

# Independent

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## PM Shahbaz reiterates Pakistan's commitment to promote SCO's development priorities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday met SCO Secretary-General Zhang Ming wherein he reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to work wholeheartedly for promotion of the organization's development priorities for the benefit of all its member states and the wider region.

In the meeting held on the sidelines of the 23rd meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of Government (CHG), the prime minister stressed that Pakistan stood ready to work with SCO member states to make the organization more effective and stronger.

Recalling Secretary-General Ming's earlier visit to Pakistan in July 2022, Prime Minister Shehbaz welcomed him in Islamabad and thanked him for the support extended by the SCO Secretariat to Pakistan in organization of the SCO CHG Meeting.

He also thanked Zhang Ming for his dedication and outstanding services as the outgoing Secretary-General of SCO and wished him every success in his future endeavours.

Zhang Ming warmly felicitated the prime minister on the successful organization of the SCO CHG Meeting and its positive outcome.

## Pleasant & friendly ties exist between Pak & Qatar: Highly educated & skilled youth can play important role in dev. of Qatar, says Governor



**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that there are pleasant and friendly relations established between Pakistan and Qatar, and we need to benefit from the profitable opportunities of investment in different sectors.

The Governor said that Qatar has made its name and status at the world level in sectors of industrialisation, sports and tourism in very short span of time.

In this regard, the highly educated youth and skilled persons of Balochistan can play important role in development and construction of Qatar.

The Governor was speaking to the member of royal family of Qatar, Sheikh Talal Khalifa Althani, who called on him here at the Governor's House on Thursday.

During the course of meeting, the matters about relations between Pakistan and Qatar and other mutual interests were discussed between them.

## Nawaz Sharif foresees thaw in Pakistan-India ties after significant SCO summit

LAHORE (INO): Ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif said on Thursday that the SCO summit, which was also attended by an Indian foreign minister in a rare visit, could be a beginning of normalisation of ties between India and Pakistan.

He made the statement in a meeting with a delegation of Indian journalists who came to Pakistan for the coverage of recently concluded Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) moot attended by foreign leaders from 10 countries.

The meeting was also attended by Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and senior minister Mariyung Aurangzeb.

Play Video

Stressing the need to revive cricket diplomacy between the South Asian nations, Nawaz said that the Indian cricket team should visit Pakistan for the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

"If you ask the Indian cricket team, they would also suggest playing in Pakistan. Despite they are ready to play, however, those who have power to allow them don't grant them permission," he told the journalists.



QUETTA: Managing Director PPL Imran Abbasi meeting with Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan

## Attack on Chinese consulate: Investigating officer identify 4 workers of alleged proscribed BLA

KARACHI (Online): Investigating officer has identified 4 workers of alleged proscribed BLA during the hearing of Chinese consulate attack case in Anti Terrorism Court (ATC).

The key witness in the case and investigating officer Nek Muhammad identified 4 workers of banned BLA during his evidence.

Investigating officer Nek Muhammad said in his evidence 3 workers of alleged banned BLA attacked Chinese Consulate on November 23, 2018. I can identify 4 accused who are present in court room.

The accused Ahmad Hasnain, Abdul Latif, Aslam and Ali Ahmad were arrested in the cases of explosive material and ammunition. The accused in their confessional statements admitted their involvement in attack on Chinese consulate. The accused provided the facility to terrorists who were killed. They provided arms and explosive material to attackers. The accused had conducted rekkie of Chinese consulate along with terrorists before the incident



KHUZDAR: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti, Corps Commander Balochistan Lt. General Rahat Naseem Ahmed Khan and other attending Grand Jirga

## Coalition govt, opposition agree on formation of constitutional bench

PML-N and PPP take a step back on the issue of the constitutional court; Constitutional package bill to be tabled in Senate today: Irfan Siddiqui

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): All the political parties, including the opposition, have finally reached a consensus on the formation of a constitutional bench after the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) took a step back on the matter of the constitutional court, sources privy to the development claimed.

The matter, initially focused on the constitutional court, has now advanced to the formation of a constitutional bench, they told Geo News on Thursday.

After high-level discussions, four leaders of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the PPP claimed an agreement had been reached among all the political parties on the formation of the constitutional bench, as per the insiders.

This comes after another meeting of the special committee on constitutional amendments draft concluded on Thursday. The parliamentary committee's meeting has been adjourned till noon on Friday (today). The constitutional package, among other things, aims to set up a federal constitutional court and fix the tenure of the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) for three years.

The government had attempted to present the bill to amend the Constitution last month, but its allies as well as members from the opposition benches vehemently opposed the proposal, forcing the ruling parties to begin a consultation process.

To pass the constitutional amendments, the government requires a two-thirds majority in parliament, with sources indicating a shortfall of 13 votes in the National Assembly and nine in the Senate.

## PM meets President to discuss constitutional amendments

ISLAMABAD (INP): PML-N and PPP withdraw from the proposal for federal constitutional courts, agreeing on alternative reforms. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has met with President Asif Ali Zardari at the President house to discuss proposed constitutional amendments and the prevailing political situation. The meeting on Thursday comes as the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) step back from their earlier proposal to establish constitutional courts. Express News reported. Moreover, during a special parliamentary committee meeting, chaired by Khurshid Shah, discussions were held on the 26th constitutional amendment draft.

According to sources, the governing coalition parties and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) have agreed to drop the proposed 26th constitutional amendment, which called for the creation of constitutional courts.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif with Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani at a banquet organized in honor of the senators.

## Political parties, institutions united for Pakistan's development: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said all political parties and institutions are working together for the development of the country.

Addressing a banquet hosted by him in honour of the senators of government and allied parties in Islamabad today, he said the political parties and people of the country have rendered sacrifices to steer the country out of difficulties.

The Prime Minister said together with the allies, we are moving towards a prosperous Pakistan for the national interest.

Shehbaz Sharif said the country's economy is on a positive trajectory.

He mentioned that there has been significant reduction in inflation in a short span and the consistent increase in remittances is encouraging for the country.

## Women mostly lack awareness, need to how to protect due rights, insists Raheela Durrani

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Education, Ms. Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani has regretfully pointed out that the women lack consciousness about their due rights, adding she stressed that they should know at least where to go for justice in case of violence against them or they are tortured and subjected to any kind of cruelty.

She said that there are many laws for protection of rights of women, however, these must be followed and implemented in true letter and spirit.

She strongly advocated the need to ensure right of share of women in the family property.

When our religion gives right of share to the women in property then how our society can deprive them of it. The Minister Education was addressing the women youth convention on the rights of women in property and violence against them at the Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University here on Thursday.

