

Quetta  
Karachi

## DAILY MIRROR

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## Opportunities providing to youth to move forward in aviation, technical fields: CM Bugti

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Monday said that all possible opportunities are being provided to Balochistan youth to move forward in aviation and other technical fields.

He said that promotion of aviation in Balochistan would open new doors of development and more opportunities could be available to locally skilled people.

He shared these views while talking to members of the assembly, senior provincial officials and various personalities including DG Aviation Wing Captain Ali Azad, Interni pilots, former caretaker provincial minister Yahya Khan Nasir, Hayatullah Ghilzai and member of the National Assembly Malik Shah Gorgaj called on him at the Chief Minister's Secretariat here.

During the meetings, various issues were discussed including the development of the

province, improvement in the aviation sector, public welfare and other matters of mutual interest. Talking to the Interni pilots, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that youth of Balochistan are providing all opportunities to move forward in aviation and other technical fields. Former caretaker provincial ministers Yahya Khan Nasir and Hayatullah Ghilzai also met the Chief Minister and discussed various issues. During this time, the political and social situation of the province, public issues and development measures were discussed. The Chief Minister said on this occasion that the government of Balochistan is taking all possible steps for the welfare of the people and the development projects of the province are being implemented rapidly. Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Malik Shah Gorgaj also met the Chief Minister of Balochistan and discussed the overall development of the province, public issues and other important issues.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of World Bank Executive Directors called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## PM Shehbaz hails \$40b World Bank investment WB investment to open new avenues of development: PM

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that with the cooperation of the World Bank (WB), several key development projects were completed in Pakistan, which had been playing a vital role in the country's progress.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with the delegation of World Bank Executive Directors, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister welcomed the delegation on their visit to Pakistan and said the partnership between the WB and Pakistan spanned over seven decades.

The prime minister observed that recent Country Partnership Framework of the World Bank included an investment of \$40 billion in Pakistan which was highly encouraging.

"Pakistan has greatly benefited from its partnership with the World Bank," he said, adding the WB provided substantial assistance to the people affected by the 2022 floods in Pakistan.

The meeting was attended by Ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Sardar Owais Khan Leghari, Dr Musadik Malik, Ministers of State Ali Pervaiz Malik and Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Prime Minister's Coordinator Romina Khurshid Alam, Senator Sherry Rehman, Member of the National Assembly Nafisa Shah, Prime Minister's Representative for the Polio Program Ayesha Raza Farooq, and other senior officials.

With \$20 billion allocated for various projects in health, education, youth development, and other social sectors, a new chapter of progress would begin in Pakistan, he added.

The prime minister said that an additional \$20 billion investment in Pakistan private sector under the International Finance Corporation (IFC) would accelerate the country's economic growth.

Appreciating the WB trust in the government's policies, he said Pakistan's institutional and economic reform programme was moving rapidly.

"The country's economy is on the right path and moving towards growth," the press release quoted the prime minister as saying.

## ECP announces Senate by-election schedule for Balochistan seat

INP

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has released the schedule for the Senate general seat election in Balochistan,

following the resignation of BNP-Mengal Senator Muhammad Qasim.

According to the official notification, polling will be held on March 8 at the Balochistan Assembly.

As per the election schedule, candidates can submit

nomination papers on February 18 and 19, while scrutiny of the documents will be completed by February 22.

The Election Tribunal will decide on appeals by February 27, and the final list of candidates will be issued on February 28. Candidates can withdraw their nominations until March 1.

Senator Muhammad Qasim resigned after voting in favor of the 26th Constitutional Amendment against his party's policy, leading to the vacancy of the Senate seat.

## CJP Yahya Afridi constitutes multiple Supreme Court committees

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Days after six judges were sworn-in as justices of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi has formed multiple administrative committees within the apex court.

The top judge has restructured the six-member Case Management Committee, led by him, which includes Justice Naem Afghan, Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan, and Justice Shafi Siddiqui, along with the Additional registrar and IT director.

