

# Independent

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ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the newly constituted Special Parliamentary Committee held to deliberate on the name of the next chief justice of Pakistan in Parliament House

## Balochistan cabinet takes key decisions, approves forest laws Bugti reaffirms govt commitment to resolve challenges, improve living standard of masses

Chief Minister directed all the cabinet members to play a significant role in resolving the issues by visiting their respective constituencies; Cabinet also approves first digital media policy and RTI appointments

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan government on Tuesday has taken key decisions in the cabinet meeting, including approval of the formation of forest laws, approval of digital and social media policy, the Balochistan Integrated Water Resources Policy.



The cabinet members reiterated their determinations that under the leadership of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, the government is striving hard to improve the governance model to extend relief to the masses and resolve the challenges.

The Balochistan Cabinet in its meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti approved the first-ever digital and social media policy in the province. Under the policy, a comprehensive framework related to social media will be formulated and the positive aspects of social media will be encouraged.

Addressing the cabinet meeting, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti said that the provincial government is determined to improve the governance system and address the issues by following the set priorities.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on relief activities for Gaza and Lebanon.

## Tarar brushes aside Opposition leader's allegations, exhorts PTI to wash dirty linen within party

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attallah Tarar on Tuesday brushed aside the Opposition Leader's allegations of forced polling during the 26th Constitutional Amendment and exhorted him to manage Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) internal conflict within his party.

input of all political parties," he said. The minister while deriding the Opposition Leader's accusations underlined the fact the two clauses of the Amendment Draft were removed on the objections of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members and agreement was met on the Constitutional Amendment.

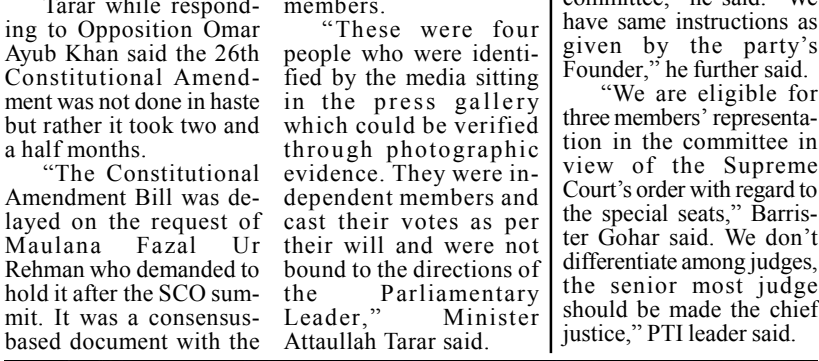
## PTI is united, no Forward Block in party, says Gohar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Barrister Gohar Ali has denied the reports about jailed PTI Founder's rebuke to the party's leadership. "The PTI has been united and there is no forward block in its ranks," Chairman PTI talking to media here said.

He said that the decision of party voting on the Amendment Bill was to be made by the Parliamentary Leader in his or her parliamentary party's meeting which was not participated by the Opposition Leader's party members.

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He said the NA Speaker had asked the names from the party for the Special Parliamentary Committee, constituted to appoint the next Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP). "We have given names to avoid being expelled out of the process," PTI leader said. "In the night, the political committee decided not to join the committee," he said. "We have same instructions as given by the party's Founder," he further said. "We are eligible for three members' representation in the committee in view of the Supreme Court's order with regard to the special seats," Barrister Gohar said. "We don't differentiate among judges, the senior most judge should be made the chief justice," PTI leader said.



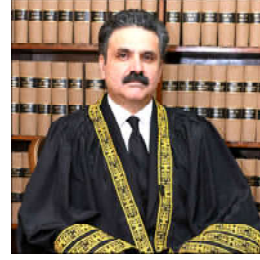
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi along with other delegates inaugurating SAHA Expo in Istanbul Türkiye.

## Amid PTI-SIC boycott

# Parliamentary committee approves Yahya Afridi's nomination as CJP with two-thirds majority

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: The special parliamentary committee responsible for appointing Pakistan's next Chief Justice has approved the nomination of Justice Yahya Afridi with a two-thirds majority, forwarding his name to the prime minister for final approval.



The decision came after a meeting lasting over an hour and a half, attended by the committee members on Tuesday. The Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, had also hosted a dinner for the members of the committee. The parliamentary committee was formed to select the country's top judicial position, but its proceedings were initially marred by the absence of key members.

The committee initially postponed its meeting, which was set to discuss the three senior-most judges nominated for the position: Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Munib Akhtar, and Justice Yahya Afridi. These judges represent the most senior ranks of Pakistan's Supreme Court, and one of them is expected to succeed the current Chief Justice, Qazi Faez Isa.

Despite the absence of PTI and Sunni Ittehad Council members, the committee pressed ahead with the judicial appointment process. The Secretary of Law and Justice presented the profiles and qualifications of the nominated judges, which included their legal careers, educational backgrounds, and timelines of their judicial appointments.

After reviewing the profiles, the committee approved Justice Yahya Afridi's nomination with a two-thirds majority and forwarded his name to the Prime Minister for final approval. Justice Afridi's appointment is expected to proceed to the President for formalisation once approved by the Prime Minister.

Earlier, representatives from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the Sunni Ittehad Council confirmed their decision to boycott the committee, citing dissatisfaction with the process. This move delayed the selection of the next Chief Justice. The decision not to participate was conveyed by PTI's Barrister Gohar Ali Khan following a meeting with parliamentary representatives in the speaker's chamber. "We have made our decision. We will not be part of this committee's meetings," Khan confirmed after discussions. The committee, led by Speaker Sadiq, had previously tried to engage PTI members, hoping to involve them in the critical judicial selection process.

A four-member sub-committee was formed, consisting of Ahsan Iqbal, Rana Ansar, Raja Pervez Ashraf, and Kamran Murtaza, to negotiate with PTI. However, despite these efforts, the boycott persisted. The boycott has significantly impacted the appointment process, as the parliamentary committee is tasked with finalising the selection for the Chief Justice role. The absence of PTI and Sunni Ittehad Council members has created further complications in the proceedings.

## 26th constitutional amendment a milestone for country's stability, public welfare: PM

Shahbaz Sharif seeks report on surge in polio cases; calls for emergency strategy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill passed by the parliament with a two-thirds majority would prove to be a milestone for the country's political and economic stability and public welfare.

The prime minister, addressing the meeting of the federal cabinet he chaired, said the new legislation would surely bring ease for the common man who had to suffer owing to inordinate delays in seeking justice.

Besides, he said the 26th constitutional amendment, passed following an in-depth consultation among the ruling coalition and opposition parties, was also an accomplishment of the vision of the Charter of Democracy signed by Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif in 2006.

He said the tireless efforts led to the successful legislation which also manifested a true spirit of consultation. Prime Minister Shehbaz thanked the leadership of the supportive political parties including President Asif Ali Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari of PPP, JUI-F's Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Muttahida Qaumi Movement, National Party, Awami National Party, Balochistan Awami Party and, also the independent candidates for their vote.

The prime minister also congratulated on the successful holding of the 23rd meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) in Islamabad, which he said had uplifted Pakistan's image.