The convention was attended by the women belonging to different walks of life besides the faculty members and students of the university.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani giving away shields to Vice Chancellor SBKWU Prof. Dr. Naheed Haque, Abdullah Khan Advocate, Jahan Ara Tabassum and others during a ceremony organized by Today Women Organization at Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University

## CM Balochistan, Commander 12 Corps attend Khuzdar Jirga No one to be allowed to create hurdle in way of peace & development of Balochistan: CM

State is standing with the oppressed segments of the society and those challenging it's writ would be dealt with strictly; Bugti tells grand Jirga

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti has categorically stated that the State is standing with the oppressed segments of the society and those challenging it's writ would be dealt with strictly.

The Chief Minister asserted that no one would be allowed to create hurdle in way of peace and development of the province.

The Chief Minister was addressing a tribal Jirga in Khuzdar district on Thursday.

The Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Rahat Nasim, provincial ministers, members of the assembly, tribal elders, elected representatives as well as the civil and military high ups, women and local people participated in the Jirga.

Addressing the Jirga, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti announced to provide interest free loans to the educated unemployed youth of the province.

He said that the students of the province are being provided opportunities of higher education within the country and abroad.

He said that the killing of innocent labourers is a sorrowful act.

He said that the security of people would be ensured by the government anyway.

He said that we would take the people and other stakeholders along for establishing lasting peace in the province.

He said that the provincial government has started viable and timely decision making for complete elimination of terrorism.

He said that the government is implementing the zero tolerance policy against the miscreants.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary General Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Zhang Ming calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Akhtar Mengal to return to Pakistan amid political turmoil

**Monitoring Desk**  
ISLAMABAD: Sardar Akhtar Mengal, leader of the Balochistan National Party (BNP), has decided to return to Pakistan in light of the country's current political situation.

According to sources, Mengal, who had resigned from the National Assembly in protest and left the country ahead of the constitutional amendments, is now planning to return due to the evolving political landscape. He is expected to arrive in Islamabad tomorrow morning from Dubai and will announce his next steps after consultations.

Two days ago, Mengal claimed on social media that two of his party's senators were being harassed for not supporting the constitutional amendments. "In such a situation, our only option may be to ask both senators to resign," he stated.

## Mir Humayun Khan Marri passes away

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The former Deputy Chairman Senate and former caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Humayun Khan Marri died of heart attack here in Quetta on Thursday morning. He was 71.

The family sources informed that Mir Humayun Marri suffered severe heart attack at home. He succumbed to the heart attack, later. Mir Humayun Marri remained the caretaker Chief minister Balochistan between August 7, 1990-November 17, 1990. Later, he served as the Deputy Chairman Senate from March 21, 1997 to October 12, 1999.

He was also elected as Member of Provincial Assembly from the election constituency of Kohlu in 1988 and then served as the Provincial Minister.

## Attallah Tarar accuses PTI of poisoning political culture through well organized campaign

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage, and Culture, Attallah Tarar, on Thursday accused the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of poisoning political traditions and culture through a well-organized campaign. Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he said the country's political traditions were untainted in the past, but PTI has poisoned them through a specific campaign.

He expressed regret, stating that it was unfortunate the opposition members lacked the tolerance to listen to differing viewpoints.

He said that all political parties in Pakistan participated in the All Parties Conference (APC) to show solidarity with Palestine, except for PTI, which refused to attend. He further alleged that PTI was running a malicious campaign against national institutions and their leadership.

He said, no one had taken note of their silence on Goldsmith, who has openly supported Israel and tweeted against the people of Palestine.

He also accused the opposition members of never speaking out against the atrocities committed by Israel against the innocent people of Palestine.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb called on by the Ambassador of USA to Pakistan H.E. Donald Blome.

## Pakistan's first multi-mission satellite becomes operational

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) said on Thursday that in a historic development, Pakistan's first multi-mission satellite, PAKSAT MM1, under the facilitation of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), has become operational.

The operationalisation of the satellite is an important milestone in the country's space and digital development, they said.

Success of PAKSAT-MM1 will help transform Pakistan's communication infrastructure, that will benefit and enrich various IT sectors.

The satellite will provide services such as television broadcasting, community internet, and tele-education to promote local industries. Furthermore, it will help increase internet connectivity in remote areas which will further boost the government's vision of Digital Pakistan.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Successful summit**

With a focus on multilateralism and Eurasian connectivity, the two-day SCO Heads of Government summit wrapped up successfully in Islamabad yesterday. The prime ministers of China and Russia attended, as well as top leaders and officials from other member states, and observers. The meeting sent the much-needed message that Pakistan was once again open for business and ready to play a central role in multilateral bodies. The major themes of the event, as summed up in the summit's joint communiqué, covered a range of topics, including commerce, the environment, cultural exchanges, etc.

Significantly, the document reaffirmed efforts to set up the SCO Development Bank and increase "the share of national currencies in mutual settlements". The document also observed that the "unilateral application of sanctions is incompatible" with international law. All these appear to be barely disguised jabs at the West, which has weaponised sanctions and the dollar against geopolitical foes such as Russia and Iran, both SCO members. Additionally, the statement emphasised the preservation of "traditional values and cultural and civilisational diversity". For his part, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif highlighted climate change as an "existential crisis", while discussing the need for stability in Afghanistan, which, although an SCO member, has not been participating in the group's meetings since the 2021 Taliban takeover. Mr Sharif also observed that the "ongoing genocide in Gaza" could not be ignored. While hosting such multilateral events is routine for states, considering Pakistan's peculiar challenges over the last few years — particularly security issues, financial troubles, and internal political tumult — organising the moot and ensuring the security of such a large number of foreign dignitaries was no mean feat. Fellow SCO states also recognised Pakistan's efforts, while observing in the joint communiqué that the summit was held in a "constructive and friendly atmosphere".

From hereon, it will take time and much effort to translate the SCO vision, particularly concerning a common bank, currency swaps, seamless regional connectivity, etc, into reality. After all, the bureaucracies of all 10 states, with varying systems of government, have to be on board and work towards these common goals, which is a considerable challenge. But while the objectives may be difficult to achieve, they are not impossible. From Pakistan's perspective, regional connectivity with its Eurasian neighbours is essential for economic growth. The country cannot remain isolated in the region. At a time when there is increased fragmentation in the world, and several conflicts are smouldering across continents, platforms like the SCO present an opportunity for states to set aside narrow differences and come together to pursue common goals for the benefit of their people. Rather than negatively viewing this as a revival of 'bloc politics', as some may do, a more optimistic view is required.

**Hope triumphant**

F.S.Aijazuddin

Someone in the IMF is not familiar with Dr Samuel Johnson's witty definition of a second marriage: "a triumph of hope over experience". The IMF and Pakistan have been in and out of wedlock not twice, but multiple times.

One would have imagined that an institution as experienced as the IMF would spot a habitual offender amongst a pack of its financial delinquents. Apparently not. No sooner had Pakistan digested the Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) of \$3 billion extended by the IMF in 2023-24, than it applied for a new loan of \$7bn. Even addicts draw a breath before the next snort.

