



**Durable peace in the world not possible without permanent resolution of Palestine, Kashmir disputes: Tarar**

Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaulah Tarar said that durable peace in the world was not possible without permanent resolution of Palestine and Kashmir issues. Talking to media outside the UNGA, he said that PM Shehbaz Sharif had raised both issues at all international fora. (Details on Page 8)



**Lot of questions still unanswerable in SC reserved seats judgement: Azam Tarar**

Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Monday said that a lot of questions were still unanswerable in the detailed judgement announced by the Supreme Court in the reserved seats case. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), he said, had not been a party in the reserved seats case at any forum, including the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Peshawar High Court (PHC) or the SC. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Invaluable support**

Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir during a visit to Wana, South Waziristan district on Tuesday.



Photo: via ISPR

**PM Shehbaz reaches UN to attend UNGA inaugural session**

Spokesman Report

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif reached the United Nations headquarters to attend the inaugural session of the 79th UN General Assembly (UNGA) on Tuesday.

Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Special Assistant to the PM Tariq Fatemi, and Pakistan's Permanent Representative



to the United Nations Mumin Akram accompanied the PM.

**Constitutional amendments set for approval in upcoming Parliament session: sources**

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The ruling coalition was in talks with the JUI-F regarding constitutional amendments on Tuesday, with efforts under way to persuade Maulana Fazlur Rehman for the crucial vote ahead of the Parliament session, sources within the government said.

It is anticipated that such legislation may be approved in the upcoming sessions of the National Assembly and Senate.

The JUI-F became the centre of attention in Pakistan's politics last week after it kept the government on its toes over the vote for a controversial constitutional amendment.

According to media reports, there was more than one draft of the proposed legislation after the JUI-F raised concerns over it. The government made several trips to Fazl's house on Sunday while keeping sessions of both houses of Parliament delayed.

Described as the "26th Constitutional Amendment", the intended legislation was set to propose a fixed three-year tenure for the chief justice of Pakistan. On September 18, JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman rejected the proposed constitutional amendments



and laid out his party's stance on the issue.

The PPP has offered the JUI-F a joint draft for the constitutional amendments, with Bilawal Bhutto Zardari insisting on the establishment of a constitutional court through such changes. On Sunday, he said that even if consultations with Fazl do not succeed, his party would still work to secure the necessary votes.

According to sources, a consensus draft for constitutional amendments would be submitted for approval in Parliament following complete harmony and agreement among political parties.

The government has sought opinions on convening sessions of the NA and Senate, with the legal wing recommending meetings in early October.

It is noteworthy that government circles claim they have secured a two-thirds majority in both chambers and have instructed members travelling abroad to return by October 2.

**Army will continue to provide support to LEAs: COAS Munir**

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Army would continue to provide steadfast support and technical assistance to law enforcement agencies, particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, to enhance their capacity, Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir said on Tuesday.

He said this while interacting with officers and troops during a visit to Wana, South Waziristan district, according to the military's media wing statement.

In the recent past, many parts of the country particularly KP

have seen an uptick in terrorist attacks. A policeman was killed and three others were injured as a roadside bomb attacked the foreign diplomats' convoy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Swat on September 23.

The attack occurred near Jehanabad. The convoy included diplomats from Bosnia, Russia, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Portugal, according to the Malakand DIG.

Earlier this month, police officers staged a protest sit-in against the terrorist attacks

targeting LEA personnel in Lakki Marwat. They blocked the Indus Highway as part of their demonstration.

In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations said that the army men briefed COAS Munir on the security situation, ongoing counter-terrorism operations, and development initiatives.

The army chief appreciated the "high-level of preparedness and exceptional morale" to counter hostile threats. He reaffirmed the Pakistan Army's "unwavering commitment to thwarting the nefarious designs" of hostile

forces and their facilitators.

The COAS paid heartfelt tribute to the security forces and LEAs who have made sacrifices in the line of duty. "Pakistan Army will continue to provide steadfast support and technical assistance to LEAs, particularly KP Police, to enhance their capacity," he said.

Pakistan's retribution will be sharp if any warfare applied against us: COAS Munir

COAS Munir also acknowledged the "pivotal role" of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in maintaining peace and advancing various projects

under the South Waziristan Integrated Development Plan. "He underscored Pakistan Army's dedication towards leveraging its resources for the prosperity and development of the people of KP," it said.

Furthermore, the army chief expressed gratitude for the tribal elders' "invaluable support" in combating terrorism and their unwavering backing of the army.

Upon arrival, the COAS honoured the martyred by laying a floral wreath at the Shuhada Monument. The army chief was warmly received at Wana by Commander Peshawar Corps.

**Framers of Constitution can dissolve ECP if they wish: CJP Isa**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The framers of the Constitution established the Election Commission of Pakistan as an institution that can be dissolved if necessary, Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa remarked on Tuesday as the Supreme Court reserved its decision regarding the formation of the Punjab Election Tribunal.

On Tuesday, a five-member larger bench led by CJP Isa heard the case challenging the Lahore High Court's deci-

sion regarding the formation of election tribunals. Other members of the bench are Justices Amid-Ud-din Khan, Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Naeem Akhtar Afghan, and Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi.

The hearing saw an objection raised by PTI leader Salman Akram Raja's lawyer, Hamid Khan, against the presiding judge which was dismissed. Following this, Khan left the courtroom but returned shortly after.

During the hearing, Khan argued that they had objections to the CJP hearing

the case. In response, CJP Isa rejected the objection and remarked that if he wished to recuse himself, he could do so.

The CJP asked the lawyer to remain seated, assuring him that he would be heard later. Following this, Khan left the courtroom.

Did ECP and Lahore High Court chief justice settle matters?

Justice Aqeel Abbasi said during the proceedings that, according to the written response from the ECP, the issue had been resolved in consultation with the high



court.

The ECP's lawyer confirmed that the LHC chief justice had maintained four tribunals while the remaining four would be appointed by the ECP. Justice Abbasi noted that it indicated that "matters had been settled" between the ECP and the LHC chief justice.

The lawyer replied in affirmative and added that new four tribunals would now be appointed by the country's top electoral authority due to changes in the law.

**PPP Chairman Bilawal sticks to plans for constitutional courts**

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has described the reforms in the justice system as "critical" while reaffirming his commitment to establishing a constitutional court to ensure that no elected prime minister was subjected to unjust execution in the future.

"We will not rest until a constitutional court is established," he said while addressing the Sindh High Court Bar Association in Karachi.

Bilawal clarified that his party opposes any legislation designed

to benefit or harm an individual, emphasising the importance of fairness in the legal system.

Under his proposed amendments, Bilawal said the constitutional court would ensure equal representation for provinces, with a rotation policy in place allowing the chief justice of Pakistan to be appointed from each province in turn.

The afore-mentioned demand was one of the things in the proposed constitutional amendment, which the ruling coalition failed to present in Parliament after failing to complete the required number of votes.



And this is nothing new, appeared on Spot Light with Munizae Jahangir which was aired on Aaj News on September

17, Murtaza said the formation of a constitutional court was an old demand which could be discussed.

He added that amendments should not be person-specific while speaking about the changes to removing the word "consent" from the law related to the transfer of high court judges.

Bilawal in his speech highlighted the strength of the 1973 Constitution, recalling the country's experiences under authoritarian regimes. "We have seen tyrannical rule, and for three generations, we have been involved in constitutional development."

**Battle over Practice and Procedure Ordinance heats up, challenges filed in courts**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Amendment Ordinance has been challenged in the Supreme Court of Pakistan, with a plea seeking its declaration as unconstitutional.

Meanwhile, the Sindh High Court has reserved its judgment on a similar petition challenging the Practice and Procedure Amendment Act after hearing arguments. Justice Yusuf Ali Saeed remarked that the judgment will be delivered today.

Choudhary Ihtesham ul Haq Advocate filed the petition in the Supreme Court against the Practice and Procedure Amendment Ordinance. The petition names the Secretary of the Law Ministry, Secretary of the Establishment Division, and Secretary of the Cabinet as respondents. The petitioner requested the

court to declare the ordinance unconstitutional and nullify all actions taken under it. The petition also seeks a suspension of the ordinance until a final decision is made.

The petition argues that the Supreme Court has previously ruled that ordinances can only be issued in emergency situations. The petitioner claims that the ordinance violates the rights of the people, citing Article 9 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to access an independent judiciary, and Article 10A, which guarantees the right to a fair trial.

The petitioner further states that the ordinance grants additional powers, which undermines the powers of Parliament and impacts the independence of the judiciary. It claims that the ordinance will negatively affect the Supreme Court's decisions.

# AJK PM announces slew of development schemes for Baloch/Sudhnoti

**Bureau Report**

**BALOCH/SUDHNOTI:** Terminating resolution of Kashmir issue as a key to regional peace, the Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that solution to the lingering dispute lies in the implementation of the UN resolutions. The AJK premier made these assertions while addressing a public gathering at Baloch today. Speaking on the occasion, he said that the so-called elections held under the shadow of guns can't be a substitute for Kashmiris' right to self determination. He said that peace in the South Asian region was inescapably linked to the settlement of the Kashmir dispute. He also lauded the struggle and supreme sacrifices rendered by veteran liberation



leader Colonel Hidayat Khan, Muhammad Hussain, Colonel Mansha Khan and Sardar Akhtar Hussain Rabbani. He said that the proud legacy left behind by these heroes of freedom struggle was sufficient enough to inspire the new generation of Kashmir. The PM said that a strong, stable

and prosperous Pakistan was guarantor for the success of Kashmiris' ongoing freedom struggle. On this occasion, the Prime Minister announced a slew of development schemes for Baloch including grant of Tehsil Hospital status to Rural Health Center Baloch, Degree College status to Girls Higher

Secondary School Gula Chowkiyan, completion of Tangi Gullah Bitran Road, Baloch Sarsawah Road, Baloch Gam Kotli, Baloch Gun Gully Road, Jhanda Bagla Road, construction of RCC bridge and water supply scheme for Baloch town and its suburbs. The PM also announced to rename Boys

Degree College Tarar Khal after Sepahi Maqbool Hussain. The AJK premier also lauded the federal government for providing a historic package that ultimately paved the way for provision of subsidized flour and cheap electricity to the people in Azad Kashmir. "The facilities being provided to the people of Azad Kashmir, are not available to people living in other parts of Pakistan", the PM added. The PM also appreciated the Pakistan army for its significant role and sacrifices in defending the territorial sovereignty of the country. The function was attended and addressed by government ministers including Pir Mazhar Saeed Shah, Faheem Akhtar Rabbani, Sardar Muhammad Hussain and other.

## *Kashmir is in critical period': Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin*

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**



**STOKE-ON-TRENT:** President Pakistan People's Party Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin has said that the Kashmir Liberation Movement is going through a very critical period. He has been busy conducting fraudulent elections since September 18, whose one-sided results are expected to be announced on October 1. He expressed these views while addressing a luncheon given in his honor in Germany by the Pakistanis/Kashmiri overseas community. He said that Kashmir Decisions are being made not by the Kashmiri people but by puppets. Decisions related to Kashmir will be made only by the Kashmiri people. On the first day, the leader of the people, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Shaheed, took our stand. The policy of the other parties may be different, but the People's Party has one policy and should always keep this policy. Controversially, according to Article 35A, a non-Kashmiri cannot buy property in Kashmir or become a Kashmiri citizen. On August 5, 2019, the Modi government repealed Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution and annexed Kashmir to India. Of undemocratic, inhumane and illegal action, which the Supreme Court of India has justified and insulted the supremacy of the law and proved that there is no law in India except anti-Muslim. The United Nations also did not take any notice of this illegal action. Assembly elections are going on in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir these days. From the fake elections of 1987 till today, Kashmiris have launched a massive mass boycott movement against all the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections held under the Indian Constitution in the occupied state of Jammu and Kashmir and denounced India's tricks, machinations, tricks, hypocrites and brutalities. Exposed. Recent elections are military exercises and military operations. People's leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto took a bold stand on Kashmir and raised the voice of Kashmiris in a vigorous manner. The people of Occupied Kashmir are resisting the oppression of the Modi government.

