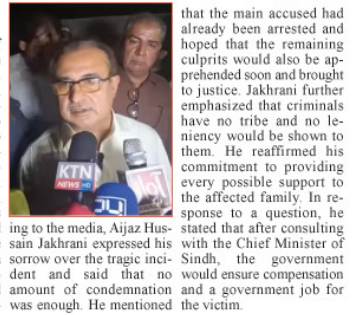
UMERKOT: SHO of Samaro Police Station Ahmed Bux Rehman has claimed to have recovered five lac rupes and a mobile phone looted a few days ago from businessman Partab Malhi of Samaro. District Kumbhar, held a press conference with Samaro police. Speaking to the media, Khalil

Sumro said that one of the accused in the theft is Jabbar Shaikh, a resident of Kashmir. He further stated that other suspects are also involved, and the police will soon arrest them and recover the stolen money.

MNA Aijaz Khan Jakhrani meets raped polio worker, assures her of his full support

By Hashim Brohi

JACOBABAD: Member of the National Assembly from Jacobabad and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader, Aijaz Hussain Jakhrani, visited the house of polio worker Abida Unar, who was a victim of sexual assault in Jacobabad. He presented her with an Ajrak, condemned the incident, and assured that all culprits involved would be arrested. During his visit, the PPP leader handed over a cheque of Rs 1 million as financial aid to the affected polio worker. While speaking



that the main accused had already been arrested and hoped that the remaining culprits would also be apprehended soon and brought to justice. Jakhrani further emphasized that criminals have no tribe and no leniency would be shown to them. He reaffirmed his commitment to providing every possible support to the affected family. In response to a question, he stated that after consulting with the Chief Minister of Sindh, the government would ensure compensation and a government job for the victim.

New office-bearers of SGA Mehar take oath

By Murtaza Panhwar

MEHAR: The oath taking ceremony of the Sindh Graduates Association (SGA) Mehar branch took place at SGA House Mehar. The chief guest of the event was Altaf Hussain Gorar, Chief Election Commissioner of the SGA Central Election Commission, and the honorary guest was former Vice Chairman Abdul Rasool Soomro. The founder and first General Secretary of SGA Mehar branch, Muhammad Ismail Panhwar was also present. The ceremony commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Engineer Muhammad Aslam Chandio. Altaf Hussain



Gorar administered the oath to the newly elected office-bearers for the term 2024 to 2027. The esteemed guests were honored with traditional Sindhi gifts, including Sindhi caps and Ajraks. The newly elected President, Badaruddin Pathi, delivered a welcoming speech, expressing

gratitude for the participation of his colleagues. He stated that their purpose is to serve selflessly, without any personal gain. Former Vice Chairman Abdul Rasool Soomro praised the social services provided by SGA Mehar, calling them commendable.

Young artist Saifi Soomro demands justice over Frere Hall fraud



By Shad Mahar

GHOTKI: Saifi Soomro, an artist from Ghotki, has alleged fraud by the administration of Karachi's Frere Hall concerning two paintings he exhibited there seven years ago. The paintings were reportedly lost, and seven years later, the same paintings appeared in a scene of an Urdu drama. The issue gained attention on social media, prompting the Minister for Culture of Sindh to take notice and form a two-member inquiry committee. According to the details, Saifi Soomro, known for his meticulous artwork, claimed that in 2017, he exhibited two paintings at Frere Hall in Karachi. Shortly after the exhibition, the hall's administration informed him that some paintings, including his, were missing and refused to return his work. Despite multiple follow-ups, the administration's responses remained unchanged, leading Soomro to remain silent for several years. Recently, Soomro discovered that the same paintings were featured in a scene of a popular Pakistani drama aired on Urdu channel. Recognizing his

work, Soomro attempted to contact the channel and relevant authorities but found no satisfactory resolution, prompting him to raise the issue on social media. The Minister for Culture and Tourism of Sindh, Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, took notice of the matter and formed a two-member committee to investigate. The committee contacted Soomro to gather information and is expected to submit a report by next Friday. Soomro stated that the Frere Hall administration has since been in touch with him and has confirmed that his paintings are available at the hall and ready for collection. However, he believes that fraud and deception were involved since his paintings were used in the drama without his permission, and any rental fees for their use were not compensated. Saifi Soomro also learned that his paintings might have been rented out for other TV stories, which he considers unfair. The young artist, who sees art as both his passion and obsession, expressed his dismay over the injustice he faced. He has called on the intellectuals and the Sindh Government to ensure that justice is served.