Recall our predicament in 2023, as we waited desperately for the release of the last \$1.1bn tranche of the SBA. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif assured the IMF MD Mme Georgieva that, if re-elected, he stood "committed to turning over the economy with the help of IMF and development partners".

On her part, Mme Georgieva reminded him that, although he had "built a very convincing case", the IMF Board recalled "the past trust deficit" and reiterated its scepticism about Pakistan's freshest undertakings. She then mollified her Board with the assurance that Pakistan would "deliver on its commitments ... as she had personally met the prime minister and seen his seriousness to deliver".

In reciprocation, our PM expressed his "profound gratitude" for her "support and assistance" and sent her some mangoes in appreciation of "her leadership and professionalism". Apparently, mangoes did the trick. A year later, on Sept 25, 2024, the IMF approved a 37-month Ex-

tended Arrangement for SDR 5,320 million. (around \$7bn). It was an anniversary of sorts. This is the 25th time Pakistan has approached the IMF for a bailout.

To obtain this \$7bn loan and its first tranche of \$1.1bn, Pakistan assured the IMF that it will implement radical changes which will test the public's patriotism and the sinews of our federation. The new programme comes with several conditions, or "bitter pills". These include bringing undertaxed sectors including retail, export, industrialists, developers, and large-scale agriculture into the income tax regime.

The Government has agreed to reduce "non-transparent support through exemptions for privileged sectors like real estate, agriculture, manufacturing, and energy, as well as, through the proliferation of Special Economic Zones". The IMF demands the abolition of SEZs by 2035. CPEC, however, plans into 2030 the expansion of SEZs and Free Trade Zones, especially Gwadar Port.

The IMF programme repeats a familiar mantra — earn more, spend less, and minimise borrowing. The IMF recognises the inherent schisms in Pakistan's political structure: "Political economy considerations and pressures from vested interests could delay or weaken the reform momentum and put at risk still-fragile stability."

The IMF also expects Pakistan to be supported by "development and bilateral partners", ie, the World Bank, ADB, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and China.

The CPEC is the IMF's bugbear. The IMF sought transparent disclosure; Pakistan hid behind legal obfuscation. In 2022, the IMF carped that Pakistan owed more to

China than the IMF and DFIs combined. In 2022, Pakistan owed China \$26.6bn, and the IMF about \$7bn.

The IMF's staff report supporting the \$7bn loan approval contains an odd justification: "Reputational risks would arise if the Fund were perceived as treating Pakistan differently from other members that ostensibly enjoy less support. Alternatively, not proceeding with a new programme also raises reputational risks as the new authorities, or other members, may accuse the Fund of not being evenhanded."

The IMF recognises that some debtors have not prospect of being repaid on time, unless a major creditor (China) either reschedules or rolls over or writes off its loans. The Chinese may do the first, possibly also the second. China is giving in the business of giving charity without cause.

When will China tire of being Pakistan's banker of the first and the last resort? One suspects it will reconsider its largesse after the next US administration is in place.

For the time being, Pakistan is enjoying the advantage of a pre-US election windfall. The latest IMF loan is spread over the next three years, with periodic reviews. Whichever candidate — Donald Trump or Kamala Harris — wins the White House in November, our \$7bn IMF lifeline will definitely come under scrutiny. President Trump gave a previous prime minister a personal tour of the White House. Will he be inclined to extend a similar courtesy to his successor? Kamala Harris knows Pakistan as India's intractable neighbour. Her DNA could colour her judgment. Meanwhile, to paraphrase Herbert Hoover: accused are the young, for they shall inherit our national debt. — Courtesy Dawn

**Rights review**

Rabiya Javeri Agha

Like any country in the world, Pakistan is host to multifaceted and complex human rights issues. The country's marginalised groups, women, minorities, and children frequently face systemic rights violations that are rooted in entrenched power structures.

Perpetrators enjoy impunity, with little rehabilitative support offered to victims. It is thus of little surprise that Pakistan's performance on international indexes is faltering. Pakistan ranked 164 out of 193 countries under the latest Human Development Index, placing it firmly in the "low human development" category in terms of education, health and income levels.

The situation on the ground is worrying, especially when one considers the Government of Pakistan's international commitments under the seven core United Nations human rights treaties it has ratified. These treaties are more than just paper. They create concrete obligations for the government to respect and fulfil key civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all those in its territory. On Oct 17, 2024, the Government of Pakistan's performance pertaining to civil and political rights, as enshrined under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), will come under review before the UN Human Rights Committee. The committee will engage in a constructive dialogue with the government, at the end of which a list of recommendations will be issued.

While Pakistan has ratified the core UN human rights treaties, its commitment to uphold-

ing the rights within remains fragile. The upcoming review underscores the importance of reform. The National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) plays a pivotal role in this process. In its capacity as an official, independent rights watchdog under the NCHR Act of 2012, it has resolved over 7,900 cases and played a key role in advocating for human rights at home and abroad. Through its research and advocacy, the NCHR has successfully challenged discriminatory practices, secured the release of prisoners, and worked to maintain our operational independence despite challenges. However, these efforts alone are not enough to reverse the systemic issues that hold Pakistan back. Our report to the UN committee outlines Pakistan's legislative and administrative strides, but also highlights persistent challenges in enforcement.

An area of grave concern is violence against women. Despite constitutional and legal protections, 23 per cent of married women in Pakistan report physical abuse, while 26pc face emotional abuse. These alarming statistics point to systemic flaws in law enforcement and the judiciary, where patriarchal norms limit justice for victims. With only 18pc of reported rape cases reaching court, the path to justice is fraught with challenges. The economic cost of this violence, estimated at \$189.7 million annually, is a further burden Pakistan can ill afford. Strengthening legal frameworks, providing better protection, and empowering women must become national priorities. Religious minorities in Pakistan also face escalating violence and discrimination. The

misuse of blasphemy laws led to 705 people being jailed by mid-2024, and continues to cause concern, while forced conversions — especially of Hindu girls — underline the vulnerabilities of marginalised communities. While legislative measures exist, enforcement is weak, leaving minority groups exposed to socio-economic and religious persecution. The NCHR has worked diligently to address these issues but recognises that more comprehensive reforms are urgently needed, particularly in tackling extremism and reforming re-ligious education.

