

DAILY MIRROR

Quetta
Karachi

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Wednesday, October, 02, 2024

Rabi-Al-Awwal, 27, 1446

Article 63-A verdict apparently intended to weaken no-confidence motions: CJP Isa

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa on Monday raised concerns over the inconsistent interpretation of Article 63-A, which governs the disqualification of lawmakers, during a Supreme Court hearing on review petitions related to the disqualification of defecting members of the National Assembly.

The chief justice called for adherence to the constitution's text, emphasising the need for clarity in the application of the law.

Presiding over a five-member bench, Chief Justice Isa questioned the contradiction in rulings

that suggest a lawmaker should be de-seated upon defection while also leaving it to Parliament to decide the duration of the disqualification.

"If the constitution clearly states that a disqualified member will be de-seated, then that is the action that must be followed," Isa said, highlighting that there should be no ambiguity in implementing the constitution's provisions.

Like Trachoma, PM Shehbaz urges sustained efforts to eliminate polio, hepatitis from Pakistan

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday stressed the urgent need to eradicate polio and hepatitis in the country through sustained efforts, similar to the successful elimination of Trachoma, a contagious eye infection that causes inflammation on the inner eyelids. Speaking at a function where Dr Lou Dapeng, Head of Mission for the World Health Organization in Pakistan, presented a Trachoma-free Pakistan certificate to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he said that the certificate symbolized the dedication of the Health Ministry and other stakeholders in the effort to eliminate the disease.

Trachoma is a disease caused by infection by the Chlamydia trachomatis bacterium and can result in irreversible blindness if left untreated. This achievement marks a significant milestone in public health.

The prime minister directed the relevant

authorities to sustain their hard work and dedication, emphasizing that such efforts could elevate Pakistan to new heights of excellence, as long as they were prepared to tackle the challenges ahead.

He recalled that during his tenure as Punjab chief minister, he initiated effective programmes to combat the diseases, and hoped that the same would continue under the current leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and in other provinces as well. He offered the cooperation of Federal Government in that regard.

PM Shehbaz appreciated the collaborative efforts of the Health Ministry, provincial governments, NGOs, experts, and other departments in eradicating Trachoma, which had helped save the sight of hundreds.

He instructed the relevant authorities to take preventive measures, and establish effective supervision and checks and balances to stop reemergence of the disease in the country.

He also stressed that the Supreme Court is operating transparently, with no decisions being made behind closed doors.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses a ceremony with regard to elimination of TRACHOMA as a public health problem from Pakistan.

Bilawal calls for judicial reforms, removal of 'black laws' enacted by dictators

'Ending the dictatorship-imposed black laws is essential for Pakistan's democratic evolution,' PPP chairman says

APP

QUETTA: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday called for the urgent abolition of laws enacted during the country's dictatorial regimes, branding them as "black laws" that are a hindrance to democratic progress.

Addressing the Balochistan High Court Bar, Bilawal emphasised the need for comprehensive judicial reforms and a renewed focus on merit-based appointments within the legal system.

"Ending the dictatorship-imposed black laws is essential for Pakistan's democratic evolution," Bilawal said. He highlighted the sacrifices made by past generations for the restoration of democracy, adding that these outdated laws continue to hold the country back.

"Our struggle for democracy spans generations, and it's time to remove the remnants of dic-

tatorship from our legal framework."

Bilawal praised the resilience of Balochistan's lawyers in their ongoing battle against authoritarianism.

"Balochistan's lawyers have always stood firm against dictatorship, and their fight for justice has been a beacon for the entire nation," he said. He also acknowledged the challenges faced by the province, including terrorism and political instability, noting that legal reforms were necessary to stabilise the region.

PPP Chairman calls for judicial reforms and constitutional court

Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari outlined a broader agenda for judicial reform, calling for the creation of a constitutional court to handle critical cases and ensure swift justice.

He criticised the existing judicial system, particularly the delay in case resolutions and the high number of unfilled judicial positions.

NA Speaker, Zakir Naik discuss challenges facing Muslim Ummah

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Renowned Islamic scholar Dr Zakir Abdul Karim Naik held a meeting with Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Islamabad today.

The matters pertaining to the challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah, interfaith harmony, and other important issues were discussed.

Talking to him, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq emphasized the need for unity among the Muslim Ummah.

Ayaz Sadiq lauded the services rendered by Dr. Zakir Naik in spreading the message of peace and love of Islam around the world.

He said the Constitution of Pakistan provides equal rights to all citizens and that the rights of minorities are fully protected in the country. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Zakir Naik said that Islam is a religion of peace, love, and brotherhood, and his missionary work aims to highlight the true message of peace and love in Islam across the world. He praised Pakistan's role in promoting the true teachings of Islam and fostering unity among Muslims.

Dr Zakir Naik meets Maulana Fazlur Rehman, lauds efforts for Muslim unity

INP

ISLAMABAD: Renowned Islamic scholar Dr Zakir Naik, currently visiting Pakistan, visited the residence of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman, where the two discussed matters of religious unity and global challenges facing the Muslim community on Tuesday.

Dr Naik was accompanied by his son, Tariq Naik.

JUI-F spokesperson Aslam Ghauri confirmed that Maulana Fazlur Rehman warmly welcomed Dr Naik alongside a high-level delegation. During the meeting, Fazl praised Dr Naik's contributions to defending Islam, particularly in answering complex questions regarding the faith.

"You have graced our home with your presence," Fazl said, adding that Dr Naik's visit would bring fur-

ther blessings to his mission. He commended Dr Naik's style of addressing religious queries, stating, "The way Dr Naik answers questions is a defence of the Muslim Ummah."

The JUI-F chief further acknowledged that many have been inspired and embraced Islam through Dr Naik's preaching. "Introducing the world to the beautiful face of Islam and working towards unity in the Muslim Ummah are our shared goals," he said.

He emphasised that Dr Naik was not a guest but a host in his home, reflecting their strong bond. Expressing his gratitude, Dr Zakir Naik said it had been his long-standing desire to meet Maulana Fazlur Rehman, which had now been fulfilled. "Yesterday, some friends came to meet me, but I said I must meet Maulana Fazlur Rehman first," Dr Naik remarked.



Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi exchanging views with Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, Chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) during meeting held in Islamabad

Privatization of sick units, power sector reforms top priority of govt: Minister

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday said that government is working on privatization of sick units, and power sector reforms and for this, all necessary steps have been taken to achieve the objectives.

