

# QUETTA VOICE

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## New Gwadar International Airport: A Game-Changer for Economic Development in Balochistan

From Our Correspondent, Syed Ali Shah, News Desk: Gwadar, Balochistan :

**GWADAR:** The New Gwadar International Airport is set to revolutionize Gwadar's role as a hub for regional and international trade. As part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), this strategic project is nearing completion and promises to unlock new opportunities for economic growth, connectivity, and development.

### 24-Hour Power Supply Secured

To ensure smooth, uninterrupted operations, the airport is now connected to three separate transmission lines, secured through a 12 MW contract with Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO). Alongside this, a dedicated complex is under construction within the airport premises. This complex will house the Airport Security Force, accommodation for Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) staff, a community school, a mosque, and other essential facilities, costing over 12 billion rupees.

### Strategic Infrastructure: East Bay Expressway Extension

In the next phase of development, the East Bay Expressway will be extended to connect Gwadar Port with the new airport. Spanning 10.5 kilometers, this new road will ease the transport of goods and passengers, further integrating Gwadar into regional and global trade networks.

### Airport Testing Complete, Staff Trained in China



A view of newly constructed Gwadar International Airport (GIA), Photo taken from social media.

The Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) has confirmed the successful completion of testing and commissioning at

the airport, including a test flight of an AirKing B700. Over a three-month evaluation, the airport's design, performance,

and safety standards were thoroughly assessed. To ensure the smooth operation of the airport, technical staff

have also received specialized training in China, preparing them to manage airport operations independently.

### Joint Management: A Collaborative Effort

The New Gwadar International Airport will be operated under the Open Skies policy through a joint venture between Pakistan, Oman, and China. While the PCAA will oversee daily operations, this partnership underscores Gwadar's growing significance in international trade.

### Economic Impact: Opening New Vistas of Prosperity

The airport is positioned to be a key driver of economic development in Gwadar, providing faster and more efficient air travel for both local citizens and international investors. Khalid Kakar, the airport's manager, noted that while the old airport could only handle small planes, the new facility will accommodate large domestic and international flights. Initial flights will be operated by Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), with more airlines expected to launch services soon. The completion of the New Gwadar International Airport is more than just an infrastructure achievement—it marks the beginning of a new era for Gwadar as a game-changer in regional economic development.

This modern facility will enhance connectivity, boost commercial activities, and solidify Gwadar's position as a key player in global trade, unlocking new vistas of prosperity for the region.

### BHC Orders Action on Blocked Goods, Issues Show Cause to Customs Director

**Syed Muhammad Quseem:** QUETTA: The Divisional Bench of the Balochistan High Court, comprising Mr. Justice Abdullah Baloch and Mr. Justice Iqbal Ahmed Kasi, has directed the federal government to resolve the ongoing blockade of vehicles carrying import and export goods. The court ordered the Ministry of Interior and Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to convene a meeting within a week with importers, exporters, and the Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry with a progress report due by October 31, 2024.

A show cause notice was issued to the Director of Customs Intelligence Balochistan for failing to submit a response, following a petition filed by the All Pakistan Dry Fruits Importers and Exporters Association. The petition highlighted severe financial losses resulting from halted border trade.



The bench stressed that poor communication and supervision between departments caused the issue, urging swift cooperation to prevent further economic damage. The court noted the significant contributions importers and exporters make to the national treasury through customs duties, sales taxes, and income taxes.

Officials from the Ministry of Interior, FBR, and Customs attended the hearing, though the Interior Secretary was absent due to commitments at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization conference in Islamabad. The absence of a response from Customs Intelligence led to the show cause notice.

The court has mandated the presence of all key officials, including the Secretary of the Interior, FBR Chairman, and Customs personnel, at the next hearing to ensure a timely resolution.

### Pakistan Reports 33rd Polio Case of 2024: Alarming Surge in Balochistan with 17th Case from Quetta

Health Desk:



QUETTA: Pakistan's polio crisis deepens as the country reports its 33rd polio case of 2024, with a child from Quetta becoming the latest victim of the crippling disease.

This marks the 17th case from Balochistan, raising serious concerns about the effectiveness of vaccination efforts in the province. According to the National Emergency Operation Cell, the latest figures indicate a disturbing trend across Pakistan:

- +17 cases from Balochistan
- +10 cases from Sindh
- +1 case each from Punjab and Islamabad
- +4 cases from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The recent case in Quetta further highlights the vulnerability of children in the region, where the virus continues to spread despite ongoing vaccination campaigns. This surge in polio cases from Balochistan, especially in Quetta, is alarming and signals

the need for an urgent review of the current eradication strategies.

### Polio in Balochistan: A Critical Concern

Balochistan has emerged as the epicenter of Pakistan's polio crisis. Health officials warn that the virus is spreading rapidly in high-risk areas, and without immediate intervention, more children may fall prey to this preventable disease. Authorities are urging parents to cooperate with vaccination teams and ensure that their children are immunized. The rise in polio cases across Pakistan underscores the importance of community participation in the fight against polio.

### National Polio Campaign Faces Challenges

Despite numerous vaccination drives, Pakistan remains one of the few countries where polio is still endemic.

The challenges include public mistrust, misinformation, and logistical hurdles in remote areas like Balochistan. The ongoing campaigns must address these issues to prevent further outbreaks.

The government, in collaboration with international health organizations, is working tirelessly to eradicate the virus, but the resurgence of polio cases calls for renewed efforts and stricter monitoring.