Torture and ill-treatment by law enforcement remain troubling realities. Despite the passage of the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act in 2022, implementation has been slow. Torture is not only a violation of human dignity, but a symptom of larger institutional flaws. Inhumane prison conditions, exacerbated by overcrowding and inadequate medical care, add to the suffering, with pre-trial detainees making up a significant portion of the prison population. Pakistan's international human rights obligations are not just boxes to be ticked — they represent the rights and dignity of its people. As we approach the next ICCPR review, the NCHR will continue to advocate for reforms that bring us closer to fulfilling these commitments. The government must act decisively to improve conditions for women, minorities, and the incarcerated, ensuring that no one in Pakistan is left behind. The future of human rights in Pakistan depends on meaningful action. It's time to turn rhetoric into reality. — Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Pakistan's economy shows signs of recovery amid govt reforms, IMF deal: SBP**

KARACHI (INP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has released its Annual Report on the State of Pakistan's Economy for the fiscal year 2023-24, revealing signs of economic recovery driven by stabilization policies, improved agricultural productivity, and engagement with international financial institutions. The report highlights improved macroeconomic conditions in FY24, supported by

stabilization policies, successful negotiations with the IMF, and a favorable global economic environment. According to the report, Pakistan's macroeconomic conditions improved, supported by stabilization policies, successful engagement with the IMF, reduced uncertainty, and favourable global economic environment. The increase in domestic agricultural productivity also contributed to relatively

better macroeconomic outcomes during the year, the Report added. The real GDP registered a moderate agriculture-led recovery in FY24. A record harvest of wheat and rice, and a rebound in the production of cotton mainly provided boost to agricultural output during FY24.

The report highlights that despite a recovery in real economic activity, the current account deficit further narrowed to a 13-year low as strong growth

in remittances and exports more than offset a slight increase in imports. This, coupled with the Stand-By Agreement with the IMF that catalysed inflows from other multilateral and bilateral sources, helped in the build-up of FX reserves and calming sentiments in the foreign exchange market. The gradual exchange rate appreciation during the year, together with higher-than- envisaged fiscal consolidation.



SINGAPORE: Pakistan's High Commissioner to Singapore, Ms. Rabiya Shafiq in a meeting with Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF) President Lennon Tan and council members.



KARACHI: Brokers are busy in trading at Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) in Karachi.

**Pakistan Charge d'Affaires highlights opportunities for Pak pharma exports to Europe**

BRUSSELS (APP): The Embassy of Pakistan in Brussels organized a webinar in which Chargé d'Affaires Faraz Zaidi emphasized the importance of enhancing Pakistan's pharmaceutical exports to Europe, highlighting the sector's untapped potential.

The webinar titled "Opportunities for Pakistan in the Pharmaceutical Sector of Belgium" was held in collaboration with the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP).

The event attracted significant participation from leading Pakistani pharmaceutical companies, with over 35 CEOs and directors attending the session. The Chargé d'Affaires underscored the Embassy's commitment to fostering stronger trade relations between the two countries, particularly in

high-value sectors such as pharmaceuticals.

Bilal Khan, Trade and Investment Attaché, provided insights into the current state of bilateral trade between Pakistan and Belgium. He discussed key trends and opportunities for Pakistani pharmaceutical exporters and urged stakeholders to leverage Belgium's position as a hub for pharmaceutical innovation in Europe.

**SAMENA LEAD PTCL Group wins "Best Business Strategy and Expansion" Awards**

ISLAMABAD (APP): PTCL Group, Pakistan's largest ICT services provider, has won the "Best Business Strategy and Expansion" award at the Leadership and Excellence Awards in Digital Development (LEAD) by the SAMENA Telecommunications Council. According to a news release, the prestigious award was presented to Hatem Bamatraf, President and

Group CEO of PTCL & Ufone 4G in recognition of the company's relentless efforts to innovate and broaden its market presence. Moreover, the award recognizes PTCL Group's exceptional business strategies, which have enabled the company to take challenges head-on, make strategic decisions, and successfully position itself on a path of sustained growth and success.

**Iran ready to work with all Pakistani industries: Mehran**

LAHORE (APP): Iranian Consul General Mehran Mowahid Far has said that Iran recognises the industrial development of Pakistan and is ready to work with all industries of Pakistan.

He said Lahore is not only a cultural but an industrial city, which has made its name with quality and hard work.

He expressed his views during a visit to the head office of Pak Tractor Manufacturing Company, Lahore here on Thursday.

He said that more than 20 Iranian companies were participating in the Pakistan Auto Show 2024, to be held at Expo Center Lahore this month, with which both countries would be able to benefit from each other's technology and experiences.

**Pak total liquid foreign reserves rise to \$16.11 billion**

KARACHI (APP): The total liquid foreign reserves of Pakistan surged to US\$ 16,111.3 million as of October 11, 2024 while the forex reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan increased to \$11,022 million.

The SBP reserves are at a 30-month high since the March 2022 when the central bank possessed liquid foreign reserves of \$11,425.1 billion. The total liquid foreign reserves of the country are also at 29-month high since April 2022 when volume of the total liquid reserves was accounted as \$16,406 million.

The State Bank of Pakistan, in a statement issued here on Thursday, informed that total liquid foreign reserves held by the central bank increased by \$215 million to \$11,022.7 million during the week ended on October 11, 2024. Meanwhile, net foreign reserves held by commercial banks were recorded as \$5,088.6 million during the week under review, it added. Total liquid foreign reserves held by the country, in the previous week ended on October 04, 2024, were \$16,047 million.

**PSX raises over Rs1 trillion through via GOP Ijarah Sukuk**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) announced a significant achievement on Thursday, surpassing the Rs 1 trillion mark through the issuance of Government of Pakistan (GoP) Ijarah Sukuk (GIS).

This breakthrough was achieved following the successful conclusion of the 13th GIS auction on September 16, 2024 through which an

additional Rs 207 billion was raised for the Ministry of Finance (MoF), said a news release.

The GIS Auctions started on December 8, 2023, and have since witnessed robust participation from the banks, mutual funds and brokerage fraternity, with each auction contributing to the growth of the Shariah-based Government Securities market.

**Mujtaba stresses shifting economic focus beyond agriculture, industry**

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Finance Minister Mian Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman, while addressing the 4th Pakistan Future of Retail Business Summit and Expo at a local hotel here on Thursday, stressed the need to shift Pakistan's economic focus beyond agriculture and industry.

He highlighted the significant role of the retail and wholesale sectors, which contribute over Rs. 20 trillion to the national economy, making up 18pc of the GDP and providing employment

to over 10 million people.

The theme of the summit, "Building a Stronger and Smarter Retail Ecosystem," addressed the evolving dynamics of the retail sector. The Minister stated that retail is a vital component of domestic commerce and plays a crucial role in driving national prosperity. He noted the substantial progress in Pakistan's retail landscape, with organized retail stores and the growth of e-commerce bringing local brands like Khaadi.

## Maryam asserts Empowering underprivileged will strengthen society

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz asserted that a society could only be strengthened with the empowerment of underprivileged and disadvantaged.

Sharing her message on the International Day for Reduction of Poverty, Maryam stated that poverty wasn't only an economic challenge but its result of inequality in education, health and justice.

She pledged for eradication of poverty through social justice and

economic development taking office of CM, Maryam Nawaz highlighted.

She recalled the projects launched for eradication of poverty including Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar, for the homeless, Kissan Package worth Rs 4 billion for farmers and Himmat Card for special persons.