Holding the summit despite challenges with terrorism and security on top, was a great success for the country, he said and appreciated the efforts by the ministries of foreign affairs, information and broadcasting, and interior, law enforcement agencies, police, Pakistan Rangers, Pakistan Army and intelligence agencies.

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QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over meeting of Provincial Cabinet

## Dissenting senator Qasim Roonjho resigns from Senate seat

ISLAMABAD (Online): Dissident senator of Balochistan National Party (Mengal) Qasim Roonjho has resigned from membership of Senate.

## Implementation of reserved seats verdict not binding, CJP Isa says in detailed note

"I consider it my duty to point out constitutional violations and illegalities in majority's short order," says CJP

He filed his resignation with secretary Senate. Qasim Roonjho is parliamentary leader of BNP (Mengal) in Senate.

In his 14-page note, the CJP said, "I agreed with the short order dated 12 July 2024 authored by Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail and agree with his detailed reasons thereof which have been issued today.

Sardar Akhtar Mengal, chief of BNP (Mengal) had sought resignation from both of the senators. Senator Nasima Ahsan and Senator Qasim Roonjho had crossed the floor in favor of constitutional amendment.

However, I consider it my duty to point out the constitutional violations and illegalities in the majority's short order of 12 July 2024, and the majority's detailed judgment of 23 September 2024, the order/clarification of 14 September 2024 and the Clarification of 18 October 2024, respectively.

## Sardar Raza M. Barrech passes away Independent Report

QUETTA: Prominent tribal and social leader, former Member of Provincial Assembly, and Advisor to the Government of Balochistan, Sardar Raza Muhammad Khan Barrech, passed away yesterday in Karachi due to natural causes.

The chief justice said, "I do hope and expect that my distinguished colleagues in the majority will reflect and correct their mistakes and ensure that Pakistan is governed in accordance with the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan ('the Constitution'). Unfortunately, the review petitions against the majority short order could not be heard because my Hon'ble colleagues (Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Munib Akhtar) outvoted me on the Committee constituted under the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act, 2023; attached is my separate note to the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2024."

## Mohsin Naqvi participates in International Expo 2024 in Istanbul

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday inaugurated the much-anticipated International Expo 2024 alongside delegates from various countries, marking a significant milestone in international cooperation and collaboration.

He stated, "The majority set up its own virtual court, permitted the making of 'an appropriate application' by the ECP and PTI, and directed that such appropriate application would only be heard by them whilst cloistered in Chambers. In doing this the majority of the Hon'ble Judges effectively legislated, because neither the Constitution nor any law permits what they did."

Upon his arrival at the expo venue, the minister received a warm welcome from senior Turkish officials, underscoring the importance of this event in fostering diplomatic ties.

## Pakistan's delegation briefs IMF officials about array of reforms to improve economy

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistani delegation comprising Secretary Finance Imdad Ullah Bosal and Governor State Bank of Pakistan Jameel Ahmed met with the Deputy Managing Director of the IMF Kenji Okamura in Washington DC.

## GoB implements minimum wage of Rs 37000 monthly for employees

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan government has issued notification of officially implementing the new minimum wage setting at Rs 37000 per month.

Discussions also covered stimulating private sector development, building climate resilience through Resilience and Sustainability financing and pursuing prudent monetary and external sector policies.

According to the notification issued by Labour and Manpower department, the minimum wage for employees including small-grade workers labourers in industrial and commercial sector of the province will be entitled Rs 37,000 monthly.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's delegation held a meeting with Director Middle East and Central Asia Department at the IMF in Washington today.

The petitioner has taken the plea legislation is mandate of parliament. Parliament can make amendment in the constitution by two thirds majority.

The delegation thanked the IMF for its continued support to Pakistan especially for the recently approved seven billion dollars Extended Fund Facility.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**The next chief justice**

The first test of the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment is already here. With Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa retiring by the end of the week — and, according to the law minister, seemingly unwilling to accept any extension in his tenure — all eyes will be on the newly constituted Special Parliamentary Committee, which must nominate the next chief justice from among the three senior-most judges of the Supreme Court under the newly enacted amendments.

This committee, which has been engineered such that it gives the government much more control over who the chief justice shall be, must give a name by today (Oct 22) — ie, within three days prior to the retirement of the chief justice. Given the circumstances in which the amendment has been enacted, it has long been speculated that its main purpose was to block the senior puisne judge, Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, from office and/or dilute his authority.

Given the restlessness brewing in the legal fraternity, it is in the government's best interests that such reservations be immediately put to rest. The ruling coalition, which will control the nomination process, must demonstrate that its intent was never to interfere in Justice Shah's elevation and, in recognition of him being not only the senior-most judge of the apex court but also one of its most respected jurists, nominate him as its first choice.

Here, it may be recalled that PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari had last month told various TV channels that "Justice Mansoor will become the next chief justice, I have no doubt about it", and also noted that, "Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah are both respectable figures. Both were part of the bench for Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's case, and they should not be made controversial". He must now stand by his word.

It would be unfortunate if the government chooses to target Justice Shah merely for the position he took in the reserved seats case, and attempts to 'punish' him by denying him of his much-deserved elevation.

It seems pertinent to point out that there has been an ongoing media and social media campaign against the judges who ruled in majority against the ECP's decisions in the reserved seats issue, and some government leaders gave more air to this controversy in their speeches to parliament when the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment was being tabled.

The independence of the judiciary is enshrined as one of the core tenets of the Constitution, and any move by the government to punish judges for holding independent views will not sit well in these fraught times. Now that it has arrogated more powers over the judiciary to itself, the government must act judiciously and with restraint. It should not stir more trouble for itself.

**Monetising hate**

Nighat Dad | Anadan Chaudhri

The unverified news of a young female student being sexually assaulted at a private college in Lahore has shocked the country. The news, that was made viral via social media and messaging apps, triggered protests, with demonstrations held by college students quickly turning violent across Punjab, and leading to the death of a security guard. The government responded with its usual high-handedness: the law enforcers used excessive physical force and disproportionate legal measures, such as the registration of FIRs, arrest of young students and the imposition of Section 144.

Media outlets have focused on the actions of the state and the administration at the educational institution at the centre of the alleged incident, and to some extent on the content creators ostensibly behind the spread of disinformation. While we must keep an eye on such actors, what is troubling is that the role of social media platforms in amplifying disinformation — in this case, through apparent inaction — has not been probed adequately.

The rapid speed at which social media content is shared shows that disinformation researchers, fact-checkers and media outlets are often unable to debunk "the evolving dynamics of disinformation" in time. Significant public damage has already been done by the time a more accurate picture emerges. Regarding the alleged rape case in Lahore, news outlets and fact-checkers scrambled to provide context, even as the government and other institutions claimed that the attack never happened — a claim that was met with heavy scepticism.

