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Capping CJP's tenure at three years

Senate passes 26th constitutional amendment with two-thirds majority

As many as 65 members voted in favor of the bill while only four voted against it; Bill aimed at enforcing judicial reforms that have been a bone of contention between govt and opposition; PTI attends Senate session but opts out of the voting process; remaining members of Senate vote in favour of 22 clauses of the bill.

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate on Sunday approved long-awaited 26th constitutional amendment with two-thirds majority (65 votes) aimed at ensuring speedy justice in the country and bringing transparency in judicial system, by incorporating all amendments proposed by Ulema-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F).

Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar piloted the Constitution (Twenty-Sixth Amendment) Bill, 2024 in the House. The House passed the bill through clause by clause reading.

In the bill having 22

clauses, amendments to various Articles of the constitution have been proposed. A new Article 9 A regarding clean and healthy environment is also incorporated in the bill under which every person shall be entitled to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

As many as 65 members voted in favor of the bill while only four voted against it.

Kamran Murtaza of JUI-F moved amendments one by one which were incorporated in the bill after not opposing by the government.

Earlier, speaking in the House, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar said that the government, its allied parties and JUI-F reached a consensus on the draft of the constitutional amendment bill. As part of the government's efforts, a special parliamentary committee comprising representatives of all the political parties including the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) discussed the proposed constitutional package.

He went on to say that the procedure to appoint judges in the superior judiciary had been changed in the 18th Amendment. Both the prime minister and the president surrendered their powers and handed over their authorities to the parliament to bring more transparency in the appointment of judges, he added.

He said the parliamentary committee was empowered to approve or reject nomination of judges. However, he said the 18th Constitutional Amendment was challenged in court of law and message was given to the then government during the proceeding of the case that the amendment would be struck down.

The minister conceded that 19th Amendment was

Federal cabinet approves proposed draft of 26th constitutional amendment

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Federal Cabinet has approved the proposed draft of the 26th constitutional amendment of the coalition parties including the Pakistan People's Party.

According to a statement issued by Prime Minister Office, the Federal cabinet meeting was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, in which the Minister of Law and Justice again gave a detailed briefing on the 26th constitutional amendment.

The federal cabinet has approved the proposed draft of the 26th constitutional amendment of the coalition parties including the Pakistan People's Party. Congratulating the entire nation on the approval of the 26th constitutional amendment by the cabinet, the cabinet took the decision in the wider interest of the country while adhering to the oath of national development and public welfare.

passed in haste to change the composition of the judicial commission (JC) and parliamentary committee on appointment of judges. Hence, the powers of parliamentary committee were reduced, he added.

Azam Nazeer said even the bar councils and other lawyers representative organizations including Pakistan Bar Council criticized and demanded to revisit the decision. They demanded to make appropriate amendments in Article 175-A of the constitution, he

said.

Now, he said that the JC, responsible for the appointment and confirmation of judges would consist of the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), three senior Supreme Court judges, four parliamentarians, the Law Minister, an advocate having at least 15 years experience, and the Attorney General. Out of four parliamentarians, two members each from Senate and National Assembly, he

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ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar and Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ataulah Tarar holding a joint media talk.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet.

Pakistan, India should decide themselves scope of bilateral dialogue: US State Dept

US values its relations with both countries," says State Dept Spokesperson Matthew Miller

WASHINGTON (INP): After some ice finally melted between Pakistan and India during the recently held Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of Government summit in Islamabad, Washington has said that it is for both the nations to decide the scope and role of any bilateral dialogue.

Matthew Miller, the spokesperson for the United States Department of State, reacted to the positive development between the two rival countries in the mega diplomatic event held in the federal capital last week.

"We have bilateral relations with Pakistan and In-

dia. The US values its relations with both countries," said Miller in an exclusive conversation with Geo News in Washington.

Reacting to the meeting between India's External Affairs Minister Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar with Pakistani leaders during the summit, the spokesperson said that it is now up to both the nations to decide the scope and role of any dialogue that they may have with regards to bilateral ties.

Both Pakistan and India witnessed their usually contentious relations ease during the SCO Council of Heads of Government Summit that welcomed top leaders of member



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti congratulates ANP's MPA Engineer Zamrak Khan Achakzai on the wedding of his son.

Mengal refuses to become part of constitutional amendment

ISLAMABAD (INP): Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) Chief Sardar Akhtar Mengal on Saturday refused to become part of the much-touted proposed constitutional amendment by saying that his party won't be a party in the passage of the constitutional amendment, which he claimed, was being "forcefully" pushed through.

Speaking to media after meeting JUI-F's Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman to mull over constitutional amendment, he said that constitution wasn't a secret document and it was right

of every citizen and political parties to get to know about any tweaks in the constitution. "The question is who is orchestrating this move of bringing constitutional amendment," he said in a thinly-veiled reference to powers that be. Mengal blamed former military rulers for behaving in the same forceful manner to get elected in managed referendums. He regretted that the MNAs didn't have any prestige left as they were picked up by the unknowns for asserting their wills, mentioning that he won't become part of the constitutional amendment till the release of his party MNAs.

JUI-F's proposals included in draft of constitutional amendments: Law Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar Sunday said that the federal cabinet has approved the comprehensive draft of the 26th constitutional amendment unanimously which also includes the proposals of JUI-F.

Talking to the media outside of the Parliament House, the minister said that according to the amendments the chief justice of Pakistan would be appointed amongst the most three senior judges of the Supreme Court.

He said that the Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI-F) has suggested five proposals in the 26th constitutional amendments which were linked to the Islamic law and Islamic Ideological Council (IIC).

The law minister said that the draft was prepared after a threadbare discussion and broader consultation with all political parties and their leaders in the House as well as their legal representatives.

26th amendment sets Jan 2028 deadline to end Riba, paves way for interest-free banking

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: The 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2024, recently passed by the Senate, has established a deadline of January 1, 2028, for the end of the practice of Riba (interest-based banking) in the country.

The clause was added to the draft amendments at the suggestion of Jamiat Ulema-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), the Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman-led religio-political party, which gave the government a tough time in presenting the draft of the amendment bill.

To eradicate this form of usury, the Senate approved the amendment in clause (f) of Article 38 of the Constitution, which pertains to the promotion of social and economic well-being.

The current clause states that "eliminate Riba as early as possible," and the government replaced this with "as far as practicable, by the 1st of January, 2028."



Pakistan Navy officials handing over the seized Narcotics to ANF officials at Gwadar.

Bilawal felicitates nation on 26th amendment passing

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Sunday extended his felicitations to the nation on the passing of the 26th Constitutional Amendment package.

Describing it as a historic day, Bilawal Bhutto shared that he had contacted Maulana Fazal ur Rehman by phone to congratulate him.

He praised the efforts of the JUI and Maulana Fazal ur Rehman in evolving consensus on the amendment, saying that their dedication was not for political gain but for the integrity of the Constitution, which is as vital to them as it is to the PPP.

In a separate address at the PPP parliamentary party meeting, Bilawal Bhutto said that as Parliamentary Party Leader of the PPP and PPPP, it is his instruction to all parliamentary members that they are to vote in favour of the constitutional amendment being presented in the House.

Bilawal Bhutto said that he would be there to guide the members on the specifics, and Sherry Rehman would do the same in the Senate.

Both the government and opposition parties involved in the discussions have reached a compromise.

Masterminds of negative and high tactics cannot be called Baloch

Independent Report

HUB: Central Senior Leader of Pakistan Peoples Party, Spokesperson of President Asif Ali Zardari and Member of Provincial Assembly elected from HUB and Advisor for Industry and Crafts Mir Ali Hassan Zahri, contrary to the fabrications and facts circulating on social media, reported "Balochistan Facts". It has been completely rejected by calling it a bundle

Tarar calls constitutional package a milestone for parliamentary supremacy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Ataulah Tarar on Sunday said that it was a historic day and a milestone for the state and people of Pakistan as the supremacy of Parliament was established.

Talking to media outside Parliament House, along with Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar here, he said the Constitution was clear about the supremacy of

Parliament. "It was stipulated in the Charter of Democracy to facilitate the delivery of cheap and speedy justice", the minister added.

He said that consultation with all political parties was the beauty of the democratic process and no political party has been left out in this process.

He said that prolonged but constructive consultations were held on the constitutional package and no urgency had been shown in this regard.



QUETTA: Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar visiting different blocks during his visit to under construction Bacha Khan Hospital Nawan Killi.

Health Minister vows to upgrade hospitals across Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: Provincial Minister of Health, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, has reaffirmed the government's commitment to equipping all hospitals in Balochistan with modern and standard facilities, aligning with the vision of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

During his visit to the under-construction Bacha Khan Hospital in Nawan

Kali, Kakar emphasized the importance of completing the hospital's construction as soon as possible. This will enable the local population to access quality healthcare services without delay.

The minister stressed that the hospital's establishment will provide state-of-the-art medical facilities to residents of Nawan Kali and surrounding areas, eliminating the need for

Pakistan Navy Ship seizes narcotics at sea

KARACHI (PR): On Oct 24, an intelligence-based counter narcotics operation was conducted by Pakistan Navy and ANF in North Arabian Sea in which approximately 2000 Kgs of Hashish, 370 Kgs of Ice and 50 Kgs of Heroin were seized by Pakistan Navy Ship HUNAIN.

The consignment includes one hundred thousand illegal Indian made pills used as drug which was to be transported via sea to international destination. Value of narcotics in international market is approximately US\$ 145 million. The seized items have been handed over to ANF for further legal proceedings.

Balochistan minority MPA passes away

QUETTA (APP): Patrick Saint, a member of the Balochistan Assembly representing the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on a minority seat, passed away on Sunday after a prolonged illness, family sources confirmed. He had been admitted to a hospital in Karachi and receiving treatment for quite some time.

Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Governor Balochistan Shaikh Jajjar Khan Mandokhail have expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise of Balochistan MPA Patrick Saint Masih.

In their separate condolence messages, they said

that with the demise of Patrick Saint Masih, the province has lost a sincere and dedicated public representative. His services will always be remembered they said extending their heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved family.

Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar also condoled Maseeh's passing, acknowledging the void left by his demise. Kakar hailed Maseeh as a sincere and dedicated individual who tirelessly served the community. Other Balochistan leaders, including Provincial Ministers and Assembly members, have also expressed their condolences.

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Women's T20 World Cup: New Zealand lift first title as they defeat South Africa by 32 runs

Sports Desk

DUBAI: The New Zealand cricket team lifted the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 trophy by beating South Africa at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Sunday.

For the Kiwis, this is their first ever T20 World Cup title victory having lost the finals of the prestigious tournament in 2009 and 2010.

They lost the final in 2009 to England and then the next year suffered defeat at the hands of Australia.

But this year, the Black Caps have ended their drought and defeated the Proteas by 32 runs. The Laura Wolvaardt-led side lost against Australia in the previous edition of the tournament.

South Africa had seemingly won the 2024 tournament as after beginning their chase of 159 runs, they were 51 without a loss of a wicket.

However, things turned bleak for the Proteas as their wickets started to topple down in quick succession. The debacle started from Tazmin Brits' fall and raced through the rest of the batters.

Brits was followed by captain Wolvaardt who scored 33 runs off 27 balls.

The Kiwi bowlers were so exceptional throughout the second innings that aside from the two openers, the rest of the line-up failed to score double-figure runs except Chloe Tryon and Annerie Dercksen who added 14 and 10 runs to the scoreboard respectively. South Africa finished their innings on 126 runs at the loss of nine wickets.

For the Black Caps, the stars of the innings turned out to be Amelia Kerr and Rosemary Mair as the duo dismissed three of the Proteas batters each.

Eden Carson, Fran Jones and Brooke Halliday

grabbed one wicket each. Undoubtedly, the Kiwis have won the title due to the efforts of their bowlers.

Earlier, the Proteas had won the toss and invited the Kiwis to bat first with Suzie Bates and Georgia Plimmer opening the innings.

Throughout their innings, the Black Caps suffered a loss of five wickets and only Bates, Kerr and Brooke Halliday scored commendable runs.

Bates added 32 runs off 31 deliveries while Kerr remained the highest-scorer for New Zealand with her 43 off 38.

Halliday's 38 off 28 steered New Zealand to a score of 158 runs which turned out to be a good enough score to lift a T20 World Cup title.

Moreover, their skipper, Sophie Devine could only score six runs off 10 balls as she was dismissed by Nadine de Klerk.



KARACHI: Ahle Sunnat Pir Syed Arshad Saeed Shah Kazmi is addressing to participants during the Annual Azmat-e-Auliya and Urs Mahbubeen Conference organized Jamia Masjid Ameer Hamza Trust, held at Nazimabad area in Karachi.



QUETTA: A beautiful eye-catching aerial view of Capital City of Balochistan during pleasant weather, captured at horizon of Quetta.

Rathua Hariam bridge project awarded to FWO

Independent Report

MIRPUR: The Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq, announced that the construction contract for the Rathua Hariam Bridge project has been awarded to Pakistan's national institution, Frontier Works Organization (FWO). The project, valued at 17 billion rupees, is expected to be completed at a cost of 10 billion rupees.

Speaking at the ceremony where the construction award letter was handed over to FWO, the Prime Minister emphasized that the government is taking practical steps rather than making false announcements. He highlighted the government's

18-month performance as satisfactory, ensuring that national projects are not hindered by regional biases or narrow-mindedness.

The ceremony was attended by notable figures, including Housing and Physical Planning Minister Chaudhry Yasar Sultan, Director General Mangla Dam Housing Authority Chaudhry Muhammad Mansha Naqshbani, and Project Director Rathua Hariam Bridge Habib Mughal.