Pir Sahab Pagara prays for peace and prosperity of Palestine, Pakistan

By AQ Khilji

PIR JO GOTH: Pir Sahab Pagara extended his heartfelt congratulations to all lovers of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SAWW) on the occasion of his birth anniversary, 12 Rabi-ul-Awal. He emphasized the importance of following the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAWW) to adorn both worlds. In his spiritual address during the Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAWW) celebrations at Darqah Sharif Pir Jo Goth, he prayed for the protection and safety of Muslims worldwide, especially those in Palestine who are enduring hardships. He



urged everyone to continuously pray for Pakistan's development, prosperity, and security. Pir Sahab Pagara also reflected on the severe economic challenges faced by people, noting that while earlier such concerns were met with skepticism, the reality now shows many struggling even for basic necessities. He advised nurturing

Meeting of Liaquat Town Welfare Society's Senior Council held in Tando Jam

By Irfan Khushk

TANDO JAM: An important meeting of the Senior Council of the Liaquat Town Welfare Society Tando Jam was held under the chairmanship of the organizing committee, hosted by Bashir Ahmad Bhutto. Dr. Atta Hussain Shah and Dr. Fahad Nazir Khoso. Senior and active members of the town attended the meeting. During the meeting, the problems faced by the town were discussed. It was decided to write a letter to the higher authorities of WAPDA and to approach the court regarding the installation of illegal transformers. Additionally, it was agreed to submit an application to the police station and the SSP office concern-



ing recent theft incidents in Liaquat Town and the ice business activities outside the town. The meeting also established a new constitution and set of leaders for the town, which will be passed by the general body. Members participating in the meeting appealed to the Town Committee of Tando Jam, the local MPA, and

MNA to contribute to the development works and address the problems of Liaquat Town. Dr. Manzoor Ali Abro, Abdul Aleem Soomro, Zahid Ali Khokhar, Shahid Hussain Memon, Shahabuddin Brohi, Salahuddin Junejo, Mudassar Junejo, Salman Gopang, and others attended the meeting.

FES Country Director Felix Kolbitz calls on SALU VC Prof Dr Muhammad Yousif Khushk

By Naeem Shaikh

KHAIRPUR: Felix Kolbitz, the Country Director Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Pakistan, visited a group of students at the University, Khairpur, called on Meritorious Prof. Dr. Muhammad Yousif Khushk, Vice Chancellor. Dr. Khushk briefed the visiting guests about the academic, research and development of the campus. They also shared for mutual promotion of education, cultural exchange and community engagement and for the furtherance of higher education. Mr. Felix visited the peace corner where he was briefed about the conducted peace related activities including seminars, dialogues,

Advisor FES-Pakistan and the participants. He also stressed about the various mile stones and achievements of BSWA. Mr. Felix Kolbitz said that it is the responsibility of the academic institutions in Pakistan and especially the Sindh province to promote the ideology of democracy. They may prepare the curriculum on the basis of democracy, because democracy promotes the real spirit of social cohesion in the Sindh" was held at Auditorium Hall of the Student societies center, where Khadim Hussain Mirani, Executive Director BSWA cordially welcomed Felix. Dr. Muhammad Yousif Khushk Vice Chancellor, Abdullah Dayo Program and concluded the session.

# METRO KARACHI



## Murad Allocates Rs1.5bn For Repair Of Karachi's Rain-Damaged Roads

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah approved Rs1.5 billion on Wednesday to repair roads in Karachi damaged by this year's heavy rains.