The development comes days after Balochistan High Court (BHC) chief Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar, ex-Sindh High Court (SHC) chief Justice Muhammad Shafi Siddiqui, SHC senior puisne judge Salahuddin

Panahwar, Peshawar High Court (PHC) judge Shakeel Ahmad, ex-Islamabad High Court (IHC) chief Justice Aamer Farooq, and ex-PHC chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim took oath as SC judges following the approval by President Asif Ali Zardari.

Meanwhile, Justice Miangul Hassan was sworn-in as an acting apex court judge.

In his latest administrative move, CJP Yahya has appointed several judges to oversee anti-terrorism courts in different provinces.

Justice Musarrat Hilali will supervise anti-terrorism courts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, whereas Justice Malik Shalazad will do so in Punjab, Justice Hashim Kakar in Balochistan, Justice Panahwar in Sindh, and Justice Aamer Farooq in Islamabad.

## Pakistan has steered away from the brink of default: Nawaz Sharif

INP

LAHORE: Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has expressed confidence that Pakistan has successfully avoided economic default, crediting the efforts of his party and leadership.

In a meeting with Members of the Punjab Assembly (MPAs), Nawaz Sharif remarked that the country had been saved from financial collapse due to the hard work of his brother, Shehbaz Sharif, and the restoration of economic stability.

Addressing the MPs from Sahiwal, Khanewal, Multan, Lodhran, Vehari, and Bahawalnagar divisions, Nawaz Sharif lamented the impact of politics on Pakistan's development, emphasizing the damage done by malice, indecency, and revenge in the political landscape.

He highlighted the country's return to economic stability, stating, "Economic development will be ensured with the con-

tinuation of our policies."

Nawaz Sharif further claimed that corruption, economic destruction, inflation, and rudeness were products of the previous regime. He reiterated that the nation had moved away from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and was now focusing on economic growth and alleviating inflation for the people. The MPs praised Nawaz and Shehbaz Sharif for their dedication to Pakistan's development, noting that despite facing personal challenges, the brothers have always prioritized the nation's welfare. They credited the swift restoration of the IMF program and the country's economic stability to the efforts of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, alongside his brother Nawaz's long-standing leadership.

During the meeting, the assembly members also lauded Maryam Nawaz for her role in public service. They expressed pride in her recognition as the first female Chief Minister of Punjab.

## 'Pakistan acknowledges KSA's progress under Vision 2030'

APP

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has emphasized that Saudi Arabia's leadership in economic reforms offers important lessons for Pakistan. He stated this in an interview with Arab News during the AIUla Conference for Emerging Market Economies in AIUla city of Saudi Arabia. He said Saudi Arabia's influence in regional economic transformation is expanding and Pakistan acknowledges the Kingdom's progress under Vision 2030 as a valuable model.

The Finance Minister said we are going through structural reforms at this point in time, on the back of the macroeconomic sta-

bility that we have achieved and there is a lot to learn from Vision 2030.

He also highlighted the growing Saudi investments in Pakistan, particularly in the business-to-business sector.

Muhammad Aurangzeb pointed to recent developments such as Saudi Aramco's foray into the downstream petroleum industry and ongoing talks concerning government-to-government agreements.

He underscored the potential for boosting exports from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, especially in the skilled labor sector.

The Finance Minister noted that this aligns with the Kingdom's expanding workforce needs as it progresses toward its Vision 2030 objectives.



QUETTA: CM Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti in a meeting with Chief Executive QESCO Officer Syed Yousaf Shah.

## PTI urges judiciary to expedite cases related to poll rigging, 26th Amendment

Ayub asks ATC judges to take stand against injustice, demands release of Imran, Bushra, Qureshi, others

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The embattled Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) urged the judiciary on Monday to expedite cases related to rigging in the 2024 nationwide polls and the 26th Constitutional Amendment, seeking "wise decisions" for the betterment of the country.

