

# Independent

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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 ju-



dicial 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 appoint-

ment 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.



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

## 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 Quami 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.

## 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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa on Tuesday issued his dissenting note on the reserved seats case.

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.

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.

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 ac-

cordance 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."

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."



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

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah 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)'s internal conflict within his party.

He was addressing the sixth meeting of the 10th National Assembly session that commenced with the recitation of Holy Quran. Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq chaired the proceedings.

Tarar while responding to Opposition Omar Ayub Khan said the 26th Constitutional Amendment was not done in haste but rather it took two and a half months.

"The Constitutional Amendment Bill was delayed on the request of Maulana Fazal Ur Rehman who demanded to hold it after the SCO summit. It was a consensus-based document with the input of all political parties," he said.

The minister while deriding the Opposition

Leader's accusations underlined the fact that 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.

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.

"These were four people who were identified by the media sitting in the press gallery which could be verified through photographic evidence. They were independent members and cast their votes as per their will and were not bound to the directions of the Parliamentary Leader," Minister Attaullah Tarar said.

The minister claimed that he had met all four members of the National Assembly from the Opposition Benches who had confirmed that they had attended the meeting on their own will and voted as per their conviction.

## 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 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.

## Dissident senator Qasim Roonjho resigns from Senate seat

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

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

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 favour of constitutional amendment.

## Terrorists kill three laborers in Central Kurram

PESHAWAR (APP): Terrorists on Tuesday killed three laborers in Khowadkhal area of Central Kurram, police informed.

As per details, laborers working at a coal mine, owned by Mulla Nabi, were attacked by the terrorists, resulting in the deaths of three laborers. The heartless terrorists killed the laborers by slitting their throats. Four of the laborers succeeded in fleeing the area upon seeing the terrorists and remained unharmed, police said, adding that the victims belonged to Darra Adam Khel, Kohat.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran Dr. Reza Amiri Moghadam called on Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters.

## 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.

The Pakistan delegation highlighted measures to expand fiscal space by broadening the tax base, aligning the provincial Agriculture Income Tax

regime with the federal income tax regime, rationalizing subsidies, rightsizing the government, and reducing energy sector costs.

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

M e a n w h i l e ,

## 26th constitutional amendment challenged in SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): 26th constitutional amendment has been challenged in Supreme Court (SC).

SC has been requested to declare 26th constitutional amendment null and void.

One Muhammad Anas has filed constitutional petition against 26th constitutional amendment through his counsel Adnan Khan making federation, chairman Senate, speaker National Assembly and others respondents.

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

Parliament has no power to propose on court's matters. 26th constitutional amendment is against basic structure and division of powers between the institutions.

## 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.

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.

During the event, Naqvi had a notable meeting with General Metin Gurak, Chief of the Turkish General Staff. The minister congratulated General Gurak on the successful organization of the expo, expressing his best wishes for its success.

In response, General Gurak thanked Minister Naqvi for Pakistan's participation, highlighting the importance of representation from

friendly nations.

As part of his visit, Mohsin Naqvi toured the expo, exploring various stalls and exhibits. He paid special attention to the stall set up by Pakistan Ordnance Factories, where he engaged with the organizers and praised the advanced Pakistani equipment on display.

Expressing his enthusiasm, Minister Naqvi remarked, "I was delighted to see the modern machinery and tools at the Istanbul International Expo." His keen interest in the advanced technologies showcased reflects Pakistan's commitment to innovation and collaboration in the defense sector.

The minister emphasized that the International Expo 2024 would serve as a platform to enhance mutual cooperation among friendly nations, paving the way for future partnerships in various fields.



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

## NA speaker, British MP call for strengthening Pak-UK partnerships

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and British MP Mohammad Yasin on Tuesday vowed for strengthening Pakistan-UK partnerships, especially parliamentary cooperation.

During a courtesy visit at Parliament House, British Member of Parliament from the House of Commons, Mohammad Yasin and Speaker emphasised the importance of furthering the strong partnership between Pakistan and the United Kingdom across

multiple areas of mutual interest, including enhanced parliamentary cooperation.