The PIA and three DISCO's privatization process would be made before the end of this year, he said while talking to a private television channel. The outsourcing of

Islamabad and Karachi airport would be made in phases, he added. Right sizing and restructuring of some ministries and departments would also be made before the next fiscal year, he stated.

In reply to a question about issues of Independent Power Producers, he said discussion was being made with Chinese authorities regarding re-profiling of debt besides China Pakistan Economic Corridor projects. All out measures are being taken to strengthen the economic sector of Pakistan, he added.



Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is answering the questions of lawyers of Balochistan High Court Bar Association regarding judicial reforms and constitutional court, in Quetta

Iran fires ballistic missiles at Israel amid escalating Middle East tensions

> Says attack to avenge killing of Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah, Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh; Israel says missile attack over

MONITORING DESK

IRAN: Iran fired a salvo of ballistic missiles at Israel on Tuesday in retaliation to the latter's campaign against Tehran's Hezbollah allies in Lebanon and the killing of its chief and that of Hamas.

Alarms sounded across Israel and explosions could be heard in Jerusalem and the Jordan River valley after Israeli forces piled into bomb shelters. Reporters on state television lay flat on the ground during live broadcasts.

Reuters journalists saw missiles intercepted in the airspace of neighbouring Jordan. Israeli media reports said as many as 100 missiles had been launched.

After about an hour, the military announced there was no longer a threat and "it was decided that it is now permitted to leave protected spaces in all areas across the country", with a "large number" of Iranian missiles intercepted.

Reports said between 150 and 200 missiles had been fired

in the attack.

It was Iran's second on Israel after a missile and drone attack in April in response to a deadly Israeli air strike on the Iranian consulate in Damascus.

Israel vowed to retaliate with an army spokesman saying it would respond at the time and place of its choosing.

"This attack will have consequences. We have plans, and



we will operate at the place and time we decide," said Israeli military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari.

Emergency services said at least two people sustained light injuries during the missile attack.

"Currently, there are no reports of injuries from the fire towards Israel, except for two light injuries from shrapnel in the Tel Aviv area and some minor injuries nationwide while moving to safe spaces," a Magen David Adom emergency service statement said.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said the missile attack was in response to the killing of Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah last week as well as that of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

"In response to the martyrdom of [Hamas leader] Ismail Haniyeh, Hassan Nasrallah and [Guards commander] Nilforoshan, we targeted the heart of the occupied territories (Israel)," the Guards said in a statement reported by the Fars news agency.

The Guards threatened to carry out "crushing attacks" against regional Israel if it retaliated after the missile attack.

"If the Zionist regime reacts to Iranian operations, it will face crushing attacks," the Guard said. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei gave the order to launch missiles at Israel, a senior Iranian official told Reuters, adding that Tehran "is fully ready for a retaliation"

Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York posted on X that the attack on Israel is a "legal, rational, and legitimate response to the terrorist acts."

Interior Minister lauds principle-based politics of JUI-F

APP

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the residence of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl Chief, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, in Islamabad today (Tuesday).

He congratulated both Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri on their unopposed re-election as the party's head and secretary general, respectively.

During his visit, he presented bouquets and extended his best wishes to them.

Mohsin Naqvi praised Maulana Fazlur Rehman for his role in promoting parliamentary supremacy and democratic values, describing him as a prudent, skilled, and visionary politician.

Interior Minister also recognized the principle-based politics of the JUI-F under Maulana Fazlur Rehman's leadership.

Mohsin Naqvi said that Maulana Fazlur Rehman has rendered invaluable services for both his party and Pakistan.

Imran's political approach undermines democracy: Rana Sana

INP

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Inter-Provincial Coordination and Political Affairs, Rana Sanaullah, on Tuesday said that political approach of the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) negates the essence of democracy in the country.

Speaking to a private news channel, he said that the PTI leader spent three and a half years attempting to undermine every politician and political party in Pakistan.

"He insisted on avoiding dialogue, striving for a political landscape where only his party remained dominant," he said.

Commenting on the current government's progress, he said that Pakistan's economy is on the right track, with practical steps focused on national development.

He said that reducing inflation, securing IMF deal, stabilizing Rupee, expanded tax net and attracting foreign investments were the major achievement of the government in this short period.

He said that all political parties were onboard on constitutional amendments through the Parliamentary Joint Committee.

PM vows further relief as inflation slows at lowest in last four years in Sept

INP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed his satisfaction at the slowing down of price-hike which now clocked in at the lowest 6.9 percent when compared with runaway digits in the last 44 months.

The prime minister lauded the government's economic team for capping the headline inflation which now clocked in at 6.9 percent on a year-on-year basis in September 2024.

The price hike had nosedived in the month of August this year at one digit 9.6pc for the first time in the last 34 months, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) reading remained at the lowest in September this year bringing the spiraling inflation to record low in the last 44 months.

"With the grace of Allah Almighty, the promises made with the public have started yielding results. With inflation rate at 6.9pc, the common man will get relief," the press release quoted the prime minister as saying.

The prime minister further observed that with continuous reduction in the petroleum prices, the public was getting relief, whereas after interest rate slide, the business activities would get a spur.

He also expressed his satisfaction at the achievement of target of bringing the inflation rate to 7 percent in 2024 ahead of next year. The prime minister said that from the day first, they had accorded priority to the measures aimed at providing relief to public, adding that machinations of those who wished Pakistan ramming into default, had been foiled. The entire nation suffered due to incompetence of a junta during their previous rule, but now the journey of common man's prosperity has started with economy on the right track and diplomatic relations being strengthened, he added.

PYCA organized awareness workshop in Quetta

APP

Quetta: Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA) organized an awareness workshop in Quetta for bringing together journalists to advance the cause of the TRANSFORM Pakistan campaign. This workshop strove to inform journalists of their roles as TRANSFORM Pakistan ambassadors for the regulation of industrially produced trans fats (iTFA) and ban on partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs) in all dietary sources across Pakistan. The Media Advocacy Workshop was started on September 30th at the Quetta Press Club. A total of 19 journalists from major print and electronic media platforms participated in the training.

"We have been doing discussions on the urgent need to regulate industrially produced trans-fatty acids (iTFA) across all dietary sources and to legislate a ban on the production and distribution of partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs) in Pakistan to ensure that the food that we all consume is free of these poisonous substances.