These demands were made at a joint press conference conducted by PTI's top leaders, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Omar Ayub Khan, Shibli Faraz, and Salman Akram Raja in Islamabad on Monday.

"One year has passed after the nation gave the mandate to the PTI," claimed Gohar, criticising the fact that a "Form 47" government had been formed by bulldozing the majority.

The former ruling party's chairman alleged that his party had filed 74 petitions against vote rigging during the Feb 8 polls, however, the courts have failed to announce any verdicts till today.

Subsequently, he also criticised the 26th Constitutional Amendment — a judiciary-centric legislation passed by both houses of parliament in October last year.

He highlighted that under the 26th Amendment, almost 46 judges were appointed to the superior judiciary, including 12 in Sindh, 10 in Peshawar, nine in Lahore, three in

Balochistan, and two in Islamabad.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the appointments to the superior judiciary drew criticism from some Supreme Court judges, the legal fraternity and the PTI which boycotted the Judicial Commission of Pakistan's (JCP) session.

The opposition party and SC judges demanded the postponement of the JCP meetings until the cases against the 26th Amendment were decided.

Reiterating the demand, Gohar said that the case related to the contentious constitutional amendment must be heard and decided by the judiciary.

Ayub, addressing the press conference, the PTI leader also demanded the judiciary to stand up for the rule of law and release all political prisoners, including party founder Imran Khan — who has been behind bars since August 2023.

"Judges of the anti-terrorism courts will have to take a stand," urged the opposition leader in the National Assembly, adding that the judiciary should have stood on its feet and told everyone that "enough is enough".

He added that the former premier Khan, ex-first lady Bushra, PTI leaders Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Yasmin Rashid, Mian Mehmood-ur-Rasheed, Hassan Niazi, and others were political prisoners who should be released.

Ayub claimed that jail amenities have been taken back from

Khan which he deserved as the former premier of the country. He also alleged that the PTI founder was kept in isolation by restricting access to him at the [Adiala] jail.

Slamming the incumbent government, the NA opposition leader claimed that the rulers were making false claims of economic progress and a reduction in inflation.

He went on to say that nobody was ready to invest due to present circumstances.

PTI Secretary General Raja also addressed the press conference and reiterated his demand to appoint more judges to the election tribunals. He criticised that only two jurists were appointed to the tribunals hearing election-related petitions in Punjab.

The senior lawyer said that the current parliament has no legal grounds as facts of the stolen mandate could not be hidden.

Leader of Opposition in the Senate Shibli Faraz said that the country could not see political stability until free and fair elections were held.

He also stressed legislation aimed at providing relief to the nation.

The major opposition party has expedited efforts to form a grand opposition alliance, as incarcerated Khan proposed to start anti-government protests after Eid.

## CM Bugti directs QESCO's CEO to improve electricity transmission

INP

Quetta: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Monday directed CEO of QESCO to find a permanent solution to the electricity problems being faced by the people of the province and take concrete steps to improve electricity transmission.

He said that adopting alternative sources of energy in the agricultural sector is the need of the hour so that the difficulties being faced by farmers are reduced and agricultural production increases.

He expressed these views while talking to Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) Syed Yousuf Shah called on him here.

On this occasion, Chief Executive Officer QESCO Syed Yousuf Shah gave a detailed briefing to the Chief Minister Balochistan on the challenges faced in the electricity transmission system and the steps being taken to solve them.

The Chief Minister said that before the arrival of summer, electricity shortages and problems in hot areas should be adequately addressed so that the people would not have to face any problems.

He also directed the QESCO administration to formulate a comprehensive and clear strategy to relieve the people from electricity-related problems and implement it quickly. He said that the proposal of the members of the provincial assembly, the pace of work on the proposed electricity schemes should be accelerated so that the people could get their benefits as soon as possible.

