

QUETTA VOICE

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PPP objects to granting reserved seats to PTI, arguing that it had not claimed any entitlement to them

PM Shehbaz asks FBR to ensure seamless refunds to exporters

NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday warned the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) against any delays in refunding exporters, aiming to alleviate concerns about meeting the \$60 billion export target. While speaking at the National Export Development Board (NEDB), the prime minister directed the commerce ministry and other departments to take "all necessary measures" to achieve the ambitious export target of \$60bn in exports within three years.

The prime minister directed the ministry to resolve the issues raised by exporters and present a report within two weeks. He added that he would personally chair the NEDB meetings every six weeks.

The prime minister noted that the country's exports had surpassed the \$30 billion mark during the previous fiscal year, with IT exports contributing over \$3.2 billion, thanks to government policies. He called it a "welcoming development."

He lauded the business community and investors for their role in increasing exports despite challenging circumstances. Furthermore, he tasked the ministry of national food security to work with the provinces to improve extension services and enhance agricultural exports.

Regarding the country's exports to Europe and North America, the prime minister said that the delivery time for such exports should be reduced.

He added that the ministry and Investment Board should also cooperate to ensure seamless transfer of Chinese export industries to the country.

He called for enhancing research and development, innovation, and brand development to increase exports.

The representatives of the export sector appreciated the prime minister for his frequent meetings to resolve their problems and called his keen interest in the export sector "very encouraging" to industrialists.

They also appreciated the prime minister's initiative to ensure timely refunds by the FBR to the export industry.

PPP challenges Supreme Court ruling on reserved seat after PML-N

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) challenged on Tuesday the July 12 verdict of the apex court on reserved seats, a week after the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) submitted its review petition.

The Supreme Court (SC) on July 12 announced its decision that reversing previous rulings by the Peshawar High Court and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and declaring that PTI is eligible for the reserved seats for women and minorities.

This ruling came after the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), backed by PTI, filed appeals against the ECP's decision and the PHC's subsequent affirmation of that decision. The SIC argued that the denial was unconstitutional and sought the allocation of 77 reserved seats that were originally assigned to other parties within the ruling coalition.

The decision received backlash from the ruling coalition, with Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz expressing her surprise and questioning the legitimacy of reinstating individuals she described as "criminals of the nation."

Represented by Farooq H. Naek, the PPP's review petition seeks to overturn the July 12 decision that previously annulled the decisions of the Peshawar High Court and the Election Commission, directing that the reserved seats be allocated to PTI. This ruling affirmed PTI's status as a legitimate party within the Parliament and provincial assemblies.

The SC's Practice and Procedure Committee has scheduled the hearing of the review petitions for after the September holidays.

However, Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isha, dissenting from the majority decision, argued that the summer holidays should be cancelled to address the review petitions promptly.

He emphasized that the Constitution should take precedence over the convenience of judges, stating that delaying the hearing would be unjust. **NEWS DESK.**



Attack on Coal Trucks Triggers Strike and Heightened Security in Harnai

Hanif Tareen:

HARNAI: A complete shutdown strike was observed in Harnai district of Balochistan on Tuesday in response to the burning of two coal trucks and the killing of a driver by unknown assailants on Harnai Sanjawi Road last night. Several others were injured in the attack.

The strike was called after the violent incident where attackers set fire to the trucks and prevented rescuers from reaching the injured. Malik Azizullah Tareen, a local leader, condemned the inci-

dent, stating, "Last night on Sanjawi Road in Harnai, unknown people burnt trucks and killed one driver while injuring several others. They were not allowing us to bring the injured or go to help them." Tareen criticized the Levies administration, claiming their inappropriate actions hindered rescue efforts. "The deputy commissioner is not a shepherd; he came from abroad, but the attitude of the Levies administration in Harnai was inappropriate," Tareen remarked. Despite resistance,

Tareen managed to forcibly retrieve an injured driver and take him to the hospital.

The incident has heightened security concerns in the region, leading to the complete closure of Harnai Bazar as residents demand justice and better protection for those working on the roads.