During a meeting held at CM House to assess the damage, Shah instructed the Local Government Department to investigate the construction quality of roads built or repaired after 2022, which have since deteriorated due to rainfall. He stressed the importance of accountability, stating that substandard work would not be tolerated, and those responsible would face consequences. The meeting included Planning Minister Nasir Shah, Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani, Karachi Mayor Murtaza



Wahab, and other senior officials. Ghani was tasked with leading the inquiry into the poor quality of recently constructed roads. Wahab reported that 17,861,500 square feet of roads were damaged across Karachi during the 2024 monsoon, with District West suffering the most extensive damage. A total of 120 roads, flyovers, and underpasses

across various districts require repairs. Shah immediately approved the necessary funds, urging quality workmanship. In a separate meeting, the CM was informed that floods also damaged 219 roads in Hyderabad Division and 178 roads in Sukkur Division. Shah directed the Water and Sewerage Department to assess the damage and begin repair work.—RT

## Saeed Ghani Credits His Success To His Martyred Father



Ghani's residence in Chanesar Goth, was attended by senior party members including

Special Assistant to the Sindh CM Syed Waqar Mehdi, MNA Agha Rafiullah, Asad Alam Niazi, and several other party officials. Quran Khawani was held, and prayers were offered for Shaheed Usman Ghani. In his remarks, Saeed Ghani reflected on his father's lifelong dedication to the PPP and the care shown to their family by the late Benazir Bhutto. He reiterated that his current

status is the result of his father's hard work and the continued support of the PPP. Syed Waqar Mehdi also paid tribute to Usman Ghani's efforts on behalf of workers and laborers, pledging to continue his legacy. Farhan Ghani, Chairman of Chanesar Town, echoed this sentiment, stating that the fruits of Usman Ghani's sacrifices are evident in both Saeed Ghani's success and his own role as town chairman.—RT

## World Culture Festival To Begin In Karachi On September 26: Sindh Chief Secretary



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Secretary Syed Asif Hyder Shah announced that the 35-day World Culture Festival, fully backed by the Sindh Government, will kick off on September 26. The landmark event, a first for the country, will feature over 400 artists from 40 nations, including Europe, America, Africa, and Arab countries. The festival will highlight the region's rich cultural heritage through performances by Sindh folk singers and the use of indigenous musical instruments.

During a high-level meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary, discussions focused on security and logistical arrangements for the festival. Attendees included Additional Chief Secretary Home Muhammad Iqbal Memon, Arts Council President Muhammad Ahmed Shah, Additional I.G Karachi Javed Alam Odho, and other senior officials. Muhammad Ahmed Shah, President of Arts Council Karachi, confirmed that the festival will run from September 26 to October 30, showcasing performances from across the world, alongside traditional Sindh folk arts. Additional I.G Karachi Javed Alam Odho assured that a comprehensive security plan is in place for the event. The Chief Secretary instructed stringent security measures and directed the Secretary of Universities to invite students from provincial universities. He also asked KMC to repair and beautify city roads ahead of the festival. Shah emphasized the festival's potential to boost international tourism and cultural ties, with special arrangements at Karachi Airport to welcome artists and guests. The Sindh Government, as host, fully supports the event and aims to ensure smooth coordination between all departments.—RT

## Cooperative Societies' Awareness Campaign Aims To Enhance Socio-Economic Welfare And Community Empowerment: Registrar Wajid Sheikh

KARACHI: An awareness campaign led by Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Wajid Ali Sheikh, was held at Bahadur Yar Jang Club. Speaking at the event, Sheikh emphasized the significance of cooperative societies, stating that globally, around 1.5 billion people are part of over 300 million such organizations. He highlighted the success of cooperative housing societies in neighboring countries and Australia, describing them as key examples of how these societies contribute to economic development and poverty alleviation. Sheikh explained that the Sindh Government



Cooperative Department has initiated this campaign to achieve its long-term objectives, which include improving the socio-economic welfare of cooperative society members and fostering community development. The campaign, he added, is aligned with the department's broader vision for societal progress. The event was also attended by Ms. Saira Sheikh, Muzamil Husain Jalbani from Sindh High Court, and final person Rabia Khan, among others, who addressed the gathering.—RT

## BMG Seeks Court Intervention Amid Fears Of Defeat In KCCI Elections

KARACHI: The Businessmen Group (BMG), which has held control over the Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) for decades, is reportedly alarmed by the possibility of losing the upcoming 2024-26 elections. In an attempt to avoid defeat, the group has approached the Sindh High Court, seeking to halt the elections through its election commission and newly appointed staff, claiming the regulator has consistently ruled against their practices. BMG is trying to prevent these decisions to avoid embarrassment within the business community.