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq highlighted the longstanding and exceptional bilateral ties between Pakistan and the UK, which are built on a foundation of mutual respect and cooperation. He expressed optimism that continued interaction between the legislatures of both nations would foster further growth in various sectors, driving momentum in bilateral relations.

## Profile of Justice Yahya Afridi

ISLAMABAD: Justice Yahya Afridi will become the 30th CJP. He was elevated to the apex court in June 2018. He took oath as the youngest chief justice of the Peshawar High Court (PHC) in December 2016.

Born on January 23, 1965, and hailing from Kohat Frontier Region, he also has the distinction of becoming the first chief justice of the high court from the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata).

Justice Afridi was elevated to the high court as additional judge on Mar 15, 2010, and subsequently he was confirmed as permanent judge of the high court on Mar 15, 2012. He was enrolled as an advocate of the high court in 1991 and that of the Supreme Court in 2004. Before his elevation to the bench, he was a prominent lawyer running a famous law firm, Afridi, Shah & Minallah, which was established in 1997.

Among the two other associates of the firm were Justice Shah and Justice Athar Minallah. Justice Afridi had done his LLB from Law College, Punjab University, in 1988, and did his LLM from Jesus College, Cambridge University, UK, in 1990.

He had also remained a good sportsman and had remained a member of Cambridge University Polo Team in 1990 and was awarded gold medal for best sportsman, Aitcheson College, Lahore, in 1982.

During his legal career, Justice Afridi appeared in several high-profile cases. Legal circles considered him a competent lawyer, who was well versed in constitutional and corporate law. He also served as assistant advocate general in his early career until 1994.

It was in 1993 when he got fame for successfully defending the government in cases pertaining to disqualification of several alleged drug barons from contesting the general elections. Several of those barons had challenged their disqualification in the PHC but their petitions were dismissed.

Following his elevation to the PHC bench, Justice Afridi also served as inspection judge for different districts. He also remained the chairman of the Labour Appellate Tribunal, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, company judge of the Abbottabad circuit bench, head of the KP Subordinate Judiciary Service Tribunal, chairman of the Enrollment Committee of Lawyers at Abbottabad Bench and Peshawar, and administrative judge of anti-terrorism courts.



## 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 |  
Adnan 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 be-

ing 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 simul-

aneously.

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 Kallaw 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.



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.

## 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.

## 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.



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



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.

## 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.

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.

## 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.



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.

## 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 his 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-

## 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.

## 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.

## 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."

## 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.



# 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.

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 spurs dialogue on restraint measures.

"Also," he added, "the largest nuclear-weapon States, in disregard of their nuclear disarmament obligations, continue to modernize their arsenals." Ambassador Jadoon, who was speaking in a thematic debate on nuclear weapons, underscored the need to acknowledge the link between nuclear disarmament.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan in a meeting with representatives of National Press Club in federal Capital.

# Rana reiterates the importance of Youth in nation-building

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP), Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Tuesday reiterated the importance of youth in nation-building and assured the National Press Club (NPC) representatives that the government, through the Youth Programme, remains committed to supporting the young people of Pakistan in every possible way.

In a meeting aimed at discussing the role of youth in national development, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan met with the esteemed representatives of the NPC here at the Prime Minister's office.

The meeting focused on the pivotal role that the youth plays in shaping the future of Pakistan.

During the meeting, the NPC representatives praised Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan for his tireless efforts in the realm of youth empowerment and development.

They commended his leadership and the positive changes he had brought to the Pakistani Youth, especially in the province of Punjab.

The representatives acknowledged that Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan was widely regarded as one of the best choices for championing youth causes, noting his deep commitment to providing opportunities for young Pakistanis and creating a pathway for their success.

The NPC also highlighted his strategic initiatives aimed at fostering skill development, educational opportunities, and overall growth for the nation's youth. The meeting concluded with both sides agreeing on the need for continued collaboration and dialogue to ensure that the voices and aspirations of youth are fully represented in national policies and development plans.

Secretary NPC Ms Nayyer Ali, Members Executive Council, NPC Ahmed Mansoor, Amir Butt and others were present.

# IG Islamabad holds online Open Court to grievances public grievances



ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, held an online khuli kachehri in his office from 12:00 p.m. to 01:00 p.m. on Tuesday.