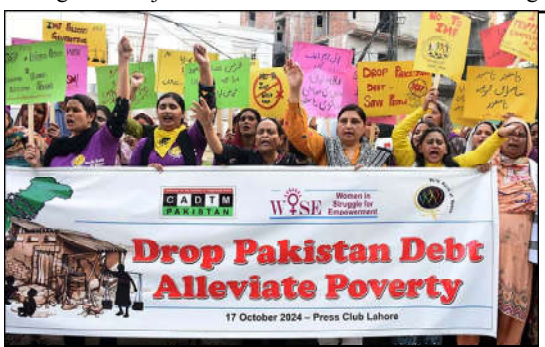
CM Maryam revealed that skills and economic opportunities programs and other innovative measures were being taken as well as women were being

empowered financially to reduce unemployment and poverty. She took concrete measures for reduction of inflation and rates of necessary items, Maryam Nawaz emphasized.

Punjab CM stressed that mutual responsibility and effort was needed for reduction of poverty.

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is being observed today.

This year the theme of the day is "Ending Social and Institutional Maltreatment Acting together for just, peaceful and inclusive societies".



LAHORE: Members of Women in Struggle for Empowerment (WISE) are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products and inflation price hiking, at Lahore press club.

## No evidence found in private college incident: CCPO Lahore

LAHORE (APP): Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamyana on Thursday said that no evidence had been found to confirm the incident at a private college.

Addressing a press conference with DIG Operations Faisal Kamran, the CCPO mentioned that a video related to a private college went viral on social media. As soon as the incident was reported, the college's CCTV footage was reviewed, but nothing was found, he added.

Kamyana said that the hospitals mentioned on

social media were also checked, and the names of the girls in the video were investigated. "One of the girls is married, and the students who have initially spoken about the incident have now retracted their statements. So far, no evidence has been found to confirm the incident," he added.

The CCPO further said that a high-level government committee also declared the incident baseless. Motorcycles were burnt on Wednesday, 24 people were arrested, and students involved in violence were warned and released, he added.

## Two police officials suspended over negligence

FAISALABAD (APP): Superintendent of Police (SP) Lyallpur Division suspended two police officials including an Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) on the charge of negligence and delinquency.

Police said here on Thursday that ASI Nasir and constable Shafiq Hussain were carrying an accused Atif for recovery of case property when he managed to escape from police custody. Therefore, an inquiry was conducted against both officials and the inquiry officer proved them both guilty.

## Eight officers transferred in mild reshuffle in KP Police

PESHAWAR (APP): The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has ordered the posting and transfer of 8 police officers in a mild reshuffle of the officers, said a notification issued by Central Police Office (CPO) here on Thursday.

According to the notification Mr Sajjad Hussain Prov.



PESHAWAR: Quami Watan Party Chairman, Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao addresses to participant during Annual Foundation Day ceremony held in Peshawar.

## Governor Kundi calls for collective efforts to eradicate poverty

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday underscored that eliminating poverty was a national duty, stressing the collective efforts. He said this on the eve of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

He highlighted the need for concrete actions and effective policies aimed at uplifting the marginalized segments of society, enabling them to pursue a path toward prosperity.

Governor Kundi pointed out, "Various

developmental and welfare projects are crucial for poverty alleviation in KP, particularly given the role of terrorism in exacerbating unemployment and poverty in the province."

He said, "Achieving economic stability hinges on maintaining peace, promoting women's empowerment, and engaging youth." He stressed the importance of improving education, healthcare, and employment opportunities as essential steps to uproot poverty. "Pakistan's development is contingent upon providing economic opportunities to its vulnerable

## LHC seeks arguments on appeal for bail cancellation of Rasikh Elahi, others

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday adjourned the hearing of an appeal seeking the cancellation of pre-arrest bail granted to Rasikh Elahi, Zahra Elahi, Tehreem Elahi, and others in a money laundering case. The court sought arguments from the parties for the next hearing, scheduled for October 24.

A division bench, headed by Justice Shehram Sarwar Chaudhry, heard the appeal filed by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). Rasikh Elahi, Zahra

Elahi, and Tehreem Elahi, along with their counsel, appeared before the bench during the proceedings. However, Saira Anwar, a co-accused, did not appear, but her counsel submitted a medical certificate on her behalf. At this, the bench directed Saira Anwar to appear on the next hearing date. The FIA had approached the high court for the cancellation of bail for Rasikh Elahi, Tehreem Elahi, and other accused, stating that the trial court confirmed their interim bail in violation of the law.

## Nobody to be allowed to create law, order situation: Azma

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari has said that nobody will be allowed to create law and order situation in Punjab and cause unrest.

While commenting on the press conference of Opposition Leader in Punjab Assembly Malik Ahmad Khan Bhachar here on Thursday, she alleged that students had been motivated to create unrest from official page of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. She said that people of

Insaf Student Wing were found involved in creating chaos.

She alleged that the PTI defamed a girl and her family as per planning. Azma said police were performing its duty to maintain law and order, and all cities including Lahore, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi were normal.

She said that strict action would be taken against all those who spread fake information in this regard and did negative propaganda.



RAWALPINDI: A view of damage building of a college from students during a protest of students in favor of their demands at 6th road in the city.

## PHC issues notices to PMDC, KMU over out of syllabus questions in MDCAT test

PESHAWAR (APP): A two-member bench consisting of Justice Shakeel Ahmad and Justice Sahibzada Asad Ullah on Thursday heard a petition filed by the Medical and Dental Colleges Admission Test (MDCAT) aspiring students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa against out of syllabus questions in MDCAT test and requested for award of grace marks. After hearing of the case the court issued notices to Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) and Khyber Medical University (KMU), Peshawar to submit their reply.

Earlier, the counsel of the petitioners Sher Hyder Khan Advocate argued that after so many controversial episodes related to the

MDCAT in the last few years, the test for medical colleges was not fair and transparent this year and there was large-scale protest across the country regarding the irregularities witnessed during the test.

He said that several out of syllabus questions were included in the test which was evidence of mismanagement and inefficiency. He said that the petitioners were qualified and eligible candidates and attempted all the question wherein it was found that some questions in the question paper were having multiple interpretations, higher difficulty level, defective answer wrong answers and confusing one and filed complaints before the Khyber Medical University (KMU).

## International News

## Israeli FM claims Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar 'eliminated'

**Monitoring Desk**  
JERUSALEM: Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz on Thursday claimed the death in an attack of Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar, who Israel has accused of masterminding the group's attack on October 7 last year.

"The mass murderer Yahya Sinwar, responsible for the massacre and atrocities of October 7th, was eliminated today by IDF (Israeli Defence Forces) soldiers," Katz said in a statement sent to media.

Israel earlier said it was checking whether it had successfully "eliminated" Sinwar in a Gaza operation, in what constitutes a massive blow against the group it has been fighting since last year's October 7 attack.