### Polio Eradication: A Call to Action

The latest polio case from Quetta is a stark reminder that the fight against polio is far from over. Parents, community leaders, and health workers must work together to protect children and eliminate the virus once and for all.

For the latest updates on Pakistan's polio eradication efforts, stay informed by visiting our website.

### Dr. Rubaba Buledi Highlights Importance of Handwashing and Breast Cancer Awareness

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan for the Women Development Department, has stressed the need for basic hygiene practices like handwashing to improve public health.

Speaking at an event held at Government Girls High School Killi Sheekhhan, Quetta, in honor of Global Handwashing Day, she emphasized that many deaths among children under five from respiratory diseases and diarrhea could be prevented through proper handwashing.

Dr. Buledi also raised concerns about the growing number of breast cancer cases in Pakistan, with around 90,000 women diagnosed each year, leading to 40,000 deaths.

She commended the efforts of the Kathleen Kamal Raisani Foundation for promoting health awareness campaigns and their role in fostering a healthier society.



### IG Police Balochistan Takes Notice of Alleged Buying and Selling of Police Recruitment Posts in Naseerabad

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Inspector General (IG) Police Balochistan, Moazzam Jah Ansari, has taken notice of allegations regarding the buying and selling of police recruitment posts in the Naseerabad division.

The notice follows claims by affected candidates that recruitment orders were made based on monetary transactions, leading to widespread corruption in the process.

The allegations surfaced after Provincial Irrigation Minister Mir Sadiq Umrani raised concerns about irregularities during the police recruitment.

The minister highlighted that the alleged rigging has caused outrage among the local population, with calls for transparency and accountability in the hiring process. Minister Umrani has called for a thorough investigation and has vowed to continue fighting for justice.



A spokesperson for Balochistan Police confirmed that the IG has ordered an inquiry into the matter, stating that if evidence of corruption is found, strict action will be taken against the recruitment committee involved in the scandal.

The alleged rigging has caused outrage among the local population, with calls for transparency and accountability in the hiring process. Minister Umrani has called for a thorough investigation and has vowed to continue fighting for justice.

### The fight over the crown

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### "She Power" Project: Empowering Women in Balochistan Through Hygiene and Sanitation

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### International Day of Rural Women observed

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## SHE POWER VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

## "She Power" Project: Empowering Women in Balochistan Through Hygiene and Sanitation

## Editorial:

The launch of the "She Power" initiative in Balochistan marks a significant step toward improving the lives of women and girls by addressing critical hygiene and sanitation issues. Supported by the Chinese government as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), this project aims to enhance the health, quality of life, and educational opportunities for young women in the province.

Balochistan, known for its harsh climate and socio-economic challenges, is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Women and girls in the region face additional hardships due to poor access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities. These vulnerabilities are compounded by the increasing frequency of extreme weather events, which further strain the already scarce resources in rural areas.

## Tackling Hygiene for Empowerment

During the high-level event to distribute hygiene kits, Romina Khurshid Alam, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, highlighted the close connection between women's socio-economic empowerment and access to adequate hygiene facilities. She emphasized that hygiene challenges directly affect women's education, work opportunities, and leadership roles, making it crucial to tackle these issues to foster healthier, more equitable communities.

The "She Power" initiative plans to distribute 20,000 hygiene kits to school-girls across four districts in Balochistan. Each kit contains essential hygiene products and educational materials aimed at promoting better health practices. These efforts will not only improve the health and well-being of young girls but also reduce absenteeism in schools, thus enhancing educational outcomes.

## Climate Change and Women's Vulnerability

The harsh realities of climate change in Balochistan, including droughts, water scarcity, and food insecurity, disproportionately affect women and girls. Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights, stressed the need for clean water and sanitation facilities to address these vulnerabilities. Women, often responsible for household chores, spend hours fetching water, leaving them with little time for education or income-generating activities.

Moreover, the lack of access to hygiene products can lead to social stigma, health complications, and missed opportunities for girls and women, further entrenching gender inequality. The "She Power" initiative seeks to change this narrative by providing the necessary resources for improved hygiene and health, creating a supportive environment that empowers women to lead healthier lives.

## Driving Socio-Economic Change

The "She Power" project's focus on hygiene and sanitation goes beyond immediate health benefits.

By improving access to essential resources, the initiative lays the groundwork for long-term socio-economic change in Balochistan. With better health and education, women are better equipped to participate in the workforce and contribute to the economic development of their communities.

This initiative represents a vital step toward gender equality in Balochistan, where women continue to face significant barriers to education, employment, and leadership. By addressing these challenges, "She Power" is paving the way for a more inclusive and resilient future for women and girls across the province.

As climate change continues to threaten livelihoods and amplify inequalities, projects like "She Power" are critical in ensuring that women are not left behind in the fight for sustainability and empowerment.

## "Here, take this"

By Shahzad Sharjeel:

THE provenance of the gesture, 'lanat', can be traced back to ancient Greece. That the mouza or faskloma, a gesture of disgust and condemnation, should survive many millennia and still be used in our part of the world is unsurprising, as some of our circumstances hark back to that era. Democracy and the flourishing of philosophy and arts are certainly not among them. Muddy and unpaved streets are the resemblances that survive, along with the lanat.

In the old times, undertrials and condemned prisoners were paraded in the streets in shackles and handcuffs. The passersby, usually

similar misfits, would dip their hands in the abundant muddy slush on the street and, with all five digits apart, rub it down the prisoner's face to record disgust over the actual or suspected misdeeds of the victim.