## *Jehangir Khan Tareen reviews progress on education, healthcare projects in Lodhran*



**Quratul Ain Asim**

**MULTAN:** Jahangir Khan Tareen visited Lodhran to review progress on welfare projects. Jahangir Khan Tareen reviewed the construction works of Tareen Institute of Computer Education and Resources (TICER) and Amna Girls College Lodhran and expressed satisfaction over the speed and quality of the construction works. Tareen Education Foundation CEO Akbar Khan was also present. Jahangir Khan Tareen directed to complete both the projects on time. The construction of Tareen University will cost more than one billion 25 crore rupees while the construction of Amna Girls College will cost more than 65 crore rupees. Jahangir Tareen said that with the construction of ACER, the students of southern Punjab, especially Lodhran and Bahawalpur, will be able to get the facilities of information technology and modern computer education. God willing, Tareen will be an ideal institution where children from low income families will also be able to build their brilliant future. He said that Ahalyan will continue to serve Lodhran selflessly through welfare projects.

## *Local Leaders Resolve School Dispute In Sujawal*

**Kamran Khamiso Khawaja**

**SUJAWAL:** A group of local community heads, led by Zulfikar Ali Malkani, intervened at Government Primary School near Jati town in Sujawal district to resolve an ongoing dispute between parents and the school's head teacher, Ashraf Ali. The dispute escalated when Ashraf Ali was manhandled by a group of goons and the father of a student. The student had complained to his parents about alleged misbehavior by the teacher. Ashraf Ali revealed that the student was constantly absent from school, and his inquiry into the student's persistent absence led to the dispute. The teacher has been serving at the school since 2009. Following talks facilitated by Zulfikar Malkani, the parents apologized to the teacher for their aggressive behavior and presented traditional Sindhi Ajraks to commemorate the restoration of healthy ties between the teacher and parents. Both the teacher and parents refuted any political interference, attributing the clash to a heat-of-the-moment reaction. Meanwhile, Zulfikar Malkani and officials from the teacher association vowed to collaborate for the betterment of education in the area.

## *13 drug dealers arrested in last 48 hours in Attock: DPO*

**Raza Naqvi**

**ATTOCK:** In light of the vision of the Chief Minister of Punjab and the directives of the Inspector General of Punjab, under the special instructions of District Police Officer Dr. Sardar Ghayas Gul Khan, Attock Police's crackdown against drug dealers continues. In the last 48 hours, more than 5 kg of hashish and 66 liters of alcohol were recovered from across the district, and 13 drug dealers were put behind bars. According to the details, Jand Police Station recovered 1420 grams of hashish from drug dealer Atta-ur-Rehman, son of Muhammad Jibrael, resident of Kohat, during a search. Similarly, the Injira Police team arrested drug dealers Amanullah, son of Abdullah, and Abdul Ghaffar, son of Pai Khan, residents of Chhab Tehsil Jand, along with drugs. In another operation, Pindigheb Police Station arrested notorious drug dealer Dilawar Khan, son of Noor Hussain, resident of Ganda Kas Pindigheb, with 1400 grams of hashish, and Haroon, son of Ghulam Muhammad, resident of Ganda Kas, was found with 10 liters of alcohol. Meanwhile, the New Airport Police team recovered a bottle of alcohol from Asghar Khan, son of Zareef Khan, a resident of Mardan, currently living in Hassan Abdal, during a search. Similarly, Bahar Police Station recovered 10 liters of alcohol each from the famous alcohol suppliers Imran Khan, son of Bashir Ahmed, and Ashfaq Ahmed, son of Muhammad Mushtaq, both residents of Bahar, and seized 1100 grams of hashish from Naveed Gul, son of Gul Muhammad, resident of Humak Fateh Jang. The Basal Police team recovered 15 liters of alcohol from the notorious liquor seller Nazir Hussain, son of Muhammad Amir, resident of Pindigheb, during a check. In another operation, the Fateh Jang Police team recovered 560 grams of hashish from the drug dealer Saqlain Abbas, son of Adil Hussain, resident of Bhal Syedan. Similarly, the Rangro Police recovered 10 liters of alcohol each from Fazal Subhan, son of Ghafoor Khan, resident of Waisa Hazro, and Atiq Ahmed, son of Ahmed Nawaz, resident of Khora Khail Hazro. The Attock Police have registered separate cases in various police stations and have taken the accused into custody.

## Group Photo

Group photo after the meeting of the delegation of Hazara Journalists Association under the leadership of Luqman Shah with Federal Information Secretary Ambrin Jan.



# Women's University inaugurated Jinnah Hall Air Conditioning Project at Katchery Campus

**Kiran Asim**

**MULTAN:** Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Kalsoom Pracha inaugurated at Women's University MULTAN Jinnah Hall Air Conditioning Project at Katchery Campus the Women University Multan. The ceremony was attended by Registrar Prof Dr Mamoona Khan, Project Director Asad Bhutta and other faculty members. The project has been completed with the help of fundraising from Alumni of WUM, Aspire Group of Colleges and some other expenses have been paid by PC-1 of the university. On this occasion Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Kalsoom Pracha said, besides providing quality education to the students, we are committed to provide all necessary infrastructure and co-curricular facilities to our students. It is a moment of pride to highlight



that Women University is achieving its every target for promoting higher education in the region. By install-

ing air-conditioner, it will be possible to organize activities and events in extreme weather. She said students are

our national assets and providing them with modern educational facilities and guidance is our collective responsibility.

# Forces of Pakistan and the people have sacrificed their lives for the establishment of peace

**Asim Tanveer**

**MULTAN:** Social ambassador and peace promotion activist Shahid Mahmood Ansari. Social leader Noor ul amin. Khawaja Zia. Zaman Akbar Chaudhry Mansoor Advocate. Syed Imtiaz Shah. Saleem Darbari and social intellectual Muhammad Rizwan. The female social leader Mrs. Yasmeen Khan has said that the Pakistani nation is calling for peace.

The entire nation has made numerous sacrifices for the establishment of peace, especially the forces of Pakistan and the people have sacrificed their lives for the establishment of peace.

There is social tolerance for the whole world. Interfaith unity and compassionate attitudes and respect



for each other's opinions are the signs of a peaceful society, he said at the Multan Peace Forum.

Shahid Mahmood Ansari led the peace walk on the occasion of World

Peace Day organized by Consciousness Development Organization and Civil Society Forum. Noor Ul Amin Khakwani Zaman Akbar Khawaja Zia did while Muhammad Saleem Darbari.

Khalid Chhata. Malik Amir Nawaz Mohammad Rizwan. Ahsan Ghori. Dr. Liaquat. Syed Imtiaz Shah. Rukhsana Mahbub. Farrukh Mahmood Bhatti. Iqbal Khan Baloch. Mukhtar Soomro and Khurshid Akbar were participants. Social Ambassador Shahid Mahmood Ansari, while addressing the participants, added that the people of Pakistan are well aware of the usefulness and importance of peace.

In the war against terrorism, the Pakistani nation has created a history of peace with its blood.

Pakistan has always played the role of the vanguard in the efforts and the brave children of the nation have sacrificed themselves today for peace in the country and are the heroes of the entire nation.

Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:34 am  
Zohr ..... 12:00 Noon  
Asr ..... 4:18 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:02 pm  
Isha ..... 7:25 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 &  
& Rescue Services ..... 4451122  
Motorway Police ..... 9266044  
Motorway Police ..... 9270601-20

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

Edhi Ambulance ..... 115  
PIA Flight Info ..... 114  
PIA Cargo ..... 9280979  
Railway Inquiry ..... 117  
Railway Exchange ..... 9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi ..... 5555489  
CAA ..... 9281092

**HOSPITALS**

CMH ..... 561111  
MH ..... 561116  
MH ..... 561116  
Cantt Hospital ..... 9270907-11  
DHQ ..... 5556311-4  
RGH ..... 9290301-7  
Holy Family ..... 9290322-7  
PIMS ..... 9261170-79  
Polyclinic ..... 9218300-09  
Shifa International ..... 4603666

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
Islamabad Metropolitan  
Corporation ..... 9209224  
Potohar Town ..... 9209224  
Rawal Town ..... 5773343

**COMPLAINTS**

Water Tanker Service  
E-7, F-10 & F-11 ..... 9204654  
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8 ..... 9203883  
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 ..... 9266316  
Wapda Islamabad ..... 9217579-80  
Sui Gas Complaint ..... 119, 9272249  
Wasa Water Tank  
Rawalpindi ..... 0331-5022125

**Chairman of Pakistan Human Rights Party Addresses MDCAT Scandal, Assures Legal Action**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Khalid Aftab Sulehri, Chairman of the Pakistan Human Rights Party, has raised serious concerns about the ongoing MDCAT (Medical and Dental College Admission Test) scandal, which has sent shockwaves through Pakistan's academic community. Allegations of cheating, paper leaks, and discrepancies in the difficulty level of exams across various provinces have sparked outrage, with students and their families demanding accountability.

Reports of widespread malpractice surfaced, including news of organized cheating during the MDCAT exam held in Quetta. Additionally, students have claimed that some exam questions were either incorrectly formulated or not part of the syllabus. Many students have voiced their frustration over the inconsistency in the exam papers' difficulty across different regions.

Today, Dr. Sulehri met with a group of MDCAT candidates at Crown Hotel in Islamabad's Blue Area, where he listened to their complaints and demands. The students outlined several key requests aimed at ensuring transparency and fairness in the examination process:

Provision of Question Papers: Students should be given access to their question papers at the end of the exam to allow them to assess the content for fairness.

Updated Question Papers Online: All versions of the question paper booklets (of various colors) should be uploaded on the official website.

Corrected Answer Key: A revised and accurate answer key, corresponding to the question papers, should be made available.

Feedback Mechanism: A feedback form should be introduced for students and stakeholders to share their observations and concerns.

# CM chairs 16th cabinet meeting, approves major projects including recruitment of 7,354 CTIs

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif presided over 16th provincial cabinet meeting in which the recruitment of 7,354 College Teaching Interns (CTIs) was approved across Punjab.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif sought a comprehensive and uniform housing policy across Punjab. The cabinet paid tribute to the police personnel on performing duty in Rahim Yar Khan and Katcha area. The cabinet approved special allowance for police personnel on performing duty in the Katcha area.

The Chief Minister stopped increasing hostel charges for working women across Punjab. The CM commended Irrigation Minister Kazim Pirzada and the Irrigation Department for no loss of life being caused due to the recent floods. The cabinet approved the issuance of



Rs. 500 million 'Endowment Fund for Writers Welfare' under the auspices of the Information and Culture Department.

The cabinet, appreciated the peaceful conduct of MDCAT examination in Punjab. It was apprised in the meeting that controversial questions are being

raised on the conduct of MDCAT examination in other provinces besides Punjab.

The Chief Minister sought a monthly package plan for the differently-abled visually impaired persons. The cabinet approved a special court for persons with disabilities under the Punjab Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act. Conditional approval was given to delegate the powers of Sub-Registrar to the Tehsildar and Naib Tehsildar. The CM Punjab directed the Board of Revenue to submit a five-year comprehensive housing policy to the Cabinet.

