



Lady Gaga reflects on accidentally revealing engagement to Michael Polansky

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NATIONAL

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SPORTS

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CIRCULATION CERTIFIED BY ABC

PM Shehbaz Vows Firm Response To Indian Aggression In UN Address

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has reiterated that Pakistan will give befitting response to Indian aggression as he highlighted the belligerence of the Modi-led government.

The premier made these remarks while addressing the plenary meeting for the UN General Debate at the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

In his 21-minute address, he touched on multiple regional and international issues including Palestine and Kashmir disputes, Ukraine war, climate change, rising poverty and debt burden particularly induced by climate change impacts.

"It is an honour for me to address the United Nations General Assembly for the second time as the prime minister of the country that has always been the proactive member of the UN Assembly," the premier said in his opening remarks.

PM Shehbaz said the Father of our nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, declared in 1947 that, "we stand by the United Nations Charter, and will gladly make, our full contribution, to peace and prosperity, of the world." Pakistan has stood by this commitment unwaveringly.

"Today, we are facing most daunting challenges to the world order — Israel's genocidal war in Gaza, a dan-



gerous conflict in Ukraine, destructive conflicts across Africa and Asia, rising geopolitical tensions resurging terrorism, galloping poverty, stifling debt and a mounting impact of climate change. We feel the chill of a new cold war."

Likening the current situation of Gaza to Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), the prime minister said that the people of occupied territory 'too' have struggled, for a century, for their freedom, and right to self-determination.

"Instead of moving towards peace, India, has resiled, from its commitments to implement the Security Council resolutions on Kashmir dispute," he said, adding: "These resolutions, mandate a plebiscite, to enable the Kashmiris, to exercise their fundamental right to self-determination."

Since 5 August 2019, the premier said, India has initiated, unilateral illegal steps, to impose, what it's leaders ominously call, a "Final Solution" for the occupied territory.

"Day in and day out, nine hundred thousand Indian troops, terrorise the people of occupied Kashmir, with draconian measures, including prolonged curfews, extra-judicial killings, and the abduction, of thousands of young Kashmiris."

He added: "At the same time, in a classic settler-colonial project, India is seizing, Kashmiri lands and properties, and settling outsiders, into occupied Jammu and Kashmir, their nefarious design, to transform the Muslim-majority into a minority. This hackneyed tactic, is employed by all occupying powers, but it has always failed. In Jammu and Kashmir too, it shall fail, by Grace of God!"

PM Shehbaz pointed out that the Kashmiri people are "resolute" in rejection of the false Indian identity, that New Delhi, seeks to impose upon them.

Criticising India's policy of brutal coercion and oppression in occupied Kashmir, he said such actions have ensured, that Burhan Wani's legacy, continues to inspire, the struggle and sacrifices, of millions of Kashmiris.

He noted that India was engaged in a massive expansion of its military capabilities which according to him were deployed against Pakistan. "Its war doctrines, envisage a surprise attack and a limited war under, the nu-

merous conflict in Ukraine, destructive conflicts across Africa and Asia, rising geopolitical tensions resurging terrorism, galloping poverty, stifling debt and a mounting impact of climate change. We feel the chill of a new cold war."

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gional connectivity, the government had launched the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and established the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to mobilise investments, in resilient infrastructure, renewable energy, minerals, sustainable agriculture and technology.

The prime minister said that Pakistan had sacrificed around 80,000 lives of soldiers and civilians and suffered economic loss worth \$150 billion in its fight against terrorism.

He reiterated the nation's resolve to counter the new wave of "externally financed and sponsored" terrorism, especially by the Fina al-Khawarij (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) and its associates.

"Make no mistake, we are determined to eliminate this threat once again, through our comprehensive national effort, Azm-e-Istehkam And, we will work collectively with the international community to combat all forms of terrorism and reform the global counter-terrorism architecture," he reaffirmed.

Coming to Afghanistan, the prime minister said Pakistan desired the earliest possible normalisation of the situation in Afghanistan and joined the UN's appeal for \$3 billion in humanitarian assistance for the Afghan people.

He urged the Afghan interim government to meet international expectations to re-

spect human rights, including the rights of women and girls, promote political inclusion, and take effective action to neutralise all terrorist groups within Afghanistan, especially those responsible for cross-border terrorism against neighbouring countries. These include ISIL-K (Daesh), the Al-Qaeda-affiliated TTP/Fina al-Khawarij, Majeed Brigade, BLA and others.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that Islamophobia was manifested, by frequent desecrations of the Holy Quran, attacks on mosques, negative stereotyping of Muslims and acts of discrimination and violence against them. The most alarming manifestation of Islamophobia is the Hindu supremacist agenda in India seeking the subjugation of 200 million Muslims and the obliteration of India's Islamic heritage, he added.

Pakistan and the OIC would work with the UN Secretary-General and his Special Envoy to implement a plan of action to combat this scourge, he assured.

The prime minister also sought an immediate end to the tragic conflict in Ukraine, and its peaceful resolution, besides reaffirming Pakistan's resolve to continue to cooperate with Africa to counter terrorism and resolve regional conflicts, including through its role in UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding in the region. —RT/Agency

He condemned the recent constitutional amendments, calling them "satanic amendments," meant to manipulate the electoral process and secure power for the ruling elite.

Sheikh Waqas Akram, another prominent PTI leader and central spokesperson, repeated Faraz's concerns, accusing the current government of introducing constitutional amendments solely to harm Imran Khan and his party.

"These amendments are aimed at further weakening PTI, but as long as we exist, we will oppose these changes with all our might," Akram added. —RT/Agency

He also accused the government of manipulating parliamentary procedures and the Election Commission to serve their agenda, claiming that the political crisis in the country stems from the biased actions of the Election Commission. Despite obstacles, Akram confirmed that PTI will hold a protest at Liaquat Bagh tomorrow, asserting their right to peaceful assembly as a constitutional right.

"Attempts to block our protests will not stop us from exercising our democratic rights," he added. —RT/Agency

PM Shehbaz Invites American Banks To Invest In Key Pakistani Sectors

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday invited American banks to invest in Pakistan's key sectors of infrastructure, energy, technology, agriculture, and assured of the government's commitment to maintain a stable macro-economic environment to facilitate foreign investors.



The prime minister said this while talking to a delegation of prominent Pakistani American bankers on the sidelines of the 79th UN General Assembly. The delegation comprised high-ranking representatives from prestigious banks including JP Morgan, Natixis Corps & Investments, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp, Goldman Sachs, Citizens Bank, Lazard, Audaud Group.

He informed the delegation about the key initiatives taken by the government to stabilize the economy and attract foreign investment to Pakistan, including broadening the tax base, enhancing the ease of doing business, and ongoing reforms in the state-owned enterprises.

These steps have resulted in improved economic indicators and upgradation of Pakistan's credit rating by international rating agencies, including Fitch and Moody's. He also briefed the delegation on the establishment of a Sustainable Finance Framework, which will allow the Government to carry out a green/sustainability bond is-

suance in the international capital markets. Thanking the prime minister for the opportunity to interact with him, the delegation lauded the government's policies that have been instrumental in achieving the macroeconomic stability in Pakistan. The delegation also expressed a deep interest in cooperating with the government for the development of manufacturing sector, especially SMEs to help bolster the exports. —RT/Agency

PM Meets Nepalese Counterpart, Calls For Stronger Bilateral Ties

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday met his Nepalese counterpart K.P. Sharma Oli and expressed Pakistan's desire to further strengthen the multifaceted bilateral cooperation, especially in commercial, economic, trade, and tourism sectors.

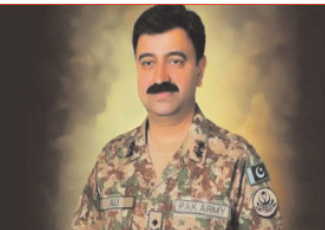


In the meeting held on the sidelines of the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly here, the two leaders reiterated their commitment to continue exploring avenues for enhancing bilateral and regional cooperation.

Prime Minister Shehbaz congratulated K.P. Sharma Oli on assuming the office of the prime minister. Expressing satisfaction at the excellent bilateral ties between Pakistan and Nepal, he conveyed warm sentiments and wishes for the people and the Govern-

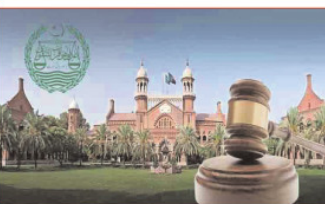
ment of Nepal on behalf of the people of Pakistan. Prime Minister Shehbaz also extended an invitation to the Nepalese prime minister to visit Pakistan. —RT/Agency

Lt. Gen. Muhammad Ali Appointed As New Defense Secretary



ISLAMABAD: Lt. Gen. Muhammad Ali has been appointed as Defense Secretary of Pakistan and will assume his duties from October 1, media reported on Friday. The federal government appointed Lieutenant General Muhammad Ali as the Defense Secretary for the time span of two years and three months. The establishment division has also issued an official notification in this regard, directing him to assume his new duties from October 01, 2024 till December 31, 2026. —RT/Agency

LHC Demands Federal Government's Response On NAB Amendment Via Presidential Ordinance



LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) has sought response issuing notice to the federal government and other parties in a case against NAB amendment via presidential ordinance. Applicant Muneer Ahmed's lawyer Azhar Siddique presented the arguments. Applicant contended that presidential ordinance could only be presented in emergency situation. This amendment aimed to suppress PTI founder Imran Khan, he added. —RT/Agency

Law And Constitution Under Threat, Warns Shibli Faraz

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Shibli Faraz said that the law and constitution were under threat in the country. Talking to the media alongside Sheikh Waqas Akram, Faraz said the Toshakhana case had been registered four times against the PTI founder Imran Khan.



He claimed that despite all efforts to convict Khan, he remained strong both mentally and physically, and even if sentenced, the decision would likely be overturned in a higher court. Faraz further expressed concerns over the ongoing detention of Bushra Bibi, describing her as a non-political figure who is being illegally kept in jail as a means to coerce the PTI leadership.

"There is no justice for even the most prominent figures in the country, so what hope can a common person have?" Faraz questioned. The country's political, legal, and constitutional framework is being exploited for the benefit of a specific ruling group.

He also condemned the recent constitutional amendments, calling them "satanic amendments," meant to manipulate the electoral process and secure power for the ruling elite.

Sheikh Waqas Akram, another prominent PTI leader and central spokesperson, repeated Faraz's concerns, accusing the current government of introducing constitutional amendments solely to harm Imran Khan and his party.

"These amendments are aimed at further weakening PTI, but as long as we exist, we will oppose these changes with all our might," Akram added. —RT/Agency

Pakistan Emphasizes Strengthening Cooperative Ties With Iraq

NEW YORK: Pakistan and Iraq on Friday agreed to further deepen and broaden the scope of existing bilateral ties and exploit the potential of enhancing mutually beneficial cooperation between both countries.



The bilateral ties were discussed in a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his Iraqi counterpart Mohammad Shia' Al Sudani on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly here.

The prime minister lauded the cordial ties between the two brotherly countries, reinforced by strong historical, cultural and religious affinities. He also commended the excellent arrangements made by the government of Iraq for

the Pakistani pilgrims. The two leaders also exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest. They noted with grave concern the ongoing Israeli carnage on Gaza and the ensuing humanitarian catastrophe. Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated Pakistan's call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and holding Is-

rael accountable for the genocide. Underscoring the commonality of views on international issues, both the leaders resolved to reinforce the international efforts both at the UN and OIC platforms for immediate ceasefire in Gaza, and unimpeded supply of humanitarian assistance to Palestinian brethren. —RT/Agency

THE HEARTLAND



PPP MNA Khursheed Ahmed Junejo holds meeting with party leaders and workers in Shahdadkot

SHAHADKOT: PPP leader and elected MNA Khursheed Ahmed Junejo visited Shahdadkot, where he held a meeting with party workers to understand their issues. During his visit, MNA Khursheed Ahmed Junejo also offered condolences to various communities in the area. He conducted a meeting with PPP officials and workers, attended by Taluka President Mir Asif Ali Laghari, Vice President Sirai Darya Khan Mastoi, General Secretary Raees Wajid Khan Chandio, and many other officials and workers.