Yet others, repulsed by these wretches, avoided physical contact and imitated the hand gesture from a distance. Let their insults go to waste, they would also yell 'na, meaning 'here, take this!' Precisely what it means in Hindi — i.e. 'be off!' — is an accompaniment, of 'bujo' or 'bhundo', as lanat is called.

Every region and society adapted cultural norms, civil and vulgar,

according to its temperament. Punjab and Sindh have added the suffix 'lakh' to 'lanat' for added effect.

The Sraiki-belt has taken the insult to another level by exclaiming 'gaharion ayi' (rotating and grinding) while communicating it. The Baloch and Pakhtun do not seem to have an indigenous word for it, and the insult is uncommon, though not entirely unheard of in their cultures.

Having established the antecedents and gravity of the word, let us discuss its latest usage and the currency it is given through a viral video. By way of a full public disclosure, I have issues with the chief justice,

By Arifa Noor:

POLITICS has been stuck at the same roundabout for weeks now, with the government and its allies obsessed with passing a constitutional amendment; the PTI equally determined to oppose it; and Maulana Fazlur Rehman being the golden prize every party is trying to land.

The paralysis is understandable, if one hears all sides. According to the PTI and others on that side, the amendment will 'destroy' the judiciary as it stands.

On the other hand, the government has been frank about its fears that the new chief justice, on the basis of seniority) means their balancing act, a la Rose after the Titanic has sunk, will not last long and they will end up in icy cold water like Jack. It's a matter of life and death for the set-up put in place on Feb 9.

Indeed, officials have expressed fears the new Supreme Court will look into its victory on 'Feb 9' and that it may be the beginning of the end. And it's a far base not just on the judgment of the incoming chief justice (in the reserved seats case), but also on the incumbent has decided in cases such as the bat symbol one.

As this is Pakistan, the government's solution is to manage the

By Dr Niaz Murtaza:

DEBATE is on about the right mix between parliamentary supremacy and judicial freedom. Regime circles say the former is democracy's core but our courts now act supreme. In fact, democracy actually means supremacy of people's welfare and the first two are just democracy's tools to ensure these two.

So the right mix between the first two is one that maximises public welfare. People in democracies delegate governance to elected agents. However, agents often cheat clients, so many clients hire third parties to monitor big agents. Parliaments monitor executives, but both come from the same political parties and a political process rife with compromise to demagogues globally make free courts their monitors as the courts' members imbibe the high politics of justice and lack political links. What if judges don't keep their noses clean? Democracies don't keep noses clean; they flourish without such balance. Judicial freedom

to informally influence all state pillars to pursue people's welfare. This system of checks and balances is imperfect but works better than absolute systems. Courts punish elected violators of the law but, globally, also review laws that undermine basic human or democratic norms as well as the ability of courts, media and civil society to monitor elected agents. These powers cut parliamentary supremacy but ensure public welfare. Can courts six constitutional laws passed by supermajority? As people's supremacy trumps parliament's, courts must not such bad laws passed by even a 100 per cent majority to protect the people, but not laws in technical or administrative areas where judges lack the needed expertise.

So, public welfare is not maximised by maximising parliament's supremacy but by balancing it with judicial freedom. Democracy flourishes without such balance. Judicial freedom

requires powerful executives to have no formal role in judges' hiring and accountability and court rules and work, as that may undercut their ability to monitor executives freely. This is more true for weak democracies, where executives use even informal powers to corrupt judges, which must be curbed.

Democracies flourish without such balance. It is better to have parliament, the judiciary itself, civil society and academia do these tasks. However, executive influence must be avoided while involving parliament by having committees with parity among ruling and opposition legislators, but no executive members.

Our law ensures parity in committees while it involves executive members in judicial hiring. There is a case for adopting the system that the UK and India now have, where only judges do this, but by adding legal access from civil society and academia to judge the merits of laws. This would let only judges hold judges accountable.

As for why Modi won't be visiting Islamabad although he is expected to show up in Kazan, I think it's Iran that worries him, as he would be watched closely, not least by Israel. Last time Modi hugged Vladimir Putin, he had made an awkward visit to Kiev to balance the gesture.

He also would avoid being seen to be talking to Pakistan.

The communal doctrine of Hindutva that guides his foreign policy scarcely interested A.B.

## The fight over the crown

problem by clipping the Supreme Court's wings via a constitutional amendment, which allows the creation of a new constitutional court or awards the government the powers to choose the chief justice from a panel of senior judges. There is far more to the mythical amendment, but as far as the apex court is concerned, the critical proposals are those which will allow the defanging of the current Supreme Court or the appointment of a different chief justice.

Perhaps one can say that the real questions are now the main cause of instability in Pakistan.

While we were told the numbers are complete (by Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari and some ministers) for the set-up put in place on Feb 9, the truth is there is no end in sight to the crisis. Even if the amendment is passed, there is no guarantee the crisis will be resolved.

Some observers feel the legal community will hit the road in protest. Other observers think the government might be challenged. A third fear is that the judiciary will react. Regardless, the amendment's passage will be the end of the matter.

There was a similar sense of crisis when

former chief justice Umar Bandial was about to retire and Qazi Faez Isa was getting ready to don the top judge's robes. This is why the notification about the new chief justice was issued weeks in advance, further weakening the authority of a head judge about to step into oblivion. This time, the crisis is more intense. Weeks before the amendment was even official, there were rumours that the chief justice would not be retiring. Now if his retirement is becoming inevitable, officials are still wary of calling Mansoor Ali Shah the next chief justice.