The government is also working to address the issues of Mangla Dam affectees, particularly the resettlement of sub-families. This development is part of the government's efforts to provide relief and support to affected communities.

Rizwan likely to be appointed as Pakistan white-ball captain

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan wicketkeeper batter Mohammad Rizwan is likely to be appointed as the Pakistan white-ball captain.

Sources divulged that the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and Rizwan had agreed to spearhead the national cricket team.

Meanwhile, it has been accepted that the white-ball captain and squad will be announced within two days.

Meanwhile Pakistan batter Fakhar Zaman submitted his response to showcase notice from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) after the 34-year-old cricketer penned comments in favor of Babar Azam.

Sources divulged that Zaman said in his

response that Babar Azam is his friend and fellow cricketer. "There was no intention to scoff at the PCB or anybody else by coming in the favor of Babar Azam."

He replied, "I am a centrally contracted player and get salary. I have just talked about Babar Azam's cricket. I feel that Babar Azam should have been provided with opportunity in this difficult time."

"The purpose of penning my statement was not to leave the PCB angry, but to express my thoughts," Zaman said.

"PCB is our institution, which we respect and will continue to respect," he replied to the PCB.

Sources divulged that Zaman said in his

Senate passes 26th constitutional amendment....

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He said one member of the JC would be either a woman or a non-Muslim qualified to become a senator on a technocrat seat, clarifying the nomination would be made by the Speaker National Assembly.

He said no changes have been made to the provincial Judicial Commissions, where the Chief Justice of the High Court, a senior judge, and the provincial law minister would continue to assess judges' performance.

The minister said that the amendment outlines the procedure for appointing the CJP, clarifying that the Prime Minister would no longer exercise this authority, instead delegating it to the Parliament. A 12-member committee would finalize the nominations and forward them to the PM, with the CJP serving either until retirement or for a maximum of three years, he said.

He said that the appointment of the CJP was a part of the reform package, with three senior judges being considered for the position, from which one would be selected as Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP).

The minister said that the mechanism for forming constitutional benches at the Supreme Court and provincial levels had been clarified, with logistical preparations needed at the provincial level. Provincial assemblies, with a 51 percent majority, could pass a resolution to establish a provincial constitutional bench, he said.

He said the formation of these benches would be under the authority of the JC headed by the CJP.

He said setting up constitutional court was part of Charter of Democracy (CoD) signed by Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in 2006. The Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto also took up the matter which was pending agenda part of the CoD, he added.

He said in past, elected prime ministers were removed from their offices by exercising Article 184 of the Constitution although there was clear procedure given in the Article 195 of the constitution. In 2022, the elected prime minister was removed under the Article 195 devised in the constitution through vote of no confidence, he added.

He clarified that incumbent CJP Qazi Faez Isa was not interested in any extension adding, "During the pre meetings that I had held with the top Judge, he reiterated his disinterest in his extension of his tenure, saying that any amendment would come into effects after his retirement".

Azam Tarar said that the JC would have the authority to draft rules and establish a clear process for evaluating judges' professional capabilities. The JC, in collaboration with the CJP and provincial high courts, would regularly review judges' performance, he added.

He said that the JC would provide reports on judges' professional skills, and five technical advisors could be appointed in the National and Provincial Assemblies under the constitution.

He said Kamran Murtaza of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) proposed five amendments which have already been included in the draft.

Speaking on the upper house floor, PTI Senator Barrister Ali Zafar termed the Constitution a "social contract", that unites the nation. "If there is no consensus, the Constitution will die its own death," he said. He pointed out that the Constitution is formed with the consent of the people and the "amendments should also be made with their consent."

Zafar cited the example of Article 58(2)(b)—which empowers the president to dissolve the government—saying that both Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) governments became targets of

this amendment. "Such amendments, which are made without consensus, can damage the country's democracy."

He noted that it had been decided in PTI's parliamentary committee meeting that they would not vote on the constitutional amendment.

"We have taken signatures of all our members [...] If any of our members vote, then do not count it," the PTI Senator asked the Senate Chairman.

He further said that they were not part of "any process" and had not provided a "single clause".

Referring to his 45-minute meeting with Imran Khan, Zafar said the PTI founder was unaware of the country's political situation and questioned the urgency for the passage of constitutional amendment before October 25 — the day the incumbent chief justice would retire. Speaking of the draft, he pointed out that there were "serious mistakes" which should be addressed.

"A constitutional court isn't being formed but constitutional benches are," he said, adding that the process of appointing judges has been kept by the government. "There will be a huge confusion as to which cases will be heard by constitutional benches," he noted.

In her speech on the floor of the upper house of the parliament, PPP Senator Sherry Rehman criticized the opposition for not proposing a single point during the 10 sittings of the parliamentary committee.

She emphasized that their actions were not an "attack" but rather paving the way for the parliament to claim its rights.

The PPP lawmaker also praised Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari for his efforts in building a broader consensus on the constitutional package among the political parties.

After the speeches, the House passed the motion to vote on the constitutional amendments by majority vote. Before the voting,

opposition lawmakers demanded that PML-N leader Rana Sanaullah and the Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) be sent out of the House. However, the treasury senators asserted that it was their — Sanaullah and AGP — constitutional right to sit in the House.

Below are the salient features of the bill:

Right to clean and healthy environment:

A new Article 9A is inserted, granting every citizen the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.

Elimination of riba (Interest):

Amendment to Article 38 (f) mandates the complete elimination of riba (interest) by January 1, 2028.

Judicial Independence and Protection:

Amendment to Article 48(4) clarifies that the advice given to the President by the Cabinet or Prime Minister cannot be challenged in any court or tribunal.

Amendment to Article 81 includes provisions for the allocation of funds for judicial bodies such as the Judicial Commission of Pakistan and Supreme Judicial Council.

Article 175A has been revised to provide a performance evaluation system for judges of the High Courts. The evaluation process will ensure accountability and address inefficiencies.

Revisions to Article 177 specify that a person must have served as a High Court Judge for at least five years or practiced for 15 years in the High Court and the Supreme Court to qualify as a Judge of the Supreme Court.

Revised procedure for appointment of judges:

Article 175A has been further modified to change the composition of the Judicial Commission responsible for appointing Supreme Court judges. A Special Parliamentary Committee will appoint the Chief Justice of Pakistan from among the three most senior judges.

The committee will include representatives from the National Assembly and Senate, ensuring proportional representation of political parties based on their parliamentary strength.

The committee will operate with a majority vote (two-thirds) to finalize judicial appointments.

Organising elections:

Amendment to Article 81 includes provisions for sums to organize and conduct elections for the National Assembly, Senate, Provincial Assemblies, and local governments.

Judicial evaluation and accountability:

Provisions are added for annual performance evaluation of

the High Court Judges by the Judicial Commission.

In cases of unsatisfactory performance, judges will be given a chance to improve, failing which the matter will be referred to the Supreme Judicial Council.

Retirement age and tenure of Chief Justice of Pakistan:

Amendment to Article 179 limits the tenure of the Chief Justice of Pakistan to three years, irrespective of age. After the completion of their term, the Chief Justice will retire regardless of their age at the time.

Appointment criteria for SC:

Changes to Article 177 redefine the qualifications required for appointments to the Supreme Court, requiring candidates to have served as High Court judges for at least five years or to have practised as advocates for at least 15 years.

Earlier the Parliamentary Leaders of various political parties in the Senate on Friday urged the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senators to accord their consent for the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill 2024 for strengthening of the judicial system.

The debate ensued after the fourth meeting of the 343rd Senate Session prior to the presentation of the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill 2024 where the Parliamentary Leaders from the treasury and opposition benches presented their point of views on the legislation.

Taking the Floor, Parliamentary Leader, Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), Senator Sherry Rehman said the Parliamentary committee formed on the Amendment Bill 2024 met 11 times to hold extensive deliberations on the process. "It's my responsibility to remind the masses and this House that PPP formed the unanimous Constitution of 1973, 18th Constitutional Amendment and continued the legacy of Charter of Democracy accorded by Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto," she added.

Senator Rehman derided the PTI Parliamentary Leader for alleging hidden perils in the legislation. PPP Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto, she said expressed extreme leadership in the process by expanding the consultations' scope to legal fraternity and civil society while sharing it on media and parliament's forum as well.

She said the PPP have reached this forum by rendering many sacrifices, adding, "The opposition must understand that they have to keep the country integrated and not disintegrated. Bilawal Bhutto has left no political leadership vacuum by his proactive role."

UoT holds all Balochistan HEC Cricket Tournament

Independent Report

QUETTA: The University of Turbat (UoT) cricket team delivered an outstanding performance in the All Balochistan HEC Cricket Zone Event 2024, dominating Pool B by winning all three of their group stage matches consecutively.

In the group stage matches, the Team UoT secured commanding victories over the University of Makran, Panjgur, by 8 wickets, Lasbela University of Agriculture, Wa-



ter, and Marine Sciences (LUAWMS), Uthal, by 2 wickets, and the University of Loralai by 7 wickets, maintaining an unbeaten streak that carried them into the final.

In the high important final match, UoT took on Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, and Management Sciences (BUITEMS), Quetta, at the University of Loralai cricket ground on Saturday. Despite their excellent form throughout the tournament, the team UoT fell short in the final, losing the match and missing out on the championship title.

UoT Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Jan Muhammad, along with the university community lauded the team for their exceptional performance throughout the event and expressed confidence in their future tournaments.

Vice-Chancellor highlighted UoT's commendable journey in the tournament, with standout contributions from players like Aslam Mazhar, Sohail Shoaib, Salman Naik, Ijazul Haq, Jalal Hussain, Behrawar Khan, Imran Zahid, Bakhshullah, Sawood Babul, Bahad Naeem, and other players. The Vice-Chancellor also extended his appreciation to Mr. Mazhar Gichki, Sports In-charge, focal person Munir Anwar, and the team officials for their leadership and guidance throughout the tournament.

"Although the team UoT just missed out on the title, the team's efforts and determination throughout the tournament have been a source of pride for the university," VC added.

The event, hosted by the University of Loralai concluded in a final competition between the two most formidable teams of the tournament, BUITEMS from Pool A and the University of Turbat from Pool B. Despite high hopes and a fighting spirit from UoT, the BUITEMS played better in the final and emerged victorious, claiming the championship. Eight universities from Balochistan, including the University of Turbat, participated in the tournament.

Dr. Ehsanullah Khan Kakar, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Loralai and chief guest of the final match and closing ceremony congratulated BUITEMS on their triumph in the final and extended his gratitude to all the universities across Balochistan for their participation in the event.

Masterminds of negative....

Continued from page 1

people of Hub and do not want the projects of public interest going on in Hub to be successful. He said that there is opposition in politics but the opposition lies about women. Dirty and vile talk does not in any way beautify a so-called political figure. Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the said report is nothing but a complete lie and juggling of words. The allegations in the report have nothing to do with reality and these high-handed tactics are being used by the fearful anti-people elements who are afraid of the recent progress and prosperity of the Hub and do not want the Hub to develop.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that Alhamdulillah, I and my spouse are Baloch and no certificate is required for this and in every way we are better Baloch than those who claim to be Baloch who are talking about us not being Baloch and those who talk like this are not worthy to be called Baloch who do not have the slightest sense

of respect for women and tribal values and traditions. Mir Ali Hassan Zehri further said that people have fallen so much in political opposition that they are making base accusations against women. Shame on such elements that are doing hateful and vile campaigns in hostility and opposition. He said more, what kind of Balochism is it to use vulgar language about women? The fact is that the anti-national elements and their followers are working for their personal interests under the guise of Balochism and now these demented anti-people. The people of Balochistan know it well that who is who. The zealous people of Balochistan, especially HUB and Lasbela, have completely rejected the above-mentioned elements and will not listen to their negative propaganda in any way. Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that it is good to deal with those who talk badly about our women and these elements are warned to stop such dirty tactics otherwise

they will be prosecuted as per tribal traditions. Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that we have buried the forty-year period of dark and dirty politics of anti-people elements together with the people of the HUB and the people of the HUB have embarked on a new journey of development and prosperity and these plans are not being digested by these defeated elements. He said that the people of HUB have rejected the 40-year-old occupying group and held them accountable and today they are not able to show their face to anyone and are trying unsuccessfully to spread chaos and hatred among the people through negative and high tactics, in which they will have to face failure because the people of Hub have now become well aware of the vile politics of lies and looting by the anti-people elements. They should stop such their dirty tactics, or if the people show them a mirror, they will not be able to show their face to anyone.



ABBOTTABAD: Group Photo of Doctors of Ayub Medical College, Who completed MBBS in the year 2024.

Senator Samina, PM's aide Romina agree to promote climate justice agenda

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, and Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam, have reached a consensus to advocate for the integration of human rights into climate change policies in Pakistan.

During a bilateral meeting with PM's aide Romina Khurshid here on Sunday, both sides also agreed to jointly work to roll out a viable action plan to ensure that climate actions not only address environmental issues but also uphold and protect the rights of vulnerable communities affected by climate change in the country, especially in the highly cli-

mate vulnerable Balochistan province. "Integrating human rights into climate change policy is essential to ensure that actions to tackle climate risks do not exacerbate existing inequalities or infringe upon basic human rights," Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri highlighted during the meeting with the PM's climate aide. She said, "Climate change significantly undermines' fundamental human rights, including the right to life, health, food, and water, reflecting an increasing awareness of these pressing issues."