The cabinet rejected the Working Women's Hostels policy for increasing charges by the Women Development Department.

The cabinet approved the request to provide financial assistance for the treatment of Syeda Sara D/O Syed Mian Abu Bakar Kaka Khel. Under the

Muslim Family Laws Ordinance 1961, an approval was granted to amend the notification to allow Assistant Director Local Government to perform duties as Chairman of the Conciliation Council. It was informed during the meeting that a 'Central Portal' will be set up for transparent recruitment of College Teaching Interns (CTIs) in the government colleges. An approval was granted to make amendment in the Punjab Infrastructure Development Cess Act 2015.

The cabinet approved to delegate leave and pension powers to CEO Health and Education in the districts. The cabinet approved the appointment of Government Analyst and Provincial Drug Inspector, Election Commission Annual Report 2023 and the appointment of Caretaker Ombudsman Punjab.

Provincial Ministers, Chief Secretary, IG Police, Secretaries and other relevant officials attended the meeting.

MoU

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan and Belarusian Minister of Energy Aleksei Kushnarenko co-chair the 7th Joint Ministerial Commission, signing the Protocol and MoUs between the both countries.



Photo: Online

KE Breaks Record Yet Again: Country's Lowest Tariff Bid Received for 220 MW Hybrid Project

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Earlier this month, K-Electric (KE), Pakistan's only private utility firm, announced the receipt of seven bids for Pakistan's first 220 MW hybrid wind/solar project in Dhabaji Sindh. Building up on the momentum, the company marked another important milestone with the opening of the financial bids at a private event in Karachi. With PKR 8.9189 per unit, JCM Power, a Canadian-based renewable energy company, has emerged as the bidder with the lowest proposed tariff, establishing a new precedent in the country's renewable space.

"We deeply appreciate NEPRA supporting us for competitive bidding process on such a complex and innovative project. It aligns seamlessly with KE's vision to induct renewables, reduce generation costs, and gradually reduce dependence on expensive imported fuel sources. With this kind of tariff, we anticipate that the government will have the capacity to pass on the relief to customers as well."

Shahab Qader, Chief Strategy Officer KE, also added, "This is a momentous occasion as KE breaks the barrier yet again. This project is the first in Pakistan to integrate solar and wind energy for improved operational and financial efficiency. These unique specifications also made this project technically demanding requiring deeper expertise. These renewable energy projects at Winder and Bela in Balochistan, and the latest one in Dhabaji, Sindh, totaling to 370 MW, have received a resounding 2960 MW in offers. This response serves as an affirmation of the utility's long-term strategy to make cheapest cost of generation possible"

This strategic approach has the potential to break the cycle of dependence on costlier sources and reduce overall energy production costs and, simultaneously contributing towards catalyzing the economic progress of the country.

Virtual University of Pakistan Extends Last Date for Fall 2024 Admissions

City Desk

ISB/LHR/KHI: Virtual University of Pakistan has announced an extension for the Fall 2024 admissions, providing aspiring students with additional time to apply. The last date for submitting online applications is now September 30, 2024.

Prospective students can take advantage of the extra time to apply for a variety of programs offered by the university. Virtual University continues to offer a diverse range of BS programs in disciplines such as Computer Science, Business Administration, Psychology, Mathematics, Mass Communication, and Bio Sciences, among others. Additionally, Associate Degree Programs are available in various fields to provide students with flexible learning options aligned with current industry demands.

As part of its commitment to accessible education, Virtual University is offering scholarships worth more than 80 million PKR to deserving students. These scholarships aim to ease the financial burden on students and ensure that quality education remains within reach for all.

All application processes are fully online, ensuring convenience and ease for students, with the support of its 200+ campuses and Learning Management System (LMS). Applicants are encouraged to complete their applications online through the university's official admissions portal.

The Virtual University of Pakistan, renowned for its quality education and flexible online learning environment, aims to make education accessible to all, regardless of geographical boundaries. With this extension, the university hopes to accommodate students who may need extra time to complete their application process.

## Mehfil-e-Naat organized at Female Campus of IIUI

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Directorate of Students Affairs (Female Campus), International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) in collaboration with the Faculty of Arabic, organized a Mehfil-e-Naat to celebrate the birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in connection with the month of Rabi ul Awal.

The event drew large participation from students, faculty, and staff, who came together to reflect on the life and teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) through soulful Naat recitations and Darood-o-Salam.

The Mehfil encouraged the expression of this devotion through a Naat competition, where students showcased their love for the Prophet (PBUH). Gifts were awarded to the best Naat Khawan students.



Dr. Summaya Chughtai, Incharge of the Female Campus, honored the occasion as the chief guest and spoke about how the Prophet's (PBUH) message of Rehmat provides guidance in every facet of life. She emphasized how the Prophet's (PBUH) qualities of forgiveness, forbearance, and

justice are essential in today's world. Dr. Sadia Saleem, the chief organizer, echoed these sentiments, appreciating the students' enthusiasm and dedication to celebrating the Prophet's legacy.

The event was focused on the Prophet's message of Rehmat (mercy), with many speakers

reminding attendees that the Prophet (PBUH) was sent as a mercy not only to humans but to all of creation. Speakers expressed that His example of caring for the weak, forgiving wrongdoers, and showing love even to those who opposed him was highlighted as a model of ideal behavior for Muslims.

## SPARC urges action against tobacco industry's deceptive tactics to introduce smaller cigarette packs

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) has expressed deep concerns over a latest proposal by the tobacco industry, pressurizing the government to allow cigarette packs with less than 20 cigarettes, a move that could wreak havoc on the public health, especially among youth and vulnerable segments of the society.

Pakistan is a signatory to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which requires

evidence-based measures aimed at the reduction of tobacco consumption and protection of public health. Article 16.3 of the FCTC specifically requires that countries prohibit the sale of packs of less than the prescribed limit since they enhance the affordability and availability of tobacco products among minors. Global best practices advocate for at least 20 cigarettes per pack, and more than 80 countries have promulgated such legislations to deter the access of youth to tobacco.

Though Pakistan's laws

have since long aligned with the FCTC by prohibiting the manufacture, sale, and import of cigarette packs containing fewer than 20 sticks, the new move by the industry to introduce the former for export purposes raises an alarm. Allowing them to be manufactured—even for export purposes—risks eroding the long-standing public health commitment of the country and paves the way for entrance of these miniscule and cheaper packs into the domestic market.

Dr. Khalil Ahmad, SPARC's

program manager, while emphasizing on the potential harms of these efforts said: "This campaign by the tobacco companies to produce packs of less than 20 sticks, under the guise of export, can undermine country's longstanding efforts against tobacco control. There is a significant danger that these products will shortly find their way into our local markets, thereby poisoning the health of our youth and lower-income populations even further."

Dr. Khalil called upon the government to stand

firm against the pressure of industry and protect the progress which Pakistan has made regarding the decrease in tobacco consumption, particularly among minors. Dr. Ahmad further laid emphasis on the requirement to stay respectful to the rules of WHO FCTC, which calls for the prevention of the promotion of products that make tobacco more accessible to minors.

Health advocate warn that relaxing regulations could increase the economic burden on the country, already dealing with substantial



health costs due to tobacco-related diseases. The government has to be reminded of its commitment to the FCTC and must continue enforcing laws protecting public health while preventing vulnerable populations from suffering

the brunt of smoke spreading. Finally, SPARC urge the government to resist any changes in the tobacco control legislation that may affect public's health and the country's economy in the future.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
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 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**  
 (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: **Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.**  
 Karachi office: **Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.**  
**Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.**  
 Lahore Office: **7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.**  
 Email: **spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com**  
 Whatsapp: **0346-5008408**

# Judiciary-Government Clash: A Battle at the People's Expense

The recent Supreme Court judgment represents an unprecedented act of defiance against the previously unquestioned power of the establishment, directly challenging all pillars of the state, including the government, parliament, Election Commission, the President and even factions within the judiciary.

This situation echoes the Supreme Court's earlier verdict to hold Punjab Assembly elections on May 14, 2023, which was not implemented due to intense pressure from various state elements. The judiciary's inability to enforce its decision back then led to the marginalization of PTI, alleged rigged elections, the formation of an unrepresentative government, and a deepening constitutional crisis, causing immense hardship for the people and undermining the rule of law.

Now, all elements of power within the state are fully determined to maintain the status quo and are fully poised to use every means at their disposal to undermine the purpose, intent, and implementation of the Supreme Court's decision. The earlier capitulation of the Supreme Court occurred in an environment where the judiciary was shackled and lacked the strength to counter the combined assault from all pillars of the state and their affiliated institutions. However, it appears that the judiciary has now regained the strength it lost long ago. The subordinate judiciary, high courts, and even the Supreme Court, which had been reduced to mere rubber stamps, seem to have reached a point where they have decided to reclaim their rightful authority, a domain

they had surrendered since Pakistan's inception, due to the intense pressures exerted by powerful elements.

Efforts may also be made to intimidate judges through threats, blackmail, or exposure of alleged misconduct to weaken their resolve, hoping to force a compromise or soften the judgment. Backdoor negotiations with political parties, including PTI, might be pursued to reach a deal that either delays or waters down the implementation by offering incentives or compromise solutions.

The forces defending the status quo may incite street protests, strikes, or civil unrest to create chaos and instability, justifying non-implementation under the guise of maintaining law and order. They might mobilize all elements of power to resist the judgment by refusing to cooperate, creating operational hurdles, or even actively subverting the judiciary's authority. The government might frame the situation as an extraordinary crisis requiring exceptional measures, sidelining the Supreme Court's decision under the pretext of national interest or stability.

Finally, intensified legal actions, arrests, and harassment against PTI leadership and supporters could be employed to weaken their organizational strength and create leadership vacuums, diminishing their ability to capitalize on the judgment. Those with vested interests might unite to form a grand alliance, coordinating efforts to resist the judgment and leveraging their

collective resources and influence to maintain the status quo.

However, this time, the Supreme Court seems determined to dig in its heels and use whatever constitutional power it has to ensure the implementation of its judgment. In the event of non-compliance, the Court can issue comprehensive, binding implementation orders that clearly define the roles and responsibilities of various state institutions, eliminating any ambiguity or delay and making non-compliance easily identifiable. It may also establish a monitoring committee to oversee the implementation process.

The Supreme Court could initiate contempt proceedings against any individual or institution that defies its orders, taking swift action against high-ranking officials who deliberately obstruct the implementation process to demonstrate the judiciary's resolve. It may issue direct orders to the executive branch to enforce its judgment, and if these agencies are hesitant or unwilling to act, the Court can take decisive action against their leadership for dereliction of duty. In extreme cases, it may invoke Article 245 of the Constitution, which permits calling upon the military to aid civil power in implementing its orders.

The Court might actively engage with the public through media outreach, making the details and significance of the judgment widely known. By mobilizing civil society organizations, legal experts, and bar associations to rally public

support, it can create an environment that pressures the government and establishment to implement the decision.

It may direct the Election Commission to strictly adhere to timelines for re-elections, reinstating PTI members, and reversing any unconstitutional changes to election laws. Additionally, the Supreme Court could regularly publish the names and details of individuals or institutions obstructing the implementation process, serving as a powerful tool to compel compliance and uphold the rule of law.

Non-implementation of the Supreme Court's judgment would have dire consequences for the country and its people. It would undermine the rule of law, erode judicial independence, and set a dangerous precedent that powerful institutions can defy legal authority without consequences. This would weaken democratic processes, leading to political instability, civil unrest, and a breakdown of constitutional order. For the people, it would mean the erosion of their rights, loss of faith in the justice system, and diminished prospects for fair representation and governance. It would also damage Pakistan's international reputation, deter foreign investment, and potentially invite undemocratic forces to exploit the chaos, plunging the nation into deeper economic and social turmoil. Therefore, implementing the judgment is crucial to safeguard democracy, maintain stability, and protect the rights and future of the citizens.