The discourse on

current events, locally or internationally, is frequently shaped by accounts on YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, X, Facebook, etc, whose content is shared more than that of the BBC or CNN. Rather than being nuanced and level-headed, however, social media personalities or outlets "routinely promote sensationalist, extreme or false content, rapidly spreading it to vast audiences", according to the UK-based Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

The protests in response to the alleged rape in Lahore bring to mind how the UK, too, fell victim to disinformation this summer. The 2024 riots in the UK were instructive: not only did social media fan the flames of public anger, but a Lahore-based web presence, 'Channel3Now', was found responsible for promoting dangerous disinformation — false news that it was monetising on social media. In Pakistan, to what extent did platforms contribute to the spread of the rumour of a rape in Lahore and the ensuing offline violence? What role did the recommendation algorithms of social media platforms play? And to what extent was the rumour spread by accounts who stood to benefit financially from platform ad revenue-sharing programmes? One can note that in Europe, in order to hold Big Tech accountable, active steps are being taken or proposed. The European Union's Digital Services Act (DSA), 2022, for example, holds social media companies themselves responsible for disinformation, with fines payable of up to six per cent of a platform's global revenue.

In the event of harmful yet legal content shared online, platforms may find themselves being blocked by the government if they are unable to remove harmful, or false material. In the Global South, platforms have been slower to respond or have not responded at all compared to how quickly they might have acted had they been facing the authorities in the US, UK, or EU. Recent events have made this disparity in accountability even more evident, particularly when it comes to addressing the monetisation of disinformation on social media in countries like Pakistan and the larger Global South.

It's time that social media platforms paid the same attention to countries in the Global South in the matter of regulating the monetisation of content and ensuring that the issue of harmful content is tackled effectively and that repeat offenders are removed from social media platforms permanently. Such a proactive approach could prevent governments from imposing more stringent and potentially problematic laws or banning platforms altogether.

CSOs from the Global Majority have a role to play by closely monitoring the enforcement of the DSA in Europe. By understanding how platforms comply with the DSA, these CSOs can use those insights to push for similar measures in their own regions, targeting the harm caused by disinformation and damaging content. This effort includes exposing and addressing the monetisation of hate by content creators who present themselves as journalists, using this label to spread hate and disinformation while profiting from content they misleadingly classify as 'news' or 'journalistic content'. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Economy's black hole**

Dr Nadia Tahir

When debt is accrued, out of a desire for a stable exchange rate, it forms a 'black hole' in the economy. Foreign debt may solve the problem of balance-of-payments and result in a stable exchange rate in the short run, but it can also trigger the 'debt stealer trap', which sucks resources without building productive capacity. Debt is not a bad instrument especially when modern economics is governed by the rules of trust and credit. An economy can accumulate debt but the rate of increase in debt stock should not exceed the capacity to repay. For sustainable debt, the primary balance must be in surplus and growth in real income should be higher than the increase in debt stock.

Our current imports stand at \$53.2 billion, while exports totalled nearly \$31.1bn in 2023-24. We need \$22.1bn merely to balance our trade. Our imports comprised less elastic consumer goods or essential inputs such as crude oil, edible oil, medicines, paper and steel. In a case such as this, controlling imports shrinks the economy and reduces consumer welfare.

Let us consider the latest data released by the Ministry of Finance on Sept 30, 2024. Our imports were recorded at \$9.53bn, while exports totalled approximately \$4.86bn for July-August 2025. Remittances stood at \$5.94bn, helping the country to have a current account surplus after many years. Dependence on remittances without fuelling domestic productive capacity and skills is again not sustainable. We can have a stable exchange rate in the long run only by increasing exports and remittances simultaneously.

Fortunately, at the moment Pakistan has a stable exchange rate and a declining inflation and interest rate, while the current account is in surplus after a long period of volatile financial indicators. It is a rare combination in our economic history. It reminds us of the halcyon days of 2005-06, but even at that time there was a current account deficit issue. In those days, we undertook some liberalisation reforms and drastically reduced tariff rates. For many, it was just like opening the floodgates of the economy, which doubled our imports.

Recently, the DG Debt (Finance Division), explained the necessity of managing the exchange rate risk to the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance. The committee was informed that Pakistan needs \$18.8bn excluding a debt rollover. It was also said that Pakistan has to repay a cumulative amount of \$100bn over the next four years.

Currently, Pakistan's external debt and liabilities are at a modest level. Pakistan's external debt stock was at 43 per cent in June 2023. It declined to 34pc in June 2024. According to the first quarterly report of the Economic Affairs Division "64pc of the total external public debt is concessional with extended maturities".

Broadly speaking, Pakistan requires an additional \$25bn from exports (7pc ann-u-al growth rate in real GDP) to repay our external debt obligations. To meet the challenge, we need to earn an additional \$2.08bn every month or borrow the same amount.

Securing debt from donors and development partners is also be-

coming difficult. They ask for certain actions to be taken before issuing new debt. For the \$7bn IMF programme, the \$2bn financing gap condition was met by borrowing at commercial rates. This type of commercial borrowing will considerably reduce the average time of maturity of our debt, which is six months for domestic debt and almost 2.5 years for external debt. Without debt restructuring, a stabilised exchange rate will not work for long.

There is another dimension — declining interest rates and inflation can potentially trigger recession, particularly when businesses anticipate lower long-term interest rates, leading to decreased investment and growth. Furthermore, our banking sector growth heavily depends on lending to the government by investing in T-bills. Reducing interest rates may hamper the growth of our banks and saving rates in the near future.

It is observed that exchange rate stability will reduce the imports bill and external debt burden. Without increasing exports earnings, the exchange rate stability will continue to depend heavily on foreign debt, loan rollovers and commercial domestic debt instruments. The more we desire a stable nominal exchange rate the more we have to borrow. This is simple arithmetic. We have managed the immediate default and exchange rate risks. However, stability that is reliant on debt financing is always transitory and increases speculation and uncertainty about the future. In nutshell, the economy means growth for businesses and opportunities, which we have to earn instead of resorting to borrow. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**BISP, ADB join hands to empower beneficiaries**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, in a meeting with the Country Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Emma Fan held Tuesday discussed initiatives for empowering beneficiaries of the programme through imparting skill-based training.

The meeting focused on promoting a future partnership between BISP and ADB, identifying key sectors for skill training of deserving families, facilitating international certifications, providing overseas job opportunities, and strengthening coordination with provincial poverty

graduation programs and awareness campaigns for deserving women. On this occasion, Senator Rubina Khalid highlighted that BISP is currently providing financial support to 9.3 million deserving families, a number expected to rise to 10 million by the end of the year. To further economically empower these families, BISP is initiating a skill training program. She emphasized the importance of acquiring international certifications to help beneficiaries secure employment abroad. Senator Rubina Khalid also stressed the need to link existing provincial-level poverty graduation and skill development programs with BISP.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, met with the Country Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Emma Fan at BISP headquarters.

**Approaches discussed to access int'l capital markets, external creditors**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's delegation, currently attending the World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund annual meetings in the United States, met with Alvarez and Marsal Sovereign Advisory Services, wherein approaches were discussed through which Pakistan could access the international capital markets and external creditors.

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb is leading the Pakistan delegation to the Annual Meetings WB and IMF,

being held in Washington DC from 21-26 October 2024, said a press release issued by the finance ministry.