Harnai has been considered to be one of the sensitive districts of Balochistan. Militants in the area have been targeting security forces and trucks carrying coal from the area.

Hidayat-ur-Rehman and Ali Madad Jatak's Heated Exchange in Assembly

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: A video capturing a bitter exchange between Haq Du Tehreek leader Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman and PPP leader Ali Madad Jatak during a Balochistan Assembly session has gone viral on social media, drawing widespread attention.

The confrontation erupted during the assembly meeting, where the two leaders engaged in a heated argument that quickly escalated. The intensity of their exchange left other members of the assembly attempting to restore order. Eventually, both Rehman and Jatak were silenced by their colleagues.

Despite efforts to calm the situation, Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman chose to leave the assembly session abruptly. The video of their altercation has since circulated widely online, sparking a flurry of reactions from the public and highlighting the ongoing tensions within the provincial assembly.

As the video continues to gain traction, it underscores the challenges faced by the Balochistan Assembly in maintaining decorum and addressing the pressing issues of the province amidst growing political discord.

The session of the Balochistan Assembly commenced with the Speaker Captain (R) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai in the chair. The Speaker repeatedly urged the two lawmakers to demonstrate patience and avoid using street words. Nevertheless, both lawmakers engaged in the heated debate.

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PTI calls for hunger strike outside Parliament against 'injustice, unfairness'

NEWS DESK: Senior PTI leader Asad Qaiser on Tuesday said the party had called for a "symbolic hunger strike" outside Parliament, demanding the National Assembly members' intervention on actions against the party and its leaders.

Earlier this month, while speaking to reporters in Adiala Jail, incarcerated former premier Imran Khan had said he was mulling the decision to go on a hunger strike if justice was denied to him.

A day ago, police and the Federal Investigation Agency raided PTI's Central Office over the suspicion of alleged "anti-state digital campaigns" and arrested the party's information secretary, Raouf Hasan. The party also alleged that its lawmakers were being swayed with offers of bribes or threatened with legal proceedings against them.

To register their protest, Qaiser, PTI leaders Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Ali Muhammad Khan and several others were seen sitting outside Parliament today.

Speaking to the media, Qaiser said that the party had started a "local protest" against its victimisation. "We don't want to create any [unfavourable] law and order situation in the country," Qaiser told journalists while sitting outside the parliament. "But given what is happening to us — the ongoing campaign against us, the pressure on our MNAs, the cases against them and the offers being made to sway their loyalties

— what other option do we have?" he said.

On the other hand, Barrister Gohar said lawmakers did not need permission to stage a protest on the premises of the Parliament.

"This is our right, we are parliamentarians, and parliamentarians are entitled to conduct themselves however they want within the premises of the Parliament," he said. "We can express our opinions [here] however we want."

He said the protest conveyed the party's position against the "injustice, unfairness, and the illegal and unconstitutional things that are happening [to us]". He added that PTI parliamentarians were staging a sit-in to uphold the law and the constitution, despite having reservations about some "strangers" occupying parliamentary positions.

Meanwhile, Judicial Magistrate Muhammad Shabbir granted the Federal Investigation Agency a two-day physical remand of PTI spokesperson Raouf Hasan and other arrested PTI leaders to "facilitate" the probe.

A day prior, Hasan was apprehended by the Islamabad police as the interior ministry accused the party of peddling "anti-state propaganda".

The magistrate ordered the suspects' appearance before the court on Thursday.

Separately, the PTI's central secretary was also sealed by the Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation for not having fire and life safety standards and measures in place.



UNDP Empowers Balochistan: Education, Climate, and Healthcare Initiatives

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OUR VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Balochistan Needs Action, Not Another Failed Polio Campaign

Editorial:

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. While a targeted vaccination campaign is a welcome response, it's a mere bandage on a gaping wound.

Imported Solutions Don't Work

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. Yet, our voices and workable solutions are consistently sidelined.

The presence of poliovirus in environmental samples since last August is a glaring failure of our health department. This isn't just a recent oversight; it exposes a systemic weakness in surveillance and outreach programs.