Among these discussions, one on one talks with media personnel remains pivotal considering the power of media to bring change" said Areebah Shahid, Executive Director at PYCA. The workshop was attended by Deputy Director Technical, Balochistan Food Authority.

Mr. Naqeeb Ullah. Addressing the group of journalists, he said, "A single regulation is necessary in times of health crisis in Pakistan. Without a uniform regulation to limit iTFA set by the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA), it is difficult for provincial authorities to regulate food sources in their respective jurisdictions."

Addressing at the workshop, Ms. Huma Jehangir, Program Implementation Lead at PYCA said that, "One of the major contributors of iTFA in Pakistan is partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs). She said that along with a regulation that limits iTFA to less than 2 percent of the total fats in all foods adding that it is equally important to ban the production and distribution of PHOs.



QUETTA: CM Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti in a meeting with Member Peoples Party Agha Shakeel Durrani.

Youth need to promote tolerance, critical thinking, social change:

Rubina Khalid

INP

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid has said that the youth need to promote tolerance, critical thinking and social change actively. She said, "There is a dire need for social change, and the younger generation must play a role in distinguishing right from wrong and fostering a culture of understanding." The BISP chairperson stated this on Tuesday while speaking as chief guest at the induction ceremony of the new batch of students during her visit to the Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKT).

On the occasion, she also discussed social media's influence on society and stressed the importance of using words wisely to build character. Keeping in mind Pakistan's internal and external challenges, there is a dire need for coordinated efforts and giving up the practice of protest. The people believe in peace and progress of the country, she said. Rubina Khalid emphasized the importance of unity and working together to strengthen the country.

Kashmiri Political Leader, Senior Journalist Khawaja Muhammad Farooq on the Reach-out of Mr. Sajid Tarar Endorses Donald Trump for 2024 U.S. Presidential Election



Bureau Report

New York: Renowned Kashmiri political and social leader and a prominent senior journalist of New York Khawaja Muhammad Farooq, a two-time elected councillor from the Gujranwala Cantonment Board, has publicly endorsed Donald Trump for the upcoming 2024 U.S. Presidential election. Farooq, a prominent Pakistani-American businessman and founder of American Muslims for Trump, Mr. Sajid Tarar had a promising conversation with Mr. Khawaja Muhammad Farooq on September 25th, 2024 in which Mr. Farooq was blessed with the responsibility to campaign for Donald Trump.

Farooq, now residing in New York, voiced his strong support for the

Republican candidate, citing Trump's global popularity and appeal to immigrants as key factors. In a statement, Farooq emphasized that Trump is not only receiving backing from American citizens but is also viewed favorably by people around the world.

"Immigrants living in the U.S. are being urged by their relatives abroad to vote for Trump due to his positive image. His leadership is seen as crucial in addressing global economic issues, and many believe he is the hope for ending injustices in various countries," Farooq stated. Farooq further highlighted the significant support Trump has garnered from American Muslims, predicting that 90% of the community will cast their votes in favor of the former president. He also noted strong

backing from Christians and Jews, stressing that Trump has built faith among American bureaucrats and business leaders. He urged the Pakistani community in the U.S., along with other citizens, to ensure a strong voter turnout, expressing his optimism that Trump would revive the U.S. economy by creating jobs, strengthening industries, and restoring the nation's image as a land of opportunity.

Farooq's endorsement reflects a growing belief among some immigrant communities that Trump's leadership is essential for addressing both domestic and international crises. As the 2024 election draws near, Trump's ability to unite diverse groups of voters will be a critical factor in determining the outcome.

Annual of EMCA polling to be held on Oct 6



By Khawaja Farooq

Gujranwala: Electronic Media Cameraman Association (EMCA), Annual Elections 2024-25 polling will be held on Sunday, October 6 at the Secretariat Union of Journalists.

Polling will be continued from 2 pm to 5 pm. Raja Yasin and Muhammad Yousuf

Mughal will perform the duties of the Member Election Commission. The total number of voters is 26 who will exercise their right to vote on election day.

Wednesday is the last date for submission of nomination papers. Faisal Mughal (Dawn News).

Senior Vice President Asif Jan (Sama News) for the candidate of the Member Election Commission.

Vice President Shaukat Bhatti (24News), General Secretary Mateen Bazmi (New News), Joint Secretary Asif Butt (Hum News).

Waqaar for the candidate of Finance Secretary Raja Subhan (PTV) and Information Secretary.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhel in a meeting with Provincial Minister Mir Saleem Khosa.

Pakistan Coast Guard operations, arms, liquor and heroin seized

APP

Quetta: PCG seizes arms, narcotics in respective areas of Balochistan Pakistan Coast Guards (PCG)'s jawans seized arms and narcotics in Balochistan's Gwadar, general area Musa Goth, Winder and Uthal. According to PCG's spokesman, on a tip off, PCG's personnel conducted raids at places and recovered arms including 226 Glock pistols with magazines, 34 Beretta pistols with magazines, 145 30-bore pistols, 140 Sapier magazine 30-bore pistols and 324 Sapier magazine Gulag pistols.

The Pakistan Coast Guards also seized drugs including alcohol, hashish and heroin during the past few days. According to details, 959 bottles of high quality foreign liquor and 2203 cans of beer were recovered from Gadani area. In a similar operation, 332 kg of high quality hashish was recovered from Gwadar in the last few days.



ISLAMABAD: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman addressing a press conference.

Two kidnapped were released

By Abdul Sami Bhutto

SHIKARPUR: Two kidnapped persons were released from the clutches of the kidnapers from the jurisdiction of Rustam police station on Tuesday in early hours.

According to Press Release issued from SSP Shikarpur Office that two kidnapped persons identified as Ghulam Mustafa Brohi and Ghulam Qadir Rind who were Kidnapped some 45 days ago on honey traps from the jurisdiction of Naparkot police station and today they were safely recovered from the clutches of the kidnapers during a targeted based operation held in the katcha area of Khanpur.

The search operations are going on in the katcha area for arrest of the kidnapers and outlaws.

It may be recalled that these two kidnapped persons were also recovered safe without any arrest of involved as usual which is a big question mark over the performance of District Shikarpur Police.



Tottenham beat 10-man United to up pressure on Ten Hag

SPORTS DESK

MANCHESTER: Tottenham Hotspur piled more pressure on Erik ten Hag's position as Manchester United manager with a dominant 3-0 win at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Spurs made a flying start when Brennan Johnson tapped in from Micky Van de Ven's storming run after three minutes.