*The Writer is Former Press Secretary to the President, Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former MD, SRBC and CEO, AIV*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Biden says now 'time to finalise' Gaza deal and 'end this war'

US President Joe Biden on Tuesday urged Israel and Hamas to finalize a months-old ceasefire proposal, telling the United Nations he was committed to ending the Gaza war.

"Now is the time for the parties to finalize its terms," he said of the deal brokered by the United States, Qatar and Egypt.

The deal will "bring the hostages home and secure security for Israel and Gaza free from Hamas's grip, ease the suffering in Gaza and end this war," Biden told the UN General Assembly.

He asked world leaders to prevent "full-scale war" over Lebanon, as clashes escalated between Israel and Hezbollah, prompting the UN chief to warn of a situation "on the brink."

The UN General Assembly, the high point of the diplomatic calendar, comes as Lebanese authorities say Israeli strikes killed 558 people – 50 of them children.

"Full-scale war is not in anyone's interest. Even though the situation has escalated, a diplomatic solution is still possible," Biden said in his farewell address to the global body.

"In fact (it) remains the only path to lasting security to allow the residents from both countries to return to their homes on the border safely," Biden said.

Biden also pushed again for an elusive ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, telling the global body it was time to "end this war."

UN Security Council member France called for an emergency meeting on the crisis, as the EU's top diplomat Josep Borrell warned "we are almost in a full-fledged war."

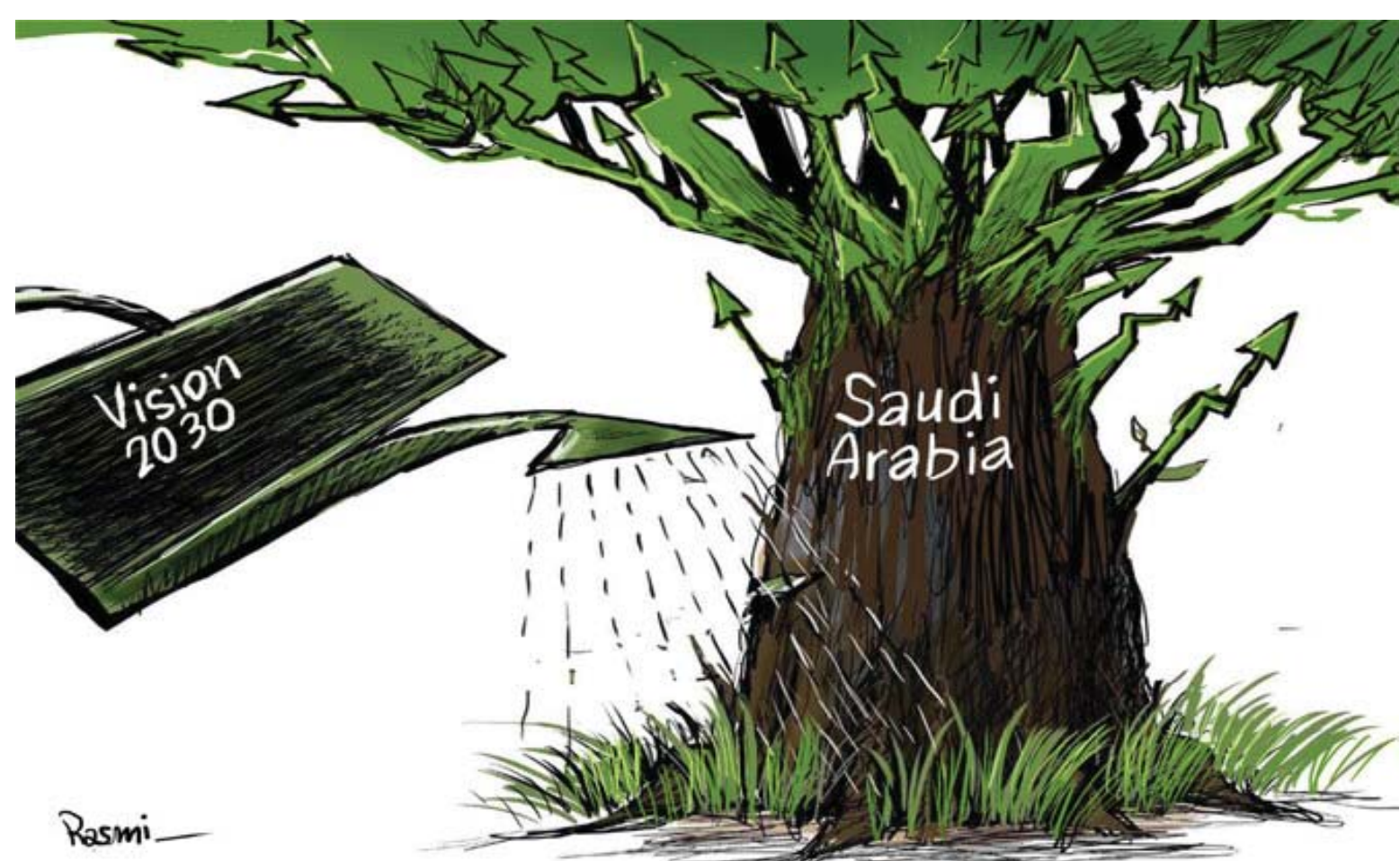
"We should all be alarmed by the escalation. Lebanon is at the brink," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said.

President Masoud Pezeshkian of Iran – which backs both Hezbollah and Hamas – condemned the "senseless and incomprehensible" inaction by the UN against Israel.

The United States, Israel's closest ally, has opposed a ground invasion into Lebanon. A senior official said ahead of Biden's speech that the United States would bring "concrete" ideas for de-escalation to the UN.

It is unclear what progress can be made to defuse the situation in Lebanon as the efforts to broker a ceasefire in Gaza, which Israel has relentlessly pounded since October 2023, have come to nothing.

Guterres cautioned against "the possibility of transforming Lebanon [into] another Gaza," calling the situation in the embattled Palestinian territory a "non-stop nightmare."



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Ashraf Al-Awsat)

## Revolutionizing Education: 'The Concept Schools' Vision for the Future

In an ever-evolving world, the need for a robust and holistic education system has never been more critical. At Concept Schools, we are committed to changing the traditional educational paradigm by focusing on a comprehensive approach that not only equips students with academic knowledge but also prepares them for the complexities of the modern world. Concept School's mission is very much clear, we want to redefine the concept of education. Our approach goes beyond the typical classroom experience, offering an integrated curriculum designed to develop the intellectual, moral, and social dimensions of our students. Our 'Brainiacs Development Program' is at the heart of this initiative, aimed at nurturing critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills in young minds. This program is designed to transform students into independent thinkers and innovators who can contribute to society in meaningful ways.



Analysis

Sohail Ahmad Baber

we recognize that education is not just about academics. It's also about preparing students for life beyond school. This is where our Life Skills Activities come in. These activities are designed to polish the hidden talents of students, helping them discover their potential in areas like leadership, communication, teamwork, and emotional intelligence. Whether it's through sports, arts, or debate, we ensure that every student is given opportunities to develop skills that will serve them well in both their personal and professional lives.

In line with our vision to continuously improve and evolve, "Regional Directors meeting for the KP region" was held at Toru Restaurant Mardan on 21st Sep, presided over by CEO Nasrullah Goraya. The meeting, led by me as Regional Director KP, was a productive session where key aspects of the Concept Schools were discussed in detail. Hafiz Sohaib Ammar Siddiqi Director Academic Concept Schools, delivered an insightful presentation on Quality Assurance and the distinctive features of Concept Schools, highlighting our commitment to maintaining high educational standards. This was followed by an engaging Q&A session, where both male and female participants actively discussed challenges and potential solutions to further strengthen our schools' system. This meeting underscored our ongoing dedi-

ation to ensuring quality education across the region and reaffirmed our shared mission to transform the educational landscape. Despite our innovative approach, there are challenges that must be addressed to achieve our vision. One of the most pressing issues is the lack of access to quality education in many areas. Economic disparities and outdated educational practices continue to hinder the progress of countless students. Additionally, the growing reliance on rote learning, which stifles creativity and critical thinking, remains a significant obstacle. To overcome these challenges, it is essential to invest in teacher training, modernize curricula, and expand access to technology in the classroom. We must also encourage a culture of continuous learning and adaptation to prepare students for the rapidly changing demands of the global workforce. At Concept Schools, we are committed to addressing these issues head-on by fostering innovation, inclusivity, and resilience in our education system.

At the end I will say, the future of education lies in a system that is "holistic, inclusive, and forward-thinking". At Concept Schools, we are proud to lead the way in this transformation. By focusing on quality education, parental involvement, spiritual development, community enhancement programs and life skills, we are preparing the next generation to excel in all aspects of life, both in Pakistan and beyond.

*The Writer is Regional Director KP, Concept Schools*

## International Success for Pakistani SMEs at 2nd FoodAg Exhibition

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a pivotal role in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and creating jobs, especially in developing economies. As the backbone of many countries' economies, SMEs contribute significantly to GDP and offer employment opportunities to a large segment of the population, often in regions where larger corporations are absent. Their ability to adapt quickly to market changes and serve niche markets makes them essential for economic resilience. SMEs also promote competition and encourage innovation by introducing new products and services, pushing boundaries, and improving productivity. In many cases, they act as engines for local economies, fostering inclusive growth and contributing to poverty reduction by providing livelihoods, particularly in underserved and rural areas. Supporting SMEs, therefore, is crucial for sustainable development and long-term economic stability. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from Sindh and Balochistan made their mark at the 2nd International FoodAg Exhibition These SMEs, supported by the EU-funded Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress, generated significant business leads worth approximately USD 6.4 million, nearly doubling the figures from the previous year. This achievement underscores the potential of Pakistan's agricultural sector on the global stage, despite the numerous challenges these enterprises face at home. The event, organized by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, provided a crucial platform for Pakistani SMEs to showcase their agricultural products to international buyers. The Global Cuisine Show, a standout feature of the exhibition, allowed these businesses to present their products to world-renowned chefs, who were particularly impressed by the quality of Pakistani produce such as onions and fresh vegetables.



Analysis

Fazal Rehman Khan

Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif's visit to the ITC pavilion underscored the importance of initiatives in elevating local SMEs to the international stage, with exporters from Europe, Africa, and Asia showing keen interest in the high-quality offerings from 22 districts across Sindh and

Balochistan. SMEs successfully secured international orders for a range of products, including mangoes, dates, banana fibre, and various by-products of agriculture. However, the path to success for these enterprises has not been easy. SMEs in Pakistan often struggle with limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and restricted access to larger markets. These challenges are compounded by a lack of digital connectivity, insufficient knowledge of international trade regulations, and difficulties in scaling their operations to meet global demands. Projects are playing a vital role in addressing these hurdles. By providing technical support, capacity building, and access to international markets, GRASP is empowering local businesses to overcome their limitations and compete on a global level. The participation of 58 SMEs in this year's FoodAg exhibition, many of whom are from underserved regions like Sindh and Balochistan, is a testament to the positive impact of such initiatives.