In the meeting, he listened to the concerns of the workers and gathered information about developmental schemes. While addressing

the gathering, Khursheed Ahmed Junejo emphasized that the issues of workers and the public would be resolved on a priority basis. He noted that the strength of the PPP stems from the sacrifices of its workers and the public. Additionally, a delegation from PPP City, led by Sirai Qurban Soomro, met with him, during which he also expressed apologies to various communities --RT

SSP Dr Samiullah Soomro felicitates newly promoted Sub-Inspector Muhammad Bachal Gopang



By M Iqbal Soomro

THARI MIRWAH: In a gesture of appreciation, the SSP of Khairpur, Dr. Samiullah Soomro, congratulated Muhammad Bachal Gopang on his promotion to Sub-Inspector. Dr. Soomro also praised the role of the Special Branch in maintaining law and order in the region. Dr. Soomro emphasized that a crackdown against criminals and drug dealers in Khairpur district is ongoing, ensuring that no criminal or drug dealer will be spared. He also praised the role of the Special Branch in maintaining law and order in the region.

Sindh Minister Ali Hassan Zardari pledges enhanced facilities for inmates

By Khuda Bux Brohi

THATTA: In a visit to Central Jail Karachi, Sindh's Provincial Minister for Works, Services, and Prisons, Ali Hassan Zardari, assessed prison conditions to align with the Pakistan People's Party's (PPP) vision of rehabilitation and skill development, inspired by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.



Zardari toured the juvenile and women's sections, inspected the kitchen, and listened to prisoners' grievances, emphasizing the government's commitment to improving inmate conditions. He highlighted that his efforts reflect the PPP's ongoing dedication to social justice and human rights.

During the visit, he focused on women inmates' ability and living standards. Prisoners expressed gratitude for the minister's attention, welcoming the positive reforms as part of the Bhutto legacy committed to human dignity and rehabilitation. Zardari pledged essential amenities, including better food and healthcare. He announced plans to introduce solar power systems in prisons, aiming to enhance sustainability.

Concluding ceremony of Nutrition Care Synergies Conference and Exhibition held at SALU

By Naeem Shaikh

KHAIRPUR: The two-day landmark event, Nutrition Care Synergies: Experience Sharing and Innovations Showcase, concluded at Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur, with a vibrant closing ceremony. The event, organized by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), in collaboration with the Students Societies Center, showcased groundbreaking innovations and collaborative efforts addressing key nutritional issues. The closing event was marked by inspiring speeches, performances, and recognition of collective efforts. Mr. Carlo De Rosa, First Secretary and Development Advisor for Rural Development and Nutrition at the European Union Mission in Pakistan, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Vice Chancellor, Meritorious Prof. Dr. Muhammad Yousuf Khushk, for providing a vital platform for this event. He appreciated the 16 CSOs that showcased their work during the conference and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration between universities and CSOs in the future. Mr. Carlo also applauded the voluntary efforts of the



students from the Food and Nutrition Society working at the Students Societies Center, acknowledging their dedication and active participation throughout the event. On behalf of the Vice Chancellor, Dr. Ali Raza Lashari, Incharge of the Students Societies Center, extended sincere thanks to Mr. Carlo, Madam Shabnam Baloch (Country Director IRC), and Dr. Rano Mal (Provincial Coordinator IRC) for choosing Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur as the host venue for this mega event and collaborating with our Societies. Dr. Lashari conveyed the Vice Chancellor's message, assuring IRC and EU administration that the university will introduce a course on food and nutrition, after securing statutory approvals from relevant forums. The event also featured the participation of prominent figures, including Shaharukh, ADC-II Khairpur; Amer Fazal, DC Kashmir, Ishtasham ul Haque and Sajid Iqbal from MERF, Faheem and Irshad from SPO, and university faculty members such as Prof. Dr. Taj Muhammad Lashari.

Daulatpur man demands justice for his arrested nephews



By Aijaz Johkio

DAULATPUR: In a press conference at the Daulatpur Press Club, Murtaza Otho from the village of Nango Shah Sindh, DIG, and SSP Shaheed Benazirabad dismissed the false charges against his relatives and take legal action against Azizullah Otho. He warned that if justice is not served, they will approach the courts. He legally blocked the street in front of his sister's house and attempted to evict his family to seize their land. Murtaza Otho called on the IG Sindh, DIG, and SSP Shaheed Benazirabad to dismiss the false charges against his relatives and take legal action against Azizullah Otho. He warned that if justice is not served, they will approach the courts.

Transferred SAU employees protest for issuance of their withheld salaries

By Irfan Ali Khushk

TANDO JAM: In Tando Jam, employees of Sindh Agricultural University staged a protest in front of the university's main gate against the forced transfer to Larkana University and the non-payment of salaries for the past eight months. As the employees attempted to protest outside the Vice Chancellor's secretariat, university security, along with guards and police, stopped them from entering the campus.



The employees remained at the main gate, voicing their grievances over the non-payment of salaries and the forced transfers. They expressed to the media that the university administration violated rules and regulations

by transferring them to Larkana University, and their salaries had been halted as a result. He mentioned that the lack of salary had led to dire economic conditions, affecting their children's education due to the inability to pay school fees. They stated that shopkeepers were refusing to provide goods on credit, leading to food shortages at home. During the protest, an employee's son, Owais Langah, fell ill and was taken to the Rural Health Center for medical assistance. Meanwhile, the university administration has yet to provide any response regarding the ongoing protests and sit-ins by the employees.

DC Mukhtiar Ali Abro chairs meeting of District Oversight Committee



By Javed Laghari

DADU: A meeting of the District Oversight Committee chaired by Deputy Commissioner Mukhtiar Ali Abro was held at the DC office to discuss the poor condition of 53 primary, elementary, and secondary schools in Dadu district. The meeting revealed that a budget of PKR 117.6 million is needed to complete the

construction of these schools. Abro highlighted the importance of educational improvement for the region's development, noting that teachers continue their work even in tent schools, demonstrating their commitment. The meeting was attended by various educational officials and emphasized that enhancing education is a priority for the district. Complaints against the education department were raised, prompting the Deputy Commissioner to demand accountability and swift resolution of these issues. He instructed education officers to submit a report within 15 days regarding the needs of the schools and emphasized the urgency of improving educational facilities.

Hingorja Youth Forum organizes a program on Dr Azhar Ali Shah's book



By Sajjad Chang

HINGORJA: A program on the book "Intellectual Dialogue on Science, Literature, and Art" was held at Town Committee Park in Hingorja, organized by the Hingorja Youth Forum, featuring renowned scholar and Pro Vice Chancellor of Sindh University Campus, Dr. Syed Azhar Ali Shah, who was the writer of the book. A large number of participants from social, literary, and journalis-

tic circles attended the event. In his address, the chief guest, Dr. Azhar Ali Shah, emphasized that science sharpens our minds, while literature and art enhance our spiritual abilities. He noted the interconnection among these fields is essential for building a better individual and society. He urged the youth to focus more on reading books rather than being overly engaged with social media, stating that the development of society depends on the constructive growth of its youth, who should adopt positive trends to counter negativity. Educationist and intellectuals including Nisar Ahmed Memon, Imdad Hussain Soomro, Haji Aijaz Ahmed Mallah, Haji Shahdad Khan Bhagat, President of the Khairpur Journalists' Alliance, Ghulam Hussain Chang and others also attended the program.

Throat disease results in death of children in Thana Bula Khan



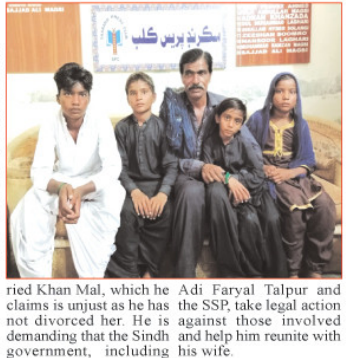
By Shoukat Khaskholi

THANA BULA KHAN: In the village of Adam Shoro in UC Mol, nine children have died in the past two months due to a throat disease, with many more currently affected. The deceased children, aged between 2 to 9 years, experienced severe symptoms, leading to fatalities within days of illness onset. Notable cases include a 3-year-old girl, a 5-year-old boy, and a 9-year-old boy, among others. Currently, one child is hospitalized in Karachi's Jinnah Hospital. Local residents have expressed concerns that the government hospital's doctor only visited once, providing limited treatment that did not help. They are urging for emergency measures and investigation into the disease's cause to prevent further deaths.

Oad community man demands justice over his wife's second marriage

By Zeeshan Soomro

SAKRAND: In a press conference at the Sakrand Press Club, Ameer S/o Kaman Oad stated that he married Rehana, daughter of Sodor Oad, in 2004, and they have one daughter and three sons. Two years ago, his brother-in-law Anwar took him and his family to Nawabshah for safety. However, when Ameer returned to collect Rehana, Anwar and others refused to let her go, threatening him instead. Recently, Ameer learned via social media that Rehana had remar-



ried Khan Mal, which he claims is unjust as he has not divorced her. He is against those involved demanding that the Sindh government, including his wife.

Journalist Imam Bux Mangrio demands justice in land dispute

By Khadim Khaskholi

SANGHAR: A senior journalist named Imam Bux Mangrio while addressing a press conference at the Sinjhoro Press Club said that he had purchased home from Maqsood Khari

and his brothers in village Bashirabad but now he is not giving him documents of the sold property. He is living in the purchased home after getting possession but now he is being threatened and his children have also been expelled from the Madrasa. The area police has refused to take action in this regard. He demanded of the concerned authorities to take notice of the matter and provide justice to him in the property dispute.

REGIONAL TIMES NATIONAL

Governor Punjab Urged To Submit Concerns In Writing: CM Punjab

LAHORE: If the Governor Punjab has a problem with those who have been appointed as a Vice Chancellors, he should communicate that in writing, and the government will sincerely look into his concerns, Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said talking to The Express Tribune, seemingly in a bid to de-escalate the matter.

With the Governor Punjab taking a stand against the procedure of the appointment of VCs of Punjab Sector Universities, Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz said that they have thoroughly scrutinized the candidates and have chosen the best people for the slot of VCs.

She said however if, Governor is to be believed and some lapses have occurred, then his office should communicate to us in writing and we will look into it.

She said that they do not want any misgiving in Punjab and will want to work in tandem with entire state machinery.

Some TV channels also reported the CM as saying that he had accused the Governor of trying to get his own man appointed for the slot of



VC however these reports were refuted by the Information Minister.

Earlier this week, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider told The Express Tribune that he primarily had two objections over appointment of VCs, one that the appointment process was not transparent and secondly proper procedure as is given in law for the selection of VCs was not followed.

He elaborated that law requires the government via search committee to forward three names in alphabetical order. Selection of the one candidate is the prerogative of the Governor.

Here in this instance, one name of each university was forwarded to my office. My

office should not be mistaken for a post office, a proper scrutiny process will be followed for appointment of VCs.

When a summary was sent in contravention of law, so the number of days as required for Provincial legislation cannot be applied in this instance.

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz when asked about Party President Nawaz Sharif's expected visit to London, she said that his medical checkup is due and this visit will be nothing but routine.

She said that party president Nawaz Sharif will return within ten days after getting his checkup done.—RT/Agency

Gandapur's Brother Files Rs500 Million Defamation Suit Against KP Governor Kundi

PESHAWAR: Faisal Amin, the brother of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister (CM) Ali Amin Gandapur has filed a defamation suit against Governor Faisal Karim Kundi for leveling corruption allegations, media reported.

Gandapur's brother filed a defamation case against Faisal Karim Kundi in the district court as the governor failed to reply to the legal notice urging him to seek an apology and pay Rs500 million.

He stated that Governor Kundi's allegations of corruption against him and the CM on a TV show had damaged his reputation and attempted to harm his political career.

Earlier, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister (CM) Ali Amin Gandapur sent a defamation notice to Governor Faisal Karim Kundi.

The notice demanded the Governor to retract his statement and apologize for

claiming that the chief minister had signed the draft of Operation Istehkam Pakistan in the Apex Committee meeting.

The notice stated that the Governor had made this statement on TV and if the Governor does not apologize, he will have to pay a fine of Rs 1000 million.

It is worth mentioning here that the war of words intensified between Ali Amin Gandapur and newly appointed Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, with the former threatening to block latter's grant.

The altercation appeared to have started after CM Ali Amin Gandapur, while addressing a public gathering, threatened to occupy the governor's house if the governor's rule was imposed in the province.