Where are the culturally sensitive campaigns that educate our communities in the local languages? 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 ownership over 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? We urge them to invest in building the capacity of our local healthcare system and empower Balochistanis to take charge of their health outcomes.

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 infrastructure, and prioritizes community engagement. Only then can we truly eradicate polio from Balochistan and safeguard the health of future generations.

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.

Economic revival

By Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry:

IN 1992, Bill Clinton ran his campaign for US president on three slogans, one of which was 'It's the economy, stupid!' In the backdrop of the economic downturn of the early 1990s, Clinton's focus on economic revival resonated well with his voters, and within three years, economic growth picked up. Ever since, the phrase 'It's the economy, stupid!' has been used extensively to emphasise the pivotal role of economic management in a nation's prosperity.

In Pakistan today, the imperative of economic revival can hardly be overemphasised. For decades, we have been living beyond our means, collecting a mountain of debt along the way. Interest payments consume the bulk of our revenues, and perpetual loans are sought to run the government. Effectively, that means much of what the government does is with borrowed money. This is unsustainable; either we increase our revenues, or reduce our expenses — preferably both. Pursuant to the agreement with the IMF, the government plans to tax the retail sector as part of its efforts to document the informal economy. This would certainly

help broaden the tax base. Opposite my house is a supermarket frequented by so many customers that I have rarely seen the cashier desk without a queue before it. Yet, when it comes to paying taxes, this shop, like many retailers, is reluctant to enter the tax net.

Our people need to realise that the roads we travel on, the public services we avail of, and the higher quality of life we desire can only be available if we pay taxes. An argument often heard in response to the topic of increasing the tax net is that the revenue collected from the common man is used by high officials of the government to finance their over-extended lifestyles. It is, therefore, important that while broadening the tax base, the government make an equally robust and visible effort to cut wasteful public expense.

However, we have yet to see any concrete step being taken to give credence to the government's claims of belt-tightening. For instance, when the government announced cost cuts on international travel, one saw a long list of the categories of public office holders who would be entitled to travel business class.

When we are knee-deep in debt, should these not be minimised? Similarly, many high-ranking officials use protocol cavalcades to move about, can cuts not be made here? The larger point is that austerity flows top down. As such, the surrender of a second car by the chief justice is a welcome precedent worth emulating.

We have yet to see any concrete proof of belt-tightening. Meanwhile, the 18th Amendment, which devolved several subjects to the provinces, was a step in the right direction, but its implementation has left much to be desired.

First, the federal ministries dealing with the subjects already devolved to the provinces have not been dissolved. Second, resources were not devolved by the provinces. Since living conditions in tehsils and villages have improved, the common man is dissatisfied with the way the economy works in our country. In a related issue, the NFC award adopted in 2010 increased the share of provinces from the net proceeds of divisible pool taxes to 57 per cent (2011-12 onwards) up from 45pc (2009-10). As debt obligations have continued to rise,

the five core areas on which Pakistan's economic revival is predicated. Under the auspices of STZs, investment opportunities are available for setting up special technology zones (STZs) at seven prime locations including Lahore, Peshawar, Swat, Abbottabad, Haripur, Islamabad and Karachi. The Ministry of Information Technology & Tele-communication also has a project for the establishment of 25 soft-ware technology parks (STPs) through Pakistan by converting public/private owned dilapidated or non-operational office buildings/warehouses into STPs. The IT-enabled services provided by these zones to IT and related trade as well as more businesses and profit repatriation freedom is granted. There is no doubt that the development of STZs/STPs is essential to catalyse the emergence of digital and IT-related trade as more and more businesses and profit repatriation freedom is granted. There is no doubt that the development of STZs/STPs is essential to catalyse the emergence of digital and IT-related trade as more and more businesses and profit repatriation freedom is granted. There is no doubt that the development of STZs/STPs is essential to catalyse the emergence of digital and IT-related trade as more and more businesses and profit repatriation freedom is granted.