Tottenham should have added to their lead long before United were reduced to 10 men when captain Fernandes was shown a straight red card on 42 minutes.

Dejan Kulusevski finally doubled the visitors advantage two minutes into the second half before Dominic Solanke rounded off the scoring.

Ten Hag began the season under scrutiny after surviving an internal review at the end of last season.

A shock FA Cup final victory over Manchester City was widely credited with saving the former Ajax coach's job after finishing eighth in the Premier League last season.

A third defeat in United's first six league games of the new campaign leaves the Red Devils down in 11th and time surely running out for their beleaguered boss.

United face daunting trips to Porto in the Europa League and Aston Villa — who played out a 2-2 draw against Ipswich Town earlier on Sunday — on league duty next weekend before a two-week international break that clubs often use to implement managerial change.

Tottenham boss Ange Postecoglou was himself under pressure just over a week ago.

But Spurs have won four games in 12 days and turned in arguably their best performance of the Australian's reign.

Van de Ven's stunning surge from well inside his own half to the United by-line set the tone as his cross left Johnson a simple task to score for the fourth consecutive game.

Tottenham were without injured captain Son Heung-min and missed the South Korean's clinical finishing as they tried to kill the game off.

Andre Onana saved one-on-ones from James Maddison and Timo Werner, while Johnson sma-shed another effort off the post.

At the other end, Joshua Zirkzee had United's best chance to equalise when he was denied by a brilliant low save from Guglielmo Vicario.

Any hope of a United fightback was killed off by a moment of madness from their skipper.

Fernandes slipped as he slid into a challenge with Maddison but raised his studs to catch the England international. Ten Hag responded by sacrificing his only striker in Zirkzee for the much-criticised Casemiro at half-time. The Brazilian was one of those at fault for the second Tottenham goal.

Solanke outmuscled Casemiro to send Johnson tearing down the right and his deflected cross was cleverly flicked beyond Onana by Kulusevski.

Thereafter the 10 men showed plenty of fight and Casemiro came close to halving United's deficit.

But more calamitous defending allowed Solanke to slide in Tottenham's third from a corner.

LIVERPOOL GO TOP On Saturday, Ibrahim Konate headed home his first ever Premier League goal and Moha-med Salah converted a penalty as Liverpool climbed to the top of the Premier League table with a 2-1 victory over struggling Wolverhampton Wanderers.



MADRID: Angel Correa (C) of Atletico Madrid prepares to score during the La Liga match against Real Madrid at the Metropolitan Stadium.

Atletico grab last-gasp equaliser against Real Madrid in derby

SPORTS DESK

MADRID: Atletico Madrid's Angel Correa bundled home an equaliser deep into added time against Real Madrid to snatch a 1-1 draw on Sunday in a nervy La Liga derby that was suspended for just over 20 minutes after the home fans hurled objects onto the pitch.

The game was stopped in the 69th, five minutes after defender Eder Militao opened the scoring for the visitors, as Atletico ultras Fondo Sur threw objects towards Real's Belgian goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, who alerted the referee.

Courtois after the match was diagnosed with a hip injury and will be out for a couple of weeks.

After a delay of over 20 minutes the players returned to the pitch and Atletico piled on the pressure before leveling the scores when substitute Correa forced the ball home from close range after a counter attack in the fifth minute of added time.

Real are second in the standings on 18 points, three behind Barcelona and two ahead of Atletico in third after eight games.

"These are matches with a lot of tension, a lot of intensity," Atletico captain Koke told DAZN regarding the objects being thrown onto the field.

"It was a very tense moment. This can't happen on a football pitch. We are footballers, professionals, and we have to be intelligent. But four people can't pay for the rest of the stadium."

Missing key forward Kylian Mbappe with a leg injury, Real boss Carlo Ancelotti opted to strengthen the midfield by bringing in Luka Modric, who is approaching 40.

The result was a more balanced side that controlled most of the game but failed to turn their dominance into goals.

Jude Bellingham played as an attacking midfielder while Uruguayan Federico Valverde was handed the playmaker role in the centre of the pitch.

Acting like a ball magnet, practically all Real's dangerous moves came through the feet of Valverde, who distributed the ball to Vinicius Jr, Rodrygo or Bellingham up front or launched long-range right-foot rockets at goal himself.

Valverde almost scored for Real three times in a first half in which the defensive home side had hardly any counter attacks.

Atletico were livelier after the break when manager Diego Simeone brought on Brazilian jet-heeled winger Samuel Lino who gave them the spark they lacked in the first half.

But just as the hosts looked closer to scoring, Vinicius Jr burst past Rodrigo De Paul on the left wing and crossed to the far post where the unmarked Militao brought the ball down before unleashing an unstoppable half-volley past keeper Jan Oblak.

As dozens of lighters and bottles started flying onto the pitch when Real's players celebrated the goal, referee Mateo Busquets Ferrer halted the match and ordered the players to go to the dressing rooms as the stadium announcer warned that if the behaviour continued the game would be abandoned.

After the delay the match resumed and Atletico kept up the pressure which paid off in the extra time.

Substitute Javi Galan's pass pierced the middle of Reals defence and Correa took the ball in his stride before running past Courtois and tapping into the empty net to salvage a point for Simeone's side.

Atletico finished the match with 10 men after Marcos Llorente was sent off for a tackle from behind on Fran Garcia.

Head stars as Australia seal England ODI series

SPORTS DESK

BRISTOL: Travis Head starred with both bat and ball as Australia beat England by 49 runs in a rain-marred fifth and final One-day International on Sunday to complete a 3-2 series win.

England were set for a huge total when opener Ben Duckett (107) and captain Harry Brook shared a third-wicket stand of 132 in 98 balls.

But from 202-2 slow bowling proved England's undoing as they lost their last eight wickets for 107 runs to be dismissed for 309, with part-time spinner Head taking an ODI best 4-28.

Australia made a blistering start to their chase, with openers Matthew Short (58) and Head (31) sharing a stand of 78 in slightly more than seven overs.

And when rain stopped play, Australia were 165-2 off 20.4 overs — well ahead of the target required under the Duckworth-Lewis-Smith method for weather-affected white-ball games.

Steven Smith, leading Australia in place of the injured Mitchell Marsh, was 36 not out before the umpires called the game off.

Short and Head punished a wayward England attack. But Brydon Carse struck with his first ball when he had left-hander Head caught at cover. Short went to fifty when he pulled Carse for his fourth six in just 23 balls. But he was out when caught behind driving at Potts.