Israel accuses Sinwar of masterminding the attack and has been hunting him down since the start of the Gaza conflict. Israel's rag-

ged military offensive has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, including women and children.

Sinwar became the group's new leader after the killing of its former political chief Ismail Haniyeh in July. Hamas and Iran blame Israel for Haniyeh's killing, but Israel has not commented on it.

Israel's announcement on Sinwar comes weeks after it assassinated Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah in a massive strike in Lebanon, where its military has been waging an offensive since late September. A slew of other Iran-backed commanders have also been killed in recent months.

With Hamas hugely weakened more than a year into the Gaza conflict, Sinwar's death deals a major blow to the organisation. In a brief statement, the military ear-



Luxembourg's Prime Minister Luc Frieden, Romania's President Klaus Iohannis, Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and President of the European Council Charles Michel attend a European Union leaders summit in Brussels, Belgium.

## US warns Israel to boost humanitarian aid into Gaza or risk losing weapons funding

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: The Biden administration has warned Israel that it must increase the amount of humanitarian aid it is allowing into Gaza within the next 30 days or it could risk losing access to U.S. weapons funding.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin warned their Israeli counterparts in a letter dated Sunday that the changes must occur. The letter,

which restates U.S. policy toward humanitarian aid and arms transfers, was sent amid deteriorating conditions in northern Gaza and an Israeli airstrike on a hospital tent site in central Gaza that killed at least four people and burned others.

A similar letter that Blinken sent to Israeli officials in April led to more humanitarian assistance getting to the Palestinian territory, State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Tuesday.

## Biden offers both a carrot and a stick to Israel as his term nears an end

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: In his final months in office, President Joe Biden is signaling new willingness to use US military assistance to Israel as both a carrot and a stick to influence its high-stakes confrontation with Iran and Iran-backed militant groups.

But while the approach increases Washington's involvement in Israeli decision-making just weeks before the US presidential election, it is unclear whether it will help achieve Biden's goals, including preventing a broader regional conflict and getting Israel to address the increasingly dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, experts say.

Biden's administration also delivered 100 soldiers to Israel along with an advanced US anti-missile system, a rare deployment that came as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government weighs a retaliatory attack on Iran after an Oct. 1 Iranian missile strike.

The Biden administration also delivered Israel a letter on Sunday warning that it must take steps in the next month to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza or face potential restrictions on US military aid.

## India blames Canada PM Trudeau for damaging ties over Sikh separatist murder row

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: India blamed Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Thursday for disastrous diplomatic fallout following the 2023 killing of a Sikh separatist in Canada.

New Delhi held firm its defiant stance towards Ottawa — an approach in sharp contrast to its compliant attitude this week towards the United States, where India is also accused of directing a separate assassination plot.

Canada has alleged that India arranged the killing of a Sikh separatist, naturalised Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar, murdered in the parking lot of a Sikh temple in Vancouver in June 2023.

India has called the allegations "preposterous".

But Trudeau, at a parliamentary inquiry on Wednesday, said Canada had "clear... indications that India had violated Canada's sovereignty".

Canada's top envoy to New Delhi, Stewart Wheeler, who India has ordered to leave by Saturday night, has said Ottawa had provided "credible, irrefutable evidence of ties between agents of the Government of India and the murder of a Canadian citizen".

India's foreign ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal on Thursday said they had not seen that evidence.

"Canada has presented us (India) no evidence whatsoever in support of the serious allegations that it has chosen to level against India and Indian diplomats," he said in a statement. "The responsibility for the damage that this cavalier behaviour has caused to India-Canada relations lies with Prime Minister Trudeau alone."

Nijjar — who immigrated to Canada in 1997 and became a citizen in 2015 — had advocated for a separate Sikh state, known as Khalistan, carved out of India.

## North Korea says 1.4 million apply to join army amid tensions with South

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: North Korean state media said on Wednesday around 1.4 million young people had applied to join or return to the army this week, blaming Seoul for a provocative drone incursion that had brought the "tense situation to the brink of war".

The fiery rhetoric comes after North Korea last week accused Seoul of sending drones over Pyongyang that scattered a "huge number" of anti-North leaflets. The North then blew up inter-Korean roads and rail lines on its side of the border on Tuesday, and warned that the South would "pay a dear price".

The young people, including students and youth league officials who had signed petitions to join the

## Kenya's deputy president 'very sick' in hospital, lawyer says

**Monitoring Desk**  
NAIROBI: A lawyer representing Kenya's Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua in his impeachment hearing told the Senate on Thursday that the politician was "very sick" and in hospital, after he failed to attend proceedings. The National Assembly voted last week to impeach Gachagua, who helped President William Ruto win an election two years ago but has been assailed by allies of the president over alleged disloyalty and a series of provocative public comments. Gachagua was due to defend himself against the 11 impeachment charges in the Senate on Thursday afternoon, before senators take a vote on whether to remove him from office. "The sad reality is that the deputy president of the republic of Kenya has been taken sick, very sick."

## UN report says 1.1 billion people living in acute poverty

**Monitoring Desk**  
GENOVA: More than one billion people are living in acute poverty across the globe, a UN Development Programme report said on Thursday, with children accounting for over half of those affected.

The paper published with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) highlighted that poverty rates were three times higher in countries at war, as 2023 saw the most conflicts around the world since the Second World War.

## Moldova says its citizens were trained in Russia to stage riots

**Monitoring Desk**  
CHISINAU: Moldovan police said on Thursday they had uncovered a programme in which hundreds of its citizens were brought to Russia to undergo training to stage riots and civil unrest, the latest in a slew of meddling allegations ahead of Sunday's election. The police said earlier this month that Russia-backed crime groups had bribed a swathe of voters and plotted.

## Amir presides meeting to review preparations about Kashmir Black Day

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and State & Frontier Regions (SAFRON) Engineer Amir Muqam on Thursday presided the meeting and reviewed the preparations regarding October 27 Kashmir Black Day.

In a statement, the minister said that Pakistanis had already given a clear message to the world that Kashmiri people were residing in their hearts.

He categorically stated that India had oppressively occupied Kashmir, which had been rejected by the Kashmiris.

He emphasized that an all-parties conference should be called on Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) to pressurize India to impede

its barbarism and genocide on innocent Kashmiris.

Amir Muqam said that Pakistan would continue its unwavering support to its Kashmiri brothers and sisters, adding that it was our national duty to remain Kashmir issue alive till independence.

"Pakistan would continue to provide political, moral and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri brothers until they achieve the right of self-determination according to the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), he said.

Federal Ministries, Gilgit-Baltistan and the representatives of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) governments briefed the minister regarding the preparations and arrangements for Kashmir Black Day.