Meanwhile, Asif Sakhi, leader of the Businessmen Alliance (BMA), voiced concerns about possible electoral manipulation. He alleged that BMG, unsettled by the threat of losing power, is resorting to questionable and illegal tactics to secure victory. Internal divisions within BMG have surfaced, driven by unethical behavior and authoritarian practices, further weakening the group. Sakhi emphasized that

**REGISTRATION & ALLIANCE**  
**KARACHI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY**  
ANNUAL ELECTION 2024-26  
ON 26th SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 09:00 AM

107	SUNAMBAR AHMED KAKARA	123	MUHAMMAD AHMAD PUNJ
108	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	124	AMIR ALI
109	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	125	MUHAMMAD TARIQ HERRON
110	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	126	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN
111	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	127	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN
112	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	128	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN
113	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	129	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN
114	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	130	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN
115	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	131	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN
116	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	132	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN
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121	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN	137	MUHAMMAD SAJJAD KHAN

a broad coalition, including shopkeepers, traders, importers, and industrialists, is united in opposition to BMG. The ruling group, in response, attempted to discourage participation by illegally raising the nomination fee from Rs15,000 to Rs100,000, a move invalidated by the Director General of Trade Organizations (DGTO), who restored the original fee. He also accused BMG of manipulating voter lists, providing incomplete and inaccurate data. Despite DGTO directives, the group continues to pursue elections under questionable conditions, prompting the BMA to consider legal challenges.—RT

## Haleem Accuses IRSA Amendment Ordinance Of Threatening Sindh's Agriculture

KARACHI: Haleem Adil Sheikh, President of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh, has vehemently denounced the IRSA Amendment Ordinance 2024, calling it a deliberate plot to render Sindh's agricultural lands barren.

In a recent statement, Sheikh accused President Asif Ali Zardari of masterminding the ordinance, claiming it was originally proposed during Dr. Arif Alvi's tenure, but Alvi had

refused to endorse it. Sheikh also criticized the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) for allegedly mismanaging Sindh's resources, accusing them of hypocrisy. He stated that while Zardari endorsed the ordinance, the PPP later presented a resolution against it in the Sindh Assembly to mislead the public. Sheikh urged the PPP to demonstrate its commitment to Sindh by participating in protests against the ordinance scheduled for September 19. PTI, along with its allies, plans to stage demonstrations across Sindh to resist any efforts to exploit the province's resources. He further accused the PPP of a 15-year track record of exploiting Sindh, from depleting its forests to selling off Karoonjhar, and now attempting to negotiate away the province's water rights.—RT/Agency

## 140 Chikungunya Cases Confirmed Through PCR Tests: Azra Pechuho

KARACHI: Sindh Health Minister Azra Pechuho revealed that 140 Chikungunya cases have been confirmed this year through PCR tests, as reported by the media on Wednesday. Speaking to the press, Pechuho also noted improvements in the Malaria situation across Sindh. The minister highlighted irregularities in admissions at Lyari General Nursing Hospital, where fake documents were used. She announced plans to scrutinize the fraudulent documents. Pechuho also addressed concerns raised about a milk bank set up in Korangi, stating that discus-



sions with NADRA's chairman revealed issues with the registration rules and regulations. She added that the federal cabinet holds the authority to amend these rules and has written to the prime minister for action. Pechuho further mentioned that discussions have been held with the Council of Islamic Ideology regarding the matter, and changes to legislation will follow once federal government issues are resolved.—RT/Agency

## Over Rs1bn In Financial Irregularities Discovered In PPHI Sindh

KARACHI: Significant financial irregularities, amounting to over Rs1 billion, have been uncovered in the People's Primary Health Initiative (PPHI) Sindh, according to a report by the auditor general. The report highlights an unauthorized loan of Rs1.18 billion taken from Sindh Bank, as well as over Rs1 billion worth of substandard and expired medicines stocked by the health initiative. Further irregularities include more than Rs950 million spent improperly on lab equipment procurement and Rs480 million misused during flood relief efforts intended for food aid. Additionally, Rs78 million was paid to various companies for the purchase of low-quality medicines, while Rs24.2 million allocated for civil works at the Rural Health Center in Bhan Saeedabad, Jamshoro, was also flagged in the report.—RT/Agency