Responding to the Gandapur's statement, Faisal Karim Kundi said he knew how to protect the Governor's House if Gandapur attacked it.—RT/Agency

KP Governor Focused On Retaining Position: Barrister Saif



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Adviser Barrister Saif said on Friday that KP Governor Faisal Kundi should advise Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to realise the responsibilities of his job.

In a statement, Saif said that KP governor should tell PM that eliminating terrorism was responsibility of the federal government, for which the PM should take practical steps.

He stated that Kundi should also inform the PM about provincial dues of KP, adding that the premier should look into the miseries faced by residents of KP who were battered by inflated gas and power bills.

He lashed out at KP governor for 'backbiting' in order to please the leadership of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).—RT/Agency

Government To Promote Private Sector Utilization Of Gwadar Port

ISLAMABAD: The cabinet has endorsed a suggestion that calls for gradually involving the private sector in import and export of commodities through Gwadar Port.

In a recent meeting, the cabinet also decided that the government would shift 60% of public sector imports and exports from Karachi Port to Gwadar Port to make the latter a fully functional facility.

It took the decision while considering a proposal for 50% import of goods by the public sector from the deep-sea Gwadar Port.

Sources said that it was decided that at least 60% of all public sector imports of wheat, fertiliser and sugar would be made through Gwadar Port. In addition to these, other commodities procured by public sector entities from overseas markets will also be identified for import through Gwadar Port.

Meeting participants agreed that all the public sector entities engaged in the export of goods would make



arrangements to route at least 60% of shipments through Gwadar Port.

The cabinet constituted a committee comprising the minister for commerce, minister for maritime affairs, commerce secretary, maritime affairs secretary, railways secretary, Federal Board of Revenue chairman, National Highway Authority chairman and Public Procurement Regulatory Authority managing director.

The committee will ensure that 60% of public sector imports of wheat, fertiliser and sugar are made through Gwadar Port.

It will review the annual procurement plans of public sector entities, including au-

tonomous bodies, to identify those commodities that can be imported through Gwadar Port (in addition to wheat, fertiliser and sugar).

Furthermore, the committee will review the export plans of public sector entities to identify the commodities that can be exported through Gwadar Port and to ensure that at least 60% of the identified commodities are exported through the port. It will identify the road and rail infrastructure that can be used for transporting goods to and from Gwadar Port and will identify the road and rail links that need to be repaired as well as new alignments that should be constructed.—RT/Agency

PTI-Led KP Government Cautiously Welcomes IMF Package Approval

PESHAWAR: Welcoming the International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout package's approval, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Adviser for Finance Muzammil Aslam has said the provincial cabinet has expressed reservations on some points of the deal with the international lender.

Talking to media on Friday, he said the cabinet had directed to seek clarification from the federal government on those points.

The sought-after explanation by the Centre on the points would be submitted to KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, he added.

The development came after the Executive Board of the Washington-based lender on September 25 approved a \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with the first tranche of \$1.1 billion likely to be released by September 30.



The latest bailout, coming to Pakistan in the form of loans, follows a commitment by the government to implement reforms, including a major effort to broaden the country's tax base - a measure reflected in the tax-heavy budget passed earlier this year by the incumbent administration.

Furthermore, IMF Pakistan Mission Chief Nathan Porter has confirmed that multiple friendly nations have given "significant financing assurances" to Islamabad linked to the bailout package which go beyond the agreement to roll over \$12 billion in bilateral loans owed to these countries.

Sources in the Ministry of Finance have said that the interest rate on the loan is less than 5% and the lender might even disburse the second instalment within this fiscal year.

The key priorities, as reported by media on Friday, under the new EFF-supported programme include:—RT/Agency

back to the chief minister house after its approval.

The development came as a few weeks ago the provincial governor approved a summary to denote Adviser to Chief Minister on social welfare Muzammil Aslam Yousafzai.

Yousafzai was accused of violating the party's austerity policy.—RT/Agency

Mashal Yousafzai Appointed Special Assistant To KP Chief Minister



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has approved the summary to appoint Mashal Azam Yousafzai as special assistant in the provincial cabinet.

KP Chief Minister forwarded the summary to the governor who gave his assent.

The summary was sent

to the chief minister house after its approval.

The development came as a few weeks ago the provincial governor approved a summary to denote Adviser to Chief Minister on social welfare Muzammil Aslam Yousafzai.

Yousafzai was accused of violating the party's austerity policy.—RT/Agency

PTI-Backed MNA Adil Khan Bazai Denies Joining PML-N



QUETTA: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-supported MNA Adil Khan Bazai has denied joining the PML-N.

Adil Khan Bazai stated that he was elected as an MNA with PTI's support and has submitted his affiliation certificate to the Sunni Itehad Council. He clarified that

he had not submitted any documents to join the PML-N. Adil Bazai further added that false news had been circulating in the media about his joining PML-N for the past several months. He emphasised that he would remain with the PTI.—RT/Agency

SOUTHERN PUNJAB

Oath-Taking Ceremony For Punjab Boy Scouts Association Held In Gujranwala



By Dr. Mirza MB Qamar

GUJRANWALA: The swearing-in ceremony of the Punjab Boy Scouts Association took place at the Commissioner's office in Gujranwala, with Commissioner Syed Naveed Haider Sheerazi appointed as the Divisional President. Dr. Ehsan Bhatta, Provincial President of the Boy Scouts Association, took the oath alongside

other officials including Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Tariq Qureshi and various directors from education and local government.

Commissioner Sheerazi emphasized the responsibility of scouts in addressing the nation's challenges and fostering teamwork among youth. He called for every citizen to fulfill their duties for the country's develop-

ment. Dr. Bhatta highlighted the importance of moral training by teachers and the need to enhance literary and sports activities in schools, reinforcing the role of scouts during emergencies.

The event saw participation from a large number of scouts and educational leaders, promoting a vision of disciplined and responsible citizenship among the younger generation.

Newly Installed Electricity Poles Collapse In Kamalia

By Abid Mahmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: Due to the negligence, carelessness, and incompetence of FESCO officials, residents of Kamalia are facing difficulties and financial losses. FESCO's incompetence nearly led to a major accident for the residents of Kamalia. According to the details, faulty installation of electricity poles by FESCO administration was reported a few days ago on Kamalia Rajana Road and Chichawati Road. Several installed electricity poles suddenly collapsed



yesterday, and one of the poles fell onto a rickshaw in front of Zeeshan Colony on Rajana Road. Fortunately, no casualties were reported.

Public circles have pointed out that hundreds of similarly installed electricity poles in the area still pose a threat to lives and property, presenting a security risk. This raises serious questions about not only FESCO's performance but also the responsibility of the tehsil administration. However, no concerned institution seems to be taking this sensitive issue seriously. Citizens have demanded that the authorities immediately address the situation and ensure the protection of their lives and property.

District And Sessions Judge Initiates Plantation Drive In Toba Tek Singh

By Abid Mahmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: The District and Sessions Judge of Toba Tek Singh, Asad Ali, participated in the plantation campaign by planting a tree sapling at the Tehsil Court. Judge Toba Tek Singh Asad Ali participated in the plantation campaign by planting a sapling at the Tehsil Court. He was accompanied by Additional and Sessions Judges



Abbas Rasool, Shafiq Ali, and Waqar Ahmed, Civil Judges Muhammad Shafiq, Shahid Ali, Syed Ahsan, Mrs. Saira Bano, as well as the President of the Gojra Bar, Chaudhry Ijaz Akhtar Khan, General Secretary Mian Asad Bashir, and a large number of other lawyers.

Judge Asad Ali planted a sapling along with the Forest Department's Block Officer Muhammad Akram Jigar and expressed his good wishes. On this occasion, the honorable judge shared his thoughts, stating that tree planting is extremely important to combat environmental pollution and severe climate effects. Other judges also participated in the campaign by planting saplings, and a prayer for blessings was offered after the lawyers met with the District and Sessions Judge to discuss issues concerning the bench and the bar.

ADC Zeeshan Labha Masih Inspects Health And Education Facilities



By Abid Mahmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naem Sindhu, Additional Deputy Commissioner General Zeeshan Labha Masih visited the Basic Health Center 361-JB, where he reviewed the

ongoing renovation work. The Additional Deputy Commissioner also checked the attendance of doctors and paramedical staff at the health center. He stated that the Punjab Government is committed to providing healthcare services to the public,

and in this regard, the availability of medicines and the presence of doctors are being ensured 100% in all hospitals of Toba Tek Singh. Later, he also visited High School 361-JB and reviewed the educational activities there.

60 Dead, Dozens Injured In Month-Long Kurram Clashes: KP Governor Kundi

PESHAWAR: More than a month after warring Kurram tribes agreed on a ceasefire following days of deadly clashes, violence has erupted once again in the region with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday revealing the death toll reached 60 with dozens injured.



Speaking to the media, Governor Kundi said: "As many as 60 people have died in Parachinar and dozens are injured".

The governor's remarks come as this second round of clashes began around a week ago over the construction of trenches six days ago and has continued unabated since then.

The dispute involves two rival tribes who have been fighting over a piece of land. In August, the two sides had reached a two-month ceasefire after the armed clashes

resulted in 50 casualties and wounded 226 others.

Police say that clashes have been reported at various places with the fighting resulting in the closure of the Peshawar-Parachinar road.

Due to the closure of roads and markets, people are facing severe difficulties, including a shortage of food items, medicines and fuel. The News reported on Friday.

Meanwhile, Private Schools Management Chairman Muhammad Hayat Khan said that educational institutions had been closed

for a week.

Speaking on the issue, Deputy Commissioner Javedullah Mahsud has said that efforts are underway to stop the fighting with the help of the jirga and the tribal elders. The ongoing clashes involve the offensive launched by the tribes in central Kurram against the tribes in Balikhel area, which intensified the violence and spread to Peshawar, Teri Mangal, Kanj Alizai, Maqbal, Para Chamkani, Karman, Satta, Balikhel, Sangena, Khar Killay and other areas.—RT/Agency

Family Heading To Saudi Arabia For Begging Arrested At Faisalabad Airport

FAISALABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Friday arrested a family traveling to Saudi Arabia for 'begging' from Faisalabad airport, media reported. The spokesperson of FIA immigration revealed that the same family was offloaded from Lahore Airport last month. The spokesperson revealed that the arrested individuals - identified as Munawar Hussain and Shafia Bibi, along with their minor daughter - had been traveling

frequently to Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia for the purpose of begging.

According to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the individuals failed to provide legitimate sources of income or satisfactory explanations for the expenses incurred during their multiple foreign trips.

The FIA also noted that the accused had no tax return record in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and lacked a return ticket or hotel

bookings, prompting their transfer to the Anti-Human Trafficking Circle in Faisalabad for further legal proceedings.

It's worth noting that last month, FIA Immigration arrested 11 individuals, including 8 women, at Karachi Airport traveling to Saudi Arabia for begging under the guise of performing Umrah. These individuals were offloaded as their return tickets and hotel bookings were found to be fake.—RT/Agency

EDITORIAL

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

Saturday, September 28, 2024

The Disturbing Normalization of Floor Crossing in Pakistan

The recent defection of PTI MNA Adil Khan Bazai to the PML-N ahead of proposed constitutional amendments is yet another troubling example of how floor crossing has become an accepted norm in Pakistan's political landscape. This practice, which blatantly disregards the people's mandate, makes a mockery of democratic values. The lack of any meaningful consequences for switching party loyalties highlights the moral bankruptcy within the system, where elected officials are allowed to trade allegiances with impunity.

The act of floor crossing is not just a personal decision for political gain, but a betrayal of the

voters who trusted the candidate to represent their interests under a specific political platform. Adil Bazai's decision undermines the in-

tegrity of the democratic process and raises serious questions about the ethical standards of our elected officials. Democracy thrives on accountability and the sanctity of the people's vote, both of which are severely compromised when such actions are taken without any repercussions.

Instead of condemning this undemocratic

practice, the current government appears to condone and even encourage it for political advantage. This is not only shortsighted but morally indefensible. A government that claims to stand for constitutional reform should be the first to reject floor crossing. If democracy is to survive in Pakistan, we must introduce stringent measures that punish such behavior and discourage party switching. The people deserve leaders who remain committed to their platform and the values they pledged to uphold.

Without this accountability, our democracy remains fragile, and the will of the people continues to be trampled for the sake of political expediency.