QUETTA: Chairman Balochistan Commission on the Status of Women Fozia Shaheen meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

## Sustainable economic development must eradicate inequality, poverty: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan on Thursday said that sustainable economic development is essential for eradicating poverty and economic empowerment in the country. Wealth creation, equal distribution of wealth, and economic competitiveness in society are necessary to eradicate poverty and sustainable economic development in the country, the minister said.

The Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives said this while chairing a roundtable consultation on Targeting Zero poverty, here in the auditorium of Planning Development and Special Initiatives.

The minister said that quality education, gender equality and maintaining peace and justice in the society must be for sustainable economic development and prosperity in the country. Meanwhile, he announced a task force for sustainable economic development and to eradicate poverty to remove inequality in the country.

Ahsan Iqbal said that this is the era of economic ideologies and the world is now distributed in geo-economic blocks and technology and export-driven economies are performing in the modern world. He said that data science and technology play a significant role in the economic development of modern states and countries.

## Bilawal pays tributes to martyrs of Karsaz tragedy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has paid tributes to the martyrs of the Karsaz tragedy on its 17th anniversary, solemnly commemorating the horrific attack that occurred on October 18, 2007.

Reflecting on the tragic day when 180 brave party workers laid down their lives, he expressed profound sorrow and reaffirmed the PPP's unwavering commitment to the ideals of democracy, justice, and sacrifice in the service of the people.

In a press release issued by then party Media Cell, he said, "The Karsaz bombing was a calculated conspiracy where dictatorship and terrorists joined forces, targeting the truck carrying Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and the central leadership of PPP, amidst a sea

of millions who had come to welcome her. Those who attempted to silence the voice of democracy with terror and violence have failed, and their efforts were in vain."

He further remarked, "The Karsaz tragedy is a solemn reminder of the ultimate price paid by our brave party workers, who sacrificed their lives for the noble cause of democracy. Their courage and selflessness remain etched in the history of our ongoing struggle for a peaceful, democratic Pakistan—a struggle led by Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto."

Bilawal Bhutto emphasized that the blood of the Karsaz martyrs continues to inspire the fight against extremism, injustice, and the few forces that have historically sought to suppress the rights of the people.

## BNP being kept away from democratic struggle: Agha Hasan concerned about disappearance of Senator Qasim Ronjho, son of Nasima Ehsan

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The central Secretary Information of Balochistan National Party (BNP), Agha Hasan Baloch has expressed concern about disappearance of the party's Senator Qasim Ronjho and son of Senator Nasima Ehsan from Islamabad and demanded of the government to ensure their immediate recovery.

He was addressing joint press conference along with other party leaders here at the Quetta Press Club on Thursday.

Agha Hasan Baloch mentioned that Senator Qasim Ronjho had gone for dialysis in Islamabad the other day (Wednesday) and since then, there are no whereabouts of him. Similarly, son of party's Senator Nasima Ehsan is also missing, he pointed out.

He condemned the raid at the lodges in Islamabad and harassment of party's senior leader,



Sajid Tareen Advocate.

He said that the people are not disappeared to use as a tool for getting the constitutional amendment passed.

He said that we are political and democratic people, and as such have always made democratic policies. However, adding he alleged that the party is being kept away from the political and democratic struggle. He also said that the federation has not comprehended the issue of



ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister of Mongolia H.E. Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene along with a delegation meets Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## NAPHDA violation of financial obligations abandoned 'Low-Cost Housing Project' in Ali Pur: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar Thursday said the Naya Pakistan Housing and Development Authority (NAPHDA) failed to fulfill its financial obligations that led to financial constraints causing slow progress of low-cost housing project at Ali Pur Farash.

He said while responding to the query of Member National Assembly (MNA), Aliya Kamran's query pertaining to abandoned and in complete projects of Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the slow pace development of Ali Pur Farash project on behalf of

the Interior Minister.

Attaullah Tarar said Ali Pur Farash project was not abandoned by the CDA but rather non-fulfillment of contractual obligations, non-payment by NAPHDA and violation of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between CDA, NAPHDA and FWO led to halted financial progress.

"It is 66% complete and remaining halted due to financial constraints and unfulfilled contractual obligations," he said.

Cost escalation in Ali Pur Farash project has increased multiple times and the matter should be referred to the committee concerned, he said.

The Speaker National Assembly referred it to the Standing Committee on Interior.

The Minister for Information informed that the Margalla Avenue extension till Bari Imam was the new road development project that would be completed in next two months as swift progress was underway.

He added that the Serena Chowk underpass was conceived by the Minister Interior which was under the original plan to facilitate foreign guests and high profile functions which would start from Serena Chowk to Jinnah Convention Center would be launched soon.

## FC carry out successful anti-smuggling operations

QUETTA (INP): Frontier Corps Balochistan along with other agencies is carrying out successful anti-smuggling operations in different areas of the province. The FC successfully foiled smuggling of illegal goods in the areas of Dera Murad Jamali, Barkhan, Pishin, Chaman, Nushki, Zhob and Panjaji during the past one month.

In these operations, the FC seized sixty-six metric tons sugar, more than five thousand three hundred liters Iranian diesel, seven hundred seventy-two tyres, twenty-nine metric tons milk powder and six metric tons betel nuts, Non-Custom vehicles, cigarettes and China salt.

## SCO summit boosts Gwadar port's regional significance: Qasiser

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh Thursday praised SCO summit as a resounding success, highlighting its potential to unlock new regional connectivity, opportunities and expressed optimism that exports will receive a significant boost through Gwadar Port, particularly as China relocates its middle industries to Pakistan.

Federal Minister expressed optimism about Gwadar Port's potential to drive Pakistan's economic growth while speaking to PTV news channel.

He emphasized that the port's success is crucial for the country's economic progress, he added.

China's decision to relocate its middle industries to Pakistan is expected to significantly boost the country's economy, he further mentioned. This strategic move will not only improve economic growth but also create numerous job opportunities for the local workforce, ultimately enhancing the overall standard of living, he said. Responding to a query, he said the SCO summit's successful conclusion has earned Pakistan widespread appreciation for its exceptional hospitality. It is an honor to have hosted this prestigious event, showcasing our country's capability to organize high-profile international gatherings seamlessly, he added.



QUETTA: Chairman Public Accounts Committee Asghar Ali Tareen in a group photo with Chairman Public Accounts Committee of Punjab Assembly Ali Haider Gilani and others during visit of Balochistan Assembly

## Court sends Swati to jail on judicial remand

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Islamabad on Thursday sent the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Azam Swati to jail on judicial remand, following his involvement in a protest case. The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain heard the case. Azam Swati was presented before the court.

## Fawad heaps praise on Fazal for safeguarding constitution

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry on Thursday singled out Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman for putting up 'actual fight' for protecting the constitution of Pakistan.

Speaking to media outside Islamabad's accountability court, former minister lauded Maulana's point of view regarding constitutional amendment which

the latter shared with reporters after calling on Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif alongside top political leadership of other parties including President Asif Ali Zardari for consultations on proposed constitutional package.