England then missed an opportunity when they didn't appeal after Josh Inglis, on two, got a thin edge off Carse to wicket-keeper Jamie Smith.

Earlier, Steve Smith won the toss only for Phil Salt to launch England's innings with a quickfire 45 that featured consecutive sixes off Aaron Hardie.

But Hardie had his revenge when Salt's drive over point was caught by Marcus Labuschagne, before he bowled Will Jacks for a duck with an excellent off-cutter.

Brook came in and audaciously scooped experienced fast bowler Josh Hazlewood for four.

Duckett completed a 45-ball fifty before Brook reached the landmark in just 39 balls when he drove Hardie over long-on for six. Brook then struck leg-spinner Adam Zampa for successive sixes at the start of the 25th over. But Zampa deceived Brook four balls later with a slower, flighted delivery the batsman miscued low to Glenn Maxwell at long-off. Zampa finished with an expensive 2-74 from his full 10 overs.



England's Jamie Smith loses his wicket off the bowling of Australia's Glenn Maxwell during the 5th One Day International cricket match between England and Australia at The County Ground in Bristol, south-west England.

Member APNS

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Punitive tax plan

THE government is desperate to increase its abysmally low tax collection to meet the stringent revenue conditions of the new \$7bn funding programme approved by the IMF recently.

In order to meet the tax target, the FBR has worked out a new compliance and enforcement plan, which primarily relies on punitive actions against tax evaders and cheaters. The authorities hope that it will compel existing taxpayers to stop underreporting their taxable incomes and incentivise non-filers to become taxpayers in order to avoid restrictions on their use of cash for travel, and the purchase of property, cars and financial instruments.

The political and financial leadership appears to be enthusiastic about the new strategy, owing to its promise of achieving the desired results in the near term by narrowing the tax gap of Rs7.1tr — representing tax evasion and corruption — without the need to pursue tedious reforms. On the basis of this plan, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb announced on Sunday the government's "war on cash" as part of the strategy to tap into over the Rs9.3tr in circulation and maximise revenue potential.

According to him, non-filers and under-filers are evading taxes amounting to around Rs1.3tr at the individual level. When it comes to circumventing real tax reforms to broaden the tax base, the new 'transformation plan' does not deviate from previous strategies.

There is a broad consensus among tax experts and economists that Pakistan's tax system is complicated, unfair, inequitable, corrupt, and inefficient — enough to discourage people from filing. The experience of other countries has established that broad-based, low-rate taxes provide the least incentives for people to evade, avoid and underreport taxable incomes. India, for example, has significantly increased its direct income tax collection as a ratio of the economy by streamlining its tax regime, offering reduced rates, and curbing exemptions.

In addition to increased monitoring and compliance, and the expansion of the formalisation of the economy through technology, initiatives such as incentivised lower tax rates for corporations and individuals who forgo exemptions have been implemented, aligning with the agenda to simplify taxation. It is no wonder that India's direct tax-to-GDP ratio reached a record high of 6.5pc in the fiscal year 2023-24. This increase is attributed to growth in income tax collections rather than corporate tax collections. The Indian experience shows that tax compliance can be ensured only through a combination of incentives and the fear of punishment. However, the strategy developed by the FBR to boost compliance rates appears to rely solely on enforcement through punitive actions against tax evaders and cheaters, without actually reforming the complicated tax regime.

Hence, most tax experts — unlike the minister — have little confidence in the plan as a viable strategy that will help Pakistan overcome its tax woes.

By Dr Niaz Murtaza

Burying democracy

PAKISTAN'S democracy is an endangered species now, long hunted by uniformed elements. But it seems that now a deal has been struck to make it an extinct species, after which it may be buried at sea so that those who love it can't find its remains and erect a tomb as that may spark its 'reincarnation' later.

Arguably, no civilian era has witnessed greater assaults on democracy than this one: delayed, then badly rigged polls; large-scale politicisation of key state entities; open disregard of Supreme Court verdicts; domination by the establishment; and now, a no-holds-barred assault on both the Constitution and the judiciary.

It is widely acknowledged that the primary entity behind this state of affairs is the deep state.

However, as unabashed implementers, the PML-N and PPP are now widely criticised as perhaps the most culpable parties with dubious intent in our history. In fact, many observers would go so far as to argue that they aren't so much political entities now as extensions of the security apparatus.

We have long seen the assault on democracy. Oddly, what we are now seeing is virtual suicide by democracy. Both the PML-N and PPP say they are swallowing all this as bitter pills to cure the nation of the PTI's ills. However, the prescribed pills may contain ingredients injurious not only to democracy but to these parties as well. In the end, only Sherlock Holmes may then deduce if it was suicide or murder that eliminated democracy.

One must stand against any move to tame the judiciary.

The cure is undeniably worse than the ills. I was a strong critic of the PTI when it ruled at the centre. I am ready to critique it if it rules like it did again as well as the powers that be if they target the PML-N or PPP again. It is evident that the 2018-22 period damaged democracy more than 2008-18. It is even clearer that the current era's damage far exceeds that inflicted under the PTI. But many anchors still talk more of the out-of-power PTI's ills than the bigger ones of the incumbents.

The PML-N acts servile fearing that higher powers may dump it for the PPP. The latter does so hoping they do. It's a race to the bottom among them and some judicial elements. At this point, it is hard to see who is ahead.

But no one wins a race to the bottom: everyone loses. Nature has its own way of nixing plots. It would be sweet justice if no unjust elements get unjust extensions.

But even this may be small sanction for moves against democracy. To keep a rigged regime from falling fairly under a new judicial command, the PPP and PML-N, which gave us some sterling laws such as the 1973 Constitution and the 18th Constitutional Amendment, are now, ironically, willing to maim their own creation. This goes beyond violating one clause as they did in delaying the polls. The no-trust vote against the PTI was also carried out for petty gains against public gains.

However, few appear to be actively opposing these anti-democratic moves. In fact, it would seem that

certain sections of the media and the legal community, who have fought past assaults, are also toeing the line of those responsible for the current assault on democracy. Many in civil society are muted, seeing it as intralite wars. But it is possible that once they succeed in nixing the PTI, they will use their enhanced control to nix progressive periphery causes as well. One must proactively resist any attempt to subdue the judiciary, even if it is not championing many progressive causes at present.