REGIONAL TIMES

THE HEARTLAND



JSQM demands justice for Dr Shahnawaz Kumbhar

By Naeem Ahmed Shaikh

KHAIRPUR: Jeay Sindh Quami Mahaz (JSQM) staged a protest demonstration outside the Khairpur Press Club against the Umerkot incident and rising religious extremism in Sindh.

According to details, JSQM organized a protest on Friday in front of the Khairpur Press Club, condemning the murder of Dr. Shahnawaz Kumbhar from Umerkot. The protest was led by JSQM leaders Akbar Makol, Jameel Lashari, Ejaz Phulpoto, Mushtaq Shaikh, Zaid Phulpoto, and others.

The protesters stated that Sindh is a land of peace, and they will never accept reli-



gious extremism in the province. They emphasized that they were protesting to seek justice for the blood of Shahnawaz. They further stated that Sindh has always been a land of peace, love, and tolerance, but it is a tragedy when protectors of

the people are killed in fake police encounters without any crime or guilt. The protesters urged higher authorities to ensure justice for Shahnawaz Kumbhar by registering a case against those responsible for his murder.

Khaskheli community protests against youth's arrest



Murtaza Panhwar

MEHAR: The residents of Zahidabad village in Yusuf Bothro, including Ghulam Hussain Khaskheli, Dilbar Shamsah Khatoon, and others, protested at the Mehar Press Club, stating that last night, Thari Mohabbat police, led by officer Sharafuddin and others, raided their homes and committed violence. They reported that the

police took their belongings, one lac rupees in cash, and arrested a young man named Ajiaz Khaskheli. The protesters emphasized that they are poor and have no enmity with anyone. They appealed to the IG Sindh and SSP Dadu for help against police brutality, delinquency, and the involvement of influential individuals in the arrest and release of the arrested young man.

Five of a family injured in gas leak explosion

By GM Chandio

HYDERABAD: An explosion due to a gas leak occurred at the residence of Naeem Arain, a general councillor in UC 50, Sakhi Pir, injuring five individuals, including women. The incident took place while they were using a machine to obtain gas due to low pressure.

The injured were rushed to the burn ward of the

Civil Hospital. Local leaders and residents, including PTI District Vice President Shoaib Shaukat and various councilors, visited the hospital to check on the victims and ensure they received adequate medical care. Three individuals with severe burns were referred to Karachi for treatment. Shoaib Shaukat criticized the government for failing to provide basic necessities to the public, while Sufyan Ali Siddiqui high-

lighted the lack of a burn hospital in Hyderabad, forcing many to be referred to Karachi. He expressed frustration over the lack of timely medical facilities leading to loss of life. Prince Farooq Khan emphasized the public's distress due to power, water, and gas shortages, calling the government responsible for such tragic incidents and suggesting that if they cannot meet basic needs, they should resign.

Four injured in Mehkani-Noohani clash

By Mumtaz Ali Thahim

TANDO ADAM: A clash occurred between the Mehkani and Noohani communities over livestock grazing on agricultural land near the Four Mile Stop in Tando Adam. The altercation escalated to fring, resulting in four individuals being seriously injured, who included Wazir Ali Mehkani, Anwar

Mehkani, Ali Noohani, and Imam Bakhsh Noohani.

The injured were initially taken to the Tando Adam Taluka Hospital and later transferred to a hospital in Hyderabad due to their critical condition. Former PPP Senator Fida Hussain Dero visited the hospital to gather details about the incident. The Mehkani community claimed that the Noohani side had been grazing their livestock on their crops, leading to the conflict. In contrast, the Noohani side stated that they had given permission for the grazing and were attacked without provocation. Area police arrived at the scene to prevent further violence. As of the report's filing, no case had been registered, and no arrests had been made.

40th Graduation Ceremony of Lower School Course held at PTS Larkana

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: A disciplined parade at the training institute saluted SSP Larkana where Principal of PTS Larkana, SP Raja Mahmood Hassan, warmly welcomed the SSP.

SSP Larkana Mir Rohail Khan Khoso participated as the chief guest at the 40th Graduation Ceremony of the Lower School Course. While addressing the graduating police recruits, he stated, "You are the reflection of the police department, so focus on your turnout while performing your duties in your districts and strive to bring a



good name to the department. He extended congratulations on behalf of the brave Inspector General of Police Sindh, Ghulam Nabi Memon, to all the passing-

out recruits. The graduating recruits hailed from Larkana, Qambar-Shahdadkot, Kashmore, Kandhkot, Shikarpur, and Jacobabad districts.

302nd annual Urs of Makhdoom Abdul Rehman Hashmi Shaheed celebrated in Khuhra Sharif



By Naeem Shaikh

KHAIRPUR: The third session of the 302nd annual Urs Mubarak of Makhdoom Abdul Rehman Hashmi Shaheed was held at the Government Abdul Rehman Shaheed Girls Degree College, Khuhra.

The event was graced by the presence of the custodian of the Dargah Khuhra Sharif as the chief guest. The college principal, Fozia Anjum, along with professors Syed Ali Raza Shah Jilani, Muhammad Akram Arain, Ghaus Bakhsh Jokhio, Wazir Ali Ajin, Fakhar-un-Nisa Ab-

basi (Principal of High School Khuhra), Mehr-un-Nisa Khilji, Madam Ruqaya, Fozia Abro, and Saba Javed Mughal, among other professors, lecturers, staff, students, and parents, attended the event in large numbers.

On this occasion, the principal presented Ajrak gifts to Makhdoom Nadeem Ahmed Hashmi and other guests. The students presented Quranic recitations, Naat and supplications. Awards were distributed among students who secured first, second, and third positions in the competitions.

Sunni Rabta Council holds Mehfil Zikr-e-Muhammad Mustafa (SAWW)

By Kamran Hidayat

SUJAWAL: The Sunni Rabta Council Sujawal organized Mehfil Zikr-e-Muhammad Mustafa (SAWW) at Farooq Azam Chowk, featuring special guest Aillama Pir Abdul Khaliq Chachar. The event also included Naat reciter Hafiz Irshad Ahmed Katchar, and young Naat reciter Umar Farooq, who captivated the audience with their



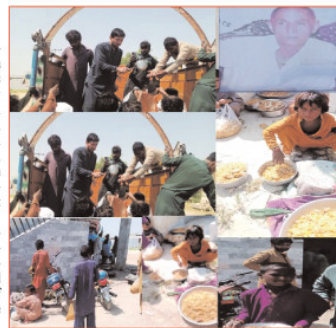
melodious tributes to the Holy Prophet (SAWW) (RA).

3rd death anniversary of Late Seth Waisan Mal Kalai observed

By Shams Palari

NOORIBAD: In the ancient city of Kalo Khohar, a commemorative event was held for the third anniversary of social worker Late Seth Waisan Mal Kalai. His sons, Seth Prasaram Das, Hirish Kumar, Khubchand Suraj, and Rajesh Kumar Prasaram Das, organized a simple remembrance ceremony at their father's birthplace.

As part of the observance, cooked food was distributed among the local impoverished laborers and farmers, with hundreds of people participating in the event.



LHWs protest against DHO Tando Allahyar



By Afaque Khanzada

TANDO ALLAHYAR: Lady Health Workers staged a protest demonstration outside the DC office against the alleged misconduct of the DHO, Amin Bhatti. Led by provincial president Haliman

Laghari, the rally saw a large turnout, with participants chanting slogans demanding the DHO's removal. They voiced concerns about their rights being ignored and reported disrespectful treatment from the DHO. The workers high-

lighted issues like lack of fuel allowances and called for immediate action from health authorities to remove the corrupt DHO. After discussions with ADC-I Ibrahim Almani, the protest was concluded with assurances of justice.

Awareness seminar on harassment held for TMK students

By Abdul Sattar

TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN: Raising awareness about undesirable behaviors in society is crucial for children, many of whom unknowingly become victims of sexual harassment.

This was highlighted by Deputy Director Muhammad Naeem Soomro and others at a seminar on child sexual exploitation at Government Primary School Karimabad.

They stressed the need to educate children on how to

react to inappropriate behavior, such as calling for help and informing parents or school authorities. Soomro also distributed informational pamphlets to the children, emphasizing the moral duty to protect them from sexual exploitation.

SPORTS



Lahore Qalandars COO discusses player signing challenges amid PSL and IPL overlap



LAHORE: Chief Operating Officer (COO) of two-time Pakistan Super League (PSL) champions Lahore Qalandars Sameen Rana discussed the scheduling changes for PSL 10 due to the 2025 Champions Trophy, which is set to take place in February-March.

For the first time, the PSL will not be held in its traditional time slot, leading officials to move the tournament to earlier dates.

"Due to the Champions Trophy, the PSL will not occur in its usual time frame for the first time; therefore, the dates for the PSL will be pushed forward."

However, we are pleased that the ICC event is taking place in Pakistan. We pray for its success and look forward to witnessing the star players from all eight teams in action on our home ground," Rana said in an interview.

The tenth edition of PSL will coincide with the IPL for the first time, creating challenges and opportunities, as players not participating in the IPL will be available for an extended period without overlapping events.

"The upcoming edition of the PSL will coincide with the IPL for the first time, presenting a unique challenge."

"This overlap will provide a new experience, as no other cricket events will be taking place during that time, allowing players not participating in the IPL to be available for a longer duration," he said.—Agency

Kylian Mbappe sets goal for his return from injury



The Real Madrid star Kylian Mbappe is set to play the biggest match against Barcelona after making a comeback.

Earlier on Tuesday, the French superstar had to leave the field during the match against Alaves due to discomfort.

Meanwhile, Real Madrid ended up victorious with a 3-2 win over Alaves.

Speaking in the post-match presentation, Coach Carlo Ancelotti described it as a "knock."

"Mbappe asked to be substituted to avoid any problems," he said.

With regards to this, Marca revealed insights about the French professional player on Thursday.

Following tests carried out today by Real Madrid's medical services, Mbappe was diagnosed with an injury to the biceps femoris in his left leg.

The French superstar, ESPN reported citing sources, is expected to be on hiatus for three weeks, leading him to miss games with Lille in Champions League and Villarreal in La Liga and the international break with France.

Despite being injured, the French captain is still not ready to damage his ambitions.

It is worth noting that this comes amid confirmation that the former Paris Saint-Germain standout is set to make a comeback.

As per Marca, Mbappe is expected to mark his comeback against Celta Vigo on October 19.

However, the French star's main goal is to be fully fit for a big clash against Barcelona on October 26 - the most crucial match of the season's first edition of El Clasico at the Santiago Bernabeu.—Agency

Face of the Day



Name: Ahmed Raza
Location: Karachi
About me: I love taking selfies!

Please email us your photo for our Model Watch and Kids' Corner section at regionaltimes10@gmail.com

New Zealand stumble after Sri Lanka's run fest in second Test



GALLE: New Zealand were in a state of bother at the Stumps on Day 2 of the second Test after Sri Lanka piled up a humongous total, courtesy of centuries from Dinesh Chandimal, Kusal Mendis and rising star Kamindu Mendis.

The hosts declared their first innings at 602/5, minutes before the Stumps and after an unbeaten 200-run partnership between Kamindu and Kusal.

The visitors had a shaky start to their innings as they lost both their openers Tom Latham (2) and Devon Conway (9) inside nine overs.

Skipper Kane Williamson (6) and nightwatchman Ajaz Patel (0) did well to survive the remaining 5.4 overs and will now resume New Zealand's innings at 22/2 on the third day.

Sri Lanka resumed their first innings at 306/3 with Mathews and Kamindu, unbeaten on 78 and 51 respectively.

The duo managed to add just 22 runs to their overnight

off 80 deliveries, hitting three fours and a six.

This was Phillips' third wicket in the innings as he cleaned up Dinesh Chandimal on 116 in the third session of the opening day.

But New Zealand's hopes of some fightback with the ball were dashed by a well-crafted partnership between Kamindu and Kusal.

When Sri Lanka captain de Silva called for the declaration, Kamindu was just 18 away from his maiden double century, while Kusal had just amassed his 10th Test century.

During his marathon 182-run knock, Kamindu breached the 1000 Test runs barrier.—Agency

Bangladeshi fan Tiger Roby 'thrashed' by Indian team's supporters



KANPUR: A Bangladeshi fan attending the India-Bangladesh Test match in Kanpur on Friday was rushed to the hospital after allegedly being heckled and assaulted inside the stadium, reported India's PTI news agency.