He emphasized that uninterrupted power supply should be ensured in the areas where the people are paying electricity bills so that the consumers would not face any kind of problem. The Chief Minister directed continuous monitoring of the progress made on electricity transmission and solar energy projects and said that urgent steps should be taken to improve power supply in remote areas.

He said that the Balochistan government is taking all possible steps to reduce the problems of the people and practical steps are also being taken to promote alternative sources of energy. The Chief Executive Officer of QESCO informed the Chief Minister of Balochistan that work is underway on various projects to address the problems of power transmission in remote areas of the province and steps are also being taken to promote alternative sources of solar energy.

## At least one dead as Kurram-bound aid convoy comes under attack

NEWS DESK

PARACHINAR: An aid convoy en route from Thall to Kurram was attacked near Lower Kurram's Ochit area on Monday, injuring five truck drivers, one of whom later died from his wounds, police reported.

The convoy, consisting of 64 vehicles, was en route to Kurram district when unidentified assailants opened fire. Following the attack, officials decided to turn the convoy back to Hangu as a precautionary measure.

One of the injured truck drivers succumbed to his wounds, as the convoy came under attack at multiple locations, including Bagan, Ochit, Mandori, Dad Kamar, and Char Khel, the police said, adding that security in the area had been ramped up.

Reacting to the incident, Adviser to the KP Chief Minister on Information, Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif, in a statement, said the provincial cabinet strongly condemned the attack while stressing the government's commitment to restoring peace in the region.

"The KP chief minister has directed the authorities to take strict action against the miscreants responsible for disturbing the peace," Barrister Saif said, adding that during the cabinet meeting, the overall security situation in Kurram was thoroughly reviewed.

Noting that the provincial government would not let anyone sabotage the unstable ceasefire, the adviser asserted that certain elements were trying to destabilise the region.

"Through a grand jirga, agreements have been reached between the conflicting parties, and efforts to rebuild trust are ongoing," Barrister Saif said, adding, "As part of the government's strategy to restore peace, the process of demolishing illegal bunkers in the area is proceeding swiftly." The adviser stressed that these actions were critical for the long-term stability of the region and the safety of its people. The latest incident of violence disrupted relief efforts amid a fragile peace in the crisis-hit region. The government has been dispatching convoys carrying food and essential supplies to ensure the availability of necessary goods in the region, which has been reeling from a prolonged wave of tribal violence.

## Sindh Assembly passes universities amendment bill amid protest

ONLINE

KARACHI: The Sindh Assembly on Monday approved the Universities Amendment Bill 2025, despite strong objections from opposition lawmakers. The bill, which had been previously returned by the governor, was reintroduced and passed after a heated debate. Members of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) strongly opposed the bill, chanting slogans and creating disruptions in the assembly. Despite the opposition's objections, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar presented the bill, which was subsequently passed by the assembly. Opposition members, including MQM-P and PTI lawmakers, rushed to the speaker's dais in protest, voicing their opposition to the bill. The opposition also staged a walkout in response to the passage of the bill. Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon criticised the opposition's actions, accusing them of protesting without understanding the contents of the bill.

He also remarked that MQM and PTI had formed an alliance in the assembly. The Sindh Assembly also discussed the Sindh Civil Courts Amendment Bill (Revised), which had been previously passed but returned by the governor with objections. The assembly approved both bills, with opposition protests continuing throughout the session. The controversial bill allows senior bureaucrats in grade-21 or above, with at least four years of experience and a relevant Master's degree, to be appointed as vice chancellors (VCs) of public-sector universities in Sindh. However, a PhD is still required for the VC position at engineering universities. The bill also includes provisions regarding the resignation or retirement of bureaucrats seeking the VC position and sets an age limit for applicants. This decision has sparked widespread criticism from academics and teacher associations, who argue that a doctoral degree should remain the minimum qualification for the VC position, particularly for general universities.



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoab Noshervani in a meeting with Advisor Local Government Nawabzada Mir Hamza Zehri.