In addition to their participation in the exhibition, the project also organized a seminar focused on exporting food products to the EU. This seminar, which attracted significant attention, provided Pakistani traders with critical insights into navigating upcoming regulations like the EU Green Deal and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism. Such educational efforts are crucial in helping local businesses explore new markets across Europe. The GRASP project has provided vital support to over 30,000 SMEs in Sindh and Balochistan provinces. It continues to improve the business environment for these enterprises while assisting federal and provincial governments in developing policies that enhance the competitiveness of Pakistan's SMEs. The impressive performance of these businesses at the 2nd International FoodAg Exhibition is a clear indication that with the right support, Pakistani SMEs can not only survive but thrive in the competitive global market. Projects are crucial in bridging the gap between potential and performance, ensuring that Pakistan's agricultural sector can reach new heights in the years to come.

*The writer is communication consultant and freelance analyst*

# U. S. Ambassador Donald Blome Inaugurates Agrilift's New Soil Lab in Lahore, Driving Innovation in Sustainable Farming

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: U. S. Ambassador Donald Blome, alongside U. S. Consul General Kristin Hawkins, visited Agrilift during his official trip to Lahore to promote clean energy and climate action under the U. S.-Pakistan "Green Alliance" framework. The Ambassador inaugurated Agrilift's newly established soil lab, which was funded by a USAID Investment Promotion Activity (IPA) grant, emphasizing the U. S. government's commitment to addressing the pressing challenges of climate change,

food security, and sustainable agriculture.

Following the inauguration, Ambassador Blome and his team witnessed Agrilift's precision farming technology in action during a live demonstration at a local farm. Agrilift's innovative approach integrates cutting-edge AI and data analytics, enabling farmers to optimize their crop yields while conserving vital soil and water resources.

Commenting on the occasion, Jawwad Hasan, CEO of Agrilift, remarked, "At Agrilift, our mission is



to turn data into higher yield, empowering farmers to produce more sustainably. The support we've received from USAID IPA has allowed us to expand our efforts and set up the Agrilift Soil Analysis Laboratory. This will pave the way for sustainable, scalable and cost-effective real-time solutions that address the needs of the farmer in Pakistan."

At the inauguration, Ambassador Blome noted, "This program is just one example of the U. S. government's support in advancing agritech, improving crop yields, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in

Pakistan."

Agrilift is at the forefront of revolutionizing Pakistan's agricultural landscape with next-gen precision farming solutions. By leveraging data and AI, the company empowers farmers with the tools needed to maximize crop output in an environmentally responsible manner.

Agrilift is committed to expanding its suite of products, with plans to extend precision farming solutions across the world, with the ultimate vision of a future where no child ever goes to bed hungry.

## Launch of Book Titled "CHINA LEADS"

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized the launch of China Leads by Dr. Junaid Ahmad. The book was reviewed by eminent scholars, including Ambassador Masood Khalid, former Ambassador of Pakistan to China, and Dr. Tahir Mumtaz Awan, former Director of the China Study Centre, COMSATS University Islamabad.

Ambassador Masood Khalid praised the book for offering a rich historical context on China's rise, from its ancient civilization to its modern achievements under the Communist Party of China. He highlighted the book's insights on socio-economic development, and its pivotal role in global politics. He praised the book's detailed historical account, covering dynastic periods, China's modernization under Mao Zedong, and its current trajectory under President Xi Jinping. The book offers valuable insights into China's moderniza-



tion efforts, poverty alleviation, and its strategic foreign relations, making it an essential resource for researchers and policymakers. He also suggested future editions should include discussions on China's Global Development,

Security and Civilization Initiatives, further enhancing the book's relevance. Ambassador Khalid also commended the detailed research, making the book a valuable resource for those interested in China's history, foreign policy, and

future direction.

Dr. Tahir Mumtaz Awan commended the book for its comprehensive account of China's rise as a global leader, not only economically, but also culturally, geopolitically, and ideologically. He high-

lighted the book's historical insights, China's strategic use of soft power, and its impact on global perceptions, particularly regarding the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Dr. Junaid Ahmad, the author of the book stated that China Leads emphasizes that the Chinese civilization and language embody wisdom and knowledge accumulated over 5,000 years. Throughout its history, China has never been an aggressor. It has only defended itself against numerous aggressors. Chairman Mao laid the foundation for China's global stature by making it a nuclear power in 1964. His successors, starting with Deng Xiaoping, guided China towards a market economy, with leaders like Xi Jinping continuing this trajectory, positioning China as a global leader in various fields.

Earlier in his remarks, Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director of the China Pakistan Study Center at ISSI, welcomed the audience, describing the book as a

timely and insightful work on China's journey of leadership, innovation, and peace. He emphasized China's transformation from a nation to a global leader in economics, technology, and diplomacy, and highlighted the book's comprehensive narrative on China's rise and its contributions to global development.

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood while giving concluding remarks highlighted China's remarkable journey since 1949, driven by Confucius philosophy and consistent leadership under the Communist Party. He emphasized China's role as a stabilizing force in the emerging global order, promoting multilateralism and win-win cooperation. He contrasted China's policies of mutual respect with Western unilateralism, noting China's alignment with the developing world.

The event was attended by a large number of academics, scholars, diplomats, government officials and members of civil society.

## Arcapita and Dgpays Consortium Acquires Majority Stake in NEOPAY from Mashreq

**Spokesman Report**

DUBAI, UAE: Arcapita Group Holdings Limited ("Arcapita"), the global alternative investment firm, and Dgpays, a leading financial infrastructure technology provider in the EMEA region, (together in equal partnership, the "Consortium") and Mashreq, one of the UAE's leading financial institutions, jointly announced today the Consortium's agreement to acquire a majority stake in NEOPAY, the UAE's fast-growing payment solutions provider, while Mashreq retains a significant minority interest. The transaction implies an approximate enterprise value for NEOPAY of \$385



million, and the closing is subject to necessary regulatory approvals.

The acquisition represents a significant milestone for NEOPAY as it aims to expand its presence in the rapidly growing digital payments sector in the Middle

East. The strategic support of the Consortium, positions NEOPAY to further accelerate its growth trajectory and offer new services, leveraging Dgpays' cutting-edge technology.

NEOPAY is the UAE's fastest growing payment solutions provider, with a strong foothold among merchants and e-commerce players. The UAE's card transaction value is expected to grow at double-digit rates over the next five years, presenting substantial opportunities for NEOPAY to capture further market share.

Founded as a strategic division within Mashreq, NEOPAY experienced significant growth in recent years, serving a diverse

client base across key sectors such as retail, hospitality, government, and e-commerce. NEOPAY's expansion is driven by the UAE's dynamic economic landscape, which is characterized by a young, digitally literate population, robust GDP growth, and the government's ongoing initiatives to promote digital transformation and a cashless economy.

Serkan Omerbeyoglu, CEO of Dgpays, said, "We are excited to support NEOPAY's transformative journey in partnership with Mashreq. NEOPAY has demonstrated exceptional growth and innovation in the UAE's digital payments landscape, and we see tremendous potential in

expanding this success across the broader Middle East region.

Atif A. Abdulmalik, CEO of Arcapita, commented: "NEOPAY is fully aligned with Arcapita's investment strategy which focuses on acquiring companies that are not only market leaders but also have strong growth potential driven by favorable macroeconomic trends. NEOPAY is well-positioned to benefit from the UAE's ongoing shift towards digital payments, supported by rising GDP, a tech-savvy young population, and government-led initiatives for digital transformation."

Ahmed Abdelaal, Group

CEO, Mashreq, said: "This transaction is a key milestone in NEOPAY's journey, allowing it to continue its strong growth trajectory as a regional leader in digital payments. We are confident that Arcapita and Dgpays have the right expertise and vision to help NEOPAY achieve its ambitious expansion plans across the Middle East."

Vibhor Mundhada, CEO of NEOPAY, also said, "We are thrilled to embark on the next chapter of NEOPAY's growth with the support of Arcapita and Dgpays. NEOPAY has established itself as a leader in the digital payments sector by consistently innovating and

delivering value to our clients.

This acquisition signifies a strategic alignment between Arcapita, Dgpays, and Mashreq, highlighting a shared commitment to driving innovation and growth in the digital payments industry throughout the Middle East.

Goldman Sachs International, DIFC Branch acted as financial advisor to the seller, while deNovo Partners advised the Consortium. Clifford Chance acted as legal counsel to Mashreq while Freshfields was legal counsel to the Consortium. Mashreq's Investment Banking arm facilitated the closure of the transaction between the parties.

## Experts Urge Strategic Investments in Aerospace Innovations for National Security and Economic Growth at CASS Seminar

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, successfully concluded a seminar on 'Air and Space Technologies: Harnessing the Innovation Economy.' This event convened distinguished experts from the defence, technology, and academic sectors to discuss strategies for leveraging space and technological advancements to prosper in an innovation-driven economic landscape in Pakistan.

Air Vice Marshal Nasser Wyne (Retd), Director (Aerospace Warfare) at CASS, set the stage for the seminar sharing how the rise of air power in the Twentieth Century transitioned into aerospace power, incorporating space exploration, satellite technology, and autonomous systems. This shift, he stressed, presents strategic opportunities for nations to bypass traditional developmental barriers and capitalise on cutting-edge innovations for both defence and economic growth. AVM Wyne further asserted that the innovation economy, fueled by the commercialisation of new technologies, was playing a crucial role in this transformation.

In his Keynote Address on 'Future of Air and Space in National Defence and the Global Innovation Economy', Air Marshal Zahid Mehmood (Retd), Former Vice Chief of the Air Staff,



Pakistan Air Force, highlighted the evolution of aerospace from a defence-centric industry to a key driver of economic growth and technological innovation. He pointed out that while the sector originated in military needs, it has since expanded to foster commercial aviation, space exploration, and private sector involvement. He asserted that technological advancements in areas like satellite deployment, AI, and space exploration are creating new markets and opportunities globally. To capitalise on these, he emphasised the need for strategic investments and the development of skilled human capital, warning that countries that fail to adapt may fall behind. The Air Marshal also stressed the need for developing countries, like Pakistan, to harness aerospace inno-

ventions through strategic investments, technology transfer, and human capital development. He urged policymakers to foster public-private partnerships (PPPs) and invest in building capacity to secure their position in the rapidly evolving aerospace landscape.

In his presentation on 'Space and Technology Nexus: Boosting National Security & Economic Prosperity', Dr Najam Abbas Naqvi, Chairman National Centre for GIS and Space Applications, outlined how advancements in satellite technology, earth observation, and global navigation systems are providing innovative solutions for sectors like agriculture, urban planning, and disaster management. Dr Naqvi acknowledged the importance of building a skilled workforce and

fostering collaborative research between academia and industry to further leverage these technologies. He urged policymakers to incentivise private sector involvement through funding and tax benefits while advocating for the establishment of aerospace innovation clusters to drive research and commercialisation. Dr Naqvi stressed that leveraging PPPs would be essential in sharing risks and advancing large-scale space projects. He forecasted that with the right strategies in place, Pakistan could position itself to benefit from the growing global space economy, projected to be worth USD 1.8 trillion by 2035.

In his address on 'Aerospace Evolution in Pakistan: Initiatives and Impacts', Air Vice Marshal Dr Liaquat Ullah Iqbal, Director General Public Relations & Public



Science and Technology Park (NASTP), outlined the strategic vision behind PAF's flagship initiative. He articulated the critical role of NASTP as the driving force for the Triple Helix Model, highlighting the interconnectedness of the IT, computing, and aerospace industries. Dr Iqbal provided an overview of the various initiatives undertaken under NASTP's infrastructure, which spans five cities, each focusing on distinct domains. He also briefly touched upon the business strategies and future prospects of innovative technologies and their incubation within NASTP. Commending the collaborative efforts of multiple ministries, he emphasised the critical role played by thorough documentation and approvals at various levels in securing the Special

Economic Zone (SEZ) status for NASTP. He affirmed that youth development, private sector engagement, diaspora outreach, and international collaborations are essential pillars for NASTP's sustained growth, positioning it as a key player in advancing Pakistan's aerospace sector.