## SHC Halts NADRA From Charging Fees For Inheritance Certificates



KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) has suspended the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) from collecting fees for the issuance of inheritance certificates. This decision came during a hearing on a petition challenging NADRA's fee policy, where the court requested input from the deputy attorney general and assistant advocate general. The petitioner's lawyer argued that NADRA continues to charge fees even when applications for inheritance certificates are rejected, which violates its own regulations that only allow fees to be charged for services rendered. The lawyer further contended that the current fee of Rs22,000 for inheritance certificates is excessive, as these certificates are essential for distributing property according to Islamic law. The SHC ordered NADRA to stop charging fees for inheritance certificates and letters of administration, though it allowed fees for routine services like ID cards and family registration certificates (FRC) to continue. The court also questioned whether NADRA can impose fees based on property ownership and whether the state is entitled to collect fees for such services.—RT/Agency

## New office-bearers of JUI-F Shikarpur elected



By Adeel Alvi  
SHIKARPUR: In the intra-party elections of JUI-F District Shikarpur, the newly elected Ameer, Maulana Abdullah Mahar, and General Secretary, Maulana Muhammad Tayab Mekho, have reorganized the district cabinet through mutual consultation. The newly appointed district officials include Patrons Maulana Syed Siraj Ahmed Shah Amroti, Maulana Abdullah Pahore, Maulana Ali Muhammad Sehndro, Maulana Abdul Shakoor Shaikh, Maulana Rahim Bux Soomro, Naib Ameer Maulana Abdul Bari Shaikh, Maulana Sanaullah Bhutto, Mufti Ghulam Qadir Brohi, Qari Muhammad Muneeb Soomro, Deputy Secretaries Maulana Taj Muhammad Mahar, Syed Tahir Mahmood Shah Amroti, Maulana Abdul Waheed Kehar, Mufti Abdul Razzaq Brohi, Press Secretary Hafiz Rafiq Ahmed Shar, Treasurer Rafiq Ahmed Dayo, Salar Allah Dino Soomro, Assistant Salar Hafiz Saeed Ahmed Mahar and Media Coordinator Muneeb Brohi. This new leadership is set to guide the district's activities and initiatives for the upcoming term.

## AKF holds seminar on My Prophet, My Ideal for orphans in Hyderabad



By GM Chandio  
HYDERABAD: Al-Khidmat Foundation organized a seminar titled "My Prophet, My Ideal" and conducted annual medical checkups for Shining Stars (orphaned children). The seminar, under the Al-Khidmat Foundation's Orphan Care Program in Hyderabad, aimed to provide moral and spiritual education to registered Shining Stars by teaching them about the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SAWW) life and encouraging them to adopt qualities such as honesty, compassion, and integrity. He emphasized the importance of these virtues in shaping their character. The children actively participated in the seminar and learned important lessons from the life of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH).

You have to learn the rules of the game and then you have to play better than anyone else.

—Albert Einstein

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THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 19 2024

## King Charles Invites Shehbaz For Commonwealth Meeting In October

ISLAMABAD: King Charles III of the United Kingdom on Wednesday telephoned Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and formally invited him to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Samoa in October.

Accepting the invitation, the prime minister said that the "CHOGM in Samoa would be a significant moment in the Commonwealth's history".

According to a PM Office press release, it would be the first summit to be chaired by King Charles III since becoming head of the Commonwealth and his coronation.

PM Shehbaz reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the Commonwealth and the values enshrined in the Com-



King Charles III



PM Shehbaz Sharif

monwealth Charter. He said that the "CHOGM in Samoa would provide a forum to discuss opportunities for enhancing intra-Commonwealth cooperation on important issues such as fostering sustainable development, strengthening democratic institutions, and empowering Commonwealth youth".

Noting the king's longstanding interest in environmental issues and various initiatives for climate sustainability, PM Shehbaz said that he particularly looked forward to engaging with Commonwealth leaders on climate change, as Pakistan was highly vulnerable to its impacts. The prime minister also

inquired about the king's health and conveyed his best wishes for Kate Middleton, the Princess of Wales, who had completed her treatment.

The British royals have had a strong relationship with Pakistan and have visited the country on numerous occasions including visits from the late queen Elizabeth II and the late princess Diana of Wales.