A lawyer's movement is not yet here. But will we see a movement in the judiciary that triggers it, as in 2007? Supreme Court jud-ges had blocked Gen Pervez Musharraf's illegal emergency, leading to their house arrest and dismissal, only to be reinstated later. If we reach a point where judges feel that they have no choice but to write joint letters, recuse themselves from benches made under controversial new procedures, etc, the blame for all of this will fall on the establishment and the political rulers of the day.

Legitimacy is the glue that binds states and ensures progress. It was never allowed to grow much here and is being further eroded now. Such state-led lawlessness can only undermine state foundations and have a severe impact on security and the rule of law via increased terrorism, crime, extremism and external threats.

But do our rulers understand this truth? For decades, our ability to become a normal, progressive nation has been stifled. Can a hapless victim gasping desperately break the state's chokehold?

By Shahid Kardar

A fraying federation

THE federation is now at stake. The bonds of national integration for a functioning federation are under severe stress. There is anger at the denial of political rights and the lack of effective ownership or even a say in the use and pricing of assets such as coal, oil, and the ports. A recent decision to transfer land in Sindh and KP to the military for corporate farming intensifies this disgruntlement. In the case of KP and Balochistan, the bitterness extends to Islamabad's controlling the provinces' opportunities in cross-border trade.

In KP and Balochistan, social transformation has rendered traditional political leadership irrelevant. The baton has now been grasped by the youth, who are angry, if not alienated. In the case of Balochistan, they are seemingly unwilling to accept solutions within the ambit of Pakistan. The causes of their distress are historical and deep-rooted, and their significance should not be trivialised by claiming that the uprising and terrorism are being stoked by the Indians. Even if true, it is decades of Baloch grievances that are providing the fuel for the present insurgency.

To satisfactorily address these protests, a new federal structure has to be devised for the long-term sustainability of the state of Pakistan. Let us forget, we have a centre because the provinces ceded some powers to it. This requires a recasting of the Constitution for a more viable structure that strengthens the autonomy of the provinces following the 18th Amendment. This realignment would have to entail the handing over of full control of all key resources (such as coal, oil, gas, and major minerals) to the provinces where these are located.

If Pakistan's political and economic structure were to be implanted in oil-rich Texas (and in federations like Canada and Australia), this American state, with all its oil, would not be rich; instead, entrepreneurs in New York and Washington would be living it up. Whereas the wealth of Texas belongs to the citizens of that state, in Pakistan effective control over this country's lifelines and richest resources does not lie with the provinces where they are found, the corruption of the provincial leadership notwithstanding.

A new federal structure has to be devised for the long-term sustainability of the state of Pakistan.

More importantly, whereas the government of Punjab can carve out its own vision and development agenda for the province, a province like Balochistan and to a significant extent Sindh, whose two principal assets are their minerals and coastline, are unable to develop their own growth strategy because these assets are essentially controlled by the federal government. KP suffers similarly in the case of its gas and the denial of regular, timely payments of committed net hydel profits.

The argument that provincial governments are partners in decisions made by the federation on such matters, through the Council of Common Interests, and paid a royalty — in whose determination the provincial role is limited — for its minerals, and a 'modest' share in the port profits in Balochistan's case, is

a weak one. It doesn't fully recognise their right to ownership and full autonomy to take decisions on the utilisation and disposal/leasing of these assets. The acceptance of such rights should be complemented by an effectively functioning CCI, instead of a Special Investment Facilitation Council.

Government spokesmen lament that the narrow interpretation of Article 158, which gives the residents of the province where gas or coal is found precedence over others in their utilisation, results in non-productive consumption and is unfair to other users. However, this conveniently overlooks how Punjab imposes Section 144 on the movement of wheat in order to buy the crop at a price lower than its market price so that it can subsidise its consumption for its own citizens.

The injustice does not end here. While Punjab and Sindh have, at times, been selling their cotton and wheat and related products to KP and Balochistan at higher than world prices, the latter has historically been made to provide its gas to the residents of other provinces at well below world prices, reflected also in the nominal royalty payments on this scarce resource. Therefore, the provinces should have full control over their minerals and be paid international prices for them. After all, decision-makers in other provinces and at the federal level support world prices for other products on the pretext that these are produced and sold by the private sector and that good economic policy should not disincentivise efficient investments through a regime of distorted price structures.

Islamabad should also shelve many activities that it is performing in Balochistan, partly on the plea that it does not have the capacity to carry out such projects — which the federal agencies themselves execute through private consultants and contractors! Federal programmes include Gwadar and Gadani (in partnership with the Chinese), the Saindak and Reko Dik projects and provincial roads. Islamabad will simply not let go of functions that rightfully belong to the lower formations of government, as it refuses to shed weight by correcting the incongruity of its size and the expanded role and mandate that it has arrogated to itself.

Moreover, the argument that there is a need to prevent the siphoning of funds by the corrupt leadership in the province is an amusing one.

Those making it neither have clean hands themselves nor are accountable to the voters in the province on whose behalf this money is being spent on a whole range of projects that may not be accorded similar priority by the provincial leadership. In fact, taking this line of reasoning to its logical conclusion, we should still have been the colony of the honest and benevolent Britishers.

Therefore, the answer to the existing unfair arrangement lies in a genuine federal system and not in conjuring a political system around some misconceived notion of 'supreme national interest'. There is a small window of opportunity that is open, and that too for a short while, to halt and reverse the process of this drift, before there is little left to salvage.

DAILY MIRROR

Raheela calls for urgent action on Menstrual Health & Hygiene Tax Reforms

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani on Tuesday called for urgent action on Menstrual Health & Hygiene Tax Reforms. She said this while addressing at the Policy Dialogue organized by the MHM Working Group (MHMWG) Secretariat Balochistan in collaboration with UNICEF Pakistan, brought together a diverse group of policymakers, advocates, and stakeholders to discuss strategies for impact full tax reforms. Member National Assembly (MNA) Ms. Akhtar Bibi, Member National Assembly Mr Phulain Baloch and Member Balochistan Assembly Mr. Rahmat Saleh Baloch reiterated their commitment to championing this issue at the federal level, assuring participants that they would push for legislative reforms to ensure MHM products are affordable for all, especially vulnerable groups in rural and remote areas of Balochistan. Addressing at Policy Dialogue, Raheela Durrani said that "This is not just a policy issue—it's a human rights issue," said.