## SC admits for hearing appeal plea against death sentence of convict Imran Khan

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court (SC) has admitted for hearing appeal plea against death sentence of accused Imran Khan, resident of Mianwali in murder case. A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Justice Musarrat Hsini while accepting plea has issued notice and sought reply. The court adjourned the hearing for indefinite period. Hearing took place on Monday. Trial court had awarded death sentence to the convict Imran Khan for murdering Muhammad Iqbal in Mianwali. Lahore High court upheld this sentence. The counsel for petitioner told the court the said court had not even heard them. Forensic report was also not authentic. Upon it Imran Khan had challenged his conviction in SC. The apex court admitted appeal plea for hearing.

## Queens Village Republican Club Celebrates 150th Anniversary with Lincoln Dinner Featuring Rudy Giuliani

By Khawaja Farooq

NEW YORK: The Queens Village Republican Club, America's oldest Republican club founded in 1875, is set to host its 150th Anniversary Lincoln Dinner on Sunday, March 2, 2025, from 3:00 PM to 8:00 PM at Antun's in Queens Village, NY. This landmark event will celebrate the club's rich history and commitment to Republican values.

his leadership in the aftermath of 9/11. His address is expected to highlight the importance of patriotism, public service, and the future of the Republican movement.

The Lincoln Address Honoree will be Tiffany Justice, who will receive the Joyful Warrior Award for her dedication to conservative values and grassroots activism.

Several distinguished individuals will be honored during the event for their contributions to American values and leadership:

- Scott LoBaido – American Patriot Artist of the Year
  - Maud Maron – Republican Woman of the Year
  - "Joe the Box" – American Patriot of the Year
  - John Gilmore – Freedom Fighter Award
- The event will be hosted by Steve Gillan, serving as the Master of Ceremonies. This milestone celebration promises to be an inspiring gathering of conservatives, honoring both history and the future of the Republican movement in Queens and beyond.

## Petition against PECA act admitted for hearing in BHC

ONLINE

QUETTA: Petition against PECA act came up before justice Abdullah Baloch and Justice Najmud Din Mehal in Balochistan High Court (BHC) Monday. The petition has been filed by president Balochistan Union of Journalist (BUJ) Khalil Ahmad and vice chairman Balochistan Bar Council Rahib Baledi. The court while admitting the petition for hearing issued notice to federal government and information department. The hearing of the petition was adjourned for two weeks. Talking to media men president BUJ Khalil Ahmad and vice chairman Bar council Rahib Baledi said we fully hope from the judiciary that it will nullify PECA amendment act which runs contrary to human rights. PECA amendment act has been brought to stifle freedom of expression and we are resisting against it.

## Governor Tessori seeks commission to probe rising accidents in Karachi

INP

KARACHI: Amid rising number of traffic accidents and fatalities in Karachi, Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, has penned a letter to Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah for prompt action. In his letter, Kamran Tessori expressed concern over the reckless driving heavy traffic including dumpers, tanker, and water tanker drivers. He noted a noticeable increase in traffic violations and accidents in recent months.

The Sindh governor has requested Murad Ali Shah for the formation of a high-level commission, led by the Chief Secretary, to investigate the causes of these accidents and identify the responsible parties.

Kamran Tessori further said that the public is currently experiencing significant anxiety and concerns over these incidents and that adopting

## Punjab to showcase its tourism potential to world: CM Maryam

INP

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has vowed to highlight Punjab's scenic beauty on the global stage.

In her message on Global Tourism Resilience Day, she stated that Punjab is a land of deserts, mountain ranges, lakes, and rivers, with immense tourism potential yet to be fully explored.

She emphasised that sustainable initiatives are being implemented to boost tourism, which is essential for economic growth, local culture, and international

relations. Maryam Nawaz described the Murree Glass Train Project as a game-changer for tourism, adding that the Murree Master Plan is being implemented to transform it into a world-class tourist destination.