In his words, he will be chief justice under the current law, but that if it is changed, his elevation is not certain.

If the government manages to change the law to get rid of the seniority principle, chances are that each future transition will bring intrigue and more uncertainty, elements that had been missing from the Supreme Court for the past so many years. But then, by embracing this uncertainty and politicking, the court will simply be joining the other two 'pillars' of the state — government and the military — where over the years, it is accompanied by a crisis that destabilises the country.

Consider that there is a view that judgments about the PTI symbol

and overturning the previous 63-A verdict are directly linked to what happened last October and what is about to happen this October.

Similarly, the last two elections were destabilising in order to 'ensure' the right election results, courts were used, misused and ignored, convictions were forced and politicians jailed; others were pushed to change loyalties, etc. The intensity simply increased from 2018 to 2024, by which time even ordinary people, including women, faced the brunt of the state's wrath.

The intensity didn't simply increase in terms of brutality but also in the size of the crisis, which now refuses to settle months after the election, compared to 2018. Instead, it has now partly led to the crisis over the Supreme Court transition.

Neither is the third transition any less smooth. That the appointment of a military chief has always been subject to lobbying is now a truth universally acknowledged. But the lobbying has, over the decades and years, morphed into a political game. After all, this is what the PML-N has claimed more than once when its leaders argued that 'Dawn Leaks' was orchestrated to push for an extension for the then

army chief Rameez Sharif. And many, including those from within, allege that 2023 had to do with the ambition of then Gen Faiz Hameed to become army chief and the desire of Qamar Bajwa to wrangle another extension.

Perhaps one can safely say that these three transitions are now the main cause of instability in Pakistan, with each crisis not just growing in intensity but also length.

For example, the 2016 transition after Dawn Leaks settled down quickly, while the same cannot be said about 2022, if we consider what the government and the military did to the court. For example, the 2016 transition ended Justice Isa took over as chief justice. However, there are few such successes this time.

It is also important to consider that the cycle of each transition is different and all of them overlap, meaning the instability emanating from one transition is imposed on the second, and so on. For the moment, it is hard to see if there is any end in sight, because none of the stakeholders are willing to collectively agree to rules that allow for smooth transitions, acceptable to all.

## Whose supremacy?

to informally influence all state pillars to pursue people's welfare. This system of checks and balances is imperfect but works better than absolute systems. Courts punish elected violators of the law but, globally, also review laws that undermine basic human or democratic norms as well as the ability of courts, media and civil society to monitor elected agents. These powers cut parliamentary supremacy but ensure public welfare. Can courts six constitutional laws passed by supermajority? As people's supremacy trumps parliament's, courts must not such bad laws passed by even a 100 per cent majority to protect the people, but not laws in technical or administrative areas where judges lack the needed expertise.

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involved, but gives too much leeway to chief justices in all court matters.

The new constitutional bill and other laws must be viewed with a lens. The key had been a House with a rigged mandate amending the Constitution opaquely, hastily, and with possible horse-trading to alter the basic structure of the constitution. The worst specific issue is the prime minister alone naming the first head of the constitutional court, which means not parliamentary but executive sway over it. Even the basic case for such a court is weak.

Separate constitutional courts were set up in civil law states where regular courts lack the powers to review laws. Our courts already review laws, thus mixing the most critical logic in favour of a constitutional court. Nor will it cut executive influence, which exerts — mainly in the lower courts. The legal minds point to the huge pitfalls involved in dividing our legal system. Few common law

states like ours have done so. Involving politicians in judges' hiring and accountability and court rules means conflict of interest and legal expertise issues.

The recent change in the Supreme Court procedures committee rules has also led to executive sway over the courts, as it was done via presidential assent to a cabinet decision and has established the chief justice's monopoly, cut by an earlier law.

So, the bill reflects not principles but a naked power grab to tame judges. It may boost parliamentary supremacy but harm public welfare. Our courts have often harmed public welfare like other state pillars.

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By Jawed Naqvi:

MEMBERS of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) are meeting in Islamabad today to tackle extremely urgent issues, with both bodies cluding findings ways to rein in the world from the precipice of Armageddon.

Western support for Israel's genocide in Gaza and the Zionist state's intensifying military assault on Lebanon, Yemen, Syria and Iran threatens to explode out of control. Fresh tensions in the South China Sea and the unending war in Ukraine would also inevitably take front row.

Similar interest is on the menu in Kazan in Russia, where an expanded BRICS group is meeting on Oct 22-24. Russia has said it will focus on "promoting the entire range of partnership and cooperation within the framework of the association on three

key tracks — politics and security, the economy and finance, and cultural and humanitarian ties".

India and Iran are members of both bodies, shepherded discreetly by China and Russia. There's an obvious contradiction within the group that threatens to undermine its foundational purpose. Iran is battling the Zionist assault, whereas India has been an anchor of support for Israel.

Serious stuff. And here we just heard from India that its foreign minister, representing Prime Minister Modi in Islamabad, would not talk to Pakistan during the SCO meeting. The question is: did anybody suggest that India should consider talking to Pakistan during the fraught international meeting in Islamabad? Helmut Kohl was worth a Helmut Kohl in the 1990s to collect a coveted peace prize.

The Cold War had just ended and Germany was reunited. There was some acrimony in Europe about the UK's delay in joining Germany and France in the Airbus project. Kohl told reporters in New Delhi the project would carry on without Britain.

The remarks shook the global markets. It was the Indian colleague's turn to ask his question at Kohl's press conference.