Recalling the fond memories of Charles' last visit to Pakistan, when he was the prince of Wales, Prime Minister Shehbaz hoped that the king and the queen would visit Pakistan soon.

The then prince of Wales and duchess of Cornwall (now Queen Camilla) visited the country in 2006 from October 29 to November 3 and toured parts of Pakistan.

"For my wife and I, it really is the greatest possible joy to be here with you in Pakistan," said the then prince during an event on his visit in 2006. "It has taken me very nearly 58 years to reach you and it's not from want of trying, I can tell you."

Years later, it was PM Shehbaz who had to visit the UK upon the death of queen Elizabeth II in 2022 who reigned the kingdom for 70 years and 214 days.

During the funeral, the PM met with the British sovereign, King Charles III and extended his condolences over the passing of the late monarch and said that she was a source of inspiration and strength for generations of Commonwealth citizens.—RT/Agency

## Dar Describes Russia As A Key Player In Regional Cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said Pakistan viewed Russia as an important player in the West, South and Central Asia, and strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation with Russia remains an important priority for Pakistan's foreign policy.

Addressing a press conference, he said discussions with Russian counterpart Alexei Overchuk were focused on outlining further potential for expansion of economic relations between the two countries.

He said Pakistan-Russia bilateral trade touched the mark of one billion dollar last year, and expansion of trade ties by working out logistic and other related issues is a priority for both the countries.

The deputy prime minister said energy cooperation with Russia holds potential, and we aim to explore this avenue further. He said Pakistan is also eager to develop connectivity projects, including rail and road networks between two countries and beyond.

He said Islamabad aimed to continue cooperation with Moscow on realizing the



Ishaq Dar with Russian officials

common goal of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Noting Russia's historically strong relations with Muslim world, OIC and its position on Palestine conflict, Ishaq Dar said Pakistan greatly appreciated Russia's stance that freedom of speech must not be an instrument to disrespect a revered person or religion and not to hurt sentiments of Muslim Ummah.

He hoped to continue high-level contacts and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to deepen and strengthen relations with Russia.

On his part, the Russian Deputy Prime Minister said he discussed prospects for collaboration between Pakistan and Eurasian Economic Union which consists of Ar-

menia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Caucasus and Russia. He said, "We have discussed opportunities for implementing free trade agreement between Pakistan and these five countries and we look forward to further discussing and finalizing the agreement."

The Russian deputy prime minister said inter-governmental commission meeting later this year in Russia will provide an opportunity to further trade and economic relations between the two countries.

Alexei Overchuk said, "Our goals and visions for development and economic ties within the SCO are very much aligned including connectivity, addressing the climate agenda, food security, energy transition and energy security".—RT/Agency

## US Reaffirms 'Longstanding Policy' Of Withholding Support For Pakistan's Ballistic Missile Program

WASHINGTON: The United States has reiterated its "longstanding policy" denying support to Pakistan's ballistic missile programme, saying it will continue to use sanctions and other tools to ensure its own national security and protect its financial system from being used by "proliferators".

In a press briefing, addressing a query regarding the recent sanctions considered "biased and politically motivated" by Islamabad — as per the journalist, State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said that while Pakistan has been a long-term partner of the US, there are disagreements.

"... and when we have disagreements, we won't hesitate to act on those to protect America's interests," he said, emphasising on the country's policy to deny support to Pakistan's missile programme.

"... we will continue to use our sanctions and other — our other tools to ensure our national security cannot be impacted, and that the US financial system cannot be used by proliferators," said Miller.

The statement comes days after the US imposed sanctions Washington had similarly targeted three China-based companies with



Ballistic missile on a launch pad

sanctions in October 2023 for supplying missile-applicable items to Pakistan.

The Beijing Research Institute of Automation for Machine Building Industry, according to Miller's statement last week, had worked with Pakistan to procure equipment for testing rocket motors for the Shaheen-3 and Ababeel systems and potentially for larger systems.

The sanctions also targeted China-based firms Hubei Huachangda Intelligent Equipment Co, Universal Enterprise, and Xi'an Longde Technology Development Co, alongside Pakistan-based Innovative Equipment and a Chinese national, for knowingly transferring equipment under missile technology restrictions, said Miller.