She also highlighted that key roads are being upgraded to ensure safe and comfortable travel for visitors.

Additionally, a five-star hotel will be built in Kartarpur to promote religious tourism, and new tourist destinations will be introduced across the province.



QUETTA: PPP ex Provincial Minister for Minorities' Jaffer Gerge addressing a press conference.



SEHWAN: A view of Rangers personal's stand alert at shrine during 773rd annual Urs celebrations of Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sehwan Sharif.



## Champions Trophy will rekindle Pakistan's love of cricket: former captains

SPORTS DESK

Cricket fans in Pakistan are buzzing ahead of the Champions Trophy and hosting the elite one-day international tournament will rekindle the country's love affair with the sport, three former captains said.

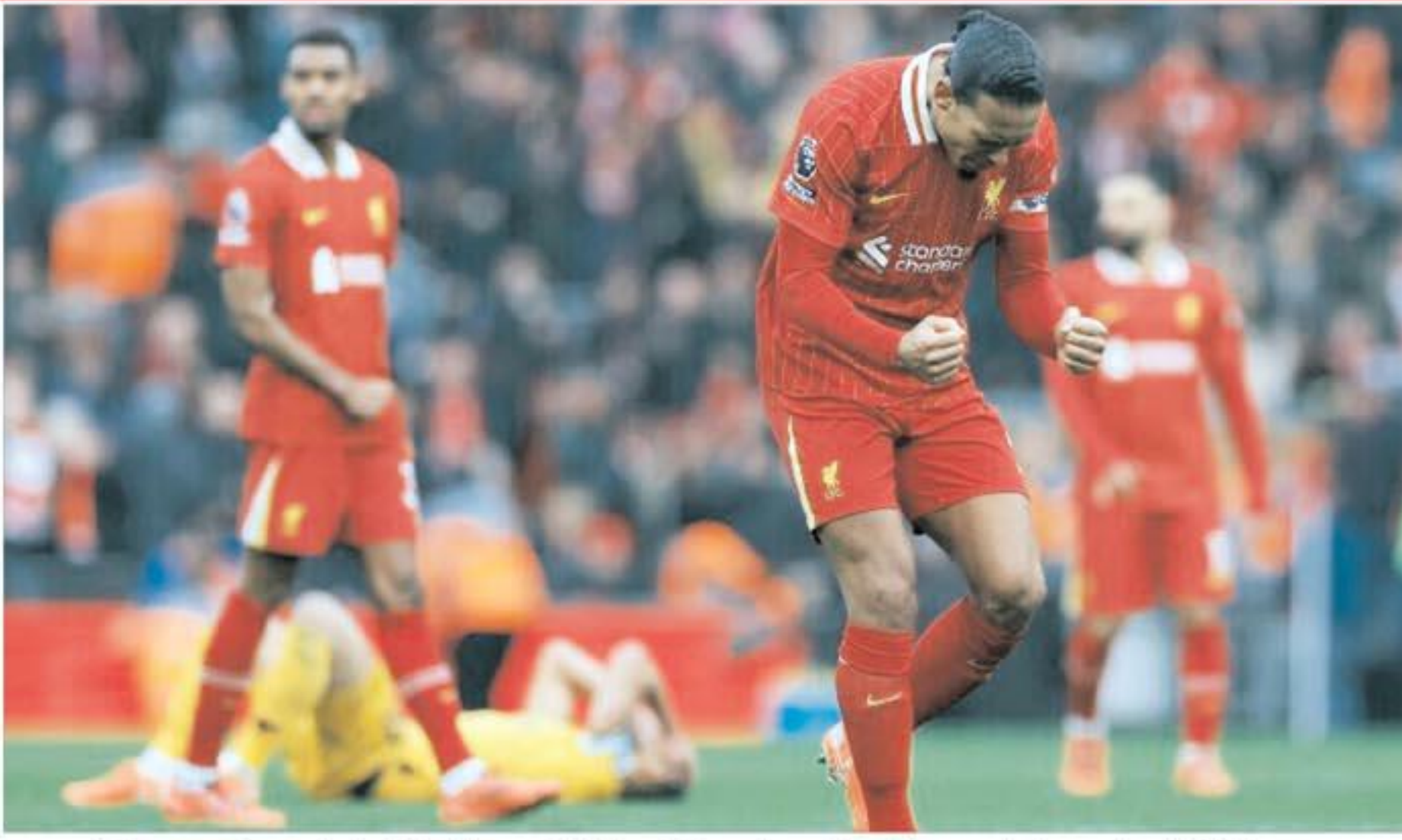
The event, which features the sport's top eight sides in the ODI format, begins on Wednesday with the hosts up against New Zealand in Karachi.