Other delegates include Finance Secretary, Imdad Ullah Bosal; Secretary Economic Affairs, Dr. Kazim Niaz and Governor, State Bank of Pakistan, Jameel Ahmad. The Pakistani delegation held a meeting with the representatives of Alvarez and Marsal Sovereign Advisory Services, comprising Managing Director and Global Practice Leader, Dr. Reza Baqir; Division Executive for Sovereign

Advisory Services, Peter Briggs and Thibaud Fourcade. Alvarez and Marsal team congratulated Pakistan on the successful conclusion of the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with IMF. The team outlined the steps needed for the country to chart an accelerated path to capital markets following a well-sequenced strategy and deliberated on ways to restore access to international capital markets and external creditors. Meanwhile, the Pakistan delegation also held a meeting with the Director Middle East and Central Asia Department

(MCD) IMF, Jihad Azour. Thanking the IMF for its continued support to Pakistan, especially for the recently approved US\$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF), the delegation outlined the government's efforts towards fiscal consolidation, revenue expansion, energy and SOE reforms, aimed at transitioning Pakistan from stabilization to growth.

Congratulating Pakistan on the successful start of the Fund programme, Jihad Azour emphasized the importance of staying the course on reforms.

**Technical training vital for telecom operators' capacity building: Shaza**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said Tuesday that technical training is vital for the capacity building of telecom operators.

During a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of APNIC (Asia Pacific Network Information Center), Singapore Jia Rong, the minister also discussed matters of mutual interest and relating to capacity building of telecom operators. Secretary IT Zarrar Hasham Khan was also present at the meeting. CEO Asia Pacific Network Information Center briefed the Minister of State for IT about the working of APNIC.

He said that APNIC wanted to start a training program for telecom operators regarding networking. The meeting agreed to forge a comprehensive plan for the training of telecom operators. Member IT, MoITT Muhammad Jahanzeb Rahim also attended the meeting. Meanwhile, Pakistan Ambassador to Germany Saqlain Syedah called on Shaza Fatima Khawaja and during the meeting matters regarding relations between Pakistan and Germany in the field of IT and Telecommunication, and facilitation of Pakistani IT companies in Germany were discussed.

Member International Coordination (IC) Imad Memon and DG IC Syed Jawwad Ali Sherazi were also present at the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) APNIC (Asia Pacific Network Information Center), Singapore Mr. Jia Rong Low called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja in Federal Capital.



DUBAI: PTCL and Ufone 4G President and Group CEO, Hatem Bamatraf and Alex Lee, Managing Director China Mobile International Middle East exchange memorabilia during the GITEX 2024 Dubai to mark the signing of a network sharing agreement aimed at enhancing connectivity in Pakistan and worldwide, in Dubai.

**Enhance national, Intl connectivity PTCL & China Mobile International partner at GITEX Global 2024**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's largest telecommunication and integrated ICT services provider, Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) and global telecom and ICT player, China Mobile International Limited (CMI) entered a partnership at GITEX Global 2024 in Dubai, UAE for global network resources sharing. The collaboration allows the two leading players to boost

connectivity for their respective customers in the country and across the world.

Waqar Ahmed, Group Director Enterprise Solutions, PTCL & Ufone 4G and Alex Lee, Managing Director, China Mobile International Middle East signed the agreement during GITEX 2024 in the presence of investors, innovators, business leaders and top management on both sides.

**Cutlery exports increase 6.60% to \$15.268 mln**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The exports of cutlery witnessed an increase of 6.60 per cent during the first quarter of the current financial year 2024-25, as against the exports of the corresponding months of last year.

The cutlery exports from the country were recorded at US \$15.268 million during July-September (2024-25) against the exports of US \$14.322 million during July-September (2023-24), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

**Mobilink Bank tops the SBP's banking on equality scorecard for the second year in a row**

**Independent Report** ISLAMABAD: Mobilink Bank has once again demonstrated its unwavering commitment to gender equality and financial inclusion, securing a remarkable score of 82.7 on the State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) Women Friendliness Grid.

This notable increase from last year's score of 71.79 highlights the Bank's continuous efforts in fostering a supportive environment for women borrowers and entrepreneurs, particularly in the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector.

The Women Friendliness Grid serves as a vital benchmark for assessing the accessibility and inclusivity of financial services for women. Mobilink Bank's approach combines innovative programs and strategic partnerships aimed at supporting women across Pakistan.

Through its Women Inspirational Network (WIN) program, the Bank has trained over 20,000 women nationwide and, in partnership with Care Pakistan, upskilled an additional 1,500 women in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) district. Under Binte-Hawwa, Mobilink Bank disbursed PKR 6.96 billion in loans to women in 2022, which rose to over PKR 10.6 billion in 2023, marking a 50% increase.

Sharing his thoughts on the achievement, Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary, Interim CEO of Mobilink Bank, said, "Achieving an 82.7 score on the Women Friendliness Grid is a

testament to our commitment to financial inclusivity and innovation. This milestone reflects our dedication to empowering women entrepreneurs, driving digital inclusion, and embedding sustainability into our operations. We will continue to focus on creating meaningful opportunities that foster gender equality and environmental responsibility." Mobilink Bank's commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs is evident in

its strategic allocation of resources and focus on sustainable practices. MSME lending represents 40% of the total loan portfolio, valued at PKR 24.34 billion, reflecting the Bank's dedication to improving opportunities for women in business. This commitment is further highlighted by a 33% representation of women in leadership, the implementation of a childcare policy, enhanced maternity and paternity leaves, and a transport allowance.

## Passage of 26<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment to augur well for institutions, Governor Punjab

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that the passage of the 26<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment by the assembly bodes well for the institutions of the country as it will ensure supremacy of the Parliament. Constitutional amendment will provide quick justice to people. He said this today while addressing a press conference at Governor House Lahore.

Zardari, Prime Minister, Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, Chairman PPP, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Maulana Fazlur Rehman played a positive role. He paid tributes to all the stakeholders, especially Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari stating that he stayed awake for four consecutive nights to make it successful. He said that the 26<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment is an unprecedented manifestation of national unity and consensus, if future decisions are made in the same way, the country will come out of crises. He said that the constitutional defects have been removed with this

constitutional amendment. Governor Punjab said that the judiciary should not interfere in the affairs of the executive. He said that the procedure for appointing judges in the nineteenth amendment was not correct, which has now been rectified. Regarding the appointment of judges, the democratic powers were sabotaged in 19<sup>th</sup> amendment, and unfortunately, the decisions of the appointments of judges were made in big chambers, later these judges gave decisions according to their personal liking and disliking, which created a great disorder in the society.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan addressing a Press Conference at Governor House.

## CM chairs 18<sup>th</sup> cabinet meeting, takes measures for environmental protection

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chaired 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the provincial cabinet to discuss and decide on important agenda items including historical measures for environmental improvement. The Cabinet approved amendments in the Provincial Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1965 to increase fine for vehicles that emit smoke. It was briefed that a vehicle operating without a Vehicle Fitness Certificate will be

financed and impounded after a one-time notice. The Cabinet also approved a historic initiative to eliminate environmental pollution, and to introduce single-use plastic culture in Punjab. It also gave approval to set up District Plastic Management Committees to address enforcement issues. DCs and DPOs will be chairpersons of District Plastic Management Committees while traders and other relevant authorities will

be their members. The District Plastic Management Committees will have the power to impose fines to ensure implementation of plastic elimination campaign. They will also have the power to seal factories manufacturing non-standard and environmentally non-friendly plastic bags besides lowering the registration and renewal fee of a quality and environment-friendly plastic bag manufacturing factory.