UNDP Empowers Balochistan: Education, Climate, and Healthcare Initiatives

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: In the vast and rugged landscape of Balochistan, where challenges ranging from climate impacts to educational disparities persist, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has emerged as a beacon of hope, spearheading initiatives to tackle these pressing issues head-on.

With climate change wreaking havoc on communities and ecosystems across the globe, Balochistan has not been spared from its effects. In response, the UNDP has been implementing a series of projects in collaboration with various stakeholders, including civil society, government bod-

ies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These projects aim to mitigate the impacts of climate change, rehabilitate flood-affected areas like Hanna Urak in Quetta, provide skill trainings and financial aid to improve livelihoods, and enhance access to education, particularly for girls.

UNDP Supporting 43 Schools To Improve Educational Opportunities For Girls

In a region where the female literacy rate hovers at a mere 17 per cent, the UNDP's focus on improving edu-

cation opportunities for girls is particularly crucial. By supporting the rehabilitation of 43 schools in four districts of Balochistan, the UNDP aims to provide over 8,000 students, predominantly girls, with improved learning facilities.

This concerted effort not only empowers girls with education but also paves the way for a more equitable and prosperous future for the entire region.

Nine Oxygen plants set to be installed in public hospitals across Balochistan

Furthermore, recognizing the importance of access to healthcare, the UNDP

is set to install nine oxygen plants in public hospitals across Balochistan, including the renowned Sheikh Zayed Hospital in Quetta.

This initiative seeks to enhance the healthcare infrastructure and capacity of these facilities, thereby improving access to vital medical services for communities across the province.

UN Assistant Secretary-General Kanni Wignaraja Reviews Projects In Balochistan

Recently, UN Assistant Secretary-General and UNDP Regional Director Kanni

Wignaraja visited Quetta to assess the progress of these initiatives alongside UNDP Balochistan Chief Zulfikar Durrami.

During her visit, she held detailed discussions with Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti, reaffirming the UNDP's commitment to supporting the government of Balochistan in addressing the region's most pressing challenges.

As these projects continue to unfold, they stand as testament to the transformative power of international cooperation and collective action in building a more resilient and sustainable future for Balochistan and its people.

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Although a prominent actor, it is not the only one in the region. The MGB and other local militant groups reportedly maintain close links with the TTP and sectarian outfits based in Punjab. These external groups appear to support local militants, as evidenced by the TTP's involvement in the 2022 Bhabar Pass blockade. The state's history of compromise with militant groups has emboldened them. For instance, in the kidnapping incident, the administration agreed to ban girls' sports in the region. Similarly, a 2019 agreement had reportedly allowed for implementation of some Islamic laws to resolve them through local jirgas and by involving religious scholars. This can result in impunity towards criminals and elements taking the law into their own hands.

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Sustainability of digital trade

By Hassan Nawaz Sheikh:

PAKISTAN'S ailing economy is undergoing a process of revival. The economic wizardry has placed a lot of bets on IT in the hope that the enormous potential of this sector can help alleviate our economic woes. There have been claims by former federal IT ministers that Pakistan's IT exports would reach between \$10 billion to \$20bn from the existing mark of \$2.6bn within the next few years. The premise on which these claims are being made is that the IT sector has been recording consistent upward growth since the last few years.

The IT industry has gained further focus when it was picked up by the newly constituted Special Investment Facilitation Council as one

of the five core areas on which Pakistan's economic revival is predicated. Under the auspices of STZs, investment opportunities are available for setting up special technology zones (STZs) at seven prime locations including Lahore, Peshawar, Swat, Abbottabad, Haripur, Islamabad and Karachi. The Ministry of Information Technology & Tele-communication also has a project for the establishment of 25 soft-ware technology parks (STPs) through Pakistan by converting public/private owned dilapidated or non-operational office buildings/warehouses into STPs. The IT-enabled services provided by these zones to IT and related trade as well as more businesses and profit repatriation freedom is granted. There is no doubt that the development of STZs/STPs is essential to catalyse the emergence of digital and IT-related trade as more and more businesses and profit repatriation freedom is granted. There is no doubt that the development of STZs/STPs is essential to catalyse the emergence of digital and IT-related trade as more and more businesses and profit repatriation freedom is granted.