In the briefing, the spokesperson also addressed a question pertaining to the

"real reasons and concerns" that triggered the sanctions imposed on a Chinese research institute and several companies involved in supplying Pakistan's ballistic missile programme.

"So the United States is committed to strengthening the international nonproliferation regime by taking action against networks supporting activities of proliferation concern," said the spokesperson. He added that the executive order action that was taken last week followed Washington October 2023 and April 2024 designation of six Chinese entities and one Belarusian entity that have worked to supply Pakistan's missile programme as well as the listing of numerous Pakistani and third-country entities on the Department of Commerce Entity List for decades.—RT/Agency

## Russian Deputy PM Alexei Overchuk Arrives In Pakistan



Alexei Overchuk

ISLAMABAD: Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk reached Pakistan today, a day after the Foreign Office announced his two-day official visit from September 18 till 19. In a statement today, the FO said that the Russian dignitary was welcomed by Pakistan's Ambassador in Moscow Muhammad Khalid Jamali and Additional Foreign Secretary (Europe) Shaqat Ali Khan at the Islamabad Airport. Deputy PM Overchuk, the FO added, will hold extensive talks with President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his counterpart Ishaq Dar during his time in the federal capital. His visit comes after last The News reported that Islamabad and Moscow were considering liquefied natural gas (LNG) transactions in future Russia, the publication said citing a senior official at the Ministry of Energy, had communicated that its LNG

export terminals would get ready in 2026 for gas trade with Pakistan in light of the fact that the price-reopening clause with Qatar under two long-term agreements under government-to-government arrangements would be invoked in 2026. Furthermore, an official informed the subcommittee that a Russian delegation was due to visit the country to discuss the establishment of a state-of-the-art steel mill on the existing site of the Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM). Speaking exclusively to media on his visit, the deputy PM expressed Moscow's readiness to share knowledge with Islamabad in various sectors to assist the latter. Stressing on increasing socio-cultural ties between the two countries, Overchuk said that he hopes constructive collaboration to continue with Pakistan under Russia's presidency of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of State.—RT/Agency

## Law Minister Seeks Legal Community's Input On Adjusting Judges' Retirement Age In Constitutional Package

ISLAMABAD: Addressing a crucial session of the country's legal fraternity to discuss contentious constitutional amendments proposed by the coalition government, Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar on Wednesday sought recommendations from lawyers to decide on the retirement age of judges whether it should be 65 or 68 years.

The federal minister was addressing the lawyers following in-camera session of the Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) and the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) to brief and review the proposed constitutional changes that have become a challenge for the coalition government to pass them in parliament as it lacked two-thirds majority.

The amendments allegedly include legislation to extend the tenure of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa — who is retiring in October this year — as well as the retirement age of the judges.

Today's event was attended by office-bearers of the lawyers' bodies, including SCBA President Shahzad



Azam Nazeer Tarar

Shaukat, PBC Vice Chairman Farooq H Naek, Law Minister Tarar, and senior lawyers.

"The constitutional amendments package, which is circulating everywhere, is just a draft consisting of a set of recommendations," said Tarar while addressing the event, "[...] it cannot be called a government bill unless it is approved by the cabinet."

"There should be a constitutional court in which we get the glimpse of the federation," he further said.

He detailed that a constitutional amendment is presented in parliament after its approval from the cabinet and it needs approval from a two-thirds majority of parliament.

He clarified that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) was not solely ruling the country as "we are part of a coalition government."

Tarar said that the "constitutional package" was part of the "Charter of Democracy" signed by the ruling PML-N and its major ally, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in 2006 which also recommended bringing judicial reforms.

He detailed that discussions were held with the PPP from January to March over the judiciary-centric reforms via introducing constitutional amendments as per the ally party's push to "complete the agenda of the Charter of Democracy".—RT/Agency

## Pakistan Denounces IIOJK Elections, Calls For Modi's Accountability Over Human Rights Violations

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday categorically rejected the elections for the legislative assembly of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), asserting that these polls were no substitute for the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination.

Provincial elections are being held in the occupied territory for the first time in a decade.

The occupied Muslim-majority region enjoyed a special status of partial autonomy until 2019 which was then revoked by the far-right Narendra Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party's government.

IIOJK's special semi-autonomous status — constitutionally enshrined power to control its affairs — had meant that only those who descended from residents of the territory in 1934 could vote and own property.