In his Concluding Remarks and Vote of Thanks, Air Marshal Javaid Ahmed (Retd), President CASS Islamabad, articulated the need to evaluate both the positive and negative aspects of technology. He remarked that the Ukraine conflict highlighted how unmanned systems are reshaping modern warfare, while the recent events in Beirut underscored the growing risk of consumer technology weaponisation. He stressed that technology was evolving rapidly; delivering solutions at

an unprecedented pace but oversight and regulations remain far behind. President CASS also warned that if the global technological divide between East and West deepens, Pakistan might be forced to make a critical choice. He acknowledged Pakistan's pockets of excellence in academia and among individuals, advocating for the continued harnessing of these capabilities. In the end, he reflected on the enduring spirit of indigenisation and innovation in the country, which, he asserted, remains key to future progress.

The seminar was followed by active participation from a diverse audience, including retired military officers, scholars, journalists, and students, who engaged in an interactive question and answer session, enriching the discourse on this critical subject.

**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
81,483.64	81,850.50	
Day's High	Day's Low	
82,010.09	81,107.38	
Index Value	Change	
12,282,661,158	-366.86	
Percentage	Time	
-0.45%	24 Sept, 2024 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
8,282.76	+23.05	
Percentage	Time	
+0.28%	24 Sept, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
42,148.75	+24.10	
Percentage	Time	
+0.057%	24 Sept, 1:23 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
37,940.59	+216.68	
Percentage	Time	
+0.57%	24 Sept, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	185.25	187.50
Bahrain Dinar	732.30	740.30
Canadian Dollar	207.10	209.50
China Yuan	38.25	38.65
Danish Krone	40.03	40.43
Euro	308.85	311.60
Hong Kong Dollar	35.68	36.03
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.93	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	900.65	910.15
Malaysian Ringgit	59.3	60.3
New Zealand \$	169.34	171.34
Norwegians Krone	26.14	26.44
Omani Riyal	718.50	727.00
Qatari Riyal	76.44	77.14
Saudi Riyal	73.85	74.40
Singapore Dollar	201.85	203.85
Swedish Korona	26.15	26.45
Swiss Franc	325.95	328.75
Thai Bhat	7.55	7.7
U.A.E Dirham	75.55	76.20
UK Pound Sterling	366.60	370.10
US Dollar	279.1	280.70

# Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari credits ICCI team for his achievements

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has said that under his leadership, ICCI has risen to the top position among country's chambers, thanks to the contributions of various committees formed to promote linkages with key government departments. The hard work of these committees has yielded significant results, earning the Chamber widespread recognition and respect.

He said this while addressing 'Best Performance Committee Awards' ceremony held here at S. M. Muneer Auditorium. He commended the awardees for their seamless performance for the pride of the Chamber and the benefit of the community extended heartfelt congratulations to them and expressed the hope that they will continue to work with the same spirit and zeal.

Bakhtawari also highlighted his commitment to selfless service to the business fraternity, citing it as his top priority throughout his tenure. He expressed gratitude for achieving numerous milestones, attributing his success to Allah Almighty.

He reaffirmed his commitment to community services, vowing to support students' educational pursuits by adding that his goal is to provide opportunities and resources,



empowering the next generation to achieve excellence and contribute meaningfully to the nation.

In his address, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari gave the entire credit of Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari's success as President to the awardees and other

ICCI executives and members by saying that they all have to continue the mission of business community's service for the economic well-being of the country. He added that they have to strengthen this connection by promoting positivity and unity in their ranks for contribution in the prosperity of the motherland.

On their part, the awardees came on the stage one by one expressed gratitude to President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari for recognizing their services and bestowing them with awards. They vowed to continue their hard work with the same spirit in future also for the cause of the country.

## Inauguration

RAWALPINDI: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam inaugurating a solar energy project of a beverage company on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

## IT Industry from across Country Elects New CEC

**Tahir Amin Malik**

LAHORE: Mr. Muhammad Zohaib Khan, Chairman of Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA), has apprised that the IT industry from across Pakistan has elected the new 10-member central executive committee (CEC) for the tenure of 2024-26; as the tenure of outgoing CEC comes to an end on September 30th, 2024.

Mr. Nadeem Malik, Secretary General of P@SHA, announced the results after vote counting in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad -

whereas election for the apex IT body's office bearers will take place on September 23rd, 2024. The new office bearers and CEC of P@SHA will take charge on October 1st, 2024, he added.

Additionally, P@SHA is the only Pakistani IT industry entity globally registered with and recognized by institutions such as WISTA (World Information Technology and Services Alliance); ASOCIO (Asian Oceanic Computing Industry Organization); APICITA (Asia Pacific ICT Alliance) and Digital Cooperation Organization (DCO).

## inDrive crosses 5 billion deals

**Celebrating 5 billion deals with inDrive**

All deals use our unique 'set your fair price' bidding model, where customers can negotiate directly with service providers



**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan inDrive, a leading ride hailing company in Pakistan is celebrating a major milestone: the completion of 5 billion deals on its global mobility and urban services platform as of September, 2024. The landmark 5 billionth deal was sealed by a driver and passenger in Peru, marking a significant moment for inDrive since the company launched its innovative bid-based pricing model in 2012 with the goal of making ridesharing pricing fairer for both drivers and passengers.

Mark Loughran, President and Deputy CEO at inDrive, commented: "I am thrilled to congratulate the entire team at inDrive and thank our loyal community around the globe for having completed 5 billion deals - an important milestone that is a testament to the global scale inDrive has reached over the past decade. More than just a number, each of these transactions represents making a meaningful impact

— whether it's providing services in underserved areas, creating job opportunities, or helping support non-profit initiatives through inVision, which enables access to sports, art and educational opportunities in communities where inDrive operates. Our mission has always been to improve people's lives, and with this milestone, we are even closer to our goal of positively impacting 1 billion people by 2030. This achievement fuels our commitment to not only sustainably growing our platform but also driving positive social change."

Since launching ride-hailing, its core service, eleven years ago, inDrive passengers have traveled for a total of 123,500 years, covering a distance of 32 billion km. inDrive has also expanded to include a range of additional services, most recently launching financial services for drivers in Mexico, and continues to grow its operations and expand into new regions - including developed markets - worldwide.

## Emirates commits support to Asia Rugby



**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Emirates has announced a new multi-year partnership as the Title Sponsor of Asia Rugby, furthering its commitment to growing the sport in untapped markets across Asia. The partnership will enable Asia Rugby to stage various 7s and 15s tournaments, as well as Asia Rugby Championships, spanning 36 countries.

Sir Tim Clark, President of Emirates Airline, said, "Emirates has a long history of supporting

rugby, and this partnership will help expand the sport's reach and create opportunities for young athletes."

Qais Al-Dhalai, Asia Rugby President, highlighted the synergy between Emirates and Asia Rugby, with the UAE serving as a strategic base for the sport's growth across the continent.

As part of the deal, Emirates' branding will feature across 21 tournaments over three years, including the Asia Rugby Men's and Women's Championships,

Sevens Series, and youth competitions. The airline's involvement will begin with the Asia Rugby Emirates Sevens Series in Hangzhou, China, in September.

Emirates has been a major supporter of rugby globally, sponsoring the Rugby World Cup, Dubai 7s, and the South African Emirates Lions. This partnership aims to strengthen rugby's presence in Asia, home to 60% of the world's population, aligning with Emirates' goal to empower athletes and foster a passionate fanbase.

Emirates has been sponsoring Rugby World Cup (RWC) since 2007 and in 2011, became RWC's worldwide partner, further cementing the airline as one of the world's biggest supporters of the sport of rugby. The airline also sponsors the jerseys of World Rugby's Match Officials who take to the field in their Emirates 'Fly Better' kits. Emirates' strong rugby partnerships also extend to the South African Emirates Lions and their home venue, Emirates Airline Park.

## CCP approves Nishat Chunian Group's corporate restructuring

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved internal restructuring involving M/s. Nishat Chunian Limited (NCL), M/s. Nishat Chunian Power Limited (NCPL), M/s. Nishat Mills Limited (NML), and the CEO of NCL, Mr. Shahzad Saleem. This internal restructuring,

undertaken as part of the Scheme of Arrangement, aims to streamline the corporate structure of the Nishat Chunian Group.

The CCP's Phase 1 competition assessment has revealed the primary business activities of each undertaking involved in the transaction. Nishat Chunian Limited (NCL), a publicly listed company, engages in textile-related opera-

tions, including spinning, weaving, dyeing, fabric processing, and the generation and sale of electricity. Nishat Chunian Power Limited (NCPL), a public listed company, specializes in building, owning, and operating fuel-fired power stations. It functions as an Independent Power Producer (IPP) and has a Power Purchase Agreement with the Central Power Purchasing

Agency (Guarantee) Ltd (CPPA-G). Similarly, Nishat Mills Limited (NML), another publicly listed company, focuses on textile manufacturing with activities spanning spinning, weaving, and the production of various fabrics, while also engaging in electricity generation. In its assessment, the CCP has identified the relevant product markets as 'spinning, weaving,

home textile, and thermal power generation- CPPA-G'. The restructuring will lead to a nominal increase in Mr. Shahzad's shareholding in NCL, while NML will experience a slight rise in its shareholding in NCPL. Despite these changes, the CCP has confirmed that the transaction will not result in any market dominance by the merger parties.

## Fly Finnah Statement

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Fly Jinnah spokesperson said: "Fly Jinnah confirms that flight 9P846 from Karachi to Lahore on September 23, 2024, experienced a smoke alarm indication in the cargo compartment upon landing in Lahore.

In accordance with standard safety protocols, the flight crew followed the standard procedures, notified the airport, and the aircraft with all crew and passengers onboard landed safely in Lahore.

Our technical team is currently conducting a thorough inspection to identify the cause of the alarm.

We regret the inconvenience caused and assure the safety of our passengers and crew remains our main priority."

## Gold prices up by Rs.1,100 Rs 273,300 per tola



ISLAMABAD, SEP 24 (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.1,100 and was sold at Rs.273,000 on Tuesday compared to its sale at Rs.271,900 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 943 to Rs. 234,053 from Rs.233,110 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs 214,550 from Rs. 213,685, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs 2,950 and Rs 2,529.14, respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$11 to \$2,628 from \$2,617, the Association reported.

# PCB's 'Connection Camp' to connect glorious past in test cricket

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) will host a high-level 'Connection Camp' with a view to connect with glorious past in test cricket, give a vivid and unified vision and set a roadmap for the future of test cricket in the country during a day-long session at a local hotel, here on Monday.

The 'Connection Camp', to be chaired by Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi, is an outcome of a series of consultations he held with former cricketers since assuming the office earlier this year. Nine elite cricketers, including Babar Azam (Pakistan's white-ball captain), Fakhar Zaman, Mohammad Rizwan, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Saud Shakeel, Shadab Khan, Shaheen Shah Afridi, and Shan Masood (Pakistan's red-ball captain). Joining them will be national team head coaches Jason Gillespie and Gary Kirsten, assistant coach Azhar Mahmood and high-performance specialist David Reid

will attend the Connection Camp.

The PCB, in a press release, maintained that the session would focus on fostering stronger collaboration between players and the PCB, while the board would reaffirm its commitment to supporting players in meeting strategic goals. It further said that the ultimate aim was for players to take a leading role in inspiring the next generation of cricketers through outstanding performances.