thority has also been set up under the Special Technology Zones Authority Act, 2021 that provides incentives for enterprises and zone developers for 10 years. These incentives include tax exemptions under the Income Tax Ordinance, 1990. Capital goods imports are exempted from taxes. There are no property tax obligations. Most importantly, investment/profit repatriation freedom is granted. There is no doubt that the development of STZs/STPs is essential to catalyse the emergence of digital and IT-related trade as more and more businesses and profit repatriation freedom is granted.

ments at best, whereby, a conducive environment for setting up businesses is being provided. The term 'digital trade' has no clear definition, yet it is believed to refer to 'commerce enabled by electronic means in both goods and services'. The Digital Trade Principles, as agreed upon by the G7, cover five areas: (1) open digital markets; (2) data free flow with trust; (3) safety and security of consumers, and businesses; (4) digital trading systems; and (5) fair and inclusive digital governance. While there is no clear measurement of this sector, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development estimates it to constitute approximately 25 per cent of the entire world trade. How-

ever, given how quickly this sector is expanding, the domestic regulatory environment will become increasingly restrictive, making it more difficult for consumers and businesses to seize some of the opportunities. How are these problems to be tackled? How would a digital trade policy not be hampered by such problems? How will our domestic businesses survive in the face of regulatory requirements as violations thereof might restrict their ability to continue to connect with their customers? For all these key problems and other related issues, our country needs to have a robust and dynamic digital trade policy for sustainable growth in this sector. Digital economy trade agree-

ments: While digital trade policy would bring a holistic and competitive edge to our IT entrepreneurs, so that they're able to compete at the international stage, digital trade agreements would be more bilateral and preferential. DTAs are just a niche market in the traditional free trade agreements. Whilst Pakistan is struggling to gain benefit from the European Union's trade policy, the developed world is moving swiftly towards the digital trade policy. The EU has concluded a number of FTAs in the shape of DTAs. For instance, digital trade is a key element in the European Union's trade policy and every modern trade agreement that EU has concluded contains a dedicated digital trade

chapter. Pakistan should, thus, aim to have a DTA with the EU that is the world's largest exporter and importer of digitally deliverable services. Singapore can be taken as another example that has a trade agreement with the EU that includes digital trade provisions. The UK and South Korea. So, the trend of digital economy and trade agreements is picking up. If our IT entrepreneurs can have direct and preferential access to developed economies — through the medium of DTAs — then we can keep our hopes high that sustainable and continued business will come our way and that would then justify the mushroom growth of STZs.

5 Coal Miners Trapped in A Coal Mine in Harnai Shah Rag

Hanif Tareen:

HARNAI: A landslide occurred in Shahrag Coal Mine caused trapping five coal miners, the levers control in Harnai said. Five miners were trapped inside due to the mudslide, they said. Rescue operations commenced immediately, resulting in the successful extraction of three of the five trapped miners. The Leves Control Harnai has confirmed that the remain-

ing two miners are still inside the mine. Rescue teams are actively working to reach and save the two miners still trapped. Efforts are focused on ensuring their safe recovery as quickly as possible. The authorities are monitoring the situation closely, prioritizing the safety and well-being of all involved. Further up-

dates will be provided as the rescue operations continue. Hazardous working conditions inside coal mines of Balochistan continue to claim precious human lives on a daily basis.

Despite repeated appeals, the coal miners owners and the provincial government is yet to improve working conditions for the coal miners in Balochistan.



NAB Balochistan Hosts Open Court for Public Complaints

News Desk:

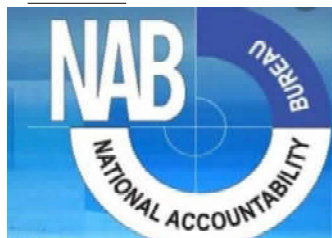
QUETTA: According to the Chairman NAB directives, NAB Balochistan is set to host an Open Court (Khuli Kachehri) every last Thursday of the month. This initiative aims to address complaints about major financial scams in Balochistan, with the Director General of NAB personally attending to the grievances.