She opened the Policy Dialogue on Menstrual Health & Hygiene (MHM) Tax Reforms and stressed the vital need for parliamentarians from Balochistan

to raise their voices at the federal level, pushing for MHM tax reforms that would ensure affordability and accessibility of menstrual products for women and girls. Ms. Durrani called for a united front in advocating these reforms, emphasizing the need for sustained government commitment and public support to create an inclusive society where every woman could manage her menstrual health with dignity.

Following her lead, stakeholders from Balochistan, including parliamentarians, health and education officials, and experts, urged the Federal Government to take immediate action on MHM tax reforms.

These reforms, they stressed, are essential for enhancing the affordability and availability of menstrual products, which would alleviate the financial burden on millions of women and girls in the province, she said. In a detailed presentation, Mr. Rahmatullah Khan Durrani, Commissioner of Income Tax at the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), proposed categorizing menstrual hygiene products as essential items rather than luxury goods.

This reclassification, he explained, would lead to reduced taxation and make these vital products more accessible to women and girls. His technical insights were complemented by Mr. Abdullah Khan, Secretary Population Balochistan,

who emphasized the need for data-driven approaches to understand the real impact of access to MHM products at the grassroots level.

Dr. Tahira Kamal Baloch, Chair of MHMWG Balochistan highlighted the pivotal role of these tax reforms in addressing the financial barriers that prevent women from accessing menstrual hygiene products. She summarized key recommendations from previous consultative rounds, paving the way for collective policy asks.

Mr Hashim Khan, representing GIZ, stressed the urgency of addressing MHM tax reforms, urging both provincial and federal stakeholders to prioritize the health and dignity of women and girls in Balochistan. Ms. Kiran Qazi, UNICEF representative, further elaborated on the financial and social challenges imposed by the current tax regime on menstrual products, emphasizing that strategic reforms are necessary to make these products widely available. Ms. Shaista Gillani, UNICEF Consultant, brought in global and regional best practices in MHM tax reforms, highlighting their relevance in the Pakistani context. Mr. Shafiq Aziz, Policy Advocacy Specialist, echoed these sentiments, underscoring the importance of media advocacy in keeping the public and policymakers engaged on this crucial issue.



Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar addresses to media persons during press conference, in Islamabad

Protest is last resort for release of Imran Khan: Aleema Khan

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: PTI founder Imran Khan's sister Aleema Khan stressed that protest was the last resort for Imran Khan's release.

Talking to media outside Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, she stated that Imran Khan had emphasised to keep protest alive, it shouldn't be halted.

Aleema Khan stated that peaceful protest was the only viable option to halt Imran Khan's possible military detention and trial in military court.

She highlighted that people took the streets in Rawalpindi for supremacy of law and independent judiciary but they were faced with resistance and rubber bullets were fired on them.

She added that KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur brought a huge convoy but it was fired. She berated the incumbent government, saying having 17 seats in federation and 25 in Punjab government was afraid of them.

She insisted on protesting until Imran Khan's release and judiciary's independence as Imran Khan and workers had no other option.

Aleema Khan revealed that protests were being held in Multan, Faisalabad, Mianwali and Bahawalpur as protest was a constitutional right of citizens.

Ayaz calls for elimination of violence in Middle East, IIOJK

APP

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has emphasized the urgent need for elimination of violence and human right violations in the Middle East and Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK).

He also called for a united stance against violence and the promotion of global peace.

The NA Speaker, in his message on the International Day of Non-violence being observed on Wednesday (October 2), condemned the Israeli atrocities in Gaza and Lebanon, saying, "Establishment of a violence-free and just society is essential for peace and progress."

He further said that Pakistan's Constitution enshrined principled that advocate for non-violence, reflecting the moral and cultural values of Islam.

Delay in gas supply, PMDC privatization reviewed by Senate Body

By Zahid Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum meeting held here at the Old PIPs Hall, Parliament Lodges on Tuesday with Senator Umer Farooq in chaired examined the delays in the gas supply project for Gulistan Tehsil in Qilla Abdullah, noting that the project was inaugurated in 2015.

During the meeting, Senator Abdul Shakoork Khan highlighted that a 5 km area was excluded from the plan, preventing the project's initiation. The Director General of Gas stated that the project has an allocation of Rs 500 million, with plans for a 22 km gas pipeline. Senator Munzoor Ahmed pointed out that the project's progress has been hindered by a distribution ban, to which the Secretary of Petroleum responded that restrictions on additional connections have been in place since 2021. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive briefing on gas policies, noting that such restrictions are common globally. Senator Abdul Shakoork Khan expressed concerns that villages along the pipeline route are not receiving gas. Senator Marri suggested implementing a policy to provide gas to areas adjacent to

the pipeline, and the committee chair agreed that the gas connection policy requires revision.

The committee also addressed the proposed privatization of the Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC). Senator Munzoor Ahmed raised concerns about the potential loss of 5,000 jobs post-privatization, questioning whether PMDC is operating at a loss and asserting its profitability.

He opposed the privatization move, stressing that local employees should be prioritized. The Petroleum Authority clarified that the government has categorized privatization

under the relevant act, and the Secretary reported that the SOES Act 2023 includes PMDC in the second privatization category, with PMDC having been profitable for the last three years. The cabinet had decided to add PMDC to the privatization list, with its shares wholly owned by the Federation.

Senator Munzoor pointed out that the Federation does not own the land outright but holds it on lease. Concerns were raised regarding PMDC's outdated methods and machinery, alongside reports of 80 fatalities over five years.

JI chief Hafiz Naeem meets PTI chairman Barrister Gohar to announce joint protest on October 7

Primary agenda to seek cooperation from all political parties on the current Middle East crisis

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: In a meeting held in Islamabad, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman met with PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, where the two parties announced a joint protest to be held on October 7.

The primary agenda of the meeting was to seek cooperation from all political parties on the current

Middle East crisis, particularly Israel's escalating aggression and recent actions in Lebanon.

Rehman expressed deep concern over Israel's increasing hostilities in the region, stressing the need for unity on the issue of Palestine.

"Regardless of our differences, we

must come together for the cause of Palestine. Our relationship with Palestine is longstanding," he said.

He also noted that PTI, as one of Pakistan's largest political parties, would join JI in protests scheduled for October 7, with demonstrations to be held across various parts of Pakistan.

PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan stated, "A delegation from Jamaat-e-Islami visited us today, and we discussed several issues. No amendments should be made in secrecy, and we will present a united front to the public."