"Welcome to India, Chancellor, and I hope you are enjoying your stay," the friend began. "My question is, sir, in the event of a war between India and Paki-

stan, whose side would you take? Also, do you support us on Kashmir?" And finally, now that you have East Germany with you, sir, could you help us prove our "Olympic standards"?

Kohl consulted with his aide to check if he had heard the question right. The reply was without delay: "I think you are mistaking me for Kaiser Wilhelm!"

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do with the agenda at hand?" "Wo bat saary fasane mein jiska zikr na tha/Wo bat unko bahot nagawara guzri hai" ("a strange fuss" — apologies to Faiz).

It's bad enough that Modi is skipping a crucial event, given the intense Western interest in the SCO and BRICS agenda for a multipolar world order. But India has sought to thrust itself in the frame with a non-sequitur. Who needed to know about a non-existent bilateral meeting? Indian journalists? Barring exceptions, they are notoriously limited in their interest in foreign affairs, displaying scant engagement with the world unless it concerns India. The king of Tonga will get the headlines if he endorses India's perpetual quest to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. After that, who cares what

else was discussed? Did anybody suggest that India should consider talking to Pakistan during the fraught international meeting in Islamabad? Helmut Kohl was worth a Helmut Kohl in the 1990s to collect a coveted peace prize.

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## World is not about Indo-Pak ties

Pakistani medical device industry taps new opportunities in Chinese market

SHENZHEN (INP) Pakistani medical device industry taps new opportunities in booming Chinese market, GwadarPro reported on Tuesday. China ranks among Pakistan's top six export destinations for surgical instruments. The immense consumer demand and capacity in China have prompted us to register all our products for sales licenses there," said Akif Javid, the proprietor of NJ Enterprises from Sialkot who has exhibited a range of surgical, dental, ENT diagnostic, orthopedic, cosmetics and surgery instruments at the ongoing 9th China International Medical Equipment Fair (CMEF) in Shenzhen, China. From October 12th to 15th, the Shenzhen World Exhibi-

tion & Convention Center (Bao'an) hosted the CMEF, drawing over 4,000 companies from across the globe who displayed tens of thousands of medical device products. The event attracted international professionals from more than 150 countries and regions, cementing its reputation as the global healthcare industry's "wind vane." Spanning nearly 200,000 square meters, the exhibition floor is abuzz with renowned enterprises showcasing the latest innovations in medical imaging, in vitro diagnostics, medical electronics and other segments of the medical device industry chain. With products integrating AI, big data and cloud platforms, the fair highlighted the innovative prowess of high-end medical devices. China has emerged as one of the world's leading producers and consumers of medical devices. Industry figures show that by the end of 2022, China's medical device market was nearly 1 trillion yuan in size, with a CAGR of 17.5 percent. Amid steady economic growth, rising health awareness among residents and supportive policies, the market outlook remains positive. Consequently, China has emerged as an appealing destination for international medical device companies aiming to exploit its vast market potential. NJ Enterprises, known for manufacturing high-quality surgical instruments, is well-positioned to seize this opportunity. Pakistan ranks among the top



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Chinese Premier Li Qiang exchanging views during the state luncheon hosted by the President, at Awan-e-Sadr.

Sheikh emphasizes interconnectedness of climate change, food security, and water scarcity

GENEVA (INP) Special Secretary, Senate, Hafizullah Sheikh has said that climate change, food security, water scarcity, and energy transitions are deeply interconnected issues which are not confined to a single policy domain or ministry. He expressed these views at the Association of Secretaries General of Parliament's Autumn Session which is being held in Geneva, Switzerland. The theme of the sessions "Managing conflicting competencies between parliamentary Committees" ASGP is a consultative body of the IPU. Highlighting the causes, he informed the Participants that overlapping mandates, ambiguous rules and evolving nature of challenges create complexity. He said that parliamentary committees are often structured according to ministries, meaning that challenges cross-

ing several domains tend to create overlaps and as a result, conflicting competencies arise, with committees duplicating efforts or offering contradictory solutions. He said that the Challenge of Conflicting Competencies is real, adding that Conflicting competencies among parliamentary committees often arise due to overlapping mandates, ambiguous rules, and political dynamics. He stressed the need to address this growing challenge and adopt a range of strategies that enhance coordination and collaboration among committees. He observed that one of the most effective ways to manage conflicting competencies is by ensuring that each parliamentary committee has clearly defined mandate and specific areas of jurisdiction. He further informed that Pakistan's Parliament, especially Senate, has implemented several mechanisms to streamline committee functions and prevent overlaps. Joint com-

mittees of the Parliament, Parliamentary Caucuses, Women Parliamentary Caucus and Committee of the Whole House are some of the solutions to address the challenge. He recommended that enhanced communication, strengthened Rules of Procedure, promotion of Collaboration through Joint Committee and Clusters, Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms, and Developing Broad-Scope Committees, the parliaments can better handle overlapping situations and work in cohesion. He called for adopting a multi-disciplinary, collaborative approach and enhancing coordination mechanisms, to ensure that parliaments function more efficiently and effectively. "By working together, we can overcome these challenges and create a more robust, coordinated parliamentary system", Hafizullah Sheikh observed while concluding his remarks.



PESHAWAR: Ex Governor Khayber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali addressing to the meeting of Mohmand Chamber of Commerce.