Chairman PCB Naqvi believes the Connection Camp is a critical step toward unifying our approach to restore Pakistan cricket to its former glory, adding that the aim is to identify key issues, foster open dialogue and collectively agree on a strategic path forward.

He said the PCB remains optimistic that this session, which builds on prior discussions with former cricketers, will lead to a results-driven strategy that improves both player management and team performance.

Mohsin Naqvi further said that this



is the first step in an ongoing journey to reshape Pakistan cricket. The PCB will continue these collaborative efforts to ensure long-term success, keeping fans at the heart of our mission."

Pakistan Test team captain Shan Masood said: "The Connection Camp is an important moment for us as players. We're fully committed to working with the PCB to reignite the pride and passion that Pakistan cricket is known for. These discussions will help us set a strong course for the future and we are excited to be part of this collaborative effort."

"The outcomes of the session will include performance benchmarks, player

development programmes and strategies to enhance grassroots cricket. This initiative aligns with the PCB's vision to not only improve immediate team performance but also ensure long-term sustainability of excellence in the sport."

Pakistan men's team red-ball head coach Jason Gillespie said that the camp provides a valuable opportunity for open dialogue and alignment between the coaching staff and players. We're all striving toward the same goal - raising the standard of Pakistan cricket and creating a culture of winning."

Gary Kirsten, Pakistan men's team white-ball head coach, said as a coach, it is my responsibility to setup the best environment possible for the players to thrive. He reaffirmed to focus on refining approach in white-ball cricket to meet the standards of the highest levels of international competition, adding that every possible effort will be made to ensure that people of Pakistan are proud of their national team.

# Lake City Panthers, Bahria Town Champions ODI Cup finals

**Sports Desk**

FAISALABAD: Lake City Panthers won the honor of playing in the final of the Bahria Town Champions ODI Cup. They defeated UMT Markhors by 7 wickets in the qualifier played at Iqbal Stadium on Tuesday. Panthers spinner Saeem Ayub's career-best performance of five wickets and 33 runs was an excellent all-round performance. In addition, Hasnain also took three wickets while Usman Khan scored an aggressive half-century. Saeem Ayub and Mohammad Hasnain were joint player of the match. It is the first time in this tournament that the team batting first has faced defeat. Allied Bank Stallions will face Noorpur Lions in the first eliminator on Wednesday. The winner of this match will face UMT Markhors in the second eliminator on September 27. The winner of the second eliminator will face Lake City Panthers in the final on September 29. In the qualifier match, Markhors won the toss and elected to bat first. But



the whole team got out by scoring only 137 runs in 36 overs. Lake City Panthers achieved the target for 3 wickets in 23.4 overs. Markhors had a disappointing start. Haseebullah was dismissed by Ali Raza in his first over on an individual score of 3 runs. In the next over,

Muhammad Hasnain took the wickets of Kamran Ghulam (22) and captain Muhammad Rizwan (zero) on consecutive balls and when Hussain got his Fakhrzaman was dismissed for an individual score of 11 in the fourth over, and Markhors' score was only 25 runs for 4 wickets.

Three of these four wickets that fell were the result of wicket-keeper Usman Khan's catches. Salman Ali Agha and Iftikhar Ahmed managed to add 77 runs to the score. Iftikhar Ahmed was run out after scoring 39 runs. Salman Ali Agha scored 52 runs with the help of one six and four

fours and was dismissed by Saeem Ayub. This is his third half-century in this tournament. Saim Ayub's spin bowling easily wiped out Markhors' batting. He got 5 wickets by giving only 24 runs which is his best bowling in List A ODI. Mohammad Hasnain got 3 players out by giving 25 runs.

Panthers had to lose 3 wickets to reach the target of 138 runs. Saeem Ayub was dismissed for 33 runs with the help of 6 fours. Omar Masdiq played an innings of 35 runs with the help of a six and five fours. With the help of sixes and five fours, he made his team's victory possible by playing a brilliant innings of 54 runs not out.

**Short score.**

UMT scores 137 (36 overs). Salman Ali Agha 52. Iftikhar Ahmed 39. Saim Ayub 24 / 5 wickets. Muhammad Hasnain 25 / 3 wickets.

Panthers. 143 runs 3 players out (23.4 overs) Usman Khan 54 not out. Umar Siddique 35. Saim Ayub 33.

The result Lake City Panthers won by 7 wickets.

# Pakistan's Haris beats England's Blackwell in second round of British Open

**Sports Desk**

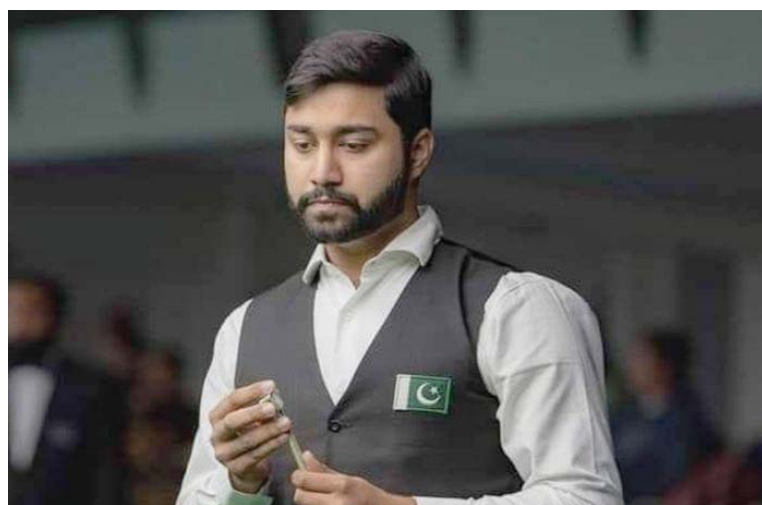
CHELTHENHAM: Pakistan snooker player Haris Tahir continued to prove his mettle as he outclassed England's Simon Blackwell in the second round of the British Open 2024 here on Tuesday.

Tahir, who has been in brilliant form, started the second-round fixture on a high by winning the opening frames with scores of 71-32 and 63-16.

Blackwell pulled one back by winning the third frame, which saw him scoring a 56-point break, and reduced Tahir's lead to 2-1.

But, Haris Tahir, fuelled with momentum, denied Simon Blackwell any chance of a comeback and won the next two frames comprehensively to secure a statement victory and advance into the Last 32 of the British Open 2024.

Tahir qualified for the final stages of the tournament by edging past Scotland's



Dean Young in the qualifying round last month.

In a thrilling snooker match, Tahir and

Young battled it out in a series of closely contested frames. Tahir took the lead by winning the first frame with a score of

58-43, setting the stage for an intense showdown.

Young retaliated in the second frame, narrowly defeating Tahir with a score of 68-65. Undeterred, Tahir staged a comeback in the third frame, securing a convincing 78-31 win before continuing his impressive form to clinch the fourth frame with a score of 74-13.

However, the momentum shifted as the Scottish cueist fought back vigorously, displaying dominance in the fifth frame with a score of 73-48. He followed this up with a nail-biting victory in the sixth frame, edging out Tahir 69-62 in a closely fought contest.

In the final and decisive seventh frame, Haris Tahir secured his triumph with a score of 63-36. His overall performance throughout the match was commendable, and this last frame solidified his well-deserved victory in the qualifying round of the British Open.

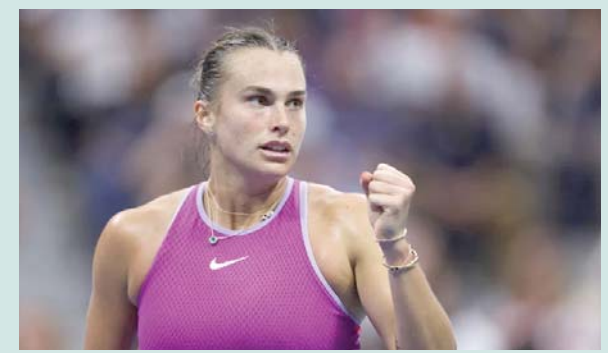
## Three more matches decided in PCB Senior Inter-District Cricket Contest

*'Arbaz Khan hits ton while Fawad Khan's ten wickets in the match'*

**Sports Desk**

KARACHI: Three more matches were decided in the PCB Senior Inter-District Cricket Tournament in Karachi Region. In the first match, Regional Cricket Association Zone VI easily defeated Regional Cricket Association Zone One by 371 runs, in the second match, Zone II defeated Zone V by 5 runs after a thrilling contest, while the third match was played between Zone IV and Zone VII. There is a tie in the first match Zone VI was bowled out for 219 runs in 66.3 overs at RLCA Ground Gulberg. Skipper Akbar ur Rahman scored 66 runs, Abdul Rahman 49 runs, Jahanzeb Sultan 35 runs, Khawaja Mohammad Nafay scored 25 runs. Bahadur Ali took 4-22 wickets and Umar Zahid took 3-57 wickets. In reply, RCAK Zone One was bowled out for 98 runs in 41.1 overs in the first innings in front of the devastating bowling of the Zone VI bowlers. Taha Mehmood scored 30 runs. Left arm leg-spinner Tariq Khan took 4-32 wickets, Saifullah 3-20 and Raza ul Hasan took 2-19. In the second innings, zone VI declared the innings by scoring 386 runs in 90.4 overs. Arbaz Khan hit brilliant 115 runs, Adeel Meco 83, Jahanzeb Sultan 54 and Abdul Rahman scored 49 runs. Ghani Rahman took 5 for 88. RCAK Zone One in the second innings chasing 507 runs and got out after scoring 136 runs in 63.2 overs. Bahadur Ali was prominent with 30 runs. Off-spinner Saifullah took 4-32 wickets and Tariq Khan took 2-51. In the second match Zone II batted first at the Landhi Gymkhana ground and were bowled out for 154 runs in 44.4 overs in the first innings. Wahaj Riaz 66, Hamza Sarwar scored 21 runs, Junaid Ilyas captured 38-4, Moazzam Malik took 3-30. In reply, RCAK Zone V got out after scoring 153 runs in 52.3 overs in the first innings. Jawad Mehmood scored 40 runs, Muhammad Hussain scored 34 runs, Basir Shah took 4-32 wickets, Umar Ejaz 3-42, Ali Shinwari took 2-34 wickets. Zone two scored 279 runs for the loss of 9 wickets in 89 overs in the second innings and declared the innings. Wahaj Riaz 54, Tariq Bakht 46, Umar Zeeshan Loya 43, Hamza Sarwar scored 47 runs. Sohail Iqbal, Owais Qarni and Muhammad Abbas dismissed two players each. RCAK Zone V got out after scoring 275 runs in 65.5 overs in the second innings. Arsalan Bashir scored 66 runs, Hassan Khan 45 runs, and Moazzam Malik scored 47 runs. Basir Shah took 4-56 wickets, Umar Ijaz 70-3. In the third match RCAK Zone VII first innings at KCCA stadium, they were bowled out by making 186 runs in 68.1 overs. Waqar Ahmed 66, Zafar Ali Khan 36, Kashif Khan scored 33 runs. Afnan Khan 3 for 28, Muhammad Asif 2-45, Naimat Khan 2-38. In reply, Zone IV scored 135 runs in the first innings in 42.2 overs. Ahad Ali scored 34 runs, Yasir Mushtaq 23, Muhammad Afzal 22. Aftab Khan took 4-35 wickets, Fawad Khan 3-30 while Zafar Ali Khan took 2-23. RCAK Zone VII scored 112 runs in 39.3 overs in the second innings Huzaifa Munir scored 37 runs, Naimat Khan 5 for 45, Afnan Khan 3-30, Muhammad Uzair Ali Khan took 2-10. In reply, Zone IV was bowled out in the second innings after scoring 163 runs in 63.1 overs. Yasir Mushtaq scored 77 runs not out, Abdullah Fazal scored 37 runs, Fawad Khan took 7 wickets for 38 runs and took 10 wickets in the match, Aftab Khan took 3 for 43.