He further commended JI's ongoing efforts for Gaza, noting that the issue is a global concern and affirming that both parties will continue these discussions moving forward.

President visits Dar's residence to condole death of his elder brother

INP

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday visited the residence of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar to offer condolence on the death of his elder brother.

The president offered Fateha for the departed soul and expressed his deep grief, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

He also prayed for the high ranks of the departed soul and for the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude.

On the occasion, Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Minister for Interior Syed Mohsin Naqvi accompanied the president.

Ahsan calls for enhancing railway capacity with modern tech

APP

ISLAMABAD: Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal has expressed Pakistan's strong interest in enhancing its railway capacity through modern technology, in line with the National Agenda for Reforms.

He made these remarks during his meeting with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), led by Mr. Chen Chen, Director of the Transport Sector Group, in Islamabad.

The discussion focused on ADB's ongoing support for Pakistan's transport sector, future development plans, and the challenges it faces.

The Minister urged the revival and review of several key projects related to railway, transport, and maritime infrastructure projects that had been approved in 2018, but stalled under the previous government. Additionally, Ahsan Iqbal recommended that the ADB establish a knowledge-sharing system to enable countries worldwide to access and learn from its models and experiences.

Both the sides engaged in detailed discussions about the Multi-Tranche Financing Facility for road projects and expressed their commitment to collaborate on future initiatives in this sector.

PM Shehbaz effectively pleaded Palestinians case as leader of Ummah: Tarar

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif effectively pleaded the case of Palestinians during his historic speech at the United Nations General Assembly as the leader of Muslim Ummah.

Addressing a press conference, the minister said that PM Shehbaz's address to the UNGA was highly appreciated all over the world, which was an honour for Pakistan.

The prime minister championed the causes of Muslim Ummah, including Palestine and Kashmir, he added.

His bilateral meetings with heads of state and government of other countries on the sidelines of the UNGA session also proved very fruitful and constructive in that regard, the minister said.

Tarar said that the PM's speech also proved that Pakistan's foreign policy was successful and that Islamabad was an important player both at the international level and in the region.

"The prime minister vociferously raised the Palestine issue in his UNGA session and during his meetings on the sidelines, which was acknowledged by the international community and that is a matter of pride for Pakistan," he reiterated.

The minister said that PM Shehbaz

had always raised the Palestine issue at all international fora. He not only highlighted the Palestinians' genocide and Israeli war crimes in Gaza but also stressed that the aggressor should be brought to justice.

The PM's UNGA address was among the most watched events on the internet, and it would figure on top in the UN history as there was a true representation of the sentiments of entire Muslim Ummah, he added.

Tarar said that led by PM Shehbaz, the Pakistani delegation boycotted the address of Israeli prime minister and many other countries followed suit, whose representatives also walked out of the General Assembly hall. Netanyahu delivered his speech in an almost empty hall, he added.

He said that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas also appreciated Pakistan's support and termed PM Shehbaz his brother. "The President of Palestine recognized and lauded the role of Pakistan highlighting the Palestinian cause at every world forum," he maintained.

The Palestinian president, he said, also appreciated Pakistan for sending medical supplies and granting admission to Palestinian students in its medical colleges.

The minister said that Pakistan was the only country in the world which had written on its passports that they were valid for all countries except Israel.



National Assembly Speaker, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq exchanging views with Dr. Zakir Abdul Karim Naik, Renowned Islamic Philosopher during meeting held at Parliament House in Islamabad.

Sindh CM Murad Ali Shah acquitted in Nooriabad Power Project reference

INP

KARACHI: An accountability court in Islamabad has acquitted Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and all other accused in the Nooriabad Power Project reference after accepting the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) chairman's request to withdraw the case.

Judge Nasir Javed Rana presided over the hearing of the reference, which named Murad Ali Shah and others. The defence counsel, Barrister Qasim Nawaz Abbasi, appeared before the court. After reviewing the request to withdraw the reference, the court granted it, leading to the acquittal of all the accused.

The decision came after the Supreme Court last month overturned a previous ruling that nullified amendments to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB)

laws.

Following the ruling, key political figures in the country breathed a sigh of relief as they are the ones that stand to benefit the most from the amendments made by the PML-N government to the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) 2000. The fact that these changes have been endorsed by the Supreme Court's larger bench, led by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa, sets the law even further in stone. The ruling also overturned the majority decision by former Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and retired Justice Ijazul Ahsan, which had nullified the amendments. The reference accused Shah of abusing his authority and violating rules by releasing funds for the Nooriabad Power Plant, alleging that billions of rupees were embezzled in both the Nooriabad Power Company and the Sindh Transmission

Govt utilizing resources to provide health facilities to people: CEO

APP

Quetta: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Health Card Balochistan Dr. Samiullah Kakar on Tuesday said that the government is utilizing all available resources to provide health facilities to the people.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting with MS Dr. Sultan Lahri of Helper Eye Hospital, MS Dr. Ishaq Panizai of Civil Hospital Quetta, consultants of the medical faculty, cardiology, gynecology and surgery departments.

Dr. Samiullah Kakar said that the process of treating patients through health card in Helper Eye Hospital Quetta was stalled for the last 8 months which has been started.

He said that Cardiac Department and other 11 specialties in Civil Hospital Quetta have committed to continue providing quality health services to the poor and deserving people of Balochistan through Health Card Program.

He also assured the consultants that the health card program would provide full support to the consultants saying that collective efforts are very important for the success of the health card program.

Dr. Sami said that the misunderstandings regarding the health card have been removed in Bolan Medical Hospital and treatment of patients through health card has been formally started. Soon 24/7 services at

BMCH will be fully available for patients on health card, he noted. He said that health services would be provided absolutely free through the health card so that every individual, especially the poor and needy could easily access the best treatment.

This project is a significant step towards strengthening and stabilizing the health system of the province which will improve the lives of thousands of patients, he said.

He said that free treatment facility has been provided to more than 90 thousand patients in more than 1200 hospitals across the country through health card. The provincial government has doubled the health budget to provide basic health facilities to the people, he maintained. He said that health card services would be extended to all hospitals in the province soon, people should take full advantage of the facility of health card and in case of any complaint, register their complaint on the health card helpline.



Pashtunkhwa National Awami Party (PKNAP) Chairman, Khushal Khan Khattak addresses during the protest demonstration of Staff Association of Balochistan University for payment of their salaries, at a protest camp in Quetta