## KP CM inaugurates BRT Pabbi Route

PESHAWAR (APP): KP Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur inaugurated the new Pabbi Route of the Peshawar Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system here on Tuesday at Chamkani BRT Station. A large number of the senior officials, including the Secretary of Transport, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) TransPeshawar and the Managing Director of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Urban Mobility Authority (KPUMA) were also present on the occasion. The newly launched Pabbi route connects Pabbi Bazaar to Sardar Garhi BRT Station, spanning a total of 16 kilometers. The route includes 13 stops: Pabbi Terminal, Pabbi

Bazaar, Kajhoo Stop, Pabbi Railway Station, Girls Degree College, WAPDA Town, Taru Jabba, Tarnab Farm, Kala Mandi, Jhagra, Shahad Market, Chamkani, and Sardar Garhi. According to the TransPeshawar spokesperson, the route will operate from 6:30 AM to 7:00 PM, with buses running every 20 minutes providing travel facility to an estimated 4,000 passengers daily. The one-way travel time for the route is approximately 33 minutes. The spokesperson further stated that with the inauguration of the Pabbi route, the total number of BRT routes has increased to 18, expanding the network's reach and providing enhanced convenience to passengers.



HYDERABAD: Ration distribution is underway among Hindu Community in connection of Diwali celebration organized by Al-Khidmat Foundation, at Circuit House Mandir in Hyderabad.

## KP becomes first province to launch education card

PESHAWAR (APP): The Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur, presided over a key meeting of the Department of Education where he announced an education emergency to promote education in the province. As part of this initiative, the province will introduce an education card, similar to the Sehat Card. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will be the first province in Pakistan to launch this program. The Education Card will initially be started in nine underdeveloped

districts, including Upper and Lower Kohistan, Kolai Palas, Torghar, Upper and Lower Chitral, Tank, and Upper and Lower South Waziristan. Children attending government schools in these areas will receive 1,000 rupees per month, and they will also be able to get free admission to registered private schools. In the first phase, 40,000 children will benefit from this program. Additionally, girls in grades 6 to 10 across the province will receive 500 rupees per month as an educational stipend.



SARGODHA: Chairman HEC, Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, addressing the opening ceremony of the 7th International Conference on Applied Zoology held at the University of Sargodha.

## KP Governor appoints two SACM

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday appointed two special assistants to the chief minister on the advice of the latter. A notification issued here said that Tufail Anjum and Rengez Ahmad have been appointed as special assistants with immediate effect.

## ANF recovers over 17 kg drugs in four operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting four operations managed to recover over 17 kg drugs worth Rs 1.6 million and arrested three accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Tuesday. He informed that in an operation, 10.8 kg hashish was recovered from Quetta bus terminal in Karachi and an accused was arrested. 5 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of another accused rounded up on Mansoor GT Road, Attock.

## PHC orders KP Govt to submit court verdict's implementation in VCs appointment case

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Tuesday ordered the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to submit a compliance report about implementation of its verdict in appointment of Vice Chancellors in several public sector universities in the province. A two members bench consisting of Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Mohammad Ijaz Khan directed the respondents to submit compliance report about the implementation of the court's judgment in the

appointment case of Vice Chancellors in several universities of KP. The court ruled that contempt of court proceedings would be initiated against the respondents in case of non implementation of the PHC's judgment. Five senior academicians have filed petition in Peshawar High Court seeking initiation of contempt of court proceedings against the KP Chief Secretary and three other respondents accusing them.

## Notorious bandit arrested after police encounter in Kasur

KASUR (APP): A dangerous bandit wanted for serious crimes was arrested in an injured condition following a police encounter near Mustafabad, Kasur on Tuesday. According to the police, police identified the injured suspect as Ali Hasan, son of Siddiq Sukna from Ghang Kahna, Lahore. He was part of a group of three bandits who robbed a citizen named Ishaq of Rs 16,000 and other valuables near the canal.

## Accused entitled to obtain copy of police raid recording: LHC

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) has declared that individuals accused in criminal cases are entitled to receive a complete copy of the video recording made during police raids. A two-member bench comprising Justice Farooq Haider and Justice Ali Zia Bajwa passed the directions while hearing a criminal appeal filed by an accused involved in a case registered under anti-narcotics law. The petitioner's

counsel argued that his client was facing trial in a case registered under the anti-narcotics law. He submitted that his client filed an application with a request to provide video recording of the raid in the form of USB but the trial court rejected the request. He argued that the video recording of the raid was crucial for a fair trial and requested the court to issue necessary directions for the purpose.

## International News

## Putin hosts BRICS summit in Russia under shadow of Ukraine war

**Monitoring Desk**  
KAZAN: Russia wants to showcase the rising clout of the non-Western world, but Moscow's partners from China, India, Brazil and the Arab world are urging President Vladimir Putin to find a way to end the war in Ukraine. The 16<sup>th</sup> annual BRICS summit will take place from 22 to 24 October. The BRICS group now accounts for 45% of the world's population and 35% of its economy, based on purchasing power parity, though China accounts for over half of its economic might. Putin, who is cast by the West as a war criminal, told reporters from BRICS nations that "BRICS does not put itself into opposition to anyone", and that the shift in the drivers of global growth was simply a fact.

"This is an association of states that says are now part of Russia, even though parts of them remain outside its control, and that it wanted its long-term security interests taken into account in Europe," he said. The BRICS summit takes place as global finance chiefs gather in Washington amid war in the Middle East as well as Ukraine, a flagging Chinese economy and worries that the US presidential election could ignite new trade battles. Putin, who ordered troops into Ukraine in 2022 after eight years of fighting in eastern Ukraine, was peppered with questions by BRICS reporters about the prospects for a ceasefire in Ukraine. Putin's answer was, in short, that Moscow would not trade away the

four regions of eastern Ukraine that it says are now part of Russia, even though parts of them remain outside its control, and that it wanted its long-term security interests taken into account in Europe. Two Russian sources said that, while there was increasing talk in Moscow of a possible ceasefire agreement, there was nothing concrete yet — and that the world was awaiting the result of the Nov. 5 presidential election in the United States. Russia, which is advancing, controls about one fifth of Ukraine, including Crimea which it seized and unilaterally annexed in 2014, about 80% of the Donbas — a coal-and-steel zone comprising the Donetsk and Luhansk regions — and over 70% of the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions.



Russia's President Vladimir Putin meets with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the Brics summit in Kazan.

## Iraq says top Islamic State group figure among 9 killed

**Monitoring Desk**  
BAGHDAD: Iraqi authorities announced on Tuesday that security forces had killed nine Islamic State (IS) group commanders, including the banned militant group's top figure in the country, in a raid in the northern mountains. Iraq's Joint Operations Command said in a statement that counterterrorism forces "killed nine terrorists, among them the so-called

governor of Iraq" for IS, naming him as Jassim al-Mazrouei Abu Abdel Qader. Iraqi security analyst Fadel Abu Raghif told AFP that Mazrouei had "assumed control of the [IS] Iraq province less than a year ago". The statement noted that the operation in the Hamrin Mountains was carried out "with technical support" and intelligence provided by the US-led coalition.