## US Open champion Sabalenka chases year-end number one ranking



Aryna Sabalenka said Tuesday that she wants to cap off a stellar year by returning to the top of the world rankings.

The world number two is the top seed at the China Open this week following the withdrawal of top-ranked Iga Swiatek, the defending champion, because of undisclosed "personal matters".

Fresh from winning the US Open, Aryna Sabalenka can take a large step towards overhauling the Pole at the top of the rankings with victory in Beijing.

"Of course that's one of my goals, to finish the season at world number one," the Belarusian, who won the Australian Open at the start of the year for a second time, said.

But the 26-year-old added: "I'm not trying to focus on that, I'm trying to focus on my game. There is only three tournaments left."

"I'm just trying to bring my best tennis on court. After the season, I'll see if it was enough to finish the year at number one or have to improve something else to get to number one."

The three-time major champion first became world number one a year ago, before being usurped by Swiatek.

"To be called the best player in the world, that means everything. It's good to know that you've been doing the right thing, all of that hours of training, wasn't a waste of time," she said.

Aryna Sabalenka will be playing for the first time since beating Jessica Pegula in the final in New York earlier this month. She has a bye in the first round.

Pegula also features at the prestigious 1000 WTA hardcourt event in the Chinese capital, along with fellow American Coco Gauff, four-time major champion Naomi Osaka and China's Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen.

The competition begins on Wednesday.

A men's ATP 500 event runs alongside the women's tournament.

# Aamir Jamal returns as Pakistan unveil squad for first England Test

**Sports Desk**

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday, announced a 15-member squad including fast bowling all-rounder Aamir Jamal for the first Test against England, set to take place in Multan from 7-11 October.

Jamal was initially named in Pakistan's squad for the two-match home Test series against Bangladesh but was released ahead of the commencement of the series.

The all-rounder sustained a back injury during his stint with Warwickshire in the County Championship on June 8 and has been out of action since then.

Meanwhile, right-arm pacer Khurram Shehzad, who was part of the Bangladesh Tests, is recovering from an injury and thus was replaced by left-arm spinner Noman Ali, who has 47 wickets in 15 Tests.

The other notable absentees are Kamran Ghulam, who was a part of the squad for Bangladesh Tests but did not make it to the Playing XI, and fast bowler Mohammad Ali.

"Kamran Ghulam and Mohammad Ali, who were part of the squad for the Bangladesh Tests, remain firmly in the selectors' plans," said PCB in a statement.

"However, due to the selection

policy's emphasis on consistency and continuity, and the belief that 15 players are sufficient for a Test, they have been advised and encouraged to continue representing their teams in the Champions One-Day Cup and the President's Cup, starting on 3 October, to ensure they stay match-ready through competitive cricket," the statement added.

Following the squad announcement and based on the recommendation of head coach Jason Gillespie, the selected players have been withdrawn from the Champions One-Day Cup playoffs to allow them some rest ahead of the series.

"With a busy domestic and international cricket schedule, it makes sense to give our players some much-needed rest ahead of the Test series against England," said Gillespie.

"We are very much looking forward to the series against England here in Pakistan and cannot wait for it to begin. We are excited about playing in front of our wonderful supporters," he added.

The squad will assemble in Multan on Monday, 30 September, with the training camp commencing on 1 October.

Pakistan Squad for first England Test:

Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel (vice-captain), Aamir



Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Noman Ali, Saim Ayub, Salman

Hurraira, Mohammad Rizwan (wicket-keeper), Naseem Shah, Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wicket-keeper), and Shaheen Shah Afridi.

## Inaugural Session UNGA

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif attending the inaugural session of United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday.



Photo: Online

## PM to attend UNGA opening session, reception by UN secretary-general today

**Spokesman Report**

UNITED NATIONS: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will attend the opening session of the 79th United Nations General Assembly being held today marking the beginning of the annual gathering of world leaders.

The prime minister, along with a high-level delegation, arrived here in New York on Monday evening to attend the annual session of the 193-member UN General Assembly and address multiple other meetings, besides meeting the participating leaders on the sidelines.

Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Information and Broadcasting Minister Attaullah Tarar, Federal Education and Professional Training Minister Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, and Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi are members of the prime minister's delegation.

He will hold an informal interaction with the world leaders at a reception hosted by the UN Secretary-General for the dignitaries participating in the UNGA session.

He is also set to meet with President of Maldives Mohamed Muizzu and discuss ways to promote bilateral cooperation.

## Finance Minister Aurangzeb optimistic about IMF review



China, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

Aurangzeb stated in an interview with Geo News, "We are very hopeful that the board will approve the 37-month, seven billion dollar programme, under which we are fully committed to implementing structural reforms."

He highlighted the government's intention to convey a clear message that it is not "desperate to borrow" as both KIBOR and policy rates decline.

"If we choose to borrow domestically, we will do so on our own terms," referencing the government's decision to reject bids for Treasury Bills and Pakistan Investment Bonds.

Aurangzeb noted that such actions are supported by the successful conclusion of the nine-month stand-by arrangement with the IMF. He expressed gratitude to the Chinese government for its longstanding partnership and support in relation to the Fund programme.

Pakistan and the IMF reached an agreement on the 37-month loan programme in July. The IMF said the programme is subject to approval from its executive board and obtaining "timely confirmation of necessary financing assurances from Pakistan's development and bilateral partners".

Looking ahead, the minister stressed the need for adhering to the reform agenda, which includes improvements in taxation, energy, and the privatization of state-owned enterprises. He affirmed that the government remains committed to such a course of action.

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has expressed strong optimism regarding the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) review of Pakistan's \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF), scheduled for today (Wednesday).

Pakistan and the IMF reached an agreement on the 37-month loan programme in July. The IMF said the programme is subject to approval from its executive board and obtaining "timely confirmation of necessary financing assurances from Pakistan's development and bilateral partners".

Additionally, there are worries that the government has struggled to secure new funding to address an external financing gap of \$2 billion for the current fiscal year.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif earlier in the month that "friendly" countries have helped Pakistan meet the requirements necessary to secure an IMF bailout.

The IMF's board is set to convene on September 25 to evaluate the EFF for Pakistan. This meeting follows concerns that the release of funds may be contingent on delays in debt rollover confirmations from

## Zardari underlines importance of newspapers in supporting democracy, human rights

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday called on newspapers to champion democratic values, raise awareness of socio-economic issues, and promote tolerance, interfaith harmony, patriotism, civic responsibility, and respect for human rights.

The president, in his message on the National Newspaper Readership Day being observed on Wednesday (September 25), urged newspapers to play their role in promoting moral, ethical,

and democratic values in the society.

He further asked the newspapers to educate the people about socio-economic issues as well as promote tolerance, inter-faith harmony, patriotism, civic responsibility, and respect for human rights.

Extending heartfelt congratulations to the All-Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) on the National Newspaper Readership Day, Zardari emphasized that newspapers were vital for raising political awareness, informing citizens about their rights and respon-



sibilities, and aiding them in making informed decisions. "In today's fast-paced digital age, where misinformation

and fake news can go viral rapidly, the role of newspapers has become even more critical. Newspapers need to provide accurate and well-researched news to discourage fake news by using modern information technology. Their role in promoting facts over sensationalism is essential to counter the spread of false information," he stressed.

A responsible press, President Zardari said, "upholds the highest standards of accuracy, fairness and balance in reporting news. A responsible press not only provides a plat-

form for marginalized voices to be heard but also generates healthy discussion among the stakeholders on important issues. It is, therefore, imperative that the press must play a constructive role in guiding and educating the people on important issues."

The president said on the day, it was vital to reaffirm support for a free and responsible press, which was essential for the proper functioning of democracy and for influencing public opinion on both national and international matters.

## Durable peace in the world not possible without permanent resolution of Palestine, Kashmir disputes: Tarar

**Spokesman Report**

NEW YORK: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that durable peace in the world was not possible without permanent resolution of Palestine and Kashmir issues.

Talking to media outside the United Nations General Assembly, he said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had raised both issues at all international fora.

He said on Palestine issue, the PM had stated that war crimes were being committed in the area, genocide of armless Palestinians was being committed

and the world should take notice and bring the perpetrator Israel to justice.

He said the Prime Minister had also made clear that Pakistan wanted restoration of pre-1967 borders in which Jerusalem should be the capital of Palestine.

"We want immediate ceasefire in Gaza and accountability of the aggressor Israel for war crimes and genocide being committed in Palestine", he remarked.

Tarar said that Pakistan had dispatched humanitarian aid through ships and C130s. Moreover Pakistan had offered to give admission to Palestinian medical students in Pakistani institutions, so that they could complete their education without any hindrance.



He said the Kashmir issue would figure in the Prime Minister's engagements in the United Nations.

Besides, he said climate change was a major issue for Pakistan which contrib-

uted only 2 per cent of the gas emissions but had to bear the brunt of adverse effects of the climate change.

He said the UN secretary general had himself visited Pakistan and himself saw the impact of climate change in Pakistan due to heavy floods.

He further said that Pakistan had also badly suffered in the war against terrorism and it was still suffering in this war launched by the western powers.

The minister said that after 2018 Pakistan was isolated on foreign policy affairs as Pakistan's friends both in East and West were unhappy.

He said now the warmth in relations with all friendly countries was restored and cooperation was showing surge.

## Lot of questions still unanswerable in SC reserved seats judgement: Azam Tarar

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Monday said that a lot of questions were still answerable in the detailed judgement announced by the Supreme Court in the reserved seats case.

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), he said, had not been a party in the reserved seats case at any forum, including the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Peshawar High Court (PHC) or the SC.

He said courts were used to give decisions on principles that who had filed the case and what relief was prayed by the petitioner.



Such questions were not answered in the reserved seats case as the apex court seemed to have not examined those aspects, the law minister said while addressing a press conference.

Azam Tarar said that independent candidates had joined the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) willfully and that their move was irreversible as per the law.

He said that the ECP was an independent institution working under constitutional oath and it had to render its responsibility under the law.

Similarly, he said, that the legislation was the sole prerogative of the Parliament. The judgment had not commented on the amendments in the election law, he added.

## TikToker arrested for counterfeit '804' number plate



**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Popular TikToker Nadeem Mubarak, known as Nadeem Nani Wala, has been arrested for using a counterfeit number plate, "IK 804" on his vehicle. Authorities confirmed the arrest on Monday.

According to the Station House Officer (SHO) of Defence Lahore, Nadeem was apprehended during a routine check on Main Boulevard Defence, where the fake number plate was uncovered.

He was taken into custody at the scene, and police seized his vehicle, filing a case for the illegal use of a false number plate.

The vehicle, marked as 804, has since been impounded.

In a related move, police officials have received strict instructions from SP Headquarters Ahmad Zunair Cheema prohibiting them from creating or sharing TikTok content while in uniform.

The new policy enforces serious disciplinary action for any officer, regardless of gender, who engages in TikTok activities during duty hours.

The circular stressed a zero-tolerance approach for content that could damage the police department's reputation.

This directive follows a recent tragic incident involving TikTok, where a young man in Liaquatnagar was shot and killed on September 12. Authorities reported that Ahmed was shot in the eye while standing outside his home.

Furthermore, police officers have been ordered to delete any existing TikTok accounts or videos to help maintain the department's image. SP Cheema highlighted the necessity of upholding high standards of professionalism in all police conduct, stating, "The integrity of the force must be maintained, and officers are expected to reflect this in their online presence as well."