It will be the first major global tournament hosted by Pakistan in nearly 30 years and former batting great Inzamamul Haq told Reuters there was no escaping the excitement in the lead-up to the event.

"Right now everyone is talking about the Champions Trophy, in schools, houses, markets, offices, everywhere," he added.

Pakistan spent nearly a decade in the wilderness after gunmen attacked the

Sri Lankan cricket team's bus in Lahore in 2009, wounding six players.



Liverpool captain Virgil van Dijk celebrates after the match against Wolves.

## Liverpool edge past Wolves to go seven points clear at top

SPORTS DESK

Premier League leaders Liverpool extended their advantage to seven points with a trickier-than-expected 2-1 win over lowly Wolverhampton Wanderers at Anfield on Sunday courtesy of goals from Luis Diaz and Mohamed Salah.

Arne Slot's team had looked to be cruising at 2-0 after Diaz bundled in on 15 minutes and won a penalty later in the half for strike partner Salah to convert with ease — a 23rd league goal for the league's leading marksman.

But Wolves, fighting for their lives near the bottom, gave them a few frights and punished Liverpool for a sloppy second half when Matheus Cunha curled a low shot brilliantly past Alisson in the 67th minute.

In an edgy finale, Liverpool held on for the win, taking them to 60 points and still on track for the title with nearest rivals Arsenal on 53.

Both have 13 games left. "We just managed to dig deep," Liverpool defender Andy Robertson said.

"The second half was a slog [...] everyone gets nervous. But it's a massive win for us and another game down."

Wolves are 17th on 19 points, two above the drop zone. Although Liverpool were far from their best, especially in a nervy second half, victory was a huge relief after a week of unusual slip-ups including an FA Cup defeat by second-tier Plymouth and a last-gasp equaliser for Everton against them in the league.

"We'd love to dominate for the full 90 minutes but it is the Premier League and Wolves can punish you and cre-

ate dangerous moments against you. It says a lot we kept fighting and kept going and got the three points," said Liverpool captain Virgil van Dijk.

"At times we were sloppy as well and we couldn't keep the ball as well as we can."

All-action Diaz In the first half, the Reds looked comfortable after Diaz slotted home when Toti Gomes attempted clearance dropped kindly for him.

The speedy Colombian was then brought down by Wolves goalkeeper Jose Sa for Salah to do what he always does — score easily from the spot — in the 37th minute.

Cunha was by far Wolves' best player and had put a free kick just over before his glorious effort from outside the box had the away fans dreaming of a comeback.

Wolves' recently-signed midfielder Marshall Munetsi, who saw a shot superbly saved by Alisson when one-on-one, said the players were proud of their second-half performance.

"We created a lot of chances and made them uncomfortable [...] the second half was the identity of the team, this is what the coach wants. This is something we have to keep doing."

With a colossal fight against relegation to come, Wolves' coach Vitor Pereira echoed that after so nearly matching the Premier League's best team.

"We must play the first half as we played the second half, this is what I want to see in my team — the personality, courage and identity," he said.

"Even the best players in the world, if you press them they make mistakes."