The Senator Zehri remarked, "I personally believe as various studies show that managing human rights into climate risk management action plans and discourse is crucial for cre-

ating and promoting a more just and equitable approach to tackle the climate crisis, particularly for resource-poor and marginalized communities in the vulnerable areas in Balochistan."

She pointed out, "Being a large and arid region in the southwestern part of the country, the Balochistan province is extremely vulnerable to climate change due to a combination of its geographic features, socio-economic challenges, and existing environmental stresses."

"The region's vulnerability is aggravated more due to its dependence on agriculture, water scarcity, and limited and shabby infrastructure, making it highly sensitive to adverse climate risks, particularly



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Austria to Pakistan Ms. Andrea Wicke giving away certificates among winners during the closing ceremony of 3-day "Girls Sports Carnival 2024" organized by Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training at Pakistan Sports Board.



ISLAMABAD: Former Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul Haque is speaking on the occasion of the 53rd annual Palestine Hurriyat Convention of Imamiya Students Organization Pakistan.

Dengue cases keep rising despite ICT admin's efforts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dengue cases continue to rise in the Federal Capital, despite the ongoing efforts by the district administration to control the outbreak.

Hospital sources reported that 20 patients have been admitted to Poly-clinic Hospital, 25 to CDA Hospital and 72 to Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), Quaid-e-Azam Hospital has taken in 63 patients, while 12 are currently receiving treatment at Federal General Hospital. As of last week, Rawalpindi reported a total of 3,220 dengue cases, while Islamabad recorded 2,276 cases while, the authorities have also found 1,143 positive dengue larvae samples across various parts of the city, indicating the persistence of the disease.

In response, the district administration has ramped up fumigation operations across the city to prevent the further spread of dengue. Areas such as Dhok Hydari, Koral, and Sarai Kharboza have already been fumigated, while

fogging efforts are continuing in Tarlai, Mehrban Town, E-11, and Dhok Abbasi.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, has instructed the fumigation teams to ensure no area is left out. He urged citizens to report if their neighbourhoods are missed so that complete coverage can be achieved. DC Memon also encouraged residents to cooperate with the district administration in its efforts to curb the dengue outbreak.

Alongside fumigation, the administration is focusing on ensuring effective treatment for dengue patients. Special wards have been set up in hospitals across the city, and the situation is being closely monitored.

Furthermore, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) East, Mehreen Baloch, visited several hospitals to check on the facilities provided for dengue patients, ensuring the availability of beds and other necessary services.

DC directs wholesalers to follow notified price list

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (ICT) Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon on Sunday directed the authorities concerned to take indiscriminate actions against wholesalers, who were not following the notified price list.

According to Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Spokesperson, the Deputy Commissioner urged the citizens to pay the price of food items as per the rate list.

On the special directives of Irfan Nawaz Memon, the ICT administration arrested eight shopkeepers from the Sunday markets of the G-10 and G-11 sectors for not implementing the notified price list.

It is pertinent to mention here that action against shopkeepers selling food items at high prices to the citizens was taken on a regular basis.

Pak-Korea Cultural Week 2024 to be observed from Oct 23

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Prime Minister's Youth Program (PMYP) in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, Islamabad, will observe the Korea-Pakistan Cultural Week 2024.

According to the PMYP office, the vibrant celebration will showcase the rich cultural heritage of both nations, strengthening their friendship and cultural exchange.

The event will feature two exciting programs including the Korea-Pakistan Cultural Gala on October 23 at Liaquat Gymnasium which will showcase mesmerizing music, dance, and art performances from Korea and Pakistan.

Additionally, the Korea-Pakistan Movie Day will screen four critically acclaimed films from October 24 to 27 at PNCA, Islamabad.

Korean movies "Ode to My Father" and "The Himalayas" would be showcased alongside Pakistani hits "Nayab" and "Superstar." These films would highlight the diversity and creativity of both countries' cinema.

Regarding the occasion, Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Program Rana Mashhood said "We are thrilled to partner with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to bring this cultural extravaganza to Pakistan. This event embodies the spirit of friendship and cooperation between two countries."

The Korea-Pakistan Cultural Week 2024 underscores the growing bilateral relations between Korea and Pakistan and promises to attract a diverse audience, including dignitaries, cultural enthusiasts, and students.



ISLAMABAD: Women browse and purchase second-hand warm clothes at the weekly bazaar in Aabpara, Federal Capital, getting ready for the colder season.

Meeting between Governor KP, UK's Education delegation held

ISLAMABAD (APP): Professor Sarah William, Dean of the University Business and Law School in Buckinghamshire, UK, met with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi along with a delegation here on Sunday to focus on enhancing educational collaboration.

The meeting, which also included Chairman of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter, Malik Habib Malik Orakzai, and vice chancellors from various universities in the province, focused on enhancing educational collaboration and addressing modern educational needs.

Governor Kundi emphasized the importance of aligning provincial universities with global standards, saying that while students possess talent, they require guidance and encouragement.

He expressed regret over the lack of attention given to education and stressed the need to develop an exemplary educational

system for future growth and prosperity.

He highlighted the necessity of acquiring and promoting quality education to achieve goals like women's empowerment and youth engagement.

Discussions also centered on fostering international cooperation in education.

Sarah William committed to strengthening ties with educational institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while Governor Kundi underscored the significance of establishing robust connections with the British education system.

Vice-chancellors exchanged ideas on opportunities for development and collaboration with international institutions.

The meeting was seen as a positive step towards enhancing education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and fostering international collaboration. During the visit, Professor Sarah William presented Governor Kundi with her book, "Women Work in Public Relations."

Forward block is about to be formed in PTI, claims Vawda

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senator Faisal Vawda has made a bold claim, stating that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) will form a forward block led by what he described as "subservient politicians".

Speaking to the media, Senator Vawda suggested that certain PTI members have deliberately sabotaged the party by boycotting the vote on the constitutional amendments.

He indicated that this move was orchestrated, and the public deserves to know the truth.

According to Vawda, had the opposition been involved, they would have voted against the amendments. He further claimed

that a clever politician will lead the PTI forward block.

Earlier to this, Vawda had posted on X (formerly Twitter), hinting at developments regarding the 26th constitutional amendment, writing, "Anyone wants to come is welcomed, otherwise there are more numbers than needed. Inshallah today after the amendment we will cut the cake."

He had also emphasized that the amendment would pass regardless of opposition, saying, "Whether anyone shows up or not."

He added that there would be no resolution for those who engaged in bribery or intimidation.

Pak to 'launch' nationwide polio vaccination drive on Oct 25

ISLAMABAD (INP): A nationwide polio vaccination drive is set to commence on October 25, aiming to immunize over 4.5 million children across Pakistan.

According to sources, the campaign will be conducted in three phases, starting from Sindh province.

The first phase will begin on October 25 in Sindh, followed by the second phase on October 28 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The third phase will commence on November 11 in Punjab, Balochistan, and

Islamabad.

The drive aims to vaccinate over 4.5 million children, including 2.3 million in Punjab, 1.6 million in Sindh, 730,000 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 265,000 in Balochistan.

Additionally, 461,125 children will be vaccinated in Islamabad, 740,000 in Azad Kashmir, and 281,232 in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The vaccination drive will also include vitamin A supplements for children aged 6 to 59 months. A total of 455,504 frontline workers will be deployed for the campaign.

PBS to host first-ever-Data Fest 2024 at Pak-China Friendship Centre today

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) will be hosting Pakistan's first-ever Data Fest-2024 at the Pak-China Friendship Centre from October 21-22, 2024, bringing together experts, researchers, and data enthusiasts from diverse fields to explore the critical role of data in shaping policies and driving innovation for a better future.

This first-of-its-kind festival aims to foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and actionable strategies to tackle pressing challenges in Pakistan, including healthcare access, social equity, and sustainable development.

Prominent data scientists, statisticians and Information Technology experts will deliver inspiring speeches, showcasing the transformative power of data in policy-making and innovation.

Attendees participated in hands-on workshops, exhibitions, and a data visualization competition, showcasing the latest advancements in data technologies.

Key activities of the event are thematic discussions that will comprise

engaging sessions on governance, climate resilience, and more, with participation from stakeholders including NADRA, SUPARCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, and the World Bank.

Further keynote speeches will be delivered by international and regional experts from organizations such as the United Nations and Asian Development Bank.

A total of 50 workshops will be conducted across six dedicated workstations and will cover various data integration and visualization topics.

The event features 80 stalls showcasing cutting-edge data products and tools, including participation from organizations like NADRA, SUPARCO, KPITB, AJK (IT Board), Pakistan Software Export Board, World Bank, UNICEF, UNFPA, Provincial Bureau of Statistics, IT Firms.

Panel Discussions of Data experts on six topics including Harnessing Demographic Data for Policy and Legislation to address Pakistan's high population Growth Rate, Welfare Monitoring for Better

Policy Decision-making, Climate Change Issues, Data Gaps, Bridging Data Gaps for Inclusive Data Systems for Effective Policy Making, Data Integration for Growth and Development, Closing Human Capital Gaps (Education) will also be held.

Delegations from International statistical offices, including, the Maldives Bureau of Statistics, Nepal Statistical Office, National Center for Statistics and Information, Oman, Delegates from the Asian Development Bank and UNICEF will also attend the event. Further, there will be virtual presentations from Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Iran.

An incubation center for research and innovation is specially designed for academia and researchers to showcase their projects, and research work using different data sets using integrated data sets.

Various foundations and social welfare organizations also participated in the event.

From Academia, Institutions like LUMS, FAST, NUST, and Quaid-e-Azam University will attend Data Fest-2024



ISLAMABAD: A view of overturned vehicle on highway due to mechanical failure.

IRSA releases 95,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 95,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 68,200 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1535.57 feet and was 137.57 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 35,900 cusecs and 37,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1198.20 feet, which was 148.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.

The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 6,300 cusecs and 32,000 cusecs respectively.

11 criminals arrested; drugs and weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police apprehended 11 criminals involved in different criminal activities, including drug peddling, and possessing illegal weapons on Sunday. The police also recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession.

DIG Syed Ali Raza, said that the Islamabad Police is actively working to ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property in the federal capital, emphasizing that no elements will be allowed to disrupt citizens' peace. Protecting the lives, property, and dignity of citizens is the Islamabad Police's top priority, Syed Ali Raza added. Citizens are urged to report any suspicious activities to the relevant police station, emergency helpline "Pukar-15," or via the "ICT 15" app to help make the city crime-free through cooperation between the police and the public.

Moreover, four absconders were also arrested from various areas of the city during the last 48 hours.

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Symposium held in Islamabad on China-Pakistan cooperation to drive modernization

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Hong Ting Forum themed "Understanding China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and Chinese-style Modernization Development Path" was held in the federal capital city of Islamabad the other day.

The symposium drew about 100 participants, including diplomats, scholars, and media representatives.

It was co-convened by Xinhua News Agency and the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), an Islamabad-based think tank.

Speaking at the event, Shi Yuanqiang, minister of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, said that China is ready to share development opportunities with the rest of the world. "China and Pakistan are good neighbours and all-weather strategic cooperative partners, and mutually beneficial cooperation benefits both countries," he added.

Masood Khalid, former Pakistani ambassador to China, said the 20th plenary session of the 20th Communist Party of China Central Committee has

adopted a grand strategic blueprint for Chinese-style modernization.

"Pakistan greatly value our time-tested relationship with China, and both countries are tied in a relationship which is unbreakable," Khalid said, adding that Pakistan should learn from the development model of Chinese-style modernization to embark on the path of self-reliance and better benefit both nations and regional development.

Mudassar Iqbal, deputy director of the Associated Press of Pakistan,

said that China's approach to modernization is not only benefiting its own people but also contributing to global development.

"The ironclad friendship between Pakistan and China will enable the two countries to stand and move forward side by side and forge a future of shared prosperity and unshakable friendship," he added.

Hassan Daud Butt, senior advisor at the China Study Center of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, an Islamabad-based think tank, said that Pakistan

should fully utilize the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to expand cooperation with China in various fields such as industry, agriculture, science and technology, digital economy, green energy and technological innovation.

On the occasion, Khalid Mahmood, chairman of the ISSI Board of Governors, said efforts should be stepped up by the media and think tanks of Pakistan and China to contribute to deepening the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries.

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Human rights review

Pakistan is on shaky ground regarding human freedoms.

In a recent review, the UN Human Rights Committee — which carries out periodic assessments of other countries' rights record too — has expressed concern about escalating human rights abuses: politically motivated oppression, torture, eroding freedom to practise religious beliefs, forced conversions, curbs on the freedom of expression, a ban on student unions, restrictions on assembly, harassment of rights activists, crimes against women and children, capital punishment and extrajudicial killings.

Successive governments have been responsible for matters reaching this point, while certain state agencies can specifically be held responsible for crimes such as enforced disappearances. Besides, the state's failure to rein in radical religious elements has also contributed to a culture of fear.

While the scale of intimidation is significant, the rising crime graph is the outcome of a corrupt, ineffective and inequitable criminal justice system and structural flaws in the security apparatus. Among other things, these factors have contributed to the rampant violence against women: for instance, a rape takes place every two minutes in the country because of a 3pc conviction rate.

As for Pakistan's children, not only are millions of them deprived of even basic freedoms like education and forced into manual labour, their existence itself is overlooked by the state: as the review notes, only 42pc of children under five were registered at birth.

Meanwhile, religious communities experience persistent tyranny through the misuse of blasphemy laws, while forced conversions underscore the defenselessness of the marginalised. Thus, the UN body dismissed the figure of 74 cases of forced conversions from the state party and observed that the actual number was far higher.