A public relation officer told APP: citizens were provided with a telephone number during the E-Khuli Kachehri.

He said IG Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi personally listened to the issues raised by citizens, and the AIG Investigations/ Complaints was also present on the occasion.

During the kachehri, IGP listened to telephone calls from citizens and assigned relevant senior police officers to promptly resolve their issues, he said.

Citizens raised concerns regarding personal matters, delays in FIR registration, incomplete investigations, car and motorcycle thefts, and other issues, he added.

IG Rizvi emphasized that delays in case investigations would not be tolerated, and all police officers were instructed to conduct thorough investigations.

Moreover, IG mentioned that professional beggars would be eradicated, and legal action would be taken against them.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police arrested a wanted member of the thief gang involved in numerous theft activities and recovered stolen mobile phones from their possession.

A public relation officer told APP under the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IG) police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the search and combing operations are being conducted in different areas of the city, to ensure the safety and security of the Islamabad citizens.

In this regard the Shams Colony police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending a wanted member of the thief gang.

He said the accused was identified as Akbar Shah. He added police team also recovered stolen mobile phones from their possession. He said cases were registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway. DIG Ali Raza, also directed all senior officers for an effective crackdown against the accused involved in criminal activities.



ISLAMABAD: Group photo with Begum Mumtaz Mughal, PML-N leader Tahseen Fawad and other participants on the occasion of anti-smoking seminar organized by Aurat Foundation.



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

# 26th Constitutional Amendment brings great relief to people of Pakistan: Tahir Ashrafi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Ashrafi, stressed on Tuesday that the inclusion of the interest-free economy clause in the 26th Constitutional Amendment is a major relief for the people of Pakistan.

Addressing a news conference, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Ashrafi said that swift justice for the common man and the elimination of interest-based systems were significant achievements of the amendment.

Tahir Ashrafi highlighted that the successful organization of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit has boosted Pakistan's global image. "Security was a major challenge for the SCO Summit, and the Pakistan Army, along with other institutions, made full efforts to ensure safety," Ashrafi said.

The Pakistan Ulema Council lauds the steps taken in the 26th Amendment regarding the elimination of interest and reforms related to religious schools (madrasas).

Tahir Ashrafi further stated that moving away from an interest-based system is a substantial victory, and any political party supporting this initiative is welcomed. Ashrafi pointed out that ordinary citizens often face challenges in seeking justice from lower courts. Tahir Ashrafi also noted the recent visit of the Chinese Premier to Pakistan, marking the first such visit in 11 years, which he described as highly successful.

# Rural women playing vital role in agriculture, economic growth: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam on Tuesday said that in any society where sustainable development is paramount, the pivotal role of rural women in agriculture and community development cannot be overlooked.

Addressing as chief guest at the 17th Annual Rural Women Leadership Training Conference at the Lok Virsa open-air auditorium organized by civil society organisations here, she said that rural women are not only the backbone of agricultural production but also vital contributors to economic growth, food security, and social cohesion. Accounting for a significant portion of the agricultural workforce in the country, rural women provide a major labour force for key agricultural activities including planting, harvesting and managing livestock, ensuring that families and communities have access to adequate food and health, she added.

"Their traditional knowledge and innovative practices enhance productivity and contribute to sustainable farming methods. By empowering women with resources, training, and access to markets, we can increase agricultural output and improve food security for millions," the PM's coordinator remarked.

She further said that beyond farming, rural women are crucial for economic diversification. Many engage in small-scale enterprises, from food processing to handicrafts, creating jobs and boosting local economies. Their entrepreneurial spirit can drive innovation and resilience in rural areas, laying the groundwork for sustainable economic growth.

Rural women are now seen more at the forefront of community development activities. Because, they take on leadership roles in local organizations, advocate for their rights, and mobilize resources for various initiatives.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam addressing as chief guest at the 17th Annual Rural Women Leadership Training Conference at Lok Virsa in Federal Capital.

# IG Islamabad files detailed report Petition for recovery of PTI founder focal person Intezar Panjutha

ISLAMABAD (Online): IG Islamabad has filed detailed report in Islamabad High Court (IHC) on the petition regarding recovery of Intezar Panjutha, focal person of PTI founder.