The upcoming session will be held on July 25, 2024, from 11:00 am to 01:00 pm at the NAB Complaint Office, DC Office, Ansonbe Road, Quetta. Complainants are required to provide:

1. Name with parentage
2. Copy of Computerized National Identity Card
3. Complete Postal Address
4. Thumb Impression/Signature
5. Contact Information: Cell/Landline number/Email

As per the revised SOP, NAB will no longer entertain anonymous complaints. Verified complaints within NAB's jurisdiction will be addressed, requiring an affidavit on stamp paper from the complainants. Complaints can be submitted through:

1. Post/in person at NAB office, Shahra-e-Gulistan Road, Quetta Cantt
2. Email: balochistan@nab.gov.pk
3. Post/in person at NAB complaints office, DC office, Ansonbe Road, Quetta
4. Open Court with the Director General (last Thursday of every month)



The public is urged to report financial misconduct through these channels. The armed men fled the scene after the attack, and Leves authorities are investigating the matter. Fortunately, no casualties were reported.

Balochistan: Firing Incident on Trucks in Mastung

News Desk:

QUETTA: In a troubling incident near Khadkocha tehsil on the national highway, unknown assailants fired on three ten-wheeler trucks loaded with chromite. The attack resulted in the

trucks catching fire. Following the incident, truck drivers staged a protest on the road. The Assistant Commissioner arrived to engage in talks with the drivers, seeking to address their

concerns. The armed men fled the scene after the attack, and Leves authorities are investigating the matter. Fortunately, no casualties were reported.

Maryam Aurangzeb says zero tolerance for environmental violations in Punjab

KASUR (INP): Senior Punjab Minister Maryam Aurangzeb has reiterated the government's firm stance on environmental protection, emphasizing zero tolerance for violations of environmental laws.

During her visit to Kasur, Aurangzeb oversaw the demolition of kilns operating without zigzag technology, a significant contributor to smog.

"Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's environmental policy is clear and uncompromising," Aurangzeb stated. "We will take action against anything that causes smog."

Kilns and factories that pollute the environment will be shut down."

Aurangzeb highlighted the mandatory adoption of zigzag technology for kilns across Punjab, warning that non-compliant kilns will face demolition. She also announced a province-wide ban on plastic bags and an ongoing crackdown on smoke-emitting vehicles.

"We cannot allow public health to be compromised for financial gain," she asserted. "There will be no exceptions, even for influential individuals. All polluting factories will

face action."

Aurangzeb reported significant progress in Kasur, where 640 kilns have transitioned to zigzag technology with 15 more conversions imminent.

Additionally, operations are targeting leather-burning factories in Lahore, Sheikhpura, and Kasur.

"All state institutions must work together to fulfill their responsibilities," she concluded, reaffirming the government's commitment to a cleaner, healthier Punjab.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar hold talks with Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired a meeting of the National Export Development Board.

Prime Minister (PM) directs to achieve export target of \$60b

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed the Ministry of Commerce and other relevant departments to take practical steps to achieve the export target of sixty billion dollars in the next three years.

Chairing a meeting of National Export Development Board in Islamabad, he said the Ministry of Commerce should finalize the policy proposals in this regard in collaboration with the sectors having export potential.

He emphasized the need for research and development, innovation, and brand development to make Pakistani products unique and enhance their exports.

Shehbaz Sharif directed the Ministry of Power to present a comprehensive plan to reduce the power tariff for industries.

The Prime Minister also

directed the trade officers in Pakistani embassies across the world to play their role in the promotion of Pakistani exports.

The Prime Minister recalled the exports remained thirty billion dollars during the last fiscal year. He said IT exports exceeded 3.2 billion dollars due to government's policies, terming it a welcome development.

Shehbaz Sharif said the problems identified by the exporters should be solved and a report be submitted to him in the next two weeks.