The fan, known as "Tiger Roby," was dressed in a tiger costume - the emblem of the Bangladesh cricket team - and was standing in the C Block balcony of Green Park Stadium, where the incident took place.

A clip on PTI Videos showed the fan being carried out of the stadium by medical officials and security personnel. He was later seated on a chair and given water.

In another account, PTI, quoting police, reported that the fan was not assaulted but suffered from dehydration.

A follow-up report by PTI claimed that Roby was hospitalised after falling ill. "He was gasping for breath when he met a constable. He became unconscious before we could speak to him, but now he is fine," Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Harish Chander was quoted as saying in the report.

However, a journalist covering the game told media that the fan was manhandled, though not beaten or assaulted.

"Tiger Roby was manhandled after he angered Indian fans by insulting some of their players. They tried to snatch the Bangladesh flag from him, and he was slightly hit. He wasn't beaten, nor was it a case of dehydration. He did get hit slightly, but then he overdramatised the incident," the journalist told this correspondent.—Agency

Veteran cricket umpire Aleem Dar calls it a day



LAHORE: Aleem Dar has decided to put an end to his umpiring career at the end of the Pakistan Cricket Board's 2024-25 domestic season, concluding a career that spanned for nearly a quarter of a century, the PCB said in a statement on Friday.

Dar was a true gentleman for cricketers and fans both on and off the field and was awarded the highly prestigious David Shepherd Trophy for ICC Umpire of the Year three times from 2009 to 2011.

As for his cricket playing career, the maestro played 17 first-class and 18 List-A games from the year 1986 to 1988, then went on to umpiring games from the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy in 1998-99.

From 2003 to 2023, he served on the ICC Elite Panel of Umpires, where he earned a reputation for his player management skills, understanding of the playing con-

ditions, calm demeanour and outstanding decision-making.

He is currently part of the PCB's Elite Panel and remains one of four Pakistani umpires on the ICC's International Panel, making him eligible to officiate in ODIs and T20Is.

To date, Dar has officiated in a record-breaking 145 Tests, 231 ODIs, 72 T20Is, 5 WT20Is, 181 first-class matches, and 282 List-A matches.

"His contributions to the sport extend far beyond these numbers, with his professionalism and respectful manner making him a beloved figure worldwide," the statement read.

Reflecting on his decision to retire, the maestro of the umpiring world said: "Umpiring has been my life for nearly 25 years and I have cherished the privilege of officiating some of the most iconic matches involving the greatest players of this generation," Dar remarked.

"Throughout my career, I've strived to uphold the highest standards of sportsmanship, and it has been an honour to work alongside some of the finest match officials in the world."

"However, all great journeys must eventually come to an end, and the time has come for me to focus fully on my social and charity work. My hospital project and other initiatives are very close to my heart and require my full devotion and attention."

Dar acknowledged the support he has had from his colleagues during his journey further adding that it is the right time to hang the boots.

"Having achieved almost everything that I had aspired to in umpiring with the unwavering support of my peers and colleagues, I also feel it's the right moment to step aside and allow emerging umpires to shine.—Agency

Markhors qualify for final as Eliminator two washed out due to rain



FAISALABAD: The Markhors have qualified for the Champions One-Day Cup final as the Eliminator two against the Lions called off due to rain at the Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad on Friday.

According to the qualifying conditions in case of rain or other unforeseen obstacles in the play-offs, the team with the higher standing at the conclusion of the league games, would qualify for the final of the event.

As per these conditions, the Markhors, led by Muhammad Rizwan, topped the charts with three wins, one loss and 38

seven wickets and the Shadab Khan-led Panthers eased their way into the final of the Champions One-Day Cup.

Their previous face-off was on September 12 where the Rizwan-led Markhors registered a 160-run victory against the Shadab-led team.

Kamran Ghulam's 115 runs helped the Markhors put up a 348-run target against the Panthers and Naseem Shah's and Akif Javed's bowling prowess - they took three wickets each - added Rizwan and Co in bowling out the Panthers on 187 runs.—Agency

Alvarez strikes late to earn Atletico win at Celta Vigo



A late goal from Julian Alvarez earned Atletico Madrid a dramatic 1-0 win at Celta de Vigo on Thursday to lift them to third place in the LaLiga standings.

Atletico avoided a second straight draw to move up to 15 points, one clear of Villarreal and two behind Real Madrid, who they host on Sunday. Barcelona lead the table.

Big-money signing Alvarez struck in the final minute of regular time with a close-range finish from the end of a blow.

Griezmann to register his second goal of the season. Gaitanidis said "Julian was more clever than our defenders and me and they beat us.—Agency

found ourselves better in the match," Alvarez told DAZN.

"Obviously, the goal helps my confidence but the important thing is to help the team."

Atletico goalkeeper Jan Oblak was key as Celta suffered their first home defeat of the season, producing fine saves to deny captain Iago Aspas and Borja Iglesias.

"The team played a great game. We controlled possession, we had some very good chances and in the end it was a blow," Griezmann to register his second goal of the season. Gaitanidis said "Julian was more clever than our defenders and me and they beat us.—Agency

ENTERTAINMENT

Lady Gaga reflects on accidentally revealing engagement to Michael Polansky



Lady Gaga recently admitted that she and fiancé Michael Polansky tried to keep news of their engagement secret at first, but then accidentally let it slip.

Gaga spilled the beans during an appearance on Friday's Graham Norton Show, where she was joined by The Penguin star Colin Farrell, The Substance star Demi Moore and musicians Jack Savoretti and Miles Kane.

The Poker Face hitmaker recalled how she accidentally revealed her engagement by introducing Michael as 'my fiancé' when they met the French Prime Minister Gabriel Attal during the Paris Olympics.

When the Prime Minister shared the video of the meeting, the news was out.

She told Graham: "He proposed on April 1st, and I thought he was joking."

"Then when we went to the Olympics, we were filmed saying hello to the Prime Minister and I was caught on camera saying 'This is my fiancé'. I had wanted to keep it a secret."

Gaga was on the show to promote her upcoming film Joker: Folie à Deux, in which she plays Harley Quinn against Joaquin Phoenix's Joker.

Talking about the movie, she said: "It breaks genre in many ways - it's funny, it's a drama, there's dance, there's music, and everything conspires to make this unique and special film."

Joker: Folie à Deux is a musical, and the Alejandro singer and Joaquin Phoenix had to sing live while filming.

Kendall Jenner to use Bad Bunny as 'sacrificial lamb'



Kendall Jenner reportedly has nothing to do with Bad Bunny as she has decided to let go of the musician for good, but her mother Kris Jenner disagrees.

As per the latest findings of Life & Style, the matriarch wants to exploit Bad Bunny and her daughter's breakup to get ratings for their show, The Kardashians.

The insider began, "Kendall was protective of the relationship when things were going well."

They also added, "but she's decided she's done, so she no longer cares about keeping things private."

"She definitely wanted to send a message by sitting so far apart," the source, confided and claimed, "She'll be thrilled to milk this breakup for ratings."

Before signing off from the chat, the source also revealed, "Kendall's always under pressure to deliver a

storyline, and unfortunately Bunny is the sacrificial lamb."

This report comes as a shock to fans as in a recent chat with Vogue France, Kendall shared her approach to relationships and admitted that she has always admired supermodel Christy Turlington and her approach towards her career.

"I spent a lot of time looking at her face as a kid. She seemed so calm and collected. I really appreciated her energy through it all. And it feels like life outside modelling and family were really important to her," Kendall told the outlet.

"Relationships mean so much to me, and I can't wait to have a life with someone one day, to have kids, to create a family. Christy just gives good vibes. Maybe she cared a little bit less! I think that's really cool," she continued at the time.

NATIONAL



THE HEARTLAND

No Consensus Between JUI-F And PTI On Constitutional Amendments, Says Murtaza

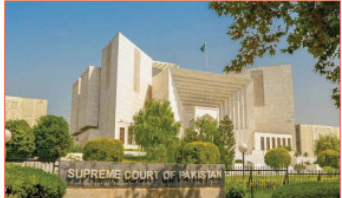
ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Senator Kamran Murtaza Friday rejected the impression of finalising a joint draft for constitutional amendments with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Exclusively talking to media, Kamran Murtaza said JUI-F has its point of view on the proposed constitutional amendments and the impression of working jointly with PTI for constitutional amendments draft is baseless. "No consensus with government or PTI on the constitutional amendments yet," the JUI-F senator said. Referring to Bilawal Bhattu Zardari's meeting with Fazlur Rehman, the lawmaker said the PPP has not contacted them so far. He also regretted the 'differences' between the SC judges.—RT/Agency

Jamaat-E-Islami Announces Nationwide Sit-Ins

LAHORE: Following the announcement of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Chief, the party announced protests on major highways across Pakistan as the government failed to implement Rawalpindi Agreement, media reported on Friday. During an emergency meeting at Mansoorah, attended by party leadership from central and provincial cities online, JI Chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman criticized the government for only taking "cosmetic measures" in the past 45 days. He emphasized that JI rejects these superficial steps and will hold sit-ins on key highways this Sunday [September 29]. Hafiz Naeem demanded immediate relief on electricity bills for the entire country and urged the government to implement uniform tariffs based on the actual cost of production. He also called for practical actions concerning Independent Power Producers (IPPs) agreements, instead of mere public statements.—RT/Agency

Supreme Court Schedules Hearing For Article 63-A Review Case

ISLAMABAD: A case of Article 63-A review has been fixed for hearing in the Supreme Court. A five-member bench headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa would hear the case on Monday. The bench includes Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Jamal Mandokhail and Justice Mazhar Alam Miankhel. It is pertinent to note that SC judgment on May 17, 2022 on presidential reference for explanation of Article 63-A stated that any vote of parliamentarian against party policy would not be considered. Parliament was responsible to decide on the duration of life-time disqualification or disqualification, SC order stated. A five-member bench headed by then chief justice Umar Ata Bandial heard the presidential reference and the verdict was delivered by a 3-2 majority of a full bench. Various review applications were filed on this matter but no application had been produced.—RT/Agency

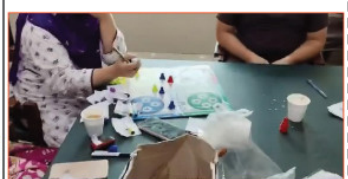


Gilani Invites Global Tourists To Discover The Beauty Of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Friday called on tourists from around the world to explore Pakistan's natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. Gilani, in his message on the World Tourism Day, said, "Pakistan is rich in natural beauty, and by promoting tourism, we can create employment opportunities and contribute to the overall prosperity of our nation." He highlighted the significance of Pakistan in religious tourism, noting that the country was home to important religious sites for Buddhists, Sikhs, and Hindus, attracting pilgrims from across the globe. "Allah Almighty has blessed Pakistan with stunning mountains, high-altitude ranges, deserts, rivers, and scenic regions," he added.—RT/Agency

Sahiwal Hospital Doctors Found Playing Ludo While Patients Await Care

SAHIWAL: A shocking video goes viral on social media in which the doctors at a teaching hospital in Sahiwal can be seen playing Ludo during duty hours which sparked outrage among citizens, media reported on Friday. The footage revealed one male and two female doctors engaged in the game while ignoring pleas from a patient's attendants for medical attention. Despite repeated requests from the distressed citizens, the doctors reportedly mocking the individuals seeking help and called security staff who forcibly removed the patient from the room. The patient's attendants are calling on Punjab's Chief Minister and Health Minister to take immediate action against the doctors involved in this negligence.—RT/Agency

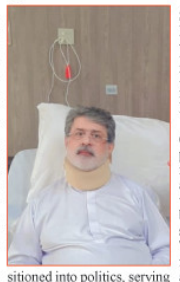


Man killed in a fatal accident at Tando Adam Railway Station

TANDO ADAM: A tragic incident occurred at Tando Adam Railway Station, where a man was killed after slipping while disembarking from the Pakistan Express train traveling from Punjab to Karachi. The victim, identified as Ghulam Shabeer, son of Fazal Din Qureshi, was a resident of the Sikander Abad and sold bananas on the platform. The accident happened as he attempted to get off the moving train. His body was taken to Taluka hospital, where it was handed over to his family after necessary procedures. Notably, this marks the third such fatality at Tando Adam railway station within 24 hours.