Canada expels top India diplomats, links them to murder of Sikh leader

OTTAWA (INP) Canada expelled six Indian diplomats including the high commissioner linking them to the murder of a Sikh separatist leader and alleging a broader effort to target Indian dissidents in Canada. Earlier in the day, India retaliated by ordering the expulsion of six high-ranking Canadian diplomats including the acting high commissioner and said it had withdrawn its envoy from Canada, contradicting Canada's statement of expulsion. The diplomatic row represents a major deterioration of relations between the two Commonwealth countries. It has been framed since Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said last year he had evidence linking Indian agents to the assassination of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian territory. The government now has "clear and compelling evidence that agents of the government of India have engaged in and con-

tinued to engage in activities that pose a significant threat to public safety," Trudeau said at a news conference. These activities involved clandestine information gathering techniques, coercive behaviour, targeting South Asian Canadians and involvement in over a dozen threatening and violent acts, including murder, he said. "This is unacceptable," he said, adding that India had committed a fundamental error by engaging in criminal activities in Canada. India has long denied Trudeau's accusations. On Monday, it dismissed Canada's withdrawal of diplomats from Canada because it was not confident that their safety could be guaranteed. "We have no faith in the current Canadian Government's commitment to ensure their safety." Therefore, the Government of India has decided to withdraw the High Commissioner in April, carried out in response to an Indian strike on the Iranian consulate that is attributed to Israel. Meanwhile, Iran has said it is prepared to respond to a possible Israeli attack following the Islamic republic's retaliatory missile strike against it. "The plan for the necessary response to the Zionists (Israel) has been fully prepared," Tasnim news agency said, quoting "an informed source" in the armed forces.

ment Canada's Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said the government had requested India to remove the diplomatic immunity of six diplomats so that the Canadian investigative agencies could question them regarding the allegations of criminal activity. But since India did not co-operate, it had to expel the diplomats. "We're not seeking diplomatic confrontation with India," she said. "But we will not sit quietly as agents of any country are linked to efforts to threaten, harass or even kill Canadians." Canada withdrew more than 40 diplomats from India in October 2023 after New Delhi asked Ottawa to reduce its diplomatic presence. "We have gone from a rift to a major rupture in the relationship with India," Fen Osler Hampson, professor of international relations at Ottawa's Carleton University said in a telephone interview. "It is hard to see at this juncture that a return to normalcy will happen any time in the foreseeable future."

PCB issues show-cause notice to Fakhar Zaman over Babar Azam post

LAHORE (INP) The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has issued a show-cause notice to opening batsman Fakhar Zaman over his post about star batter Babar Azam. The newly appointed selection committee on Sunday dropped Babar, along with Naseem Shah, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Sarfaraz Ahmed from the squad for the ongoing second and upcoming third Test against England. Following the announcement, Fakhar Zaman took to his official X (formerly Twitter) ac-

count and expressed his disappointment. He cited the exclusion as a show-cause notice to opening batsman Fakhar Zaman over his post about star batter Babar Azam. The newly appointed selection committee on Sunday dropped Babar, along with Naseem Shah, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Sarfaraz Ahmed from the squad for the ongoing second and upcoming third Test against England. Following the announcement, Fakhar Zaman took to his official X (formerly Twitter) ac-

Israel tells US it will not hit Iran's nuclear or oil facilities

GAZA (INP) Israel has assured the White House that a planned retaliatory attack on Iran won't target nuclear or oil facilities, US media reported. Israel has vowed to counterattack after Iran fired ballistic missiles at the country on October 1, launched in response to Israel's killing of Hassan Nasrallah in the region, along with his Israeli Revolutionary Guards. Citing unnamed US officials, the Washington Post said that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had reassured Israel's nuclear or oil facilities in order to avoid a further expansion of regional war

would target oil facilities. The Wall Street Journal, also citing US officials speaking on condition of anonymity, said the pledge came in a call between US President Joe Biden and Netanyahu last week, as well as in conversations in recent days between US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and his Israeli counterpart, Yoav Gallant. The plan "was met with relief in Washington," the Washington Post reported. Biden has warned Israel against striking Iran's nuclear or oil facilities in order to avoid a further expansion of regional war

TENDER NOTICE and PRE-QUALIFICATION NOTICE. Includes details for BPPRA GOB, Government of Balochistan, Project Director (Procurement) of PAF-Roeder Civil Project. Details include eligibility criteria, application process, and contact information for the Project Director.

### FBR once again extends income tax return filing deadline

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has once again extended the deadline for filing income tax returns, allowing taxpayers to submit their returns until October 31.

This extension follows multiple requests from trade organizations and tax bar associations for additional time to complete their tax submissions.

In a circular issued by the FBR, the decision was made under Section 214A of the Income Tax Ordinance 2001, providing taxpayers more time to fulfill their tax obligations.

This marks the second extension of the deadline, as

the initial due date was previously pushed from September 30 to October 14.

Earlier, Oct 14 was the final day for filing income tax returns for 2024, with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) claiming that there will be no further extension.

Meanwhile, this year has seen a significant surge in tax filings, with the FBR reporting an impressive 105% increase compared to last year.

As of Monday, more than 4.43 million individuals submitted their tax returns, representing an increase of over 2.27 million compared to the previous year.

In 2023, 2.16 million people filed their returns.

In addition to the increase in returns, the FBR noted a 120% rise in income tax submitted alongside the returns. By October 8, a total of Rs114 billion in tax had been collected, more than double the Rs52 billion collected during the same period last year.

More than 1.63 million people have declared zero taxable income in their returns. The FBR also reported that since July 2023, over 1.03 million new taxpayers have registered, with 622,000 of these new filers also declaring zero taxable income.