Chaudhry, who is a lawyer himself, claimed that Maulana's stance was closest to that of legal community as well as of people who believed in democracy.

## Over 150 arrested as violent protests against alleged Lahore rape spread to Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI (INP): At least 150 violent protesters were arrested in Rawalpindi as police used tear gas to disperse students demonstrating against the alleged rape of a Lahore student.

Last week, reports related to the alleged rape of the private college student went viral on social media, prompting the police to arrest a security guard at the college who was allegedly involved in the incident.

Enraged by the alleged incident, students mobilised on social media and staged protests outside different colleges in Lahore in the past few days. On Monday, at least 28 were injured due to clashes with the security guards of the college and police.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has declared that the alleged rape was "fabricated news", blaming the PTI for spread



QUETTA: Provincial Advisor Rabada Buledi addressing on seminar on Women Rights organized by Today Woman.

## Pakistan, Mongolia agree to form JMC, inter-parliamentary union to boost cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Mongolia on Thursday agreed to form a Joint Ministerial Commission to enhance cooperation in trade, tourism, agriculture and mining sectors, and an inter-parliamentary union to expand the bilateral parliamentary ties.

The bilateral relations were discussed in a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his Mongolian counterpart Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene here on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) Meeting, according to a PM Office press release.

In the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz suggested that both sides

should explore new avenues of mutually advantageous cooperation with a particular focus on trade, investment, people-to-people contacts and connections.

He offered the Mongolian side to send civil servants to training institutions in Pakistan and also proposed to declare 2025 as the year of Pakistan-Mongolia Friendship to bolster the brotherly ties between the two countries.

Prime Minister Shehbaz warmly welcomed Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene and noted that his visit marked a new chapter in the history of the bilateral relationship, defined by mutual respect, goodwill and amity.

Felicitating him on his

re-election as the Prime Minister of Mongolia, Shehbaz Sharif stated he looked forward to working closely with Oyun-Erdene in the days ahead to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

Oyun-Erdene warmly felicitated the prime minister on the successful conduct of the SCO CHG Meeting and appreciated Pakistan's leadership role as SCO CHG Chair. He reciprocated that Mongolia shared Pakistan's desire to build stronger and closer bilateral relations through joint efforts and collaboration.

The Mongolian prime minister also planted a sapling in the lawn of the Prime Minister's House.



QUETTA: Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar visiting Balochistan Institute for Nephrology Urology Quetta. Secretary Health Mubejzur Rehman Panezai is also present

## ECP fixes Oct 28 as last date for postal ballot

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday fixed Oct 28 as the last date for receiving applications for postal ballot papers for by elections to the Provincial Assembly, Balochistan PB-08, Sibi.

In a statement, the ECP said that the facility, under the law, has been extended to the persons in government service, members of armed forces, their wives and such of their children as are registered voters and ordinarily reside with them provided they are stationed at a place other than the place in which their constituency is situated.

Persons with any physical disability who are unable to travel and hold a national identity card with a logo for physical disability issued by the national database and registration authority (NADRA) can also vote via postal ballot, the poll body said, adding persons who are detained in prison or held in custody are also entitled to vote by postal ballot.

## IMF okays increase in BISP stipend amount

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved a major increase in the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) stipend amount.

According to IMF, the quarterly stipend for BISP recipients will increase by Rs. 3,000, raising the total quarterly stipend to Rs. 13,500 from January who currently receive Rs. 10,500.

The IMF is working to enhance the BISP and its administrative systems, in collaboration with the World Bank.

The BISP has a budget of Rs. 599 billion for the current financial year, accounting for 0.5% of Pakistan's GDP.

This represents a 27% increase from the previous year.

## Dr Rubaba grieved over death of Humayun Mari

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Advisor for Women Development, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, expressed deep sorrow over the passing of former caretaker Chief Minister, former Chairman of the Senate, and former Provincial Minister Nawabzada Mir Humayun Mari. She stated that Nawabzada Humayun Mari's services will always be remembered, and his demise is a great loss to the nation. She prayed for Allah Almighty to grant the departed soul a place in Jannah and to give strength to the bereaved family to bear this loss.

## DPM Dar felicitates nation on successful conclusion of SCO CHG conference

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday felicitated the nation on the successful conclusion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting held in Islamabad.

"As our guests depart Islamabad after attending the 23rd Meeting of the SCO Council of the Heads of Government, I wish to congratulate the Pakistani nation on the successful conclusion of the Confer-

ence and thank all the Government departments/officials/bodies for their valuable contributions in making the event memorable," the Deputy PM wrote on his official X account.

With the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the lead, he said ministers and officials from the ministries of interior and information, Capital Development Authority, and leadership of our security and law enforcement authorities, gave their best and fullest support.

## NDMA continues aid to conflict-hit Gaza, Lebanon

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) continues to provide humanitarian aid to the war-affected people of Gaza and Lebanon on the directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

The second consignment of aid was dispatched on Thursday from Karachi to Lebanon. This aid shipment, sent by NDMA in collaboration with Al-Khidmat Foundation, comprises approximately 100 tons of supplies, including medicines, ready-to-eat meat, tents, tarpaulins, warm bedding, winter clothing, and powdered milk.

The aid was dispatched via flight from Jinnah International Airport, Karachi, to Beirut, Lebanon, a news

release said. The send off ceremony held at Jinnah International Airport was attended by the representatives from NDMA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Al-Khidmat Foundation and local administration. During ceremony, the attendees emphasized the urgent need to provide relief to the war-torn populations of Palestine and Lebanon, considering the ongoing conflict and the needs of the affected communities.

They reaffirmed the Government of Pakistan's commitment to supporting their brothers and sisters in distress and stressed the importance of collaboration by welfare organizations and the Pakistani public in strengthening these efforts.



Pakistan and Italian Navy ships during bilateral exercise in North Arabia Sea.

## Senate adopts resolution felicitating govt on successful SCO meeting

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Senate on Thursday passed a resolution congratulating the government for successfully holding the SCO Council of Heads of the Government meeting in Islamabad.

The resolution was moved by Senator Sherry Rehman.

The resolution expressed the confidence that the progress made at this event will go a long way in Pakistan's growing geo-economic profile and role in enhanced regional connectivity, investment, infrastructure, climate and security goals.

The Senate today passed the Deposit Protection Corporation Amendment Bill, 2024.

It was moved by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb. In his remarks, the Fi-

nance Minister said the Bill is aimed at further strengthening the financial system.

The Establishment of Special Court (Overseas Pakistanis Property) Bill was also passed by the House.

It was moved by Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Chaudhry Salik Hussain.

Speaking on the occasion, Chaudhry Salik Hussain said the legislation is aimed at addressing the property related issues of overseas Pakistanis.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb laid before the House the National Forensics Agency Bill, 2024. The chair referred the Bill to the Standing Committee concerned.