Highlighting the significance of the private sector in the development of any country, he said they should be made part of policy formulation process to solve their problems. The Prime Minister said the Ministry of National Food Security should work with provinces for bringing improvement in extension ser-

vices in order to increase agricultural exports. He said steps should be accelerated to introduce varieties of high yielding seeds.

Shehbaz Sharif called for reducing the delivery time of Pakistani goods to Europe and America by immediately solving the problems related to the shipping of exports.

He said the Ministry of Commerce should ensure co-operation with the Investment Board for the transfer of Chinese export industries to Pakistan.

The Prime Minister said any kind of delay in the refund of exporters will not be tolerated. The Participants of the meeting said the Prime Minister's special interest in the export sector is encouraging for industrialists. The exporters were also appreciative of the Prime Minister's initiative to provide timely refunds to the export industry.

Islamabad court hands over PTI's Raof Hasan to FIA on two-day physical remand

ISLAMABAD (INP): The court of a judicial magistrate in Islamabad granted physical remand of two days for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Central Spokesman and Information Secretary Raof Hasan to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

According to media reports, FIA presented PTI leader Raof Hasan in the court of a judicial magistrate in Islamabad and demanded a physical remand of 10 days but the court granted only two days' remand.

The FIA legal team told the court that there was a need to export the devices related to the social media accounts of the PTI activists involved in negative activities, so his physical remand was required.

FIA also presented the arrested other PTI workers be-

fore the judicial magistrate and demanded their physical remand for investigation.

Yesterday, PTI central spokesman Raof Hasan and coordinator Ahmed Waqas Janjua were arrested from the PTI Secretariat for their involvement in anti-state propaganda.

The Interior Ministry spokesman said in a press statement that Islamabad Police and FIA conducted a raid on PTI's digital media wing.

The police also confiscated computers and other equipment from the secretariat in light of the preliminary investigation and digital content.

The interior ministry spokesperson said that PTI was involved in anti-state propaganda and that a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) was being formed to probe the matter.

Earlier, Islamabad Police raided the central office of the Digital Media Cell established in the PTI Secretariat and arrested the central spokesperson Raof Hasan and PTI coordinator Ahmed Waqas Janjua.

According to the text of the FIR number 654/24 that was presented in the court, 12 members of PTI's leadership and media cell have been named in the case.

Among the accused are Waqas Ahmed, Raof Hasan, Afaq Ahmed Alvi, Hameedullah, Zeeshan Farooq, Syed Osama, Muhammad Rizwan, Muhammad Rafiq, and Syed Hamza.



ISLAMABAD: Admiral Andre Luiz Silva Lima De Santana Mendes, Chief of Naval Staff of Brazil Armed Forces caized on Federal Minister for Defense Khanuja Muhammad Asif.

Bannu Peace Committee presents 16 demands to CM Gandapur

BANNU (INP): A Jirga between the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Bannu Peace Committee [an envoy of the elders of the Bannu district] was held at the Chief Minister's House in Peshawar on Tuesday.

The elders from Bannu presented a 16-point list of demands to Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and expressed their concerns over the military's Azm-e-Istehkam Operation (AIO).

KP Government Spokesperson Barrister Dr Saif confirmed the Jirga at the CM's house and stated that it has

been decided to call the Apex Committee meeting on Thursday. He said it has been agreed that the Apex Committee meeting will take place on Thursday, with five advisors from the Bannu Peace Committee. Barrister Dr Saif mentioned that a policy to restore law and order in the province would be formulated in the upcoming provincial Apex Committee meeting.

The spokesperson said CM Ali Amin Gandapur discussed the situation in Bannu with the Bannu Peace Committee members and expressed gratitude for their cooperation with the administration regard-

ing the Bannu incident.

Spokesperson Dr Saif added that the members of the Bannu Peace Committee have expressed their trust in Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, who will visit Bannu on Friday at their invitation. Regarding Jirga, the sources said it has been decided that the Bannu Peace Committee will continue the symbolic sit-in in Bannu.

Additionally, it was agreed to restore the authority of the police and activate the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in Bannu while CM Ali Amin Gandapur's visit to Bannu on Friday is confirmed.