## Hezbollah finance chief killed in Syria: Israeli army

**Monitoring Desk**  
JERUSALEM: The Israeli army said on Monday (Oct 21) that the latest commander responsible for funding the Lebanese Hezbollah group was "eliminated" in Syria. The man, whose name was not released, headed the Iran-backed Hezbollah's Unit 4400 that is "responsible for the transfers and the amount of funds" to the group through Tehran's oil sales, army spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said in a statement.

## Blinken back to Middle East to push for Gaza truce

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken left for the Middle East Monday on a new push for an elusive Gaza ceasefire two weeks before US elections, seeing a new opportunity from Israel's killing of Hamas's leader. It will be the 11<sup>th</sup> trip to the Middle East by the top US diplomat since war broke out a year ago, with Blinken on his last visit to Israel in August warning it may have been the "last chance" for a US-led ceasefire plan. That push did not succeed, and the conflict has escalated and expanded since then, with Israel pounding Hezbollah targets in Lebanon and warn-

ing of a new strike directly on Iran, whose clerical leaders back both Hamas and Hezbollah. US President Joe Biden, who personally laid out the ceasefire plan on May 31 that would also free hostages from Gaza, has seen new hope since Israel last week killed Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar. Biden, speaking to reporters on a visit to Germany, said he called Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to congratulate him and tell him that Blinken would head to the region. "I told him that we were really pleased with his actions and, further, that now is the time to move on—move on, move towards a ceasefire."

## US defense chief visits Kyiv for talks on how to keep supporting Ukraine's fight against Russia

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin arrived in Kyiv on an unannounced visit Monday, hours after a Russian drone attack on the Ukrainian capital and as Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy pushes Western partners to keep providing military support for the war. Austin said on the X platform that his fourth visit shows "that the United States, alongside the international community, continues to stand by Ukraine." Ukraine is having difficulty holding back a ferocious Russian campaign along the eastern front that is gradually compelling Kyiv's forces to give up a series of towns, villages and hamlets. Zelenskyy is urging Western allies to support his so-called "victory plan"

to end the almost three-year war, which is Europe's biggest conflict since World War II and has cost tens of thousands of lives on both sides, including many civilians. His strategy includes a formal invitation for Ukraine to join NATO and permission to use Western long-range missiles to strike military targets in Russia — steps that Kyiv's allies have previously balked at supporting. The Western response has been lukewarm, and Austin was expected to discuss the plan with Ukrainian officials in Kyiv. Zelenskyy said in a Sunday evening video address that his plan had won the backing of France, Lithuania, Nordic countries and "many other allies" in the European Union which he didn't name.

## New mpox variant detected in Germany: health authority

**Monitoring Desk**  
BERLIN: An infection with the new mpox variant clade 1b has been detected in Germany for the first time, the Robert Koch Institute health authority said on Tuesday. The infection occurred abroad and was detected last Friday, the institute said, adding that it did not see an increased risk for Germany but was "monitoring the situation very closely". Mpox, a viral disease related to smallpox that causes fever, body aches, swollen lymph nodes and a rash that forms into blisters, has two main subtypes — clade 1 and clade 2. From May 2022, clade 2 spread around the world, mostly affecting gay and bisexual men in Europe and the United States. In July 2022, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared an international public health emergency.

## Ukraine's Zelenskyy says only a US green light on a NATO invitation will sway a reluctant Germany

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Ukraine's president is hoping allies will take a more positive stance on his so-called victory plan after the U.S. election, but concedes that its key demand — an invitation to join NATO — is not welcome by some key Western partners, in particular Germany. Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russia was also likely looking at the postelection scenario in the U.S. to assess the possibility of cease-fire talks with Ukraine. He assessed that if partial cease-fire deals could be reached over attacks on energy in-

frastructure and Black Sea shipping routes, it would signal the end of the "hot phase" of the war. Zelenskyy spoke to journalists on Monday and his comments were embargoed until Tuesday. On NATO, Zelenskyy said France, Britain and Italy have shown signs of support. Germany has reservations, however, and Zelenskyy believes only a U.S. green light will convince Berlin to accept the idea. "The German side is skeptical about our NATO membership — that's a fact.

## Iran begins constructing wall along Afghan border amidst terrorism threats

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEHRAN: Iran has decided to build a wall along the Afghan border to safeguard its borders and cope with terrorism threats. Iran has initiated taking stringent security measures as part of counter strategy to regional instability. It merits mention that Iran has devised a three-year security plan to enhance its security and protect its territorial integrity.

## South Korea warns it can send arms to Ukraine after reports of North's troops in Russia

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: South Korea warned Tuesday it could consider supplying weapons to Ukraine in response to North Korea allegedly dispatching troops to Russia, as both North Korea and Russia denied the movements. The South Korean statement is apparently meant to pressure Russia not to bring in North Korean troops in its war against Ukraine. South Korean officials worry that Russia may reward North Korea by giving it sophisticated weapons technologies that can boost the North's nuclear and missile programs that target South Korea. In an emergency National Security Council meeting, top South Korean officials condemned North Korea's alleged dispatch of troops as "a grave security threat" to South Korea and the international community. They described North Korea as "a criminal group" that forces its youths to serve as Russian mercenaries for an

unjustifiable war, the South Korean presidential office said in a statement. The officials agreed to take phased countermeasures, linking the level of their responses to progress in Russian-North Korean military cooperation, according to the statement. Possible steps include diplomatic, economic and military options, and South Korea could consider sending both defensive and offensive weapons to Ukraine, a senior South Korean presidential official told reporters on condition of anonymity in a background briefing. The official said North Korea could attempt to get high-tech Russian technologies to perfect its nuclear missiles. The official said Russia's possible help for North Korea's efforts to modernize its outdated conventional weapons systems and acquire a space-based surveillance system would pose a serious.

## Shehbaz appeals nation to donate to PM's relief fund for Gaza, Lebanon

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has once again appealed the nation especially the affluent ones to actively donate to the Prime Minister's relief fund for Gaza and Lebanon.

Chairing a review meeting in Islamabad regarding aid being sent by Pakistan to Gaza and Lebanon, he said the people including overseas Pakistanis should support the government in helping Palestinian and Lebanese brothers and sisters by depositing donations in BANIQAISBFD000011111429.

Shehbaz Sharif instructed to conduct a full awareness campaign regarding the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Gaza and Lebanon.

The Prime Minister directed to immediately send two planes of humani-

tarian aid to Lebanon and Gaza. He said apart from air, relief goods should be sent by trucks.

Directing to accelerate the transportation of humanitarian aid, Shehbaz Sharif emphasized ensuring the aid reaches the deserving ones.

The meeting was informed that Pakistan is sending tents, clothes, blankets, medicines and food items to people affected by Israeli aggression in Gaza and Lebanon.

It was informed that due to Israeli attacks and blockades, there are difficulties in delivering aid supplies to the affected areas in Palestine and Lebanon.

The meeting was informed that the NGOs who want to send relief goods for the victims of Gaza and Lebanon will be facilitated by the government.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs the Federal Cabinet Meeting.