Sardar Sarfraz Chakar Domki Fondly Remembered by Public School Hyderabad Alumni

HYDERABAD: Sardar Sarfraz Chakar Domki, son of Sardar Chakar Khan Domki and grandson of Nawab Akbar Bugti, was remembered with deep admiration and respect by his former classmates from Public School Hyderabad. Born in the village of Lahri, near the borders of Sibi and Dera Bugti, Sardar Sarfraz was known for his humility, kindness, and soft-spoken nature, despite being the leader of the valiant Domki tribe of the ancient state of Kachi. Following the death of his father, Sardar Sarfraz was appointed as the chief of the Domki tribe by the tribal elite. He began his professional journey as an Assistant Commissioner in the Balochistan Provincial Services, eventually rising to the position of District Coordinating Officer. Later, he transitioned into politics, serving as a minister in the Balochistan cabinet until his untimely death. The loss of Sardar Sarfraz brought immense sorrow not only to his family and tribe but also to his friends and former schoolmates. His alma mater, Public School Hyderabad, honored the late Sardar with heartfelt tributes. Many of his school friends traveled to his native village, Lahri, to offer their condolences to his family, including his son, brothers, and fellow tribesmen. Colonel Hassan Imam (Retd.), a close school friend, paid a poignant tribute, remembering Sardar Sarfraz as a simple and gentle soul whose caring nature and sobriety left a lasting impression on all who knew him. Teachers and staff members from Public School Hyderabad also joined in paying homage to the deceased Sardar. Following his passing, Sardar Sarfraz's elder son, Kohyar Khan, has been designated as the new chieftain of the Domki tribe, while his younger brother, Hirbehayr Khan, will serve as regent for tribal affairs.—RT

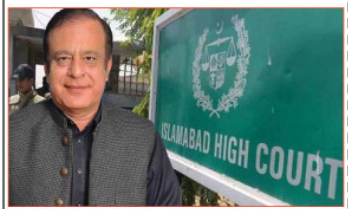


Punjab Government Imposes Section 144 Ahead Of PTI's Rawalpindi Power Show

LAHORE: The Punjab government on Friday imposed Section 144 in Rawalpindi for two days, banning public gatherings, ahead of a PTI rally scheduled in the city on the weekend. Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure is a legal provision that empowers district administrations to prohibit an assembly of four or more people in an area for a limited period. It is usually imposed to prevent potential disturbances, maintain law and order, and curb any activities that might escalate into violence. On September 23, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan informed at a press conference that the party would hold a rally in Rawalpindi on September 28. He said that his party had applied for a no-object certificate (NOC) and requested that the Punjab government grant it. However, PTI founder Imran Khan on Thursday announced that his party would not hold a rally in Rawalpindi on September 28, stating that the decision was made due to an apprehension that the government would not allow his party to hold the event in the city and designate a location in the suburbs as the venue. He said that instead of a rally, the party would stage protests and PTI lawyers would hold a demonstration outside the Supreme Court.—RT/Agency

IHC Directs Ministry Of Interior To Lift Shibli Faraz's Name From ECL

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has directed the Ministry of Interior to remove Shibli Faraz's name from the Exit Control List (ECL) within one week. Justice Jahanjiri remarked on why Shibli Faraz didn't raise the matter in the National Assembly being a parliamentarian. Shibli Faraz's lawyer replied that nothing was happening there, in fact the speaker also agreed with this stance. The court directed to remove Shibli Faraz's name from ECL within a week and update the court about this matter. The court ordered the appearance of the Home secretary in personal capacity if the court order wasn't implemented. The court has adjourned the case hearing until one week.—RT/Agency



Lawyers' team reaches Sindhri Police Station to register case of Dr Shahnawaz

MIRPURKHAS: A ten-member legal team, led by Barrister Asadullah Shah Rashdi addressed a press conference after submitting request for the registration of a case at the Sindhri police station regarding the murder of Dr. Shahnawaz. They stated that he was killed after being taken into custody. In light of a law passed in 2022, which mandates that the FIA conducts inquiries into deaths during judicial custody, the lawyers have named several officials, including DIG Javed Jiskani, SSP Asad Chaudhry and SSP Asif Raza Baloch, in their complaint. They also included the SHO of Sindhri and Umar Jan Sarhandi, who allegedly incited violence. The lawyers identified other police personnel, such as DIB In-Charge Danish Bhatti and Sub-Inspector Hidayatullah Narejo, as involved. They emphasized that the allegations of torture against Dr. Shahnawaz could be confirmed after exhumation. The legal team stressed that all individuals who incited violence on social media should be held accountable. They reported that around 300 people are currently arrested across Sindh on blasphemy charges. The family of Dr. Shahnawaz demands a judicial inquiry, stating that the issue is not minor but significant on a national level. They have recommended that charges under the Anti-Terrorism Act and Section 302 be included in the case.



Experts Advocate For Creative Strategies To Tackle Pakistan's Water Crisis

ISLAMABAD: Experts gathered at a National Consultative Workshop on Friday to discuss the importance of evidence-based technological solutions and accurate real-time data. Hosted by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), the event demanded smart innovations to effectively manage the nation's water resources. The workshop, hosted under the Water Resource Accountability in Pakistan (WRAP) Programme, aimed to support the implementation of the National Water Policy (NWP). It welcomed over 100 participants, including government officials, representatives from development agencies, private sector leaders, academia, and members of local communities from all provinces and regions. Throughout the event, discussions and presentations revolved around Pakistan's water scarcity challenges and the successful strategies implemented through the WRAP Programme in Punjab and KP. Dr. Mohsin Hafeez, Director for Water, Food and Ecosystems and Team Leader for the WRAP Programme, briefed the meeting on water accounting in Pakistan and its role. He said that our national institutions, such as the National Disaster Management Authority and order, and curb any activities that might escalate into violence. On September 23, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan informed at a press conference that the party would hold a rally in Rawalpindi on September 28. He said that his party had applied for a no-object certificate (NOC) and requested that the Punjab government grant it. However, PTI founder Imran Khan on Thursday announced that his party would not hold a rally in Rawalpindi on September 28, stating that the decision was made due to an apprehension that the government would not allow his party to hold the event in the city and designate a location in the suburbs as the venue. He said that instead of a rally, the party would stage protests and PTI lawyers would hold a demonstration outside the Supreme Court.—RT/Agency



LHC Imposes Fines For Littering On Roads

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court has ordered for enforcement of fine against those throwing garbage on roads. LHC Justice Shahid Karim heard the applications for smog mitigation. The Judicial Water Commission informed the court that dead chicken meat was being sold in Tollinton Market and action against those involved in this crime was needed. The LDA lawyer stated that they conducted operation in Tollinton Market yesterday and on-boarding of Tollinton Market Association was desired. Selling dead chicken meat was a legal offence. Justice Karim remarked that some restaurants were selling their water and its sale shouldn't be allowed if it didn't comply with Pakistani standards. Relevant authorities must take this matter under consideration, the court observed. Justice Karim remarked that extreme temperature in September was quite concerning as it's a result of climate change. LHC stated that half of the pollution would be reduced if lanes on roads were followed. The court has ordered a fine on throwing garbage on roads and not following lane traffic rules.—RT/Agency

FIR Filed Against Accused In Dr. Shahnawaz Murder Case After Inquiry Report Confirms Police Misconduct

UMERKOT: An FIR has been registered following an inquiry report that established the blasphemy accused, Dr. Shahnawaz Kumbhar, was killed in a suspected fake police encounter in Umerkot, Sindh, as reported on Friday. The case names 45 individuals, including senior police officials such as DIG Javed Jiskani, SSP Asad Chaudhry, SSP Asif Raza Baloch, and the SHO of Sindhri, alongside CIA team members. The FIR, filed under charges of murder, terrorism, and violations of the Torture and Custodial Death Prevention Act 2022, also implicates Umar Jan Sindhari, accused of inciting public unrest via social media, resulting in violent actions. The complaint was lodged by Advocate Ibrahim, Dr. Shahnawaz's brother-in-law, at Police Station Sindhri, alleging that the police staged the encounter and subjected the victim to torture. Additionally, DIB In-Charge Danish Bhatti, Sub-Inspector Hidayatullah Narejo, and other police personnel are named in the case, which includes both identified and unidentified suspects linked to the incident. Dr. Shahnawaz was reportedly apprehended in Karachi and subsequently handed over to Umerkot police, where his death occurred. The inquiry committee, established under the directives of Sindh Police Chief Ghulam Nabi Memon, has concluded its investigation of the Umerkot incident, revealing serious misconduct by police officials from Umerkot and Mirpurkhas. The inquiry report, prompted by public outcry, has detailed significant legal violations by the involved police personnel. Following blasphemy allegations against Dr. Shahnawaz, widespread protests erupted in Umerkot, compelling police to expedite his arrest. He was tracked down in Karachi and transferred to the Mirpur Khas police, who are alleged to have staged the encounter later that night. The committee confirmed that the police encounter was fabricated to provide legal cover for an extrajudicial killing, condemning the public celebrations and praise received by officers after Dr. Shahnawaz's death, which gained traction on social media. The inquiry committee recommended that Dr. Shahnawaz's family be allowed to record a statement and file a murder FIR against the implicated officers. Moreover, the committee called for stringent departmental action against Umerkot and Mirpur Khas police, including senior officers like the DIG and IJC to expedite his arrest. He was tracked down in Karachi and transferred to the Mirpur Khas police, who are alleged to have



METRO KARACHI



Sindh Energy Minister Advocates For Affordable Solar Energy Solutions

KARACHI: Provincial Minister for Energy, Development, and Planning, Sindh, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, has emphasized the importance of making affordable and high-quality solar panels accessible to the poorest segments of society. He expressed these views while visiting various stalls and speaking to the media on the second day of the ongoing three-day Solar Expo at the Expo Center Karachi. Accompanying him were Sindh Energy Secretary Mosaddeq Ahmed Khan and Project Director Sindh Solar Energy, Mahfooz Ahmed Qazi.



Minister Nasir Shah highlighted the need for locally and internationally manufactured and marketed all components related to solar panels, including batteries and lithium, at affordable prices. He stressed that the people of Sindh cannot bear the burden of expensive electricity and costly solar systems, and it is essential to make alternative energy solutions more accessible to the general public.

He noted that competition among companies has already led to a decrease in the prices of solar panels at both domestic and international levels, but there is still room for further reduction.

In response to a question, the minister acknowledged the severe problems people face due to high electricity costs, load shedding, and over-billing. He assured that the Sindh government is aware of these issues and that the public will receive positive news soon. He also mentioned that Sindh is providing the cheapest electricity to the National Grid.

Addressing concerns about the high cost of fertilizers, Nasir Shah revealed that a solution is being developed to produce affordable fertilizer from Thar coal, which will benefit farmers and the agriculture sector.

The minister also praised the ongoing Solar Expo, noting that over 200 companies from 10 countries are participating, with 80% of

them being world-class enterprises. He commended the organizers for their efforts, stating that the exhibition not only enhances the image of the Sindh government but also showcases Pakistan positively to the international community.

He suggested extending the duration of the exhibition beyond three days to allow more people to gain awareness and learn about the quality offerings of local and international companies. Additionally, Nasir Shah announced that more than 160,000 solar systems with inverters and battery backups will be provided free of cost to poor and underdeveloped areas in Sindh. He also mentioned that hybrid solar parks are in the pipeline, aiming to further promote renewable energy in the region.—RT

Sindh Government To Establish Fusion Center For Enhanced Anti-Narcotics Coordination

KARACHI: The Sindh government has announced the establishment of a Fusion Center aimed at enhancing intelligence sharing and coordination on drug-related matters between provincial and federal institutions. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to strengthen anti-narcotics efforts across Pakistan. Additionally, the government plans to collaborate with the Health Department to establish rehabilitation centers for drug addicts.

The decision was made during the second meeting of the High-Powered Committee for Anti-Narcotics, chaired by Sindh Senior Minister Shajeel Inam Memon at his office in Karachi. The meeting was attended by key officials, including Secretary Excise Muhammad Saleem Rajput, Secretary Universities and Boards Abbas Baloch, Secretary Social Welfare Parvez Ahmad Sehgar, Commander ANF Brigadier Umar, DIG CIA



Muqadas Haider, and others. Representatives from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Tom from Geneva and Sajid Aslam from Islamabad, also participated online.