ISLAMABAD: Kazakhstan's Prime Minister Olzhas Bektenov arrived in Pakistan today to attend the 23rd SCO conference. Federal Minister for Privatization, Communication and Investment Abdul Aleem Khan, welcomed the Kazakhstan's Prime Minister at Islamabad International Airport.

### PTI's Salman Akram Raja expresses concern over Govt mysterious constrictions amendments plan

PESHAWAR (INP): Salman Akram Raja, the Secretary General of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), expressed serious concerns regarding the government's plans for mysterious constitutional amendments during an upcoming assembly session scheduled for October 18.

He asserted that the government lacks sufficient support to push through these changes, particularly highlighting the challenges surrounding the establishment of a constitutional court.

Raja noted, "The biggest problem is creating a constitutional court," emphasizing that the amendments could potentially destabilize the political system.

He indicated that PTI's leadership is closely monitoring the situation and preparing for a decisive response, stating, "We will not give any opportunity to the government."

Touching on the topic of protests, Raja affirmed the right to peaceful demonstration, rejecting claims that a mob would disrupt the atmosphere.

"If someone wants to protest, it is his constitutional democratic right," he asserted, condemning the government's heavy-handed approach to dissent, especially under the pretext of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) events.

He criticized the government's actions, which he described as coercive, and emphasized that the planned amendments could lead to a paralyzed governance structure.

"The government has used the SCO for coercion," he stated, calling into question their legitimacy.

Regarding PTI's internal dynamics, Raja confirmed that the party remains resilient, with strong support from its members, including Maulana Fazur Rehman, who has proposed forming a constitutional bench as an alternative to a full constitutional court.

Raja also revealed that some PTI members are currently in hiding in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to fears of violence and abduction.

As the political climate intensifies, Raja reiterated the importance of strategic decision-making within the party, mentioning upcoming meetings of the political and core committees to discuss the next steps, including potential protests in Islamabad.

"We will not be afraid of YouTube and social media; we will make decisions in the right direction," he concluded, signaling PTI's commitment to standing firm against the government's maneuvers.

### World Bank says 26 poorest nations in worst financial shape since 2006

WASHINGTON (INP): The world's 26 poorest countries, home to 40% of the most poverty-stricken people, are more in debt than at any time since 2006 and increasingly vulnerable to natural disasters and other shocks, a new World Bank report showed.

The report finds that these economies are poorer today on average than they were on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic, even as the rest of the world has largely recovered from COVID and resumed its growth trajectory.

Released a week before World Bank and International Monetary Fund annual meetings get underway in Washington, the report confirms a major setback to efforts to eradicate extreme poverty and underscores the World Bank's efforts this year to raise \$100 billion to replenish its financing fund for the world's poorest countries, the International Development Association (IDA).

The 26 poorest economies studied, which have annual per-capita incomes of less than \$1,145, are increasingly reliant on IDA

grants and near-zero interest rate loans as market financing has largely dried up, the World Bank said.

Their average debt-to-GDP ratio of 72% is at an 18-year high and half of the group are either in debt distress or at high risk of it. Most of the countries in the study are in sub-Saharan Africa, from Ethiopia to Chad and Congo, but the list also includes Afghanistan and Yemen.

Two thirds of the 26 poorest countries are either in armed conflicts or have difficulty maintaining order because of institutional and social fragility, which inhibit foreign investment, and nearly all export commodities, exposing them to frequent boom-and-bust cycles, the report said.

"At a time when much of the world simply backed away from the poorest countries, IDA has been their lifeline," World Bank chief economist Indermit Gill said in a statement.

"Over the past five years, it has poured most of its financial resources into the 26 low-income economies, keeping them afloat through the historic setbacks they suffered."

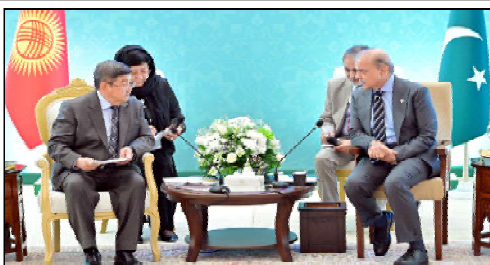
IDA normally is replenished every three years with contributions from World Bank shareholders. It raised a record \$93 billion in 2021 and World Bank President Ajay Banga is aiming to exceed that with more than \$100 billion in pledges by Dec. 6.

Natural disasters have also taken a greater toll on these countries over the past decade. Between 2011 and 2023, natural disasters were associated with an average annual losses of 2% of GDP, five times the average among lower-middle-income countries, pointing to the need for much higher investment, the World Bank said.

The report also recommended that these economies, which have large informal sectors operating outside their tax systems, do more to help themselves. This includes improving tax collections by simplifying taxpayer registration and tax administration and improving the efficiency of public spending.



DUBAI: H.E. Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Pakistan's Ambassador in UAE presents Souvenir to Sheikh Mana bin Mohammed bin Mana Al Maktoum at Pakistan Night held at Pakistan Association Dubai.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Mr. Akylbek Japarov, Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic, on the Sideline of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) Meeting.

### Pakistan, China reaffirm to further deepen strategic cooperation across key areas

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan and China have reaffirmed their commitment to further deepen strategic cooperation across key areas, including the economy, investment, and regional connectivity.

Both sides also emphasized the need to implement the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

This was discussed during a meeting between the visiting Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Li Qiang, and President Asif Ali Zardari at Awan-e-Sadr, on Tuesday.