The review is a reminder that our constitutional protections exist as mere aspirations, and that the state has no regrets about its citizens morphing into missing persons, while it actively crushes dissent in places such as KP and Balochistan where movements protesting against atrocities by both the state and radical anti-state elements are growing. Even peaceful protesters have encountered the might of the state.

It is unfortunate that human rights are seen as a favour to the populace — an attitude that is visible in institutions and social groups, including the judicial system. It is an approach that prevents the authorities from forming pro-people policies or fortifying departments for social development and protecting them from exploitation.

Instead of focusing solely on Pakistan's economic woes, the state must take a holistic view. It must understand that a fresh human rights regime will be realised when elected representatives are held accountable for rights excesses in their constituencies, policies are in line with international standards, and the state has a heart.

Abbas Nasir

The chaos of the past several weeks, triggered by the fast-approaching retirement date of the chief justice of Pakistan on Oct 25 and concerns that his successor may take decisions signalling the beginning of the end of the hybrid government, looks like it may have peaked.

Whether these concerns are valid or whether it is the paranoia of a set-up that lacks mass support, legitimacy and credibility, due to an election where the overall result may not have reflected the will of those who voted, is difficult to say.

What is clear is that there would be few examples of a country amending its constitution to address such concerns pinned to an inability to predict the behaviour or actions of just over half a dozen men and a woman. Many government politicians have described the toing and froing of the past weeks as the 'beauty of democracy'. I humbly disagree. Let me tell you why.

By the time you read these lines, either the so-called 'consensus' (with the JUI-F and some smaller players) would have resulted/ or would be set to soon result in the passage of a constitutional amendment, clipping the wings of the judiciary; or, what Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari called the "brutal majority with their extra numbers", would have manifested itself with the same result. You'd agree such statements have no 'beauty' about them.

There is always the third possibility that all attempts to break the impasse would have failed, stripping the hybrid buffer and pitting the establishment and at least eight judges of the Supreme Court against each other in direct confrontation. How things spin away from such an eventuality is difficult to plot.

While the government has continued to say it has the numbers (whatever the factual position) to pass the amendment but wishes to reach a consensus in order to further the

democratic cause, those they have tried to engage with have had their own reasons to enter into a dialogue.

For example, the PTI's game plan seems to be to buy time to somehow push the clock until the date changes to Oct 26, so that a new chief justice can take over and a new dynamic is triggered which, they hope, will eventually lead to the ouster of this government.

They won't care much whether this ouster comes through the election tribunals or somehow via the annulment of the February elections, as long as any fresh election returns Imran Khan to the prime minister's office with much greater authority and powers than his last stint.

The JUI-F's Maulana Fazlur Rehman must be loving the spotlight that's on him. Let's not forget he was a loyal ally who even brought his cadres to Islamabad to ease the pressure on Nawaz Sharif and his party when Imran Khan was the prime minister with the full backing of

the then establishment. But he was treated shabbily once the new government came into existence after the February elections.

Small things matter hugely in Pakistani culture, such as joining in the wedding celebrations of each other's close family members, and even more important, making sure that in moments of loss and grief, such as the passing of family elders, people are not left alone.

The PML-N and PPP were guilty of ignoring these significant gestures, and this must have led to the maulana feeling slighted. In addition, the replacement of his party's nominee for governor KP with a PPP politician was something that would not have met with his approval because it stripped his party, with stakes in the province, of the only office they could have had there.

This forced the JUI-F into taking a paradoxical position, aligning itself with the PTI, which had routed his party from its home base of KP. There can be no denying that the maulana, apart

from the one fault of letting his party vote for Gen Musharraf, has been pretty consistent in taking democratic positions.

As this column's last few lines were being finalised, a five-member PTI team that met the party's founder Imran Khan in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail had emerged from the meeting and told the media that Khan had directed his team members to continue to engage with the maulana on this important piece of legislation.

At the same time, PPP leader Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari told the media outside the maulana's Islamabad home, in the company of the chief JUI negotiator Kamran Murtaza, that the two parties had agreed on a draft amendment that the PML-N would also support, and that the PTI should make up its mind as to what it wanted to do.

It appeared that the PTI's strategy to buy time had run its course and that perhaps now the JUI-F and PTI may part ways in terms of how they vote and support the amendment. Of course,

there is many a slip between cup and lip. And the job isn't done till it is.

If the amendment is passed, the hybrid government will think it will remove any threats to its existence at least in the short term. The longer term is another story. So far, Imran Khan does not seem to have bowed to the pressure exerted by a number of court cases and his imprisonment.

There can be no doubt he continues to enjoy considerable support across the country. So far, this support has not been able to exert enough pressure from the streets for either his release from prison or to seriously challenge those at the helm.

In our experience, sometimes even the smallest of sparks can trigger effective snowballing movements that can force change. In the absence of finding its way back to power through the legal system, the PTI's only bet will be its large support base pulling off something spectacular at some point. -- Courtesy Dawn

Women and change

Muhammad Amir Rana

With their unwavering courage, Pakistani women have been challenging the odds and reshaping the country's social and political landscape. Their increasing participation in political and rights movements, a testament to their bravery, can be read as 'change is coming'.

The role of women significantly shapes the ongoing struggle against religious bigotry in the country. The images of police torture inflicted upon human rights activists, particularly on a young woman lawyer in Karachi, will be remembered. The visuals of Dr Mahrang Baloch, who was prevented from travelling to New York, added to the existing detestation of the government, which has been restricting freedoms in the country. She had been included in Time's 100 most influential people of the year and was on her way to deliver a talk at a ceremony organised by the magazine. The significant participation of women in a jirga organised by the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) in Khyber district last week signals that silence

is no longer an option, and women are becoming indispensable to the conduct of national affairs.

Change is underway, but its duration remains uncertain, as the perpetrators of oppression are still strong, especially given their solid institutional foundation and support from the power elite. However, recent developments offer a glimmer of hope that gender inequality is being challenged more structurally across the country. Many experts argue that the issue has gone beyond gender inequality, and reflects broader socio-political and cultural pressures that draw clear lines between the privileged elite and those who feel oppressed. It may also represent a silent transformation that has been unfolding for some time.

This shift is happening nationwide, including in Punjab, though the expressions of the change differ. When incidents of violence against women are normalised, and women haters justify such acts — perhaps by importing a misogynistic mullah to fuel damaging debates — the hysteria following allegations of a girl being raped in a Punjab hostel should come as no sur-

prise. The youth in Punjab, influenced by recent events and the report of a sexual assault, are voicing their sentiments more than ever. Protests against extremism and movements advocating for rights in the other provinces are likely to have an impact in Punjab too. Amid political chaos and rising social discontent, misogynistic narratives propagated by certain religious factions are facing a backlash.

Many youth in Punjab have united behind a fair cause and are reacting against injustices that have become commonplace. Their unity mirrors reactions in other provinces and their increasing participation and prominent roles indicate that, with political awakening, social structures are also undergoing a transformation. The role of women in the political opposition, mainly the women in Punjab who are facing hardship, cannot be ignored. Women's participation in politics in the province can be considered as part of the ongoing transformation.

Indeed, Pakistan has a history of women playing critical roles in politics and social development. However, most of these women belong to the upper classes,

and their role has not triggered any significant transformation in society. Few women have emerged as universal symbols of courage and resistance, like the late Asma Jahangir. Now, the major difference between the two generations is that the new women leaders come from humble backgrounds, and socio-political circumstances have pushed them to act for change. These women have been supported by their communities, and their leadership has evolved organically. This gives optimism that the change will last long.

Comprehending women's leadership is always a challenge for the power elites, who resort to their character assassination. The second argument, often used against women's participation in social and political reforms, is taken from faith and culture. This approach creates hindrances. A combination of all these factors shows how power structures in Pakistan are inherently misogynistic; they don't even change when women become prime ministers or chief ministers.

The PPP was recently being criticised for its brutal treatment of civil society, which was protesting

against extremism. But this is not new for the ruling party of Sindh. Ruling elites always cater to the interests of the majority and those who are more powerful. The extremists are powerful in Sindh and have infiltrated the police, and the government is protecting their interests.

This is not limited to the PPP; all political parties are sympathetic to the establishment when they are in power. All major mainstream political parties sympathise with the oppressed and marginalised communities when they are in the opposition and face victimisation by the establishment. While sympathising with the marginalised, these parties sell their victimhood to gain power. Once in power, they deal with these communities and rights movements as the establishment wishes.

Rights movements may also reveal a tendency to ally with the establishment, as was witnessed recently when the Haq Do Tehreek in Gwadar compromised to secure a few electoral constituencies. Similar examples can be found in the PTM. However, the risk of compromise is reduced with a women lead-

ership and its increased participation within right movements, as women leaders are seen as more dedicated to their cause and sound in the art of negotiation.

One may argue that women also actively participate in religious parties' activities. This may be an encouraging thought, but such participation is mostly limited to attending the religious parties' rallies and holding fund-collection drives. These parties hardly allow their women to lead from the front or take an active role in decision-making in party affairs. Secondly, their participation in religious and political activities remains mostly confined to protecting the social and political status quo.

Women's role in the PTM is particularly critical. The fact that these women are facing multiple societal, political, and religious pressures as well as the TTP danger in their area cannot be underestimated: the banned group is the ally of the worst misogynistic regime — the Afghan Taliban. The resistance of these women is a beacon of hope not only for Pakistani but also for Afghan women.

Road to Baku

Jamil Ahmad

In 2015, the Paris Climate Accord, a legally binding international treaty, established a structured plan for climate action with step-by-step targets for emission reductions, aiming for net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. It acknowledged that reducing GHG emissions alone would not be enough to control climate change: mutually supportive adaptation policies would be necessary to protect vulnerable people from its impact. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report, some 3.6 billion people, almost half the global population, are highly vulnerable to climate change.

The Paris Agreement, therefore, established a Global Goal on Adaptation to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change in the context of its goal to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. This benchmark was based on the IPCC's analysis that crossing this threshold would unleash harsh environmental impacts, including severe heatwaves, frequent droughts and heavy rainfall — which are becoming common. Sadly, the Global Goal on Adaptation is yet to be operationalised.

For developing countries, the treaty also laid down a framework for financial, technical and capacity-building support, and "reaffirmed that developed countries should take the lead in providing financial assistance to countries that are less endowed and more vulnerable" for mitigation and adaptation. Developed countries had pledged, in 2009, to raise \$100bn by 2020 for this purpose.

Belatedly mobilised in 2022, this amount fell short of requirements, which are estimated at \$600bn annually. Distressed by debt, most developing countries find it difficult to take climate action. They need sufficient financial means to raise adaptation to a level that guarantees a better degree of protection against the climate crisis.

In 2021, the Glasgow Climate Pact called for the doubling of "collective provision of climate finance for adaptation". But funding needs kept surging. Last year, UNEP estimated that the financial needs of developing countries for adaptation would soar from \$215bn to \$387bn by 2030. These figures are expected to be overtaken in this year's UNEP Adaptation Gap Report, due next month.

Climate COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, next month, has been dubbed the "finance COP", and will seek to agree on a new global goal for climate finance to replace the unmet \$100bn adaptation target. The new goal is expected to be broad-based and open to contributions from the private sector and others.

Precaiously perched, developing countries are expecting concessional finance to be prioritised by COP29, as more loans will only add to their debt burden. Discussions in Baku will be informed by the report of the Independent Expert Group on Climate Finance, tasked by COP to assess how the climate finance system can support the implementation of the Paris Accord. The report notes that insufficient investment in developing countries in key areas — a just energy transition, adaptation and resilience, conservation and restoration of nature, etc — was the primary reason that the Paris Agreement went

off track. The report concluded that developing countries and emerging economies, minus China, would need around \$2.4 trillion annually by 2030 to invest in climate change and nature.

The expert group recommended that immediate debt constraints and lack of fiscal space impeding the ability of poor and vulnerable countries to invest must be tackled urgently. It said that country leadership was crucial for co-mitted engagement with the private sector, MDBs, donors, and private philanthropy to unlock investment at scale. An integrated approach is required to mobilise all sources of finance — public and private, do-me-s-itic and international. Domestic resource mobilisation is needed to anchor the macro-

economic sustainability of all finance, while the elimination of harmful subsidies and imposition of carbon taxation are crucial to revenue generation.

Insufficient concessional climate finance for developing nations would render international efforts ineffective, aggravate the climate crisis, and deepen mistrust between the developed and developing countries. The expert group has urged developed countries to triple bilateral concessional finance by 2030. Nearly a decade after its adoption, the Paris Agreement remains instrumental in spurring climate action and promoting low-carbon solutions across economic sectors. Overall, however, the agreement risks missing its goal of keeping the temperature rise under 1.5°C, unless fresh vigour, stronger political commitment and adequate financial resources are urgently pumped into its pipelines. -- Courtesy Dawn

Fighting toxic talk

Muna Khan

I had to step outside social media silos to understand what was happening in Lahore, because my trusted sources — ie, this newspaper and other legacy outlets — were reporting on student protests while information about the alleged rape seemed muted. On social media, meanwhile, things were alarming, even horrific. No rape was as possible as the cover up of one. I wanted to create a timeline myself to make sense of things — this is before The Current published a very good explainer — namely, had a rape occurred?

While student protests and police brutality have continued across Punjab, there's more clarity, at least for me: a young woman and her family's name have been dragged through the mud, and they will likely have to spend the next few years explaining that she/their daughter was not raped. Students who are braving police violence are being used for political point-scoring. No one believes the government, and likely won't even if Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz pursues criminal cases against those who spread misinformation, as her administration seems to be doing. Minds have been made up across the political divide.

Welcome to this age of disinformation — with dangerous consequences.

Let it be clear that misinformation about this case was spread at a dizzying speed. Investigative journalist Umar Cheema, who was one of the first to report there was no rape at the said college, tweeted a video of a woman claiming to be the rape victim's mother on Friday evening. She tells her fol-

lowers on TikTok what happened to her daughter and asks them to call out the government and the news media for covering up the crime. After this teary-eyed confession, she posts her next video, wherein she is lip-synching to a Bollywood song.

It's easy to dismiss this woman as an attention-seeker but it's the folks who believe it and share it that worry me more. According to Tom Buchanan, who wrote a paper on disinformation in 2020, those who deliberately create it do so "to deceive and mislead audiences for the purposes of causing harm, or for political, personal or financial gain". People who then share it do so because it aligns with their worldview. Many, citing the sheer strength and effectiveness of a particular political party's social media strategy, suspect its supporters of pushing news of this rape, saying they got the turmoil they wanted. Meanwhile, brave students will bear the brunt of police violence.

Of course, a rape can occur on campus. Of course, parents would deny it. Of course, a guard or male school employee could be the harasser, CCTV footage could be deleted, the school administration could pressure and/or threaten students, the media could be involved in hushing things up. We have seen iterations of this play out plenty of times before. In this case, the police officer who told students to return to classes lest "something else" happen to them too is no different to the police officer asking why a woman gang-raped on the Motorway was driving alone at night.

We live in a country where whatever women

say is treated with suspicion. I'm lying if I said I was raped, I'm covering up rape if I say I wasn't. I'm telling the truth if I say a guard harassed me, I'm lying if I say an actor did. It is exhausting to be a woman in this country. Attitudes and policies deny us basic humanity. Digital platforms do not protect us.

Disinformation is a global threat and requires a global strategy and policies to quell it. However, misogyny threatens to unravel Pakistan's core. Misogyny is being monetised, and it is being used to create divisions in society. It should be seen as big a national security threat as terrorism. In fact, misogyny is terrorism. In August, the UK said it was planning to tackle misogyny as extremism. There are great concerns about inculture in the West, promoted by the likes of Andrew Tate. Here, we elect men like Tate, invite them as state guests and fund campaigns for them to run for Oxford chancellor.

The government alone can't fight the kind of disinformation this Lahore 'rape' case has shown. It requires parents and schools to teach media literacy classes from grade 1. And laws that don't suppress civil liberties but punish those who spread false information. Not release them.

If not, I fear parents won't want to send their daughters to colleges, women won't want to stand for public office (given the disgusting hate campaigns they face) or report sexual harassment of violence due to the stigma. This will set us back decades. In 2022, Pakistan was the second worst country for women in terms of gender parity according to the World Economic Forum. Imagine sinking lower. -- Courtesy Dawn

CM approves establishment of three authorities for dev., water, horticulture

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, chairing a meeting here on Sunday, approved the establishment of three key provincial authorities aimed at enhancing development, water and sanitation services, and horticulture. The newly proposed bodies are Punjab Development Authority, Punjab Water and Sanitation Authority, and Punjab Horticulture Authority. Formal legislation will be made for the establishment of these provincial authorities, which would develop policies and plans at the central level. At the local level, these agencies will ensure the implementation of development projects, water and sanitation

services, and horticulture initiatives. These authorities will be governed by a central board, with director generals at the helm. Proposals are under review to establish local management boards and appoint managing directors for execution at the local level. The chief minister emphasized the need to convert streetlights to solar energy, signaling a

shift towards sustainable infrastructure. Provincial Food Minister Bilal Yasin, Minister Local Government Zeeshan Rafiq, Chief Secretary Zahid Aktar Zaman, Chief Secretary to CM Sajid Zafar Dall and relevant departmental secretaries attended the meeting. The Secretary of Housing and Local Government participated via video link.



LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif presiding over a meeting regarding establishment of three different authorities regarding development, water, sanitation and horticulture.



LAHORE: Members of Awami Rickshaw Union are holding protest demonstration against price hike of essential commodities and high handedness of traffic police, at Lahore press club.

Azma terms consensus on constitutional amendment good

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari has said that state affairs run as per the laws and constitution made by the parliament.

According to a press release issued here on Sunday, she said that judicial reforms were necessary in the present circumstances. She said that formation of constitutional court was being made in accordance with charter of democracy. Azma said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder wanted an NRO [deal] in exchange for supporting constitutional amendment. She termed consensus on constitutional amendment good. The PTI members were sick and tired of PTI founder's anti-state activities, she claimed.

PDF, SBBWU and Pak Army organize grand medical camp

PESHAWAR (APP): A free general medical camp was organized at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar, under the auspices of Pakistan Development Foundation (PDF) and in collaboration with XI Corps and Lady Reading Hospital. At the camp, ten specialists including medical specialists, skin specialist, gynecologist, ENT specialist, chest specialist, dental surgeons, children specialist, psychiatrist and nutritionist participated and conducted free examinations of people living in more than 15 villages in the vicinity of the University.

On the occasion, diabetes and blood diagnostic tests of patients were also conducted free of charge. Free medicines were also given to all patients. Wife of Corps Commander Peshawar visited the camp and raised the morale of the doctors who volunteered for the camp.

PDF Chairman Bilal Sethi, Patron-in-Chief Dr Fatima Shaheen and SBBWU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Safia Ahmed (TI) were also present on the occasion.

PDF Chairman Muhammad Bilal Sethi said in his address that his organization had been serving the poor and indigent for eight years. He said that PDF encouraged the youth by keeping them engaged in positive activities. He further said that his institution would continue this service of serving the underprivileged with tremendous gusto. SBBWU VC, Dr Safia Ahmed (TI) said that by organizing this medical camp, her students have learned that serving the people is the main goal of our life.

Govt committed to provide quality education for youth: Faisal Khokhar

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Sports, Labour and Human Resources Faisal Ayub Khokhar has said that the government was committed to providing quality education for youth while also creating opportunities for them to participate in extracurricular activities. He emphasized that initiatives like "Khelat Punjab" and the Lahore Youth Festival were crucial in this regard, noting, "When grounds are filled with players, hospitals become empty."

He expressed these views during a media briefing as the chief guest at a talent hunt program organized for Lahore Qalandars at a private university's high-performance center here on Sunday. The minister remarked that such programs play a significant role in providing opportunities for talented athletes to showcase their skills. He expressed hope that these trials would reveal new talent that could contribute to both the Lahore Qalandars and the national cricket team in the future.



SIALKOT: A group photo of participants of the first ever Referee Refresh and Talent Hunt Course in Sialkot Organizers by FIFA and District Football Association.

Preparations completed for artificial rain: Marriyum

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has announced that the Punjab government has launched an aggressive initiative to combat smog, with preparations complete for artificial rain to mitigate its effects.

The minister revealed that, under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's leadership, a collaborative strategy has been developed by the Department of Environment, Army Aviation, Civil Aviation, PCSIR, and the Meteorological Department. Artificial rain will be deployed when needed to reduce smog intensity, with resources already allocated for this and other measures.

The plan, backed by international standards, has been finalized under the

guidance of the Chief Minister, and the Meteorological Department will assist in carrying out the artificial rain when necessary.

Each instance of artificial rain was expected to cost Rs. 5 to 7 million. Simultaneously, a strict crackdown on vehicles, factories, and other sources emitting toxic fumes was underway to address pollution at its root.

Marriyum Aurangzeb stressed that if pollution control measures were effective, the need for artificial rain could be avoided.

She called on the public to actively support the government's anti-smog efforts, noting that public cooperation was key to overcoming the issue and improving air quality.



HYDERABAD: Leaders of Jeay Sindh Qaumi Party addressing during Party Conference held at Hyderabad press club.

Comprehensive plan underway to overcome issues at shrines: Minister

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Minister for Aqaf, Religious Affairs, Zakat, and Ushr Syed Riaz Hussain Shah Shirazi has said that a comprehensive plan was underway to address the problems at shrines across the province.

He expressed these views on the occasion of the 93rd Urs of Hazrat Saman Sarkar and the annual fair held near Pangri with great enthusiasm and devotion, a communique said here on Sunday.

Discussing the challenges being faced by visitors at the shrines, the Minister assured that a comprehensive plan was being developed to address the issues.

He said that zaireens across Sindh's shrines will have access to basic facilities.

He also acknowledged the lack of clean drinking

water at Hazrat Saman Sarkar's shrine.

He, on the occasion, announced that a package would soon be provided to improve accommodation and other amenities at the site.

In response to questions regarding new recruitments, the minister confirmed that the Aqaf department would be initiating a hiring process soon, with a preference for local youth.

The 93rd Urs celebrations included a variety of traditional sports and activities such as horse racing, kabaddi, musical performances (Sufi Kalam), and a circus, in addition to vibrant bazaars set up for the fair.

Earlier, the Minister was warmly welcomed at the shrine. He paid his respects at the shrine by laying a wreath and performing the ceremonial "Chadar Poshi".



KARACHI: A view of ongoing construction work at the Numaish Chowranghi underpass in the provincial capital, aiming to improve city infrastructure.

Tourism Potential - Reviving glory of Multan's walled city

MULTAN (APP): Boasting of its past glory and pride for a vibrant history spanning over around 5000 years, the important city of South Punjab, Multan stands tall among the world's oldest living cities.

Also known as the city of saints, Multan's cultural and architectural heritage is encapsulated within its Walled City; a 1.2 square kilometer area that houses scores of historic buildings, each with a unique story to tell.

These ancient structures, many of which are well-preserved, offer immense potential for hosting cultural events, turning Multan into a hub

of heritage tourism.

The Walled City's monumental landmarks reflect the city's rich spiritual and historical importance. Some of its most iconic buildings include the Masjid Wali Muhammad, Masjid Hazrat Sakhi Yahya, Shrine of Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed, Tarkhana Wali Masjid, Bohar Gate, Jain Mandar, and the Tomb of Shah Yousof Gardez.

Other renowned sites like the Shrine of Hazrat Bahaudin Zakariya and Shrine of Hazrat Shah Rukn-e-Alam are revered for their religious importance, drawing visitors from far and wide. The city's ancient

Education Minister announces rewards for top position holders

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Education, Syed Sardar Ali Shah has announced rewards for students who achieved top positions in the Karachi Matric Board exams.

He highlighted that students from middle-class backgrounds have proven that it's not necessary to have luxuries to showcase one's talents, even in the face of challenges.

The event was held at the Karachi Medical and Dental College auditorium in North Nazimabad.

Attendees included the Vice Chancellor of Karachi Metropolitan University Dr. Waseem Qazi, Director of School Education Karachi Mirza Arshad Baig, head of the Association Masroor Hussain Warsi, Secretary of the Delhi Association Farhat Hayat, Delhi School Principal Ali Khan Mirjat, as well as students, teachers, education officials, and

others. In his speech, Syed Sardar Ali Shah said, "These children have made their parents and me proud."

He expressed satisfaction with the positive news regarding his promise to improve education, which he had made to his party.

The Minister also emphasized that a government school student securing a top position has set a precedent, and he acknowledged the history of people in this region who established schools with love and dedication, such as Sindh Madrasa School, Noor Muhammad High School, DJ Science College, and Dow University.

Minister launches Rescue1122 emergency bike service

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to Chief Minister Khayber Pakhtunkhwa for Relief and Resettlement Naik Muhammad Khan Sunday visited Rescue 1122 headquarters to inspect the newly launched emergency bike service.

AJK govt prepares for 77th founding day celebration

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) will celebrate the 77th anniversary of its founding on October 24 with flag-hoisting ceremonies across the state.

According to official sources, flag-hoisting ceremonies will take place at all district and tehsil headquarters across AJK, marking this historic occasion.

The AJK government was established on October 24, 1947, after local forces liberated the territory from Dogra rule.

In Mirpur, a grand flag hoisting ceremony is scheduled for 9:00 AM at

the Municipal Corporation's lush green lawn. Similar ceremonies will occur simultaneously in other districts and in Muzaffarabad, the state's capital.

The celebrations will include the cutting of a special anniversary cake and well-dressed contingents from the AJK Police, Boy Scouts, civil defense volunteers and Rescue 1122 will salute the AJK flag during the events.

People from Jammu and Kashmir on both sides of the Line of Control, as well as communities worldwide are also gearing up to celebrate the 77th



HYDERABAD: Employees of Sindh Agriculture University are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Hyderabad press club.

Two killed in separate firing incidents

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Two persons have been killed by their opponents in separate firing incidents over personal disputes in Zandani and Looni areas here, a police spokesman said on Sunday.

He said that 25-year-old Ahmad Nawaz Baloch son of Sanaullah, resident of Zandani has filed a report with Dera Town Police Station that he along with his partner Masood ur Rahman son of Abdul Rauf/Baloch.

Peace lamp sent to India from Gurdwara Baba Nanak

LAHORE (APP): In celebration of the 555th birth anniversary of the great Sikh leader, Baba Guru Nanak, a "Peace Lamp" has been sent to India from his birthplace, Gurdwara Baba Nanak.

The initiative was led by Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs/ Pradhan Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak committee, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, along with other Sikh leaders. Speaking to

the media on this occasion, the provincial minister said, "The Peace Lamp symbolizes a clear message from darkness to light, aiming to establish peace worldwide. This lamp is being sent from Pakistan to India and will travel through various countries before reaching Malaysia."

Sardar Arora emphasized that the purpose of the initiative is to promote the message of peace, love, and

essence.

This step has set stage for a broader revitalization of the Walled City, promising to enhance both its aesthetic appeal and tourist experience.

"Each street and every home in the Walled City has a unique history," said Umair Ghazanfar, Assistant Director of Walled City Multan. "It is among the ancient cities and offers ample opportunities to culture and heritage lovers."

Excited about its uplift and restoration, Umair highlights the potential for further growth, hoping for visit of more tourists to this historic and cultural city.

Revival of diplomatic engagement between India and Pakistan could foster regional peace: Iftikhar Malik

LAHORE (APP): South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik said on Sunday that reviving of diplomatic engagement between India and Pakistan during SCO summit would not only benefit the two countries but also contribute to broader regional peace and stability.

turning point in South Asia's political landscape, creating tensions and reducing a more conducive environment for collaboration in areas like trade and counter terrorism.

He said Jaishankar's gesture could set the stage for cautious optimism. Both countries, as nuclear powers, have a responsibility to ensure peace and stability in the region. A move towards dialogue, even through multilateral settings like the SCO, could pave the way for future bilateral engagements that could address long-standing

issues and open doors for economic cooperation, regional connectivity.

Iftikhar Malik said Jaishankar's outreach to Pakistan opens a window of opportunity for both countries to engage in meaningful conversations beyond the contentious issues that have dominated their interactions in the past. The SCO, with its focus on regional cooperation, counter terrorism, and economic development, provides a neutral platform where both nations can discuss shared concerns such as security, trade, and stability in South Asia.

He said S. Jaishankar extended a symbolic hand of cooperation to Pakistan, signaling a potential thaw in the long-strained bilateral ties between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. Relations between both countries have been tense for decades, marked by territorial disputes, particularly over Kashmir, and intermittent armed conflict. However, the Indian participation in SCO provides an opportunity for constructive dialogue. His interaction with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and others is good omen.



RAWALPINDI: People selecting and purchasing second hand warm clothes on the beginning of winter season at Landa Bazar in Sunday weekly Bazaar Committee chowk area, in the city.



HYDERABAD: People selecting and purchasing shoes from setup under the shade of Makki Shah Flyover.

First e-commerce workshop for gemstones and jewelry launched

LAHORE (APP): The Gold and Gem Art Promotion Council of Pakistan (GGAPCP) has taken a significant step towards the digital future by launching the first e-commerce workshop for the gemstones and jewelry sector.

In collaboration with Alibaba's authorized channel partner, Web Excel, this initiative aims to propel the industry into the global e-commerce arena. The workshop saw participation from business leaders across Lahore and other cities of Punjab. Speaking at the event, GGAPCP President

and Sarafa & Jewellers Association Lahore division Chairman Muhammad Ahmed expressed his pride in this milestone. "It is a great honor for GGAPCP to lead this initiative for the gemstone and jewelry sector," he said and also highlighted the Council's previous achievements, such as the launch of the first website and magazine dedicated to gemstones and jewelry in 2000.

Ahmed emphasized that the e-commerce initiative would push the sector into the global marketplace, providing access to over 200

countries through platforms like Alibaba. "We are now placing this sector in the most advanced era of e-commerce," he added. To further support this endeavor, GGAPCP has established a dedicated e-commerce department, appointing Nasir Arif Janjua as the Director of E-commerce and Strategic Research.

In his address, Janjua provided a comparative analysis of e-commerce markets in neighboring countries, noting that China ranks first and India sixth, while Pakistan stands at 46th.

Shahid Imran calls for viable policies to address food insecurity

LAHORE (APP): Convener Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry's regional standing committee on Food Security Shahid Imran has said that Pakistan's rapid population growth places immense pressure on the fragile food distribution system.

Speaking at a seminar on Food Security in Pakistan, here on Sunday, he said rural poor, who are often small-scale farmers, are disproportionately

affected by food insecurity due to limited resources and access to markets. Addressing food insecurity in Pakistan requires comprehensive policies that focus on improving agricultural productivity, managing natural resources sustainably, and enhancing social safety nets to ensure equitable food distribution and access for all citizens.

He said global food insecurity was a growing challenge, impacting millions of people worldwide.

Pakistani Startups shine at Gitex Global 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani companies and startups participated in this significant tech event, aiming to enhance IT exports from Pakistan to the Middle East and the MENA region while attracting investment and fostering partnerships with major IT firms.

Under the federal Ministry of IT and Telecommunications, ten Pakistani startups joined the Ignite programme at Gitex 2024. These startups are involved in sectors such as healthcare, aerospace, energy, gaming, travel technology, and smart cities, presenting their innovative solutions

to global investors, potential partners, and technology enthusiasts.

CEO of Metrix Pakistan, Hassan Nisar, told APP on Sunday that the event was crucial for showcasing Pakistan's tech potential. "Working with Gitex Global is a significant opportunity for Pakistan. Our aim is to attract business and elevate our country's role in the global tech scene," he stated. He noted that the innovative and entrepreneurial spirit of Pakistani startups would help attract global investment and accelerate growth through partnerships.

Running alongside Gitex Global was the North Star Startup Show, featuring ten startups and incubators from Pakistan, which received strong responses from the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, and beyond. Overall, 80



ISLAMABAD: Vendors selling a variety of vegetable and flower seeds at Abpara in the Federal Capital, inviting gardeners to cultivate nature.

VPHCSTSI hails SBP, NBP for introducing loan schemes for SMEs

HYDERABAD (APP): The Vice President of Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry, Shan Elahi Sehgal, has commended the State Bank of Pakistan and the National Bank of Pakistan for introducing loan schemes for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), agricultural financing and commercial vehicle loans.

He stated that these initiatives would play a crucial role in stabilizing the national economy by providing essential support such as working

capital and financial assistance for business expansion to SMEs.

Shan Sehgal further emphasized that these schemes would greatly benefit small business owners, especially women entrepreneurs, by offering opportunities to enhance and expand their businesses, thus contributing positively to the economic growth of the country.

However, he expressed concern over the lack of adequate awareness being provided by banks about these loan schemes.

Green Tractors to be given to 9,500 farmers

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government has announced distribution of 9,500 green tractors under Kisan Programme, but more than 15 lakh applications had been received.

The government received more than 1.5 million applications under the Green Tractor Programme announced for farmers. The CM office sources told APP that following the directions of the Punjab CM, the list of those who would be included in the draw would be posted on Oct 20.

Sargodha division sets 1.74 million acre wheat sowing target

SARGODHA (APP): A target of cultivating wheat on an area of 1.74 million acres has been set for Sargodha division this year.

This was informed to a meeting chaired by commissioner Jahazeb Awan on Sunday held at his office. It said that the wheat sowing target was set at 520,000 acres in Sargodha district, 298,000 acres in Khushab, 479,000 acres in Mianwali, and 443,000 acres in Bhakkar.

To assist farmers, 60 agriculture officers and 136 agricultural graduates are

actively encouraging timely wheat sowing across 1,800 villages. It was further informed that the division has adequate supplies of fertilizer, with 250,000 bags of urea and 150,000 bags of DAP available.

The agricultural department also holds 113,000 bags of wheat seeds, while farmers have additional seed stocks. Over the next 60 days, steps would be taken to meet the wheat cultivation targets in all four districts, an official of Agriculture Department said.



HYDERABAD: Women farmers are busy in their works to earn their livelihood for support their families, during a hot day of summer season, at a field in Hyderabad.

SNGPL disconnects eight meters, removes two extensions

MULTAN (APP): In a bid to curb gas theft and illegal activities, the Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) UFG Control Task Force intensified its operation under the directions of the General Manager.

The task force disconnected eight gas meters and removed two illegal gas extensions in various areas of the city.

According to details, six domestic consumers had their meters disconnected for using gas compressors illegally. In one case, a domestic consumer's meter was found installed away from

the main service line, which was immediately removed. Another consumer's meter was missing from its designated location, posing a risk of gas leakage; on which his meter was also disconnected.

Additionally, two illegal extensions were dismantled, through which gas was being supplied to multiple homes in violation of OGRA regulations.

These actions were aimed at preventing gas theft and improving gas supply across the region, with the goal of reducing pressure-related complaints.

Pakistan shines at SIAL Paris 2024

PARIS (APP): Pakistan made a remarkable impact at Europe's leading food fair SIAL Paris 2024.

34 exhibitors under TDAP's Pakistan Pavilion and 14 other exhibitors participated in diverse products from rice, corn and sesame seeds to processed food, spices, frozen food, fruit juices, candies and snacks.

Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad inaugurated the Pakistan Pavilion and interacted with the participating business groups who shared their feedback and exchanged views on enhancing Pakistan's exports in the food sector.

'SCO to open new avenues of economic development, investment'

MULTAN (APP): Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry President Hafiz Umair Saeed has said that the recent Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference held in Pakistan will produce significant results, opening new avenues for economic development and investment in the country.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said that Pakistan and China were making efforts to develop the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) on the pattern of the European Union.

He expressed hope that the future of Asia would be bright and prosperous.

He noted that the launch of CPEC-II at the

SCO would set new paths for economic development and prosperity, aligning with the government's positive initiatives for the economy and emphasized the importance of Asian countries uniting to tackle global challenges and advancing the region's economy and development, indicating better days ahead.

He also expressed hope that the SCO would not only focus on economic matters but also work together to rid the region of the scourge of terrorism and play a constructive role in resolving disputes between countries. Only by coming together we can move forward and improve the region socially and economically, he concluded.

Pb govt 'Agri Mall' project, a gift for farmers: DC

SARGODHA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Sargodha Capt (retd) Muhammad Waseem said that the "Agri Mall" was a special initiative from the Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif for the benefit of local farmers.

He made these remarks while inspecting the ongoing development at Agri Mall near Risala no. 5 here on Sunday.

The DC Capt (retd) Muhammad Waseem said the Punjab government has allocated Rs 290 million for this project.

PBF lauds govt efforts for economic stability

MULTAN (APP): The Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) lauded the government for its commendable initiatives aimed at stabilizing the economy. In a statement released on Sunday, PBF South Punjab President Khawaja Mahboob-ur-Rehman and Chairman Malik Talat Sohail highlighted the collaborative efforts between the government and the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) that have led to significant improvement across various economic

indicators. The PBF leaders emphasized the remarkable decline in the inflation rate, which has plummeted from a staggering 38% to an impressive 6.9%. In tandem, the policy rate has been reduced from 22% to 17.5%, contributing to an improved economic climate. The exchange rate has also seen a favorable change, with the value of the dollar decreasing from Rs 310 to Rs 277. In a noteworthy development, the State Bank of Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have surged from \$4.4 billion.

Oman shows strong interest in Pakistani hand-engraved furniture: PFC CEO

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq said on Sunday that Oman has evinced keen interest in world-class, hand-engraved Pakistani furniture.

Chairing a board of directors meeting here, he said PFC conducted successful two day visit to this gulf state a couple of days ago aimed at

strengthening bilateral trade relations between the two countries, with a specific focus on the luxury furniture sector.

Oman's keen interest stems from the intricate craftsmanship and cultural richness that Pakistani furniture embodies, particularly the exquisite hand-engraved woodwork, which is highly regarded for its quality.

Steps underway to make BoR courts work transparently

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Board of Revenue (BoR) is in the process of implementing a framework to ensure that revenue courts operate transparently and in accordance with established procedures. The accountability system includes mechanisms to monitor the performance and decisions of these courts, ensuring that they meet legal standards and effectively serve.



ISLAMABAD: Women browse and purchase second-hand warm clothes at the weekly bazaar in Aabpara, Federal Capital, getting ready for the colder season.

Raja Bazar - A colonial era business legacy

RAWALPINDI (APP): Most often stuffed with buyers, traffic and illegally encroaching vendors, Raja Bazaar, boasts of it's over one and half century old legacy for once being the only central commercial point of ancient Rawalpindi.

As the time ran down, this British colonial era sanctuary of traders named after Rajput or Raja (castes) traders of this region still stands there with least of our younger generation knowing its origin and evolution into today's busiest bazar of

Rawalpindi.

This blend of history and trade still holds a prominent place in city's business activities for its distinctive socioeconomic features, ancient building structures, classical archaeology designs and antique woodwork adorned with superb grillwork on facades of houses. Majority of them are remnants of Sikh rule during their reign of Punjab. Narrow streets, multi-religious community centers, mosques and temples, historic mansions, havelis, old shops and

godowns reflect its cultural heritage and socioeconomic importance. Since old ages, it still serves as the central business hub of the city by accommodating thousands of wholesalers and retailer shops with diverse range of household grocery to fruits, vegetables, jewelry, clothes, cooking utensils, electronic appliances and much more.

Abrar Sheikh, General Secretary Raja Bazaar's Central Traders' Association terms the bazaar as "a symbol of socio-economic legacy" having multi-dimensional

links with local and international markets.

"Looking around Fawara Chowk, one can find marks of ancient civilization towards 'Dingi Khoi' on one side and the rich marketplace on the other side," he said. "Strong reasons for being the heart of city are its central location and market linkage as it connects country's North region with the South. The entrepreneurs from GB and KP too, prefer Raja Bazaar for their trading ventures after China's silk route."

Highlighted an

interesting feature of departmentalized nomenclature of its sections, Abrar Sheikh mentioned to Sarafa Bazaar as house of jewelry; Kapra Bazar for cloths and garments; Lakar Bazaar for wooden articles and raw material; Urdu Bazaar books and stationary and Masala Bazar, Sabzi Mandi and other bazars for variety of goods and services. "Around 50% of shops have been converted into small plazas and joint markets after joining close by shops together making Raja Bazar.

Israeli strikes on northern Gaza leave at least 87 dead or missing, Palestinian officials say

Monitoring Desk
DEIR AL-BALAH: Israeli strikes on multiple homes in the northern Gaza Strip overnight and into Sunday left at least 87 people dead or missing, the territory's Health Ministry said.

It said another 40 people were wounded in the strikes on the town of Beit Lahiya, which was among the first targets of Israel's ground invasion nearly a year ago. The Israeli military said it carried out a precise strike on a Hamas target.

Israel has been carrying out a large-scale operation in northern Gaza for the last two weeks, saying Hamas has regrouped there. Palestinian officials say hundreds of people have been killed and that the health sector in the north is on the verge of collapse.

The United States is meanwhile investigating an unauthorized release of classified documents that assess Israel's plans to attack Iran, according to three U.S. officials. A fourth U.S. official said the documents appear to be legitimate.

The documents, attributed to the U.S.

Geospatial Intelligence Agency and National Security Agency and marked top secret, indicate that Israel was moving military assets in place to conduct a military strike in response to Iran's ballistic missile attack on Oct. 1.

The U.S. officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

The U.S. is urging Israel to press for a cease-fire in Gaza following the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar last week. But neither Israel nor Hamas has shown any renewed interest in such a deal, after months of negotiations sputtered to a halt in August.

Iran supports Hamas and the Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon, where a year of escalating tensions boiled over into all-out war last month. Israel sent ground troops into Lebanon at the start of October.

The Lebanese army said three of its soldiers were killed in an Israeli strike on their vehicle in southern Lebanon. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on Sunday's strike.

Lebanon's army has largely kept to the sidelines in the war between Israel and the Hezbollah. The military is a respected institution in Lebanon but is not powerful enough to impose its will on Hezbollah or defend the country from an Israeli invasion.

On Saturday, a drone targeted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's house, causing no casualties. It wasn't clear if the house was hit. The military said Hezbollah fired around 160 projectiles into Israel on Sunday. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Israel has meanwhile ramped up strikes on southern neighborhoods of Beirut known as the Dahiyeh, a crowded residential area. Hezbollah has a strong presence there, but it is also home to large numbers of civilians and people unaffiliated with the militant group. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, has called civilian casualties in Lebanon "far too high" in the Israel-Hezbollah war and urged Israel to scale back some strikes, especially in and around Beirut.



People inspect the site of an Israeli strike in the Lebanese town of Baaloul.

Israel unearths Hezbollah's web of tunnels in southern Lebanon

Monitoring Desk
TEL AVIV: Israeli forces have spent much of the past year destroying Hamas' vast underground network in Gaza. They are now focused on dismantling tunnels and other hideouts belonging to Hezbollah militants in southern Lebanon.

Scarred by Hamas' deadly raid into Israel last year that sparked the war in Gaza, Israel says it aims to prevent a similar incursion across its northern border from ever getting off the ground.

The Israeli military has combed through the dense brush of southern Lebanon for the past two

weeks, uncovering what it says are Hezbollah's deep attack capabilities — highlighted by a tunnel system equipped with weapons caches and rocket launchers that Israel says pose a direct threat to nearby communities.

Israel's war against the Iran-backed militant group stretches far inside Lebanon, and its airstrikes in recent weeks have killed more than 1,700 people, about a quarter of whom were women and children, according to local health authorities. But its ground campaign has centered on a narrow patch of land just along the border.

China boosts export controls

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Chinese Premier Li Qiang has signed a decree of the State Council to unveil regulations on export control of so-called dual-use items, which will take effect on Dec 1, 2024, state news agency Xinhua said on Saturday.

The regulations aim to improve transparency and standardisation of export control policies and to boost export control capabilities of items that may be used either for civilian or military purposes, said Xinhua. The United States says Beijing is supporting Russia's war effort in Ukraine by supplying dual-use goods, including microelectronics, that can help it build weapons.

Bomb hoax threats to Indian airlines spark chaos

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: More than 90 fake bomb threats have been made against flights operated by multiple Indian airlines this week, Indian media reported Sunday, sparking fear among passengers and global delays.

All flights landed safely, but the spate of threats has resulted in planes being diverted to Canada and Germany, and fighter jets scrambled to escort aircraft in the skies above Britain and Singapore. India's government and civil aviation authorities have warned that "very strict action" will be taken. New Delhi's civil aviation authorities have not said how many threats have been received in the past week, but The Times of India and broadcaster News18 reported more than 70 hoaxes targeting both domestic and international flights since October 13.



Italy's Defence Minister Guido Crosetto speaks during a roundtable, part of the G7 Defence Ministers Summit, in Naples.

Russia, Ukraine each bring home 95 prisoners of war

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Russia and Ukraine carried out a new exchange of prisoners of war, each side bringing home 95 prisoners in an agreement in which the United Arab Emirates acted as mediator.

Russia's Defence Ministry, in a post on the Telegram messaging app, said the returning Russian service members were undergoing medical checks in Belarus, one of

Russia's closest allies in the more than 2-1/2-year-old war.

Video posted on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's Telegram account showed men, some wrapped in the blue and yellow Ukrainian flag, getting off a bus well after dark and being embraced by loved ones. A Russian military video showed smiling soldiers boarding buses.

Mexican navy claims seizing record 8.3 tonnes of drugs

Monitoring Desk
MEXICO CITY: The Mexican navy announced on Friday it had seized more than 8.3 tonnes of drugs in the Pacific Ocean, a record for a single operation at sea.

"Navy personnel seized 8,361 kilograms of illicit cargo, which represents the largest amount of drugs seized in a maritime operation, unprecedented in history," said a statement from the Ministry of the Navy. It did not specify the type of the drugs, but said they were valued at 2,099 billion pesos (about \$105 million).

Twenty-three people

were arrested during the bust which took place southwest of the port of Lazaro Cardenas, off the western coast of Mexico. The drugs were distributed in six small boats and one of the vessels was a submersible, which implied a "complex" action on the part of the sailors, added the ministry.

The largest drug seizure in Mexico's history was 23 tonnes of Colombian cocaine in November 2007. Mexico has for decades been the hub of drug trafficking to the United States, with a large number of cartels fighting for control of the trade.

Boat carrying more than 100 Rohingya sighted off Indonesia

Monitoring Desk
BANDA ACEH: A boat loaded with more than 100 Rohingya refugees was spotted off Indonesia's westernmost province with at least one dead body seen on board, local officials said on Saturday. The mostly Muslim ethnic Rohingya are heavily persecuted in Myanmar, and thousands risk their lives each year on long and dangerous sea journeys to try to reach Malaysia or Indonesia. The Rohingya boat is anchored around three to four miles off the coast of South Aceh district with its engine turned off.

Kamala, Trump deploy celebrity power in must-win states

Monitoring Desk
DETROIT: Kamala Harris and Donald Trump will roll out starkly contrasting celebrity back-up this weekend in Pennsylvania and Michigan — among the most prized of the battleground states set to decide the tightest of US presidential races.

Pop star Lizzo will throw multi-Grammy award winning glitter behind the vice president's campaign in Detroit, while the world's richest man Elon Musk is to stump for Trump in Pennsylvania.

G7 reassures Ukraine on NATO bid, frets over threat to UN in Lebanon

Monitoring Desk
NAPLES: Defence ministers of the Group of Seven (G7) wealthy democracies on Saturday backed Ukraine's "irreversible" path to NATO membership and expressed concern over threats to United Nations peacekeepers targeted by Israel in Lebanon.

The first ever gathering of G7 defence ministers took place as Israel and Lebanese armed group Hezbollah exchanged fire, with one drone directed at Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's holiday home, according to his spokesman.

Italy holds the G7

rotating presidency for 2024 while the West also grapples with the Russian advance in Ukraine and China's military activities around Taiwan, as well as heightened tensions along the border of North and South Korea.

Italian Defence Minister Guido Crosetto, who hosted the meeting in the southern city of Naples, told reporters the G7 could not solve global tensions alone, but needed to stimulate action across the international community.

"The G7 must be like a gadfly that has the strength to sting the rest of the world," he said at a news conference.

Ukraine's 'victory plan' receives mixed reactions from Western allies

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's plan to end Ukraine's nearly three-year war with Russia has received mixed reactions from Western allies so far.

The "victory plan" that Zelenskyy outlined at home and abroad includes a formal invitation for Ukraine to join NATO and permission to use Western long-range missiles to strike military targets in Russia — two steps Kyiv's allies have been reluctant to support before.

U.S. backing is crucial if Zelenskyy is to get support from other allies for proposals he believes are necessary to strengthen Ukraine's position on the battlefield and ahead of any peace negotiations. But analysts say the Biden administration is unlikely to make a decision before the U.S. presidential election on Nov. 5, as it may not appeal to voters.

"They seem to be just doing very little now and waiting for the election," said Phillips O'Brien, professor of strategic studies at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. "So much of the strategy will live or die in Washington."

Analysts said the plan is a step in the right direction for Ukraine's military efforts. They also described it as ambitious, given allies' fears of escalation with nuclear-armed Russia. Ukraine has previously secured Western support for requests once deemed unrealistic, such as Patriot air defense systems and F-16 jets.

Presenting the plan now puts on the radar for the next U.S. administration, analysts said, though it's unknown how the next president will receive it.

After returning from making his case to the European Council, Zelenskyy said he expects the White House to provide feedback. "They will be here soon with some form of response," he said.

North Korea minister says new US-led sanctions monitoring team unlawful

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea's foreign minister said a new multilateral sanctions monitoring team led by the United States was "utterly unlawful and illegitimate", state media reported on Sunday.

The United States, South Korea and Japan on Wednesday announced the launch of a new multinational team to monitor the enforcement of sanctions against North Korea after Russia and China thwarted monitoring activities at the United Nations.

The team was introduced after Russia in March rejected the annual renewal of a UN panel of experts that had over the past 15 years overseen the implementation of sanctions aimed at curbing North Korea's nuclear and

missile programmes. China, North Korea's chief ally and economic lifeline, abstained from the vote.

Tensions on the Korean peninsula have intensified in recent years with North Korea stepping up its development of a series of ballistic missiles and a nuclear arsenal, drawing international sanctions, and forming a close military relations with Russia. Washington has been strengthening its security cooperation with key regional allies South Korea and Japan.

"The forces involved in the smear campaign against the DPRK will have to pay a dear price for it," Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui said via state news agency KCNA, using the country's official name.

Former special forces commander Prabowo takes up Indonesian presidency

Monitoring Desk
JAKARTA: Indonesia's Prabowo Subianto on Sunday took over as president of the world's third-largest democracy after sweeping the country's election with policies like free meals for school children and with the outgoing leader's son as his running mate.

The 73-year-old former special forces commander won the Feb. 14 contest with nearly 60% of the vote and has spent the past nine months building a formidable parliamentary coalition.

Prabowo, wearing a traditional black hat and navy suit with a woven maroon and golden sarong, officially became Indonesia's eighth president on Sunday morning after he was sworn in during a ceremony at Indonesia's parliament.

Prabowo, who unsuccessfully ran for the presidency twice before, said in a speech to lawmakers after taking his oath of office that he would be president for all Indonesians, even those who did not vote for him.

But he said there were internal issues in the country that had to be grappled with, including corruption. "Do we realize that our people and our children

are malnourished? So many of our people don't have good jobs. So many of our schools are neglected," Prabowo said.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we have to be courageous looking at all of this, and we have to be courageous solving all these problems," he said.

He was joined in the swearing-in ceremony by his running mate, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, 37, the eldest son of outgoing President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo.

As they make their way to the presidential palace through a festival-like atmosphere they will be greeted by thousands of flag-waving supporters thronging Jakarta streets lined with posters of the incoming leader.

Flower boards set up outside the palace either congratulated Prabowo and Gibran or thanked Jokowi for his decade as president.

Prabowo and Gibran are expected to stop at seven stages along the way to the palace, Nursoh Wahid, a Prabowo aide, told reporters on Friday.

Jokowi supporters are also attending the celebrations to bid farewell to Indonesia's outgoing leader.

Elon Musk promises to award \$1 mln each day to a signer of his petition

Monitoring Desk
HARRISBURG: Billionaire Elon Musk promised on Saturday to give away \$1 million each day until November's election to someone who signs his online petition supporting the US Constitution.

And he wasted no time, awarding a \$1 million cheque to an attendee of his event in Pennsylvania aimed at rallying supporters behind Republican Donald Trump. The winner was a man named John Dreher, according to event staff. "By the way, John

had no idea. So anyway, you're welcome," the Tesla founder said as he handed Dreher the check.

The money is the latest example of Musk using his extraordinary wealth to influence the tightly-contested presidential race between Trump and his Democratic rival Kamala Harris. Musk started America PAC, a political action organisation he founded in support of Trump's presidential campaign. The group is helping mobilise and register voters in battleground states.

Storm Nadine weakens over Guatemala after pummeling Belize, Mexico's Yucatan

Monitoring Desk
BELIZE CITY: Storm Nadine weakened to a tropical depression on Saturday as it chugged across Guatemala, after dumping heavy rain and bringing strong winds to neighboring Belize and the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico.

The storm is expected to swirl across Guatemala and into Mexico's southern states of Chiapas and Tabasco through early Sunday, a forecast from the US National Hurricane Center showed.

Nadine, moving west at about 13 mph (21 kph), was blowing maximum winds that had slowed to near 35 mph

(56 kph), the NHC said. In Guatemala, the nation's disaster agency released a video of a river swollen with rain, threatening to spill its banks.

It recommended some residents self-evacuate, while others should reinforce their roofs, doors and windows.

Earlier in the day, strong winds were blowing as far north as 195 miles from Nadine's center. The NHC's tropical storm warning had stretched from Belize City to Mexican beach resorts Cancun and Cozumel. Cancun's beaches were empty on Saturday as tourists were advised to stay indoors.

Polls in Iraqi Kurdistan open for regional election

Monitoring Desk
SULAIMANIYA: Iraqi Kurds began voting in a parliamentary election in their semi-autonomous region in northern Iraq on Sunday, following repeated delays.

The vote is to elect 100 lawmakers who will then pick a parliament speaker, a president and a prime minister for Iraqi Kurdistan, which gained self-rule in 1991.

The parliamentary elections, originally supposed to be held in 2022, have been repeatedly delayed due to disagreements between the two dominant parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

Air quality worsens as smog blankets Delhi

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Delhi's citizens woke up to smog blanketing the Indian capital and toxic foam floating on the Yamuna river on Saturday.

Delhi's Air Quality Index (AQI) of 273 hit the "poor" category on Saturday, according to data from the Central Pollution Control Board. Areas in the capital like Akshardham and Anand Vihar saw an AQI reading of 334, with the air quality plunging to "very poor", reported news agency ANI.



Marines posing with packages of narcotics seized after intercepting a vessel southwest of the port of Lazaro Cardenas, off the state of Michoacan, Mexico.

Mushahid proposes 3-point Action Plan, urges Erdogan to take lead on Palestine issue

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed during the global Palestine Conference proposed a 3-point Action Plan, and urged President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to take lead on Palestine issue.

On invitation of President Erdogan's AK Party, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed gave a keynote address at the 'Global Palestine Conference' held here at the Turkish capital, where he presented a 3-point Action Plan. President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan was Chief Guest on the occasion, said a news release.

Senator Mushahid Hussain, who is Member of Executive Board of the Istanbul-based 'Al Quds Parliament', as well as Co-Chairman of International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP), hailed the resistance of Hamas, Hezbollah and Iran to Israeli aggression and Zionist expansionism, terming these as exemplary models of 'Might is Not Right, but Right is Might'.

During his speech, Mushahid Hussain appreciated the leadership role of President Erdogan, terming him as the 'Lion of the Muslim World', and congratulated him on his victory in the Turkish Presidential elections.

Condemning Israel for committing the first televised genocide in history, Mushahid also condemned Western double standards and absence of morality as they were actively aiding and abetting Israeli crimes. "Most of the Muslim regimes have also failed to

rise to the occasion due to either fear or expediency," he added. Presenting his Action Plan before the gathering of some 1000 guests from over 50 countries, Mushahid said the first step should be for President Erdogan to take the lead and constitute an International Leaders Delegation, comprising leaders from the Global South, including Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Africa, Algeria and Brazil, who should visit Washington immediately after the November 5 US Presidential polls to meet the American President-elect, and urge the new US President to reverse the one-sided American policy of blatantly supporting Israel. He said, "Muslim leaders must move beyond talk and words by taking concrete actions. Second, given their strong Navies, Turkiye."

Pakistan and Indonesia should form a Joint Naval Flotilla for Peace & Humanitarian Assistance, to help break the Israeli blockade of Gaza after getting authorization from the UN General Assembly. The Naval Flotilla should carry medicine, food and relief goods to alleviate the sufferings of the Palestinians besieged in Gaza, terming it the 'world's largest open air prison, he added.

"This will send a powerful and positive message to the oppressed Palestinian people that the Muslim Ummah is not an impotent entity, rather it has the vision and political will to undertake concrete initiatives.



ISLAMABAD: Activists of Save Gaza hold placard during the protest in support of the oppressed and resistance in Gaza outside the National Press Club.



QUETTA: Newly elected Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Balochistan MPA Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman Baloch addressing at the occasion of his oath taking ceremony.

ECP to hear PTI intra party election case, LG election delays on Tuesday

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has scheduled the hearing for the PTI intra-party election case on October 22, delays in local body elections in Punjab and at the federal level, as well as a contempt case against the PTI founder. Notices have already been issued to Barrister Gohar Ali, Rauf Hassan, Akbar S. Babar, and others in the PTI intra-party election case.

The Election Commission has summoned the Chief Secretary of Punjab,

Peaceful rally held in Quetta to support constitutional amendments

QUETTA (INP): Balochistan Student Movement took out a peaceful rally in Quetta in favour of constitutional reforms and constitutional amendments.

The students demanded equal justice system for the poor and the rich. The participants of the rally said the constitutional amendments will expedite the justice system.

It was also emphasized that constitutional amendments should also be brought which ensure rights of the poor. The Balochistan Student Movement has given a call for rally across the province in favour of constitutional amendments and the establishment of constitutional courts.

NA speaker bans recording mobile videos from press gallery

ISLAMABAD (INP): National Assembly (NA) Speaker Ayaz Sadiq has banned recording mobile videos from press gallery ahead of important session of the house.

According to the ruling of the NA speaker the ban has been imposed on recording videos on cell phones from the press gallery. During Sunday's session, the speaker instructed journalists, saying, "Please refrain from making mobile videos from the press gallery."

The sessions of the Senate and National Assembly will resume today at Parliament House Islamabad today.

After a series of meetings at Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman's residence in Islamabad and delayed starts of the National Assembly (NA) and Senate sessions, the consti-

Six killed after drinking poisonous liquor in Nowshera

ISLAMABAD (APP): Six people were killed, and nine others were in critical condition after consuming poisonous liquor in the Toha Nizampur area of Nowshera on Sunday.

According to a private news channel, the incident happened at a wedding ceremony where they allegedly drank substandard and poisonous liquor.

According to the police sources, three of the dead people belong to Attock, while three belong to the Nizampur area of Nowshera.

The police started further investigation of the incident.

Gilani congratulates nation on approval of 26th constitutional amendment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousof Raza Gilani on Sunday extended his congratulations to the nation on the approval of the 26th Constitutional Amendment and said that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has long been committed to judicial reforms.

In a statement, Gilani praised the efforts of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and all coalition parties for their dedication to this crucial constitutional reform.

Gilani said that the amendment will not only strengthen the judicial system but also enhance the functioning of the superior judiciary across all four provinces. He highlighted that access to justice for the people will be significantly improved as a result of these reforms.

Reflecting on the legacy of the late Benazir Bhutto, Gilani said she was deeply committed to improving the judicial system. "Today, with the passing of the 26th Amendment, another dream of Shaheed Bibi has come true," he added.

Dialogue is not PTI's Politics: Rana Sanaullah

ISLAMABAD (INP): PML-N leader Rana Sanaullah Khan said that the dialogue is not the style of the PTI's politics.

"It is my considered opinion that the PTI could not be convinced, creating consensus or holding dialogue is not the PTI's type of politics," special assistant to the PM on political affairs, Rana Sanaullah said.

"They will do, what they are doing for the last 10 years," PML-N veteran said.

"They are talking something else over there and pretending that they are consulting," he said.

"I pray for the success of Maulana (Fazlur Rehman), they are tricking with him," Sanaullah said. Earlier, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, called for more time to review the proposed legislation.

Sources close to the development revealed that the JUI-F has expressed concerns about rushing through the amendments without enough consultation and suggested the government not to take any hasty decision.

During a meeting, the final draft of the amendment was presented to JUI-F leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman, suggested that more time is needed to discuss the implications of the changes.

Passage of 26th constitutional amendment, incomplete agenda of CoD fulfilled: Ishaq Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohamud Ishaq Dar on Sunday expressed his gratitude to all political parties for voting in favor of the 26th Constitutional Amendment and said that the incomplete agenda of the Charter of Democracy (CoD) had now been fulfilled.

After the passage of the amendment, Ishaq Dar thanked the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), Awami National Party (ANP), Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam)

Dr. Rubaba expresses grief over death of MPA

QUETTA: Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan on Women Development, has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the passing of Provincial Assembly member Patrick Saint Masih. In her condolence message, she stated that with the demise of Patrick Saint Masih, the province has lost a sincere and dedicated public representative.

His services will always be remembered.

PML-N led central Govt wants to control judiciary: JI Ameer

MULTAN (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Sunday mocked the ongoing tussle on the 26th constitutional amendment saying "well done all".

In his message on social media site X, he wrote that Bilawal asserted that Maulana Fazlur Rehman has 100 percent agreed with the PPP on the constitutional amendment. The PTI chairman also claimed to have consensus with the Maulana.

JUI emir added that Rana Sanaullah declared that the Maulana supported the government's draft on the proposed constitutional amendment.

"It shows that all parties are agreed that the next Chief Justice of Pakistan would not be Mansoor Ali Shah; the most senior judge would not be the CJP," Hafiz Naeem wrote.

These tactics showed that the government would control the judiciary, "well done all," he sarcastically berated all parties.

'Kashmiris will pursue martyrs' mission with renewed vigor, determination'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Kashmiris remain unwavering in their commitment to fulfill the martyrs' mission against all odds.

A report released by Kashmir Media Service, today, said the blood of martyrs will not be betrayed as Kashmiris stand united in their resolve. The sacrifices made by martyrs will forever be carved in the hearts of Kashmiris, it added. The report said the freedom struggle of Kashmir is etched in the blood of its martyrs and the people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir will pursue the martyrs' mission with renewed vigor and determination. It said the martyrs' sacrifices are a cherished legacy for Kashmiris and their blood will not go waste, adding the sacrifices of Kashmiri martyrs.



QUETTA: Muslim League (PML-N) Nazryati Wing leader, Jahangir Khan along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at Quetta press club.

Sindh reports two new poliovirus cases, nationwide tally surges to 39

ISLAMABAD (INP): Two fresh cases of the wild poliovirus type-1 (WPV1) have been confirmed in Sindh, raising the total number of countrywide cases to 39 so far in 2024, said the National Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).

The emergence of the new cases shows the extent of deterioration with regards to the poliovirus crisis in Pakistan. Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) officials, on Sunday, told The News that the two new victims are kids — a boy from Mirpurkhas and a girl from Sanghar. Both are the first known instances of the disease in their respective areas this year.

According to the PEI officials in Islamabad, Sindh is experiencing an increase in virus transmission, particularly after multiple environmental samples from Mirpurkhas tested positive for WPV1 earlier this year. After Balochistan recorded 20 cases, Sindh has now confirmed 12, while five have been diagnosed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and one each in Punjab and Islamabad.

At least three children have also died due to this disease this year in Pakistan, according to National EOC sources.

People face unrelenting hardships as gas crisis further deepens

Independent Report KARACHI: Pakistanis are struggling to cope with the escalating gas crisis, which has exacerbated their already dire situation. The gas company's decision to follow in K-Electric's footsteps has further compounded the issue, according to Allama Bilal Saleem Qadri, Central Secretary-General of the Pakistan Sunni Movement. Qadri emphasized that the surge in gas prices and unannounced suspensions have become another tool to torment the public. The people, already overwhelmed by problems, are becoming increasingly desperate due to the gas suspension.

Challenges Faced by the Public Inflation and Unemployment: The twin challenges have pushed the public to the brink, making it difficult for them to make ends meet. Lack of Basic Amenities: The government's inaction in providing essential services has worsened the situation.

Unaffordable Utility Bills: Many citizens struggle to pay their gas and electricity bills. The Pakistan Sunni Movement has urged the government to take immediate action to address these issues and provide relief to the struggling populace.

Pakistan key partner with China in food security: Pak Consul General

BEIJING (INP): The Acting Consul General of the Consulate General of Pakistan in Guangzhou Sardar Muhammad said that Pakistan is a key partner in food security and trade ties with China at the 2nd Hainan International Tropical Food Supply Chain Expo 2024.

He attended the Opening Ceremony and delivered a speech-themed "Further Deepening China-Pakistan Food Trade in the Context of The Belt and Road Initiative".

In his remarks, according to a Gwadar Pro's report, he highlighted Pakistan's significant contributions to global agriculture, noting the country's standing as the world's 5th largest producer of cotton and sugarcane, 6th in wheat and dates, 9th in rice, and as China's second-largest rice supplier. This diverse agricultural output positions Pakistan as a crucial partner in ensuring food security.

Indian troops martyr one Kashmiri youth in Baramulla

SRINAGAR (INP): Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism martyred one Kashmiri youth in Baramulla district of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the troops martyred the youth in a fake encounter during a cordon and search operation (CASO) in Uri area of the district.

AC Nasirabad Division conducts surprise visits to rural dispensaries

Independent Report NASIRABAD: Assistant Commissioner Chattar Khadim Hussain Khosa conducted surprise visits to two rural dispensaries in Nasirabad division, Goth Sardar Allah Waraya Shar and Goth Abdul Rahman Shar, as per the directives of Deputy Commissioner Munir Ahmed Khan Kakar.

During the visits, Khosa inspected the attendance registers of staff members and reviewed the availability of medicines at the dispensaries. He emphasized the importance of staff presence at their designated posts during official hours and announced that surprise visits will continue in the future.

Khosa stressed that doctors and paramedical staff are responsible for providing all medical facilities to the people in rural areas, as envisioned by the government. He noted that the government allocates a substantial budget for this purpose, ensuring that citizens do not face difficulties in accessing healthcare services.

The assistant commissioner also directed officials to report any shortages of medicines at the dispensaries to higher authorities, ensuring that rural residents do not return disappointed from these medical centers.

He reminded doctors that serving humanity and alleviating suffering are their primary responsibilities.

This move aims to improve healthcare services in rural Nasirabad, ensuring accountability and quality care for the local population.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, MPAs and other high officials attending walima of son of MPA Engr. Zamrak Khan Achakzai