During the meeting, it was resolved to establish a Fusion Center to improve coordination on drug-related issues between all provinces and the federal government. Senior Minister Memon directed that the High-Powered Committee meet every fortnight to expedite and review ongoing anti-narcotics operations.

The committee also decided to seek the Health Department's assistance in managing these centers.

UNODC representatives assured the Sindh government of their full support in its anti-narcotics efforts. Senior Minister Memon emphasized the need for a Fusion Center in every province and at the federal level to ensure more coordinated and effective actions against drug-related challenges.

He reaffirmed the Sindh government's commitment to a zero-tolerance policy on drugs, underscoring the critical importance of this fight for the future of the younger generation. Memon stated that the campaign against drugs is ongoing and called on all segments of society to play an active role in this effort. He also highlighted that former President Asif Ali Zardari has issued clear directives for the complete

eradication of drugs. Memon announced that drug tests will be conducted in educational institutions, not to embarrass anyone, but to confront the issue head-on. He warned that the drug problem is pervasive, affecting families and communities across all social strata.

The minister emphasized that urgent action is needed to address the significant challenge posed by drug use, and directed that rehabilitation centers be reactivated. He also stressed the importance of identifying and eliminating key drug hideouts. "No drug dealer will be spared," Memon declared, noting that indiscriminate actions against drug-related activities are currently underway and will continue. He vowed that strict action will be taken wherever drug use is reported, whether in homes, shops, or social gatherings.—RT

People protest against Mehmood Goth Police picket In-charge

By Asif Qureshi

KARACHI: Residents near the Link Road Police picket in Mehmood Goth protested, accusing In-Charge Tahir Khan of illegal detentions and extortion. They claimed he arrests poor workers, drivers, and laborers, threatening them with false charges unless they pay bribes. Protesters

shared that Khan forcibly took three workers from a hotel and extorted 120,000 rupees, holding them in custody at the Mehmood Goth police station. They called for action from senior officials, including the Sindh Home Minister and Anti-Corruption authorities, demanding Khan's suspension for his alleged mis-conduct.

ABAD Voices Concerns Over Encroachments And Tax Hikes In Meeting With KDA

KARACHI: The Chairman of the Association of Builders and Developers (ABAD), Asif Samsam, along with Senior Vice Chairman Ibrahim Habib, has raised serious concerns about the growing issue of illegal encroachments, the abrupt increase in service charges and taxes related to the sale, purchase, and transfer of plots, and the commercial misuse of KDA-leased residential plots in Clifton. They have called for swift action to resolve these pressing matters.



These concerns were discussed during a meeting with the Director General of the Karachi Development Authority (KDA), Syed Shujaat Hussain, held at ABAD House. During the meeting, Senior Director of KDA, M. Waryal Andhar, was designated as the focal person to address ABAD's issues. Additionally, it was agreed to include an ABAD representative in the KDA Governing Body, with a formal request letter from ABAD to follow.

The meeting saw the participation of ABAD Vice Chairman Zeeshan Siddiqui, Southern Region Chairman Mustafa Sheikhan, KDA officials, and numerous ABAD members. Chairman Asif Samsam voiced particular concern over illegal encroachments on plots owned by ABAD members, which has caused significant distress among

builders and developers. He urged the DG KDA to take decisive action against these encroachments.

Senior Vice Chairman Ibrahim Habib also highlighted the misuse of KDA-leased residential plots in Clifton Blocks 8 and 9 for commercial purposes, demanding immediate KDA intervention. He suggested forming a high-profile committee, including representatives from KDA, ABAD, and the Clifton Residents Society, to conduct a survey and recommend the cancellation of leases for those misusing residential plots.

Habib further expressed concern over the sudden increase in fees related to the sale, transfer, mutation, lease extension, and NOCs of plots by KDA. He urged that any such tax hikes should be discussed with stakeholders to maintain harmony. He also pointed out that ABAD members who had purchased auctioned plots on University Road were facing illegal oc-

cupation and requested the activation of the anti-encroachment cell to clear these plots.

DG KDA Shujaat Hussain assured that addressing ABAD's concerns is a top priority, acknowledging the construction industry's vital contribution to the national economy. He emphasized that construction activities generate significant tax revenue and help reduce unemployment. He pledged strict action against encroachments on auctioned plots on University Road and announced the formation of a committee to address the commercial misuse of residential plots in Clifton, with a mutual consultation to find a resolution.

The DG also announced the creation of a committee consisting of ABAD members and KDA officials to address issues related to plot sales, transfers, and taxes, with a meeting scheduled for October 1st.—RT

SITE Association Announces New Leadership For 2024-26 Term



KARACHI: The SITE Association of Industry (SAI) has elected its new office bearers for the 2024-26 term, with Ahmed Azeem Alvi taking over as President, Khalid Riaz as Senior Vice President, and Muhammad Riaz Dhedhi as Vice President. These appointments were confirmed during the 60th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association, presided over by Saleem Parekh, Chief Coordinator and former President of SAI.

The newly elected officials, along with the Executive Committee members, will officially assume their responsibilities on October 1, 2024. The AGM, held at the SAI office, was attended by notable figures including Zubair Motiwala, Chairman of the Businessmen Group (BMG) and Patron-in-Chief of SAI.

President-elect Ahmed Azeem Alvi expressed his gratitude to the members for

their confidence in him and praised the outgoing leadership for their dedicated service. He highlighted the pressing issues facing the SITE area, such as deteriorating infrastructure and utility shortages, and called on members to actively engage in the Association's activities. He assured them of his commitment to addressing their concerns, acknowledging the challenging business environment.

Chief Coordinator Saleem Parekh congratulated the new office bearers and recognized the contributions of the outgoing team, including President Muhammad Kamran Arbi, Senior Vice President Muhammad Hanif Tavakkal, and Vice President Farhan Ashraf. He emphasized that the new leadership, while bringing fresh perspectives, will continue to benefit from the support and experience of the outgoing Executive Committee and senior mem-

bers. Zubair Motiwala, Chairman of BMG, welcomed the incoming office bearers and commended the outgoing President, Muhammad Kamran Arbi, and his team for their unwavering dedication. He noted that while significant progress has been made, the industry continues to face evolving challenges.

The AGM also saw the presence of prominent SITE Association veterans and dignitaries from the Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) and other trade associations, who extended their appreciation to the outgoing office bearers and warmly welcomed the newly elected leadership. The SITE Association looks forward to the new term, committed to addressing ongoing challenges, advocating for the industry's needs, and representing the interests of its members.—RT

GCNP and MACN Lead Initiative To Enhance Customs Procedures In Maritime Sector



KARACHI: The Global Compact Network Pakistan (GCNP) and the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN) recently held an impactful session titled "Streamlining the Missing Links in Customs Procedures for Port Operations & Shipping Sector." The event brought together key stakeholders, including senior leaders from terminal operators, off-dock terminals, and members of the All-Pakistan Shipping Association (APSA).

Hosted by Karachi Gateway Terminal Limited (KGTL), the session featured opening remarks from Syed Tanvir Ahmed, Senior Advisor to GCNP-MACN, who welcomed attendees and highlighted the significance of the initiative. He also provided an overview of the GCNP-MACN Project's mission and goals.

Prominent speakers, including Omar Shafique, Collector of Customs Enforcement (Port), and Daud Pirzada, Director of Intelligence & Investigation (Customs), delivered detailed presentations on critical issues such as shipping licensing, cargo handling, and the resolution of chal-

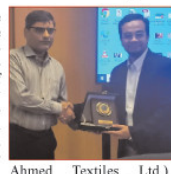
lenges related to stuck containers, GD hold containers, and document amendments. The session included a Q&A segment, where participants discussed obstacles and received expert advice from the speakers. The event concluded with the presentation of a commemorative shield to the CEO of Karachi Gateway Terminal Ltd and certificates to participants.

The session underscored the importance of effective customs procedures and port operations in promoting global trade, economic growth, and anti-corruption efforts. The GCNP-MACN Project continues to lead efforts to establish best practices, ensure compliance, and foster collaboration among stakeholders in the maritime sector.

MACN's global efforts in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to combat corruption and promote transparency and integrity in the maritime industry were also highlighted. The event coincided with "World Maritime Day," reaffirming MACN's commitment to enhancing ethical practices in Pakistan's maritime industry.—RT

TDAP Hosts Seminar on "Sustainability In The Textile & Leather Industry" Ahead Of Texpo 2024

KARACHI: As part of the lead-up to Texpo 2024, the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) organized the first in a series of seminars on "Sustainability in the Textile & Leather Industry of Pakistan" on Wednesday, September 25, 2024, at the TDAP Headquarters in Karachi.



This enlightening seminar focused on the future of sustainable practices in Pakistan's textile and leather sectors. Expert panelists, including Fahad Juma (Gul

participants from SMEs in the textile and leather industries to explore innovative solutions and address the challenges of transitioning toward a more sustainable and environmentally responsible future for Pakistan.

The seminar concluded with a vote of thanks from Mr. Basit Rauf, Director General of TDAP, who emphasized the importance of collective efforts in creating a sustainable and greener future for the country.—RT

NIMA celebrates World Maritime Day

By Syed Daim Shah

KARACHI: The National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) organized a seminar on World Maritime Day 2024, themed "Navigating the Future: Safety First," at Bahria University Karachi. The speakers emphasized the critical importance of maritime safety, security, and sustainability in the ever-evolving global maritime industry.

SI(M) Director NIMA welcomed all the guests. The special messages of Admiral Naveed Ashraf NI(M) T Bt, CNS & IMO Secretary General Mr. Arsenio Dominguez on the occasion were read out. A total of five papers were presented by leading experts in the maritime fields ranging from sustainable shipping, fishing practices to smart technologies in port operations. Khurrum Mirza from PNSC, M Moazzam Khan from WWF-Pakistan,

Javed Iqbal from Shoab Shipping, Ms. Noor-ul-Saba from Scuba Club Karachi and Malik Babar Rashid from KPT shared insightful perspectives on enhancing safety, efficiency, and environmental conservation. The chief guest, Dewan Rizwan Farooqui, Chairman of Pakistan Ship Breakers Recycling Association, underscored the importance of a sustainable and efficient maritime industry and its role in the global economy.

Reception held for K-Electric officials in Gulshan-e-Hadeed



By Asif Qureshi

KARACHI: A reception was held for K-Electric officials in Gulshan-e-Hadeed Phase

One and Two Extension after announcing the end of load shedding. Deputy Mayor Salman Abdullah Murad Imdad Ali Jokhio emphasized the party's role in resolving load

shedding and urged action on local water issues. K-Electric Regional Head Faisal Khan noted that load shedding is absent in areas with better billing

and less theft, thanks to community support. Residents presented gifts of ajrak to the officials, highlighting a united effort for local improvement.



KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari is offering condolences to the family members of Deputy Commissioner Zakir Baloch Shaheed in Karachi.—Photo by Fahim Soomro —RT

"The beginning is the most important part of the work."

—Plato

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Uniting People Every Day

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SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 28 2024

Army Chief Praises China, Saudi Arabia, And UAE For Economic Assistance

KARACHI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir has expressed appreciation for the all-out support extended by friendly nations, particularly China, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in assisting Pakistan to stabilise its economy, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement on Friday.



The army chief's statement came as he visited the Karachi Corps area of responsibility, where he was briefed on operational preparedness and key training initiatives undertaken by the army, the military's media wing said.

His remarks came a day after the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Executive Board approved a \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for Pakistan.

In a statement, IMF Pakistan Mission Chief Nathan Porter said that China, Saudi Arabia and

the United Arab Emirates have given "significant financing assurances" to Islamabad linked to the country's \$7 billion bailout package.

The financial assurances by the countries go beyond the agreement to roll over \$12 billion in bilateral loans owed to these countries, added the official.

"I won't go into the specifics, but UAE, China and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia all provided significant financing assurances to join up in this programme," Porter told reporters virtually.

The IMF official's

statement echoes the remarks made by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb last month wherein he claimed that the aforementioned countries had confirmed the rollover for three years with renewal to take place every year.

During his visit today, the COAS also interacted with the business community of Karachi.

The ISPR said Gen Munir hailed contributions of business community and entrepreneurs towards the country's economic growth.