Reports from ISI and MI were also filed wherein the matter related to recovery has been declared negative instead of positive.

IHC has summoned Attorney General (AG) today.

On the other hand federal government and police have sought time from the court for recovery of focal person of PTI founder.

# Conference on role of tech in education assessment starts today

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Inter Boards Coordination Commission (IBCC) is set to host its 2nd Annual Conference on October 23-24, 2024, at Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad.

With the theme "Building a Brighter Future: The Role of Technology in Assessment," the conference will focus on how technology can transform educational assessment systems in Pakistan and internationally.

According to IBCC, the two-day conference will bring together educationists, policymakers, and technology experts to discuss key issues related to the integration of digital tools in assessment processes. The event aims to promote innovative solutions that can enhance transparency, efficiency, and fairness in educational assessments. The opening ceremony will be officiated by Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddique, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, as the Chief Guest.

Day 1 of the conference will feature panel discussions on the role of technology in examination systems, exploring challenges and solutions for adopting digital assessment methods.

# ATC approves bail after arrest in respect of PTI leader Swati

ISLAMABAD (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad has approved bail after arrest of PTI leader Azam Swati in the case registered against him under terrorism clauses.

The court granted bail to Azam Swati against surety bonds in the sum of Rs 20000 Tuesday.

Judge Abul Hasnat Muhammad Zulqarnain of ATC heard the case and approved the bail of Muhammad Azam Swati in the case registered against him in police station Sangjain under terror clauses.

# Brother kills sister in the name of honor

ISLAMABAD (Online): A girl has been murdered in the name of honor in federal capital Islamabad.

Brother of girl murdered her sister in the name of honor in the area of Golra police. Brother cut the throat of girl with knife.

According to police brother of victim had suspicion of moral conduct of his sister. The victim girl was absent from home since the last one year.

Brother killed her on her return to home. The case has been registered on the report of uncle of girl.

The family members and residents of mohallah handed over the accused to police.

# 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 IBANPK11589000001111429.

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 humanitarian 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 wanted to send relief goods for the victims of Gaza and Lebanon will be facilitated by the government.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called on Ambassador of Hungary in Pakistan H.E Bela Fazekas.

# 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.

# Chairman CDA reviews progress on F-8 Interchange project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa, on Tuesday visited the F-8 Interchange project to inspect the ongoing development work. During his visit, he also chaired an on-site meeting with key officials, including Member Engineering, Member Admin, Member Planning and Design, and senior officers from relevant departments, along with the project contractor.

During the briefing, Chairman Randhawa was informed that the drilling and concrete work for the project's test piling had been successfully completed, and preparations for load testing were finalized. Officials assured him that construction would be accelerated following the load test. Chairman Randhawa instructed that the construction work should proceed around the clock, emphasizing strict adherence to safety measures and the implementation of best engineering practices.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication, Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a meeting with Pakistan Ambassador to Germany Ms. Saqlain Syedah in Federal Capital.

# Supt Adiala jail put on notice PTI founder petition for his medical check up by personal physician

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued notice to superintendent Adiala jail for today (Wednesday) on the petition of PTI founder in connection with his medical check up by his personal physicians and sought reply from him.

The petition seeking medical check up of Imran Khan by his personal physician came up for hearing in IHC Tuesday.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked I am issuing notice for tomorrow. I will give decision on petition.

The court issued notice to superintendent Adiala jail on the petition regarding medical check up of PTI founder by his personal physician and sought reply from him.

Further hearing will take place today (Wednesday).

Sate counsel appeared during it and he told the court doctor conducts check up of Imran Khan thrice in a day. PIMS medical board went there on October 15 and it also checked PTI founder.

The court inquired what is wrong in it if Dr Faisal conducts medical check up of PTI founder.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked I am issuing notice for tomorrow. I will give decision on petition.

The court issued notice to superintendent Adiala jail on the petition regarding medical check up of PTI founder by his personal physician and sought reply from him.

IHC summoned competent officer from Advocate General Office. Interval was made for some time.