The polls are being held after the Indian Supreme Court, last year, upheld the government's decision and set a deadline of September 30 this year for local polls.

President Zardari, talking to a delegation of migrants from IIOJK — residing in Pakistan since 1989 — led by Uzair Ahmed Ghazali at Aiwan-



President Asif Ali Zardari

e-Sadr, emphasised that such elections were unacceptable to the people of Kashmir and called upon the international community to hold the Modi government accountable for ongoing human rights violations in IIOJK. He further urged the need to take concrete steps toward conducting a plebiscite in line with relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions Welcoming the delegation, the president condemned the legislative assembly elections in IIOJK, terming them as part of India's broader strategy to consolidate its illegal occupation of the region. He highlighted that such measures could neither legitimise India's occupation nor suppress the freedom struggle of the Kashmiri people.

The president stated that India was trying to alter the demographic structure of IIOJK by turn-

ing the Kashmiri Muslims into a minority and transforming them into a disempowered community in their own land.

"Pakistan greatly valued the sacrifices made by the Kashmiri people for their rights and would continue to stand in solidarity with them," he said, reiterating the country's commitment to provide moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people till the realisation of their right to self-determination. The delegation apprised the president about the atrocities being committed by the Modi regime in the disputed territory. It was highlighted that the entire Kashmiri leadership had been imprisoned to suppress the voice of the Kashmiri people. The delegation also apprised the president about the issues of the refugees in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).—RT/Agency

## ADB Pledges \$2 Billion Annually To Pakistan For Climate Resilience Over The Next Three Years



Asian Development Bank officials

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has announced that it will provide \$2 billion in annual assistance to Pakistan over the next three years to support infrastructure development and climate-resilient initiatives.

In 2022, massive floods triggered by climate change devastated several parts of Pakistan, killing 1,700 people, washing away swathes of agricultural land, affecting 33 million people, and incurring losses worth \$30 billion, according to government estimates.

A report by the Policy and Strategy Committee (PSC) and the Oversight Board on Post-Flood Reconstruction Activities showed last week that the country had only received \$10.9bn from international development partners

out of the total estimated loss for post-flood reconstruction work, leaving a \$19.1bn shortfall that has halted the rehabilitation of flood-affected communities in three provinces.

According to a statement from the President's House, the announcement was made during a meeting between President Asif Ali Zardari and ADB's head Masatsugu Asakawa in Islamabad on Tuesday.

"[The President of the Asian Development Bank] said that the ADB would provide \$2 billion in annual assistance to Pakistan over the next three years, and reaffirmed the bank's commitment to supporting infrastructure development and climate-resilient initiatives," the statement said.—RT/Agency

## PTI Ties Constitutional Amendment Talks To Imran's Release

ISLAMABAD: Senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ali Muhammad Khan has urged the government to release the party's founder, Imran Khan, from Adiala Jail before engaging in talks on constitutional amendments.

Speaking to the media in Islamabad on Wednesday, Ali Muhammad outlined PTI's stance, stating, "First, release Imran Khan from prison, then we can discuss constitutional amendments." He added that any approval of amendments must be accompanied by the restoration of the public mandate.

The PTI leader questioned the legitimacy of the process, asking, "How can a constitutional amendment be passed by an incomplete parliament?" He also raised concerns about the role of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in the process, criticising PPP leader Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari. "It's unfortunate that the grandson is undermining the very Constitution his grandfather created," he remarked.

Hamid Khan, who was present during the conversation, reinforced PTI's position on the judiciary, stating, "We only recognise the Supreme Court. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah is the rightful



Ali Muhammad Khan

chief justice, and no one else is acceptable." He added, "We will not let institutions be mocked."

Meanwhile, PTI's founder, Imran Khan, has made serious allegations, claiming that the government is pushing constitutional amendments to extend the terms of key officials, including Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, the Chief Justice of Islamabad High Court, and the Chief Election Commissioner.

Imran expressed concern over the delay in investigating the May 9 incidents, claiming that if the new chief justice takes office, the truth behind the events will emerge.

He also criticised the government for undermining Pakistan's judicial and electoral processes, citing the delay in tribunal decisions on the February 8 election.—RT/Agency