## Pakistan strengthens regional connectivity, trade, security ties at 23rd SCO summit

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Heads of Government Meeting, held in Islamabad, provided Pakistan with a unique opportunity to enhance regional connectivity, expand trade and economic ties, strengthen security and strategic cooperation among member countries.

These insights were shared by speakers at a roundtable discussion titled "Post-SCO Council of Heads of Government Meeting 2024: Unpacking the Results and Opportunities," organized by the Centre for SCO Studies at the Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies, Pakistan-SCO Friendship Forum, and Riphah Institute of Public Policy at Riphah International University. The event focused on the outcomes of the meeting, which took place on October 15-16, 2024.

In her opening remarks, President of the In-

stitute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies, Dr. Farhat Asif emphasized the importance of assessing the strategic and economic impacts of the summit. She highlighted that the event had reinforced the need for multilateral cooperation in sectors such as security, trade, and sustainable development.

Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch delivered the keynote address, detailing key outcomes of the meeting. She announced that Pakistan would chair the Regional Anti-Terrorism Structures (RATS) body within the SCO in 2025 and host the SCO Council of Heads of State in 2026. She noted that the successful hosting of the summit had significantly bolstered Pakistan's global image.

Director of the China-Pakistan Study Centre at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, Dr. Talat Shabbir stressed the economic and strategic benefits Pakistan stands to gain from its active participation in the SCO. He noted that enhanced security cooperation and economic collaboration within the organization would contribute to Pakistan's stability and growth.

Addressing regional trade, Head of the Department of International Relations at the National University of Modern Languages, Dr. Sarwat Rauf underscored Pakistan's critical role in facilitating greater connectivity between Central and South Asia. She pointed to the country's efforts to address regional security challenges, including terrorism and extremism.

Dean of Social Sciences at MY University, Dr. Muhammad Munir provided a detailed analysis of the summit's key takeaways, highlighting Pakistan's diplomatic leadership in fostering regional cooperation.



ISTANBUL: Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi shaking hands with Chief of the Turkish General Staff Gen. Metin Gürak at the inauguration of SAHA Expo in Istanbul.

## Shahid Khaqan critiques constitutional amendment impacting judiciary

ISLAMABAD (INP): Awam Pakistan Party chief Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has voiced strong objections to the recent constitutional amendment that he claims limits the powers of the Supreme Court and alters the process for appointing judges.

Speaking to a private TV Channel, Abbasi criticized the government for not consulting the public before implementing the amendment, suggesting that the rushed approval process lacked transparency and accountability.

Abbasi pointed out that his party was not involved in the amendment process, emphasizing the speed at which the legislation was introduced and enacted—within just 12 hours, including the issuance of a gazette notification. "I have never seen such speed," he remarked, underscoring his concern

that the amendment primarily serves to concentrate power rather than address the needs of the people.

He raised critical questions about the future of the judiciary, asking who would be recognized as the Chief Justice after the amendment. Abbasi indicated that the proposed changes could create a "nominal judge" role, undermining the court's authority. He also expressed concern over the increasing power of Supreme Court registries, which he believes could significantly influence case management and appointments. Abbasi urged the Form 47 government to involve the public in discussions regarding the amendment, stating that it fails to represent the people's interests. He warned that the new judicial framework could lead to more complications for citizens seeking justice.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail offering Fateha on sad demise of former caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Humayun Marri.

## DC vows to improve education standards

**Independent Report**  
SOHBAHPUR: Deputy Commissioner Sohbatpur, Farida Train, stressed the importance of enhancing education quality and addressing issues faced by students and teachers in local educational institutions.

"Improving education standards in Sohbatpur's schools is crucial," Train said during a visit to Government Boys High School Jhanda Talab. "Despite infrastructure challenges, teachers' dedication is commendable."

Train acknowledged the district administration's efforts to resolve educational issues through thorough inspections and collaborations with higher authorities. School administrators briefed her on the institution's dilapidated condition and other pressing concerns.

The Deputy Commissioner assured that her office will work tirelessly to provide quality education, overcome challenges, and support teachers' efforts to nurture young minds.

## Advisor says: Ensuring people's security, a top govt's priority

HUB (APP): Provincial Advisor for Industries and Craft, Mir Hassan Zahri on Tuesday said ensuring security to the people is the top priority of the government.

While he talking the notice of incident of banditry here at post office road directed the police to take effective steps for early arrest of the criminals.

The advisor said the government committed to ensure law and order in the area, adding zero tolerance policy had been adopted control crimes in the province.

## China-Pak strategic partnership signed to advance CAR-T therapy in Pakistan

BEIJING (APP): A strategic cooperation agreement was signed among Beijing Yuanxin Huibao Technology Co., Ltd., the Pakistan China Business Association and Nanjing IASO Biotechnology Co., Ltd., in Beijing last week, aiming to promote the accessibility of Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-Cell (CAR-T) Therapy (herein referred as CAR-T Therapy) for adult patients suffering from multiple myeloma in Pakistan.

CAR-T Therapy is regarded as one of the most promising advancements in cell therapy, particularly for the treatment of hematological malignancies.

This collaboration will significantly improve the accessibility of CAR-T treatments, enabling more Pakistani patients to benefit from this cutting-edge therapy, added Peng Xuan, CEO of Yuanxin Huibao.



ISLAMABAD: Member of the House of Commons United Kingdom Muhammad Yasin called Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament house.

## Step afoot to promote education, health facilities for public: DC Chaman

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Chaman Habib Ahmed Bangulzai on Tuesday said that measures were being taken to promote quality of education and health facilities for masses in the area.

He expressed these views while paying a surprise visit to Aaj High School and Primary Health Center Mahmoodabad in the area.

Meanwhile, DC Chaman was given a detailed briefing about the school by the headmaster of the school.

He also checked the attendance of the school teachers and asked the stu-

China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday.

Eric Tian, head of overseas operations at IASO Biotechnology, shared insights on how this strategic alliance will leverage each partner's strengths to foster the development of innovative treatment solutions, ultimately providing more efficient CAR-T services for patients in Pakistan.

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## Pak rejects as 'flawed' proposed treaty banning production of fissile material for nuclear weapons

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has reaffirmed its opposition to the proposed treaty banning the production of fissile material used as fuel for nuclear weapons, asserting that States that do not need to produce enriched uranium after having already amassed several tons of it in excess are pushing for this discriminatory pact.

"A treaty which only results in a cut-off in the future production of fissile material would be a non-starter given that it would perpetuate asymmetries and will have no added value for nuclear disarmament," Ambassador Usman Iqbal Jadoon, deputy permanent representative to the UN, told the General Assembly's First Committee, which deals with disarmament and international security matters.

"The States, which do not need to produce fissile material after having already amassed several tonnes of fissile material in excess, are pushing for cost-free proposals such as

quantitative capping of fissile material as 'the next logical step,'" he said. In these diversionary tactics, he pointed out they are joined with fervour by the States who rely on others for extended deterrence and nuclear-weapon-sharing arrangements. "If the proponents of the FMCT (fissile material cut-off treaty) are serious in addressing the issue of fissile material production, they should start by rejecting double standards and ceasing nuclear cooperation with a country in South Asia—obviously India—that continues to amass stockpiles outside safeguards and is now on the path of a major breakout in terms of fissile production," the Pakistani envoy said. "Short of that, their calls for a moratorium or a cut-off treaty ring hollow," he added. In this regard, Ambassador Jadoon reiterated that FMCT's approach was "flawed" and that its time had long passed.