Welcoming the delegation, the President emphasized that Pakistan's friendship with its all-weather partner remained a cornerstone of the country's foreign policy.

He stressed the importance of exploring new avenues for cooperation as there was more space to expand bilateral relations. He also underscored the need to enhance connectivity through all-weather road networks to strengthen trade and people-to-people linkages.

He said that Chinese companies should benefit from the investment opportunities in Pakistan by investing in the Pakistan Stock Exchange in the Pakistan.

The President stated that the time was ripe to fully leverage China's economic growth, particularly through the opportunities

presented by CPEC and the Gwadar Port.

He shared that he would be visiting China in November and his previous visits to reconnecting with old friends and engaging in discussions to further strengthen bilateral ties. Reflecting on his earlier tenure, he noted that Pakistan has consistently enjoyed China's unwavering support on key issues of mutual importance.

The President expressed his heartfelt condolences over the tragic loss of two Chinese nationals in a terrorist attack, stating that the heart-breaking incident deeply grieved the entire nation.

He emphasized that the enemies of the Pakistan-China friendship were trying to undermine bilateral relations by targeting Chinese nationals and attempting to disrupt CPEC projects, adding that such malicious efforts would not succeed.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to tracking down the perpetrators and ensuring they receive exemplary punishment. He assured the Chinese Premier that Pakistan would take all necessary measures to enhance the security of Chinese nationals working in the country.

President Asif Ali Zardari appreciated China's support to Pakistan on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. He reiterated Pakistan's support to China on all its core issues, including the

"One China" policy, Taiwan, Tibet, Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and the South China Sea.

Speaking on the occasion, Premier Li Qiang reaffirmed that Pakistan and China were good brothers, neighbours, partners, and friends. He emphasized that Pak-China strategic cooperation would continue to deepen under the leadership of President Xi Jinping. He acknowledged the contributions of President Asif Ali Zardari in promoting stronger Pakistan-China relations. Premier Li highlighted that both nations had consistently supported each other, regardless of global challenges, and expressed confidence that they would continue to cooperate to take their partnership to new heights.

The Premier emphasized the need to accelerate the progress of development projects under CPEC. He highlighted that China would continue to support Chinese companies to invest in Pakistan. He also expressed optimism about the future of Pakistan-China relations and that it would continue to grow stronger.

As the Chinese Premier appreciated Pakistan for its firm support to China on all its core issues, including the "One China" policy, Taiwan, Tibet, Hong Kong, Xinjiang, and the South China Sea. He said that China would continue to support Pakistan's territorial integrity, sovereignty and prosperity.

### Bilawal vows to bring judicial reforms, constitutional court

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has reiterated his support for the establishment of a constitutional court.

Bilawal in his post on X said, the PPP made judicial reforms as part of its manifesto in 2007. Establishing a constitutional court is added to PPP's 2013 and 2024 election manifestos, he added.

"The PPP has fought every election since 2007 with the manifesto pledge of implementing judicial reforms including but not limited to establishing federal constitutional courts."

"Our permanent party position for almost 2 decades now has remained consistent.

Our representatives elected in every election under my Chairmanship of this party have been given the mandate by the people of Pakistan to establish a Federal Constitutional Court with equal representation for all."

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said many of today's opponents have supported judicial reforms in the past.

Their opposition today is based on personal likes and dislikes or partisan positions on the politics of the moment, he added in his post on X.

Earlier, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also raised concerns about the judicial system, noting that every six months, a political issue arises, and numerous cases remain pending.

"How can you ignore the backlog of unresolved cases while focusing on other matters?" Bilawal Bhutto Zardari asked, stressing the need for an efficient judicial system.

Referring to Article 63(A), he questioned the delays in delivering crucial judgments, stating, "How can I be expected to wait until October 25 for a decision on such a significant issue?"

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) meeting with Saeed Ghani Minister Local Government Sindh at Karachi.



KARACHI: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) meeting with Saeed Ghani Minister Local Government Sindh at Karachi.

### International Day of Rural Women observed

ISLAMABAD (INP): International Day of Rural Women was observed on Tuesday.

The objective of the day is to recognize rural women's important role in enhancing agricultural and rural development worldwide.

Achieving gender equality and empowering women is not only the right thing to do but is a critical ingredient in the fight against extreme poverty, hunger and climate change.

Women are responsible for half of the world's food production while working as environmental and biodiversity stewards. As farmers, women have learned how to cope with and adapt to climate change, for example, by practicing sustainable agriculture in harmony with nature, switching to drought-resistant seeds, employing low-impact or organic soil

management techniques, or leading community-based reforestation and restoration efforts.

Indigenous women have been at the forefront of environmental conservation by bringing invaluable ancestral knowledge and practices, and rural women have been leading global and national climate movements that have spotlighted the need for action for the sake of this and future generations.

Given their position on the frontlines of the climate crisis, women are uniquely situated to be agents of change to help find ways to mitigate the causes of global warming and adapt to its impacts on the ground.

However, reports prove that climate change has a more pronounced impact on women, pri-

marily indigenous and peasant women, whose agricultural dependence, living conditions, and marginalization expose them to a greater degree of changes due to climate, loss of diversity, and pollution.

This International Day of Rural Women's theme is "Rural Women Sustaining Nature for Our Collective Future."

Building climate resilience, conserving biodiversity, and caring for land towards gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

Let's promote their work as food providers and protectors of the environment.

Let's demand their participation in decision-making within their communities. Let's promote rural areas where women can have the same opportunities as men.