"Participants expressed confidence and praised

SIFC for its role towards achieving the positive economic indicators, which are providing an enabling environment for further economic growth," it added.

Moreover, the COAS also commended the efforts of federal and provincial governments towards supporting all initiatives and remarked that naysayers who made failed efforts towards creating despair and despondency in the society have been defeated through the collective efforts of all stakeholders.

"[The] COAS appreciated the praiseworthy role performed by brotherly and friendly countries especially China, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and UAE in the economic recovery of Pakistan by helping us in multiple domains," read the ISPR's statement.

He highlighted that Pakistan has remarkable potential in various domains and all must have unflinching trust and confidence in the bright fu-

ture of Pakistan. "Given the immense resources and potential, Pakistan is destined to achieve its rightful position in the comity of nations, InshaAllah."

The army chief also inaugurated Innovista Indus IT Park, a hub aimed at empowering Pakistan's youth by fostering academia-industry collaboration in the field of Information Technology. Technology, particularly artificial intelligence, Sindh Murad Ali Shah, and notable civil community members attended the inauguration ceremony, as per the ISPR. CM Murad emphasised the importance of IT domain for optimal exploitation of potential of youth and economic growth. The army chief highlighted that such projects are aimed at providing the most conducive environment to further promote the growth of IT industry in the country, which is already accelerating at a respectable pace.—RT/Agency

Pakistan Secures First \$1.02 Billion Tranche From IMF Under EFF

ISLAMABAD: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Friday received the first tranche of SDR 760 million (equivalent to \$1.0269 billion) from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

The IMF Executive Board approved a 37-month programme on Wednesday.

These inflows will be reflected in SBP liquid reserves to be released on Thursday, September 30, 2024, the central bank said in a statement.

Following the long-awaited approval, the IMF said the new programme would require "sound policies and reforms" to strengthen macroeconomic stability and address structural challenges alongside "continued strong financial support from Pakistan's development and bilateral partners".

Pakistan had been working on implementing conditions deemed "strict" to complete the loan programme agreed to in July, which Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif time and again hoped would be Pakistan's last.

Though, the country's economy has stabilised since it came close to defaulting last summer, it is dependent on IMF bailouts and loans from friendly countries to service its huge debt, which swallows up half of its an-



nual revenues. "There will be transitional pain, but if we are to make it the last programme, then we have to carry out structural reforms," Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb told Geo News in an exclusive talk.

The IMF said in a statement it would issue an "immediate disbursement" of around \$1 billion.

"This past year has seen a very welcome return to economic stability in Pakistan," IMF Pakistan mission chief Nathan Porter told reporters on Thursday.

"The challenge confronting Pakistan now is to move beyond this renewed sense of stability and towards stronger and sustained growth, with its benefits shared more broadly and evenly across society," he added.

Speaking on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Wednesday, Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif said the deal came through thanks to the "tremendous support" of Saudi Arabia, China and the United Arab Emirates. "In the final phase (of negotiations), the IMF's conditions were related to China. The way the Chinese government supported and strengthened us during this time is something I am truly grateful for," he told reporters shortly before the deal was announced.

Last month, Aurangzeb had said Pakistan was negotiating a \$12 billion loan reprofiling from bilateral lenders.

The amount comprised \$5 billion from Saudi Arabia, \$4 billion from China and \$3 billion from the UAE for a three-to-five-year period.

Porter said all three countries had "provided significant financing assurances," beyond these commitments to rolling over the \$12 billion in existing loans.—RT/Agency

ECP Submits New Plea To Stay SC Verdict On Reserved Seats

ISLAMABAD: In a fix over how to proceed on Supreme Court's detailed verdict in the reserved seats case after the newly-enacted Election Act Amendment Bill 2024, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has submitted two more petitions in the apex court, seeking stay on its July 12 order.



In its 70-page detailed judgment issued on Sept 23, the apex court termed the PTI "a political party" and eligible for the seats reserved for women and minorities.

The electoral watchdog, a day earlier, approached the top court to seek its guidance whether to follow amended Election Act 2017 or its judgment on the matter of allocating reserved seats to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

The ECP mentioned the National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq's letter stating that amendments were made to the Election Act after the top court's verdict declaring the opposition party eligible for the reserved seats.

Speaker Sadiq had told the ECP in his letter that the apex court's July 12 ruling was "incapable of implementation" after the amendments to Election Act 2017.

Besides civil miscellaneous petition, the Election Commission also filed two other petitions for review concerning the "clarification order" and seeking stay with regard to the July 12 order's implementation till the pleas were decided, it emerged on Friday (today).

Through the petitions, the commission sought SC's guidance with respect to the effect of the Elections (Second) Amendment Act, 2024 on the short order of the apex

court of July 12, clarification order dated Sept 14 and detailed judgment dated Sept 23 in the interest of justice.

The ECP, in its petition, noted the apex court's reserved seats verdict was based on "assumptions", adding: "It cannot rewrite the Constitution on pretext of interpretation."

"The Supreme Court in its detailed judgment dated Sept 23, 2024, deviated from [the] July 12 verdict," it said, noting that the court in the detailed order declared the 41 returned candidates as the members of the former ruling party.

The ECP pointed out that the Constitution binds independent lawmakers to

join any political party within three days, but "the Supreme Court granted them 15 days—a move which changed the words of the Constitution".

The independent candidates submitted affidavits of allegiance to Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), which the body says, was "completely ignored" in the court's ruling.

"Even if the certificates, submitted by PTI Chairman [Barrister Gohar Ali Khan], are recognised or accepted, the number of PTI members does not reach 39," the ECP said, adding that the candidates did not submit party affiliation certificates under Section 66 of the Election Act.

The electoral body maintained that the reserved seats cannot be allocated to Imran Khan-founded party, noting that the PTI did not claim its share at any forum.

In what it called a major victory for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), a 13-member full bench of the top court on July 12 ruled that the Imran Khan-

founded party was eligible for the allocation of reserved seats for women and non-Muslims in the national and provincial assemblies.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah announced the 8-5 majority verdict, nullifying the Peshawar High Court's (PHC) order wherein it had upheld the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision denying the reserved seats to the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC).

The PTI candidates contested the Feb 8 general elections as independents after the top court upheld the ECP decision to deprive the opposition party of its iconic electoral symbol—but over "unlawful" intra-party polls.

The decision forced the PTI-backed winning candidates to join the SIC in a bid to claim reserved seats.

However, the ECP denied the reserved to the SIC over its failure to submit list of candidates within the stipulated time.—RT/Agency

Pakistan Seeks Climate Financing From IMF Amid Ongoing Economic Challenges

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has requested the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to review the possibility of extending another \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion programme to meet the financing requirements for long-term reforms for mitigating the impacts of climate change.

The issue of the new programme? The Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) was raised by Pakistani authorities during a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva. The meeting was held after the IMF board meeting on Wednesday and on the sidelines of the United National General Assembly session in New York.

"During the meeting, they discussed the urgent need of mobilising adaptation financing for climate change," said a statement from the Prime Minister's Office on Thursday. The prime minister agreed to have the finance minister take up this critical issue with senior IMF management during the Annual Meetings in October, it further stated.

A day earlier, the IMF approved the \$7 billion loan programme for a period of three years, which also helped fulfilling one of the eligibility criteria for qualifying for the IMF's highly concessional climate related financing.



Pakistan had requested climate financing a few months ago but the IMF said the country did not meet one of the conditions of having a larger programme. During the meeting, Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb highlighted that after the approval of the \$7 billion programme, Pakistan has met the eligibility criteria.

Aurangzeb would now take up the issue of the new programme with the IMF during his next month visit to Washington to attend the World Bank-IMF annual meetings. The Pakistani authorities said the country can access up to \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion concessional financing.

Pakistan also meets the requirement of the Country Climate and Development assessment report, which the World Bank carried in 2022/another eligibility criterion. The Resilience and the

Sustainability Facility is one of concessional loans, which is repaid over a period of 20 years, unlike the Extended Fund Facility that has to be paid back in four and half years to 10 years.

The Resilience and Sustainability Facility provides affordable long-term financing to countries undertaking reforms to reduce risks to prospective balance of payments stability, including those related to climate change and pandemic preparedness.

This facility provides long-term financing to strengthen economic resilience and sustainability by supporting policy reforms that reduce macro-critical risks associated with climate change and pandemic preparedness, and augmenting policy space and financial buffers to mitigate the risks arising from such longer-term structural challenges.—RT/Agency

PM Shehbaz Advocates For Increased Investment And Trade Relations With The US

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasized his government's commitment to strengthening trade and investment ties between Pakistan and the United States during a meeting with a delegation from the US-Pakistan Business Council in New York on Friday.



Addressing the delegation, which included the president, senior officials, and corporate leaders from leading US companies, he expressed a strong desire to attract American investments in key sectors to foster growth and prosperity.

During his remarks, the prime minister highlighted the government's focus on improving the ease of doing business in Pakistan, noting that gathering insights from the corporate sector is a top priority.

He introduced the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), a high-level, one-stop agency designed to assist foreign investors in planning and executing projects in four critical areas: agriculture, information technology, energy, and mining.

Attendees included prominent representatives of US investors in Pakistan, such as John Murphy, Senior Vice President and Head of International at the US Chamber of Commerce; Esperanza Jelalian, President of the US-

SIFC aims to enhance investor confidence and expedite project implementation through tailored solutions and demand-driven support.

The prime minister identified several sectors in Pakistan's economy—particularly agriculture, the tech sector (including fintech), pharmaceuticals, oil and gas, and mining—where US companies could take advantage of favorable government policies and engage in mutually beneficial projects.

The meeting concluded with an interactive discussion, during which the prime minister addressed various questions from representatives of US enterprises.—RT/Agency

Pakistan Business Council; and Steven Kobos, President and CEO of Exceletrate Energy. Other notable participants came from PepsiCo, TRG Pakistan, Mastercard, Procter & Gamble, Illumina, and Abbott.

In her remarks, Ms. Jelalian noted that Pakistan is a favored destination for US investments and has significant potential. She mentioned that a USPBC delegation is being organized this year to explore additional investment opportunities in Pakistan.

The meeting included with an interactive discussion, during which the prime minister addressed various questions from representatives of US enterprises.—RT/Agency

JUI-F Declines Support For CJP Isa's Constitutional Amendments After Mubarak Sani Verdict



ISLAMABAD: Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Secretary General and National Assembly member Abdul Ghafoor Haideri has declared that his party will not support Justice Qazi Faez Isa in the ongoing constitutional amendment process.

Maulana Abdul Ghafoor expressed this stance while speaking informally with journalists at Parliament House.

Abdul Ghafoor criticised Justice Qazi Faez Isa's decision in the Mubarak Sani case, stating that it was "deliberately" made to hurt the sentiments of many Muslims.

He explained that the decision was reversed only due to public pressure. "How can we support such a person in constitutional amendments?" Abdul

Ghafoor questioned. The JUI-F leader also voiced concerns over the government's haste in pushing forward with constitutional amendments, saying that coalition parties were not properly consulted.

"We requested negotiations on the amendments, but the draft was shared with us under an oath of secrecy," he added. Abdul Ghafoor further highlighted the lack of transparency in the legislative process, particularly regarding human rights violations found in the government's draft. He noted that the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had requested to see the draft before engaging in negotiations, but the government did not take the process seriously.—RT/Agency

Ban On X Enforced Over National Security Concerns: Information Minister

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that social media platform X has been banned due to national security issues, not to curb freedom of expression.

In March this year, in its first direct admission regarding imposing an official ban on X (formerly Twitter), the interior ministry informed the Sindh High Court (SHC) that the social media platform was blocked in February till further orders on the reports of intelligence agencies.

Access to X has been disrupted in many areas of the country since February 17. In July, Tarar told a senate panel that X had been banned by the caretaker government over "compliance issues" while in August, Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari said the government



may lift the ban on X if social media rules and regulations were framed.

Earlier this month, two lawyers representing the telecom regulator, during a case in the SHC, adopted contradictory stances on whether or not X had been restored. Today, in an interview with Voice of America, Tarar dispelled the impression that it was an unannounced ban, saying that the caretaker gov-

ernment had banned X before the February 8 general elections due to issues related to compliance. "Separatists and terrorists were using the platform against Pakistan, which could not be allowed," Tarar said.

He added that terrorists belonging to the "so-called" Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) were using the platform to promote their anti-state activities.—RT/Agency