"The relentless weaponization of new and emerging capabilities and its integration and co-existence with the nuclear domain is further convoluting the security landscape," he said, adding that it would negatively impact the security of the States and exacerbate asymmetries.

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"The relentless weaponization of new and emerging capabilities and its integration and co-existence with the nuclear domain is further convoluting the security landscape," he said, adding that it would negatively impact the security of the States and exacerbate asymmetries.

Ambassador Jadoon pointed out that India was the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the region and nuclearized the Indian Ocean. It refuses to commit to non-testing, threatens aggression against Pakistan, rejects implementation of resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir of the Security Council, where it wants to sit as a permanent member, and spurns dialogue on restraint measures.



ISLAMABAD: Vice Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami addressing foreign course members of PN Staff Course during their visit to Naval Headquarters.

## Admiral (retd) Tasnim for shift in country's economic 'center of gravity' from north to south

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice Admiral @ Ahmad Tasnim on Tuesday urged the country's economic policy-makers to shift the 'center of gravity' of the economy from north to south.

He was addressing as chief guest at the 2nd seminar of the series on Blue Economy, titled "Challenges to Maritime Trade" organized by the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) Islamabad, in collaboration with the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), said a news release.

It was centered around

regional connectivity initiatives including BRI, global and regional security imperatives, latest technological and climate stimuli, etc.

Vice Admiral @ Ahmad Tasnim appreciated the quality input by all experts. He suggested to the country's economic policy-makers to shift the 'Center of Gravity' of the economy from north to south.

In his opening remarks, Vice Admiral @ Ahmad Saad, President NIMA, while welcoming the guests, outlined the key themes of the topic. The Guest of Honor Captain, Naem Sarfraz, emphasized

the importance of inclusion of subject-matter experts in the policymaking hierarchy. He also advised to adopt cheap, safe and green inland water transportation system. Renowned scholars Dr. Anjum Sarfraz, Dr. Hassan Daud and Dr. Maliba Zeba Khan set the stage for ensuing panel discussions. The panelists included renowned experts, i.e. Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz, Dr. Shabana Fayyaz, Dr. Salma Malik, Dr. Faiz Hussain, Dr. Khurram Iqbal, and Dr. Usman Chohan. They offered further insights into Pakistan's missing links of maritime vision.

In his opening remarks, Vice Admiral @ Ahmad Saad, President NIMA, while welcoming the guests, outlined the key themes of the topic. The Guest of Honor Captain, Naem Sarfraz, emphasized



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti condoling with relatives of MPA Patrick Saint Masih over his death.

## DC Kachhi orders surprise inspection of levies check posts

**Independent Report**  
MACH: Assistant Commissioner Mach Arslan Khan conducted a surprise visit to Levies checkpoints, including Gokart, Bhi Banni, and Pir Ghazi, as per Deputy Commissioner Kachhi Jahanzeb Baloch's directives. During the visit, Khan reviewed the attendance register of Levies personnel, inspected the arms situation, and assessed other matters.

Khan emphasized the importance of maintaining law and order, stating that no leniency should be shown in ensuring complete restoration of peace and upholding the rule of law.

## NA passes five resolutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly on Tuesday passed five resolutions, including one urging the government to take immediate steps to introduce media literacy training in schools and colleges to counter fake news on social and electronic media across the country.

The resolution for media literacy was moved by Syed Ali Qasim Gillani, emphasizing the importance of educating students to discern misinformation.

Sharmila Faruqi moved a resolution asking to take immediate steps to control over-billing by DISCOS in the Country.

## Toshakhana-2 case: FIA opposes bail plea of Bushra Bibi

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) will continue hearing of Toshakhana-2 case today (Wednesday) too.

On the other hand while opposing bail plea of Bushra Bibi in Toshakhana-2 case FIA prosecutor said he would continue to oppose bail plea.

Counsel Suleman Safdar told the judge during hearing of the case 12 days have passed after hearing of Bushra Bibi petition.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked I was suffering from severe fever when I came to court on October 9. It took me long time to recover from fever. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb gave these remarks during hearing of bail plea of Bushra Bibi in Toshakhana-2 case Tuesday. FIA prosecutor Zulfikar Abbas Naqvi and Counsel for FIA Umar Majid Malik appeared in the court.

Barrister Suleman Safdar counsel for Bushra Bibi was also in attendance. Suleman Safdar told

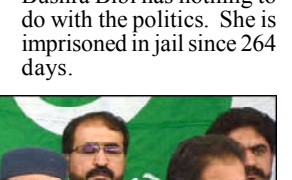
the court case is this cost was got less assessed by the private person who determines cost. Sohaib Abbasi who determined cost has now become king's evidence. Suleman Safdar said later the customs officers determined the price. These all people are witnesses and no one has been made accused. No one from cabinet division has been made accused. No one from cabinet division has been included in investigation.

Barrister Suleman Safdar this is case of prosecution that there was no direct link of PTI founder and Bushra Bibi.

According to prosecution this all work is done by Inam Ullah Shah but he is not accused.

Sohaib Abbasi who is causing loss to national kitty is king's evidence.

Counsel for Bushra Bibi said Bushra Bibi has been imprisoned to twist the arm of Imran Khan. Bushra Bibi has nothing to do with the politics. She is imprisoned in jail since 264 days.



QUETTA: Provincial Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Mulana Hidayat ur Rehman addressing a press conference.



QUETTA: MPA Sheikh Zarak Khan Mandokhail meeting with Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nausherwani.

## IBCC hails BBISE for introducing grading system

QUETTA (APP): Inter Board Coordination Commission (IBCC) of the Ministry of Education and Professional Training has hailed the BBISE and its Chairman for introducing new grading system and establishment of e-complaint cell.

Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BBISE) Quetta has introduced new grading system and established e-complaint cell for the first time in the history of the province.

The Inter Boards Coordination Commission of Ministry of Education and Professional Training has issued appreciation letter to the Chairman of BBISE, saying that the initiative would revolutionize the evaluation system, benefiting students and educators alike and would also help in attaining uniformity across the board.

The new grading system would provide a more accurate evaluation of their abilities, prioritizing stu-

dents' overall learning and development, adding that this would also help alleviate pressure on students, raise critical thinking and provide a more accurate evaluation of their abilities.

The letter further said that under visionary leadership and commitment of BBISE's Chairman to quality education has made this significant reform possible and his dedication to improving the education system in Balochistan is commendable.

Talking to APP, Chairman BBISE Mir Ijaz Azeem Baloch said that Balochistan Board was taking practical steps for development of the board in order to provide more facilities to the students in the province to provide quality education to the youth.

Under the vision of Balochistan Chief Minister and Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, the grading system has been introduced in the province by changing the marks/numbers system.



QUETTA: Managing Director BPPRA Syed Muhammad Afzal meeting with Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran.