

QUETTA VOICE

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Balochistan Home Minister, German Consul General Discuss Counterterrorism Strategies

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: In a notable encounter in Quetta, Balochistan's Home Minister, Mir Zauilah Langove, and Dr. Rudiger Lutz, the German Consul stationed in Karachi, engaged in comprehensive discussions concerning the province's development, law, and order, among other pertinent issues. The meeting, attended by esteemed officials including Additional Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Deputy Commissioner Qalat Bilal Shahbri, and Honorary Consul General of Germany to Balochistan, Murad Baloch, primarily focused on addressing the prevailing law

and order challenges in the region. The atmosphere was marked by warmth and hospitality as the Home Minister cordially welcomed the German delegation, presenting a bouquet of flowers as a token of appreciation. Dr. Lutz seized the opportunity to extend his felicitations to Minister Langove on assuming office. Throughout the discussions, Minister Langove emphasized the critical issue of terrorism in Balochistan, attributing its genesis to clandestine activities backed by India. He reiterated Pakistan's unwavering com-

mitment to counterterrorism, underscoring the indispensable role of the armed forces in upholding the province's security. Taking a firm stance against external meddling, Minister Langove condemned India's persistent endeavors to disrupt the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), asserting that such endeavors had been consistently foiled. He reaffirmed Balochistan's leadership's steadfast dedication to nurturing peace, progress, and prosperity in the region. Dr. Lutz expressed gratitude for the gracious hospitality extended during his

previous visits to Balochistan, reaffirming Germany's steadfast support for the province's advancement. In a gesture of goodwill, Minister Langove presented an honorary shield to the German Consul General, emblematic of the enduring partnership between Balochistan and Germany in their joint pursuit of peace and prosperity. The meeting concluded with both parties reiterating their commitment to collaborative endeavors aimed at addressing security challenges and fostering socio-economic development in Balochistan.

Traders observe shutter-down strike against govt plan to extend tax net to Malakand division

NEWS DESK: Private businesses, including schools, across the Malakand division were closed on Tuesday as traders observed a shutter-down strike against the government's plan to extend the tax net to the Malakand division.

The Malakand division trade union president, Abdur Rahim Khan, had given the strike call over the weekend after a detailed meeting with the all-district trade union leadership at Swat Press Club.

The traders said the government's proposed move to extend the tax net was unjustified and against the agreement the then government had inked with the state of Swat in 1969.

Malakand division, the divisional headquarters, Swat, Shangla, Chitral, Malakand, Bajaur, Dir Lower, Dir Upper and Buner traders observed the strike and closed their businesses with the exception of medicine stores and eateries.



Rahim, while speaking to Dawn.com sarcastically said the government had planned to "reward" the Malakand division residents with tax imposition for the sacrifices they rendered over the past decade and the natural disasters that continuously impacted people's lives. He said they would not allow anyone to take away their legal rights as the government had reverted the special status of provincially administered tribal area (PATA) and was trying to impose the taxes, which he said

would be "an economic murder" of the already devastated people of the division. He said the economic activity in the division was extremely low, claiming: "Show us a single factory [..] where people work and make money."

He accused the government of having also killed tourism and peace from the area through a "so-called army operation".

Shangla trade union president, Muhammad Zada, said they would sacrifice their lives but would not pay

a single penny to the government in taxes, claiming that already collects "60 per cent of taxes in remittances, online businesses, mobile, electricity, internet packages, online shopping, freelancing and several others" means but in return the division's residents "get nothing".

He said the government plan to bring the division under tax net would force the already economically devastated people of the area to "commit suicide".

Hamid Umar, another trade union leader, said that if the government does not withdraw its proposed plan, there will be extreme consequences, warning that "Islamabad was not that far from the Malakand division."

He said Swat merged into Pakistan in 1969 under a 100-year agreement that there would be no taxes of any kind, and the government would support and initiate the welfare work in all its districts but the situation was now "different and dangerous".

Coal Mine Attack In Dukki Leaves 3 Miners Injured

Hussain Zarkoon:

DUKKI: In a daring attack, armed assailants opened fire at the Sardar Mir Usman Tareen Coal Mines in the Dukki district of Balochistan. The assault left at least three individuals injured, including two security personnel and a coal miner. The attackers managed to escape unscathed after carrying out the attack. Eyewitnesses described a scene of chaos as the workers, seeking refuge from the heat, were suddenly confronted by three armed assailants. Without warning, the attackers launched a barrage of gunfire, catching the workers off guard as they slept beneath mosquito nets outside their living quarters.



The assailants, communicating in Pashto among themselves, unleashed a hail of bullets, creating panic among the workers. We heard the injured miners," recounted Faiz Muhammad, a coal miner who witnessed the attack. The ferocity of the as-

sault was evident in the injuries sustained by the victims, with one laborer enduring three gunshot wounds to the back and another receiving two bullets.

The targeted attack, which occurred at coal mine number 9, has deeply affected the community, extending beyond the immediate casualties. Two civil security personnel, identified as Abrar, son of Malik Nasrullah Qom Asraana, and Janu, son of Enz

Muhammad, were among those wounded, further compounding the devastation. Emergency response teams quickly mobilized to provide medical assistance to the injured before transporting them to Loralai for further treatment. As the victims struggle to recover, authorities have initiated a thorough investigation to apprehend the perpetrators and restore a sense of security to the shaken community.

SC orders govt to ensure Imran Khan's presence in NAB amendments case on Thursday via video link

NEWS DESK: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Gazi Faez Isa instructed the government on Tuesday to ensure video link arrangements for incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan to join proceedings of a case about changes to the country's accountability laws and give his arguments.



A five-member bench led by the chief justice and comprising Supreme Court (SC) Justices Ammuddin Khan, Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Athar Minalah and Hassan Azhar Rizvi heard the case.

In 2022, amendments were made to the country's accountability laws by the then-Pakistan Democratic Movement-led government. The amendments made several changes to the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) 1999, including reducing the jurisdiction to the apex court from Rs500 million, and transferring all pending inquiries, investigations, and trials to the relevant authorities.

Imran had subsequently filed a petition in 2022 challenging the amendments, claiming that since changes to the NAB law were made to benefit the influential accused persons and legitimise corruption.

The petition had pleaded that the fresh amendments tend to scrap corruption cases against the president, prime minister, chief ministers and ministers

and provide an opportunity to the convicted public office-holders to get their convictions undone.

The SC had reserved its verdict in the case on September 5, 2023, after 53 hearings, with the members of a three-judge bench debating the power of parliament to enact legislation with retrospective effect. The apex court had subsequently on Sept 15 ordered the restoration of corruption cases against public office holders that were withdrawn after amendments were made to the country's accountability laws and declared Imran's plea to be maintainable.

However, CJP Isa had dropped hints in an October 31, 2023, hearing as the apex court took up intra-court appeals (ICA) against the Sept 15 judgement that since earlier proceedings did not satisfy the requirements of the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023, proceedings in the matter could be started afresh if the counsel managed to "make a solid case" for the same.

Though it refused to stay proceedings in corrup-

tion cases underway in accountability courts, the apex court restrained trial courts from announcing their final orders till the next hearing of the appeals in the matter.

The apex court was seized with a number of ICAs moved by the federal government as well as by a private citizen Zuhair Ahmed Siddiqui, who was an accused in a corruption case but not a party to the challenges to the NAB amendments case.

The larger bench also issued notices to respondent Imran with a direction that since he was incarcerated, the notice should be delivered to him through the jail superintendent concerned. Justice Athar Minalah said that the PTI founder should be presented if he wanted to appear in a personal capacity, adding that Imran could not be denied his right to appear in front of the court since he was a party in the case.

"This is a matter concerning NAB and it is his right to appear in a personal capacity," Justice Minalah said.

Govt disputes 'IHC judge's letter' alleging interference in audio leaks case

NEWS DESK: The federal government on Tuesday disputed the contents of a leaked letter, purportedly penned by Islamabad High Court's (IHC) Justice Babar Sattar, alleging that security agencies used "intimidatory tactics" in a case pertaining to audio leaks being heard by the high court.

Earlier today, a snippet from a leaked letter allegedly attributed to the high court judge circulated on social media, with the PTI saying it highlighted "interference in audio leak case".

The snippet stated that in the audio leaks case, the IHC had put on notice the heads of state intelligence agencies and institutions, ministries and media regulators.



"I paid no heed to such intimidatory tactics and did not find that such messages created a risk of substantial detriment to the administration of justice. The current

malicious campaign's focus on cases involving PTA (Pakistan Telecommunication Authority) appears to be an intimidatory tactic to influence court proceedings."

The development comes amid proceedings underway in the IHC on alleged audio leaks and a separate case on contempt proceedings on a social media campaign targeting the judge, as well as suo motu proceedings in the apex court on alleged interference by intelligence agencies in judicial affairs.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on the matter, Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Ahmad, without naming Justice Sattar, said the contents

of the letter from an IHC judge to IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq had surfaced, saying that it was an "internal communication" of the court.

"The contents of that letter are being reported in such a way and the impression is being given as if there is interference in the IHC and this is not correct. The reference in the letter was to a specific case, or he understood it this way, or it was sent from such an individual which it should have not."

The AGP said he felt it necessary to provide an explanation on the matter, saying that the judge himself said in the leaked snippet that he did not feel intimidated with the message, "however he understood to be an act of interference in the principles of justice."

"His (the judge) reference in the letter was to the social media campaign [against him]. But because this is a matter that is now out in the media, I, as the

AGP, felt it necessary to explain the matter because a perception is being created that there is some breakdown in relations between the judiciary and the executive because of which the issue is moving forward."

The AGP said there were some "sensitive matters" of the state where it was necessary to have communication between different institutions. He added that it was the AGP's office or the provincial advocate generals who forwarded such communication.

"I should make it clear regarding this case that a request was made that the briefing regarding our capability on surveillance and other matters about national security, internal and external, be made in-camera so it (the capabilities of security agencies) does not go into the public domain."

He said that for a country such as Pakistan that has hostile neighbours, it was necessary to ensure that such information was not made public. "A communication certainly happened but what unfortunately occurred was that the impression was somehow sent or understood as if the case should be taken in a particular direction. There was absolutely nothing of this sort."

The AGP said his office and the advocate generals functioned as bridges for "legitimate" requests between institutions, adding that neither the government nor any other state institution could interfere in the matters of judiciary.

Governance & competent states

Balochistan Needs Action, Not Another Failed Polio Campaign

Editor: Asim Khan

The news of a children in Chaman and Dera Bugti contracting polio, in Balochistan after three years, is a damning indictment of the provincial health department and donor agencies entrusted with this critical public health mission.

For far too long, a top-down approach relying on imported solutions has dominated our fight against polio. We, the people of Balochistan, have the indigenous knowledge and cultural understanding necessary to effectively combat this disease.

Where are the efforts to build the capacity of local health-care communities in the local languages? Where are the efforts to address vaccine hesitancy through dialogue and trust-building with local leaders?

Where are the efforts to address vaccine hesitancy through dialogue and trust-building with local leaders? We need an overhaul of the health department's approach, one that leverages the strengths of our communities and fosters local public health initiatives.

Donor agencies must also shoulder some of the blame. Have they critically evaluated the effectiveness of their funding, or have they simply perpetuated a cycle of dependence on external solutions?

The upcoming vaccination campaign is crucial, but it cannot be a one-off effort. We need a sustained, multi-pronged approach that integrates local knowledge, strengthens health-care workers, and empowers Balochistanis to take charge of their health outcomes.

This is a wake-up call. Let Balochistan not be known for this resurgence of a preventable disease. Let's work together, with our own solutions at the forefront, to banish polio for good.

Criminalising hate

By Bina Shah:

HERE is a Stephen Spielberg movie called Minority Report, based on a Philip K. Dick science fiction novella set in the year 2054. Tom Cruise plays a police officer who leads a special unit that uses Pre-Cogs, people with psychic powers who can see the future and predict crimes.

When Cruise is accused of crime he is going to commit 36 hours later, it is merely the vision of a psychic that plunges Cruise into a desperate fight to clear his name and not be killed.

Thought of this film when I read about a new law enacted in Scotland called the Hate Crime and Public Order Act. Hate crime laws had already existed in Scotland; the new law adds more categories to the group of protected minorities: age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or being intersex.

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Confusingly, it is not meant to "stifle criticism or debate", or even to stop people from "expressing controversial, challenging, or offensive views" (quotes from a Scottish government spokesperson speaking to CNN). On social media, people are posting

controversial statements just to test its boundaries. In the law's first week, police received over 7,000 complaints, of which only 240 were officially recorded, and the rest deemed as false complaints. Described as an "unmitigated disaster", the law is causing more problems than it hoped to solve.

One can't truly legislate against hatred as a felt human emotion. Hate speech laws that get it right must serve as a balance between public safety and order, and the right for people to express themselves freely — hence the classic example that you can't go into a crowded theatre and shout "Fire!" because of the harmful consequences of that act.

By Huma Yusuf: DURING a spell of what feels like endless school holidays, a working mother's mind inevitably turns to childcare. When faced with the great juggling act that is work and life, it is not surprising that the West is grappling with declining birthrates and millennials are taking on TikTok in droves to swear off having children. Readers may dismiss working mothers and childcare as a Western problem, but it is increasingly a Pakistani one. The country must tackle it quickly if it is to

be an equitable, inclusive and prosperous society. Admittedly, there has been good news on the childcare front. In her inaugural speech as Punjab Chief Minister, Maryam Nawaz pledged to develop day care centres in workplaces to enable working women. This comes on the heels of a spree of day care centre launches in Punjab in recent years, which requires workplaces in Islamabad with

more instrumental in tackling the pandemic effectively. Similarly, the American political scientist Francis Fukuyama asserted it was not the type of political system that determined capable management but an effective state. In a 2020 essay, he argued the crucial determinant in efficient crisis response is state capacity and trust in government. "What matters in the end is not regime type but whether citizens trust their leaders, and whether those leaders preside over a competent and effective state."

The unsettled Covid period saw unprecedented, overlapping crises in many countries across the world. This prompted the World Bank to call for "reimagining governance" in its Future of Government report (2022) focused attention on the need for governments to tackle unresolved governance problems.

It saw the world at an inflection point due to growing demands, economic headwinds and mistrust, as well as persistent uncertainty, amidst pressures such as the learning crisis and job insecurity. The report called for a new social contract supported by an elite bargain by which elites committed to outcomes to benefit society at large and not just themselves. It proposed a "government of the future" with a clear vision of its role — innovative, trusted, prepared for crisis and responsive to the demands of citizens.

By Umair Javid:

THE rise of state interventions in the economy, even in the West. Drawing on China's successful implementation of political capitalism — ie, a system where political power of the state is used to fulfil economic goals — even countries generally reluctant to embrace any form of state intervention (such as the US) have switched to some variant of the (neoliberal) mantra of free trade championed by her and her successors in office had been detrimental to American workers. These economic shifts will become more apparent as countries across the Global South attempt to catch up using a variety of different interventionist approaches. Selective engagement with the world, rather than an unencumbered embrace, is likely to be the pattern in the years ahead. However, neoliberal globalisation

was not just an economic project. It came armed with a range of political and cultural ideals whose task was to generate mass consensus, especially among the so-called losers of globalisation. The slowdown of economic growth has led to chauvinist politics. A primary one was the ideal of liberal democracy, which had guaranteed globally by the US. The simple fact, though, is that the commitment to this ideal remained selective at best, contingent on US foreign policy goals. The West has been progressively working with dictatorships of all stripes as long as its interests in a particular region were guaranteed. However, even this superficial consensus seems to be fraying. With the rise of far-right and populist movements in the West, democracy is eroding in its supposed heartlands.

Simultaneously, the (selective) success of autocracies in generating popular support and consensus through economic growth makes them seem an attractive alternative. Regardless of the extremely specific

factors that allow some autocracies to generate growth, every aspiring autocrat, such as those frequently found in Pakistan, seems to think that limiting popular representation is a key ingredient in delivering growth. In an insightful recent exposition, sociologist Cihan Tugal cites the case of Erdogan and Turkey's AKP, which have deftly used targeted state welfare, interventions in the economy and interventionist politics to create a durable ruling arrangement. These arrangements have proved to be somewhat successful in limiting, though by no means finishing, challenges to the ruling elite over the last two decades.

Finally, the cultural agenda of neoliberalism is also being challenged, both in the West and abroad. This agenda was based on the extremely selective co-optation of ideals of inclusion and representation. It found its clearest manifestation in places like the US, where checkbox tokenism became the basic mode of dealing with racial and gender minorities without

any actual accompanying reordering of economic and social hierarchies. The slowdown of economic growth, especially in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, has led to an upsurge of racial, nationalist, and chauvinist politics, which sees even these watered-down efforts of social justice to be an affront that needs to be done away with. In a throwback of sorts to the inter-war period of the 20th century, minorities and immigrants are scapegoated for the unmet aspirations of the majority. This retreat towards primordial loyalties is also increasingly apparent in migrant communities, especially concentrated in the Gulf region across the world. The genocidal acts of Israel in Gaza, and the blatant ethnic cleansing provided by Western governments, have created a major schism with Muslim communities and death another blow to liberal political rhetoric and its talk of multicultural societies.

Anecdotal conversations with Pakistani migrants in the West reveal a range of anxieties. But as climate change leads to more stress on agricultural production, expect women to migrate in much larger numbers due to economic necessity. With climate migration will come greater demand for childcare, particularly in urban areas, as women leave behind the proverbial village it takes to raise a child. Failure to cater to this demand will worsen the prospects of female labour participation. The solution is not merely legislative: laws such as the 1934 Factories Act mandate

After neoliberalism

Childcare challenge

Childcare demand is set to grow exponentially. There are various barriers to additional childcare provision for Pakistani women seems more like lip service than a priority. This highlights the state's shortsightedness, given that women's labour participation is constantly cited as a golden key to unlock Pakistan's economic growth. Indeed, the 2018 IMF study concluded that Pakistan could boost its GDP by 30pc if it raised its workforce.

likely at a tipping point and underpinned by herself will struggle with childcare when the time comes to start a family. Inadequate childcare provision for one woman would likely prove the lot of many areas who participate in demand is set to grow exponentially. High inflation is also being challenged by households, particularly in urban areas, will grow in number. Some of this has been spurred by the rise of smaller, multi-generational households, particularly in urban areas, will grow in number. Some of this has been spurred by the rise of smaller, multi-generational households, particularly in urban areas, will grow in number.

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Nasrallah terms attacking Rafah as Netanyahu's goal to cover up defeats

TEHRAN (INP): Hezbollah's Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah has said that Israeli attacks on Rafah are the Zionist prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's goal to cover up his defeats in Gaza.

During a televised speech, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah addressed the recent escalation of violence in Gaza, and said that the Israeli regime's officials have admitted to daily defeats in the conflict.

Rafah city to cover up his failure in raiding Gaza. Nasrallah urged people not to be fooled by the US's recent scenarios, pointing out that the US supports Israel and has not changed its position on the conflict.

Storm and emphasized that it demonstrated the Israeli government's inability to win in a conflict. As a result, 70 percent of Israelis demanded the resignation of the Chief of the General Staff, who is the head of the regime.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson BISP Rubina Khalid, receives a comprehensive briefing from Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmad, during an introductory meeting at BISP HQs in Islamabad on May 14, 2024. Also in attendance are Addl. Secretary BISP, Dr. Tahir Noor, and all Directors General of BISP.

Sri Lanka squad departs for USA to partake in T20 World Cup 2024

COLOMBO (INP): The Sri Lanka cricket team departed for the United States of America (USA) on Tuesday to participate in the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, commencing on June 1.

Sri Lanka are the first team to leave for the mega event, however, star spinner Maheesh Theekshana is not travelling with the squad, owing to his commitment to IPL franchise Chennai Super Kings.

The former champions will kick start their campaign on June 3 against South Africa in New York. Sri Lanka squad: Wanindu Hasaranga (c), Charith Asalanka (vc), Kusal Mendis, Pathum Nissanka, Kamindu Mendis, Samarawickrama, Angelo Mathews, Dasun Shanaka, Dhananjaya De Silva, Maheesh Theekshana, Duneth Wellalage, Nuwan Thushara, Mathesha Pathirana, and Dilshan Madushanka.

Governor Punjab visits Golra Sharif shrine

ISLAMABAD (INP): Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan embarked on a significant visit to Golra Sharif, marking his inaugural visit to the revered site. His visit culminated in a profound meeting with Pir Nizamuddin Jami, wherein Governor Khan expressed his unwavering commitment to safeguarding the sanctity of (Khatme-e-Nubuwwat) the Prophethood finality (PBUH).

Nizamuddin Jami Ghani and Syed Pir Shamsuddin Ghani, discussing various pertinent issues. Pir Nizamuddin Jami extended warm congratulations to Governor Khan on assuming office and conveyed his sincere wishes for a successful tenure.

Ireland cricket team to visit Pakistan in 2025

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Syed Mohsin Naqvi's efforts have started producing the desired results as Ireland cricket Trophy, 2025 would be held in Pakistan. "Pakistan has always made the best arrangement to provide security to the foreign teams," he added. PCB chairman thanked his counterpart for making the best arrangements during team Pakistan's visit to Ireland.

AB No.458/13-5-2024 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTERS (MERC) BALOCHISTAN



ISLAMABAD: Governor of Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhel called on Speaker of National Assembly Ayaz Sadiq at parliament house.

Governor Kundi pledges collaborative approach with KP govt to secure masses' rights

MULTAN (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Governor Faisal Karim Kundi Tuesday reaffirmed his commitment to safeguarding the rights of the masses through collaborative efforts with the KP government.

Responding to a query regarding political difference with CM KP, Governor Kundi said, "I see the people of KP that I will spare no effort to ensure their rights are protected."

Chief Minister of KP, inviting him to the Governor's office to prioritize the uplift the province, and setting the tone for the province. Acknowledging his political mentors, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari, Governor Kundi expressed his respect for politicians and showed readiness to engage in dialogue with CM KP for the betterment of KP.

petition for progress instead of political differences and point scoring. To another question about the imposition of Governor's Rule, Governor Kundi stated that they were political persons and committed to democratic principles. On the issues of "Seriki Waseeb", Governor Kundi commended the Pakistan People's Party for their consistent efforts in providing relief to the region. Responding to a question on law and order situation in KP, the Governor asserted the state's resolve to engage with those abiding by the country's constitution while sternly dealing with those who challenge constitution's sanctity.

China to provide unwavering support for Pakistan's reform agenda: Ambassador Zaidong

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan's reform agenda, said Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong.

In an article, Ambassador Zaidong noted Pakistan's ongoing reform agenda, signaling renewed focus on national development.

aligns with China's pursuit of high-quality development, evident in its resilient economy, which surpassed 126 trillion yuan (\$17.5 trillion) in GDP in 2023, with a growth rate of 5.2%, ranking among the world's major economies.

operation and mutual prosperity, with Pakistan recognized as an "outward friend." For Pakistan, this partnership holds profound implications. Ambassador Jiang underscored the country's strategic importance, demographic dividend, and abundant natural resources, highlighting its potential for development.

China's role as a global economic power and agent of positive change is underscored by the emergence of new industries and economic sectors. Ambassador Zaidong stated, "New quality productive forces are characterized by innovation; the key lies in high quality, the essence is advanced productivity."

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NAB amendments case: SC allows PTI founder to attend proceedings via video link

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court (SC) allowed PTI founder Imran Khan to attend court proceedings in the NAB amendments case via video link.

On September 15, 2023, the Supreme Court of Pakistan struck down amendments made to National Accountability Bureau laws as it announced its reserved verdict on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder's plea.

A five-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa comprising Justice Amin-Ud-Din Khan, Justice Jamal Mandokhail, Justice Athar Minalah and Justice Hassan Azhar hearing the govt's pleas challenging the NAB amendments verdict. At the outset of the hearing, the NAB prosecutor general said

the bureau will adopt the arguments of the federal government in this case.

Justice Minalah remarked it has been told that the PTI founder wants to appear in this case. "How can a respondent be barred from attending court proceedings?" This is a matter of basic fundamental rights, he remarked.

CJP Justice Qazi Faez Isa remarked that Adiala Jail Superintendent was asked to make arrangements for the video link appearance of the PTI founder. This is not a matter related to a person but it is a matter of law and justice. The federal government filed the review plea in the NAB amendments case under the SC.

Practice and Procedure Law and made the Federation of National Accountability Bureau

of Pakistan, National Account-

ability Bureau and PTI founder respondents.

Citing no violation of basic rights with the NAB amendments, the federal government pleaded with the SC to nullify its decision in the case. "Legislation is

the right of the Parliament," the plea said.

In a majority 2-1 verdict, the top court approved Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's petition challenging amendments made to the country's accountability laws during the tenure of the previous Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)-led government. The top court also restored graft cases against public office holders that were closed down following the amendments to National Accountability Bureau laws.



BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar meets with Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDPC), Lin Jianchao in Beijing, China.

PTI condemns killing of civilians, seeks inquire to identify culprits

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) came down hard on the governments devoid of credibility, capacity and public mandate for creating

Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) like situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

PTI Spokesperson, in a strongly-worded reaction to the rapidly deteriorating AJK situation and the ongoing violent clashes, vehemently condemned the killing of civilians in violent clashes in AJK and demanded probe into the tragic incidents to identify the culprits.

PTI Spokesperson demanded immediate resignation of the AJK government, which was based on horse-trading and floor crossing. He stated that PTI was deeply concerned pertaining to the fast deteriorating situation in AJK and the

governments being beret of credibility, capacity and public mandate were creating a situation in AJK similar to the IIOJK.

PTI Spokesperson said the governments in center and Kashmir were pursuing the policy of Narendra Modi of using unbridled force against peaceful protest seeking fundamental and basic rights, which was condemnable and shameful.

He contended that the governments lacking credibility, capacity and public support have become a disaster for the country and the nation.

PTI Spokesperson stated that the use of extra-constitutional power and dictatorial style of governance were becoming a major cause of conflict and chaos in the entire society. He said that in civilized democratic societies, governments hammered out solutions

to problems in the light of public opinions instead of trying to crush and suppress them through use of force.

PTI Spokesperson urged that the state government should seriously analyze the real motives of the public protest and recognize the legitimate demands of the people of Kashmir instead of further worsening the situation by resorting to lawlessness and violence.

He stated that the people should make the democratic right of peaceful protest their strength rather than leaning towards confrontation and violence.

PTI Spokesperson stressed the need that public mandate and the rule of law should be made the basis of the country's system in preference to the horse-trading or Form 47.

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) bars govt from blocking non-filers' SIMs

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday barred the federal government from blocking the SIMs of non-filers.

IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq issued the order in response to a writ petition filed by the telecom operator. The court also issued notice to the federal

government in this regard, with the next hearing on the matter scheduled for May 27, 2024.

The petition challenged Clause 114-B of the Income Tax Ordinance and the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) Income Tax General Orders against non-filers. The

petitioner argued that the tax regulator's new-found authority violated the fundamental right to freedom of business under Article 18 of the Constitution.

The petitioner warned that if implemented, this law would allow the government to deprive citizens of services in other business areas as well.

The development comes a day after the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and telecom operators had agreed to block the mobile SIM cards of non-filers, with 5,000

SIMs to be blocked daily. FBR stated that telecom operators will receive addi-

tional lists of non-filers on a daily basis, and have already started sending messages to non-filers warning them of SIM blocking. The FBR believes that blocking SIMs of non-filers will increase tax revenue.

Moreover, the General Order under Income Tax Ordinance 2001, Section 114B, was issued after FBR meetings with PTA, and telecom operators. The purpose of the meetings was to proceed SIM blocking of non-filers for tax year 2023. Earlier, the Cellular Mobile Companies refused to block the SIM cards of 506,000 identified non-compliant taxpayers due to technical and operational obstacles.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ashraf Iqbal chairing a meeting of committee for improving the structure and capabilities of Planning Commission.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on the matters related to Ministry of Privatisation and Privatisation Commission.

PM announces privatization of all govt-owned enterprises, except strategic SOEs

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has announced to privatize all government-owned enterprises with the exception of strategically important state-owned enterprises.

Chairing a review meeting on matters related to Ministry of Privatisation and Privatisation Commission in Islamabad on Tuesday, he said apart from strategic

state-owned enterprises, all other enterprises, whether profitable or loss-making, will be privatized. The Prime Minister directed all federal ministries to

take necessary action in this regard and cooperate with

the Privatisation Commission.

Shehbaz Sharif said the government's job is not to do business but to ensure a business and investment friendly environment. The Prime Minister directed to ensure transparency in privatization process.

He directed to televise live Pakistan International Airlines Company Limited's privatization including bidding and other important steps. The process of

privatization of other institutions will also be broadcast live. On the occasion, roadmap of Privatization Program 2024-2029 was presented by Ministry of

Privatization and

Privatization Commission.

The meeting was informed about the progress made so far for the privatization of state-owned enterprises. It was informed that pre-qualification process for PIA privatization to be completed by the end of this month. The meeting was informed that privatization of Power Distribution Companies has been included in privatization program 2024-2029.

It was informed that loss-making state-owned enterprises to be privatized on priority basis and that a pre-qualified panel of experts is being appointed in Privatization Commission to speed up privatization process.

Awami Joint Action Committee calls off AJK protests after demands met

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): After several days of intense protests, the Awami Joint Action Committee on Tuesday announced to end ongoing protests in Azad

Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) against soaring inflation a day after the government accepted their demands.

The committee, which had been spearheading demonstrations, called off protest after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced Rs23 billion subsidy package for the people of AJK. "The government accepted all the demands of the protesters yesterday," the AAC said in a statement.

However, the AAC said a state-wide shutter down will be observed till 3pm today to honour the people who were killed in the protests. The

alliance's head,

Shaukat Nawaz Mir, also demanded the government give financial compensation for the families of three protesters and a police official who were killed in the violence.

It is pertinent to mention here that Azad Jammu and Kashmir witnessed violent clashes between the police and activists of a rights movement amid a wheel-jam and shutter-down strike across the territory, which left at least three people dead and several others injured.

At least a man was killed and two others were injured as clashes between the protesters and law enforcement agencies once again erupted in Muzaffarabad on

Monday. During the clashes, the cop was also killed while several others LEAs were

injured.

A day earlier, the Azad Kashmir (AJK) government had announced reduction in the prices of electricity and flour for AJK people. According to a notification issued, the price of wheat flour had been reduced by Rs 1100 per 40 kg bag, from Rs 3100 to Rs 2000. Additionally, the government also approved a reduction in electricity prices.

As per the notification, domestic consumers using up to 100 units will be charged Rs 3 per unit, while those using 101-300 units will be charged Rs 5 per unit. Consumers using more than 300 units will be charged Rs 6 per unit. Industrial consumers using up to 300 units will be charged Rs 10 per unit, while those using more than 300 units will be charged Rs 15 per unit.



QUETTA: German Council General in Karachi Dr Rudiger Lotz visiting Mehrgarh Museum.

BISP Chairperson urges dignity, empowerment for needy women

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairperson of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Rubina Khalid has underscored the importance of upholding the self-respect and dignity of BISP's deserving women.

Addressing senior management and officers during an introductory meeting at BISP Headquarters, she emphasized the need for unwavering commitment to providing essential services to the programme's beneficiaries.

Rubina Khalid made it unequivocally clear that any instances of mismanagement or misconduct would not be tolerated under her leadership, and strict action would be taken against individuals involved.

Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmad, endorsed the chairperson's statement, reinforcing the commitment to accountability and efficiency within the organization.

Additionally, Rubina Khalid expressed her intention to personally visit BISP field offices to monitor the situation closely, emphasizing her hands-on approach to ensuring effective implementation of her directives.

Emphasizing transparency and empowerment, she stressed the establishment of bank accounts for BISP beneficiaries, allowing them to access their funds independently, thus minimizing human intervention.

The chairperson emphasized the significance of vocational and technical training, particularly for the children of beneficiaries, as a means to alleviate their hardships and contribute positively to their families' well-being.

She highlighted the need for creating employment opportunities to uplift the beneficiaries from poverty.

Rubina Khalid also proposed BISP management to devise policies specifically targeting the inclusion of unmarried and widowed individuals in the program.

Recognizing them as the most vulnerable segments of society, she underscored the importance of extending support and assistance to ensure their socio-economic well-being. The meeting also witnessed a comprehensive briefing by the secretary BISP on the core initiatives and new developments within the program. On the occasion, Additional Secretary BISP, Dr. Tahira Noor, along with all Director Generals of BISP, were present to discuss the strategic direction of the program.

The chairperson conveyed her eagerness to engage with the BISP team further and deepen her understanding of the program's operations.