## Australia cricket team reach Pakistan for Champions Trophy 2025

SPORTS DESK

The Australian cricket team arrived in Lahore on Monday to participate in the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

The tournament is set to begin on February 19 with Australia's first match scheduled for February 22 against their arch-rivals, England at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium.

The team landed in two separate groups. The first group, which included team captain Steve Smith, coaches, and support staff, arrived from Colombo via Dubai. The second group, comprising 15 players and two additional members of the support staff, followed the same route and reached Lahore later the same day.

Notable players who arrived in Lahore include Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Travis Head, Matthew Short, and Adam Zampa. The Australian team opted out of participating in warm-up matches, as they had recently been involved in a two-match ODI series against Sri Lanka, which they lost 2-0.

Australia's first match in the Champions Trophy will be against England on February 22 at Gaddafi Stadium. Their second match will be against South Africa on February 25 at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, followed by a final group-stage encounter against Afghanistan on February 28, again at Gaddafi Stadium.

Australia's Champions Trophy squad for 2025 includes Steve Smith (captain), Sean Abbott, Alex Carey, Ben Dwarshuis, Nathan Ellis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Aaron Hardie, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Spencer Johnson, Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Tanveer Sangha, Matthew Short, and Adam Zampa. Cooper Connolly is the travelling reserve.

Meanwhile, the excitement surrounding the highly anticipated India-Pakistan clash in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 has reached new heights, with tickets for the February 23 match in Dubai selling out within record time. The initial batch of tickets was snapped up within just one hour of release, driven by a massive demand from cricket fans across the globe. In response to the overwhelming interest, the International Cricket Council (ICC) quickly announced the release of additional tickets. However, these tickets also sold out within 90 minutes, with fans rushing to secure their seats for the historic encounter.



KARACHI: A view of warm up match between Pakistan vs South Africa ahead of the ICC men's champions trophy in Karachi.

**TENDER NOTICE**

The Balochistan Institute of nephro-Urology Quetta (BINUQ) invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. TSE-242502646761 Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. Tender Fee Rs.1000/-

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Stationary (Total Item(s) Count: 21)	2%

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 2,000,000 in Previous 3 Years Turn over of at least 2,000,000 PKR in 3 Subsequent Previous Years Presence in Active Tax Payer List Sales Tax Certificate The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan JV is not permissible Submission of the required Bid Security In case Bid Security is not found as required during financial evaluation the bidding firm shall be declared as in-eligible and non-responsive Submission of the required Bidding document Fee Must unconditionally agree with all the instructions, terms & conditions specified in the bidding documents & contract agreement Must agree to serve the Contract within the stipulated time period Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed 1,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 07 March, 2025 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 07 March, 2025 till 11:00 AM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 12:00 PM Address: Balochistan Institute of nephro-Urology Quetta (BINUQ) samungli Road Quetta Phone no: 0819204701 Email: info.binuq@gmail.com

Chief Executive Officer  
Balochistan Institute of nephro-Urology Quetta (BINUQ)

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# Climate funding gap

**PRIME Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent appeal for climate finance at the World Governments Summit in the UAE underscores a critical challenge Pakistan faces: bridging the enormous gap between climate funding needs and available resources.**

The unfortunate reality is that Pakistan requires \$40-50bn annually for climate adaptation and mitigation, yet receives merely \$1.5-2bn from international sources. This disparity demands urgent attention, particularly given Pakistan's position as one of the world's most climate-vulnerable nations despite minimal contribution to global emissions.

The floods of 2022 serve as a haunting reminder of our vulnerability, having submerged a third of the country, affected 33m people, and caused \$30bn in economic losses. With Pakistan projected to lose over 6pc of its GDP annually to climate-related damages, the need for substantial climate finance cannot be overstated.

That Pakistan's energy transition alone requires \$100bn in investment highlights the extent of the challenge. However, the international climate finance architecture remains flawed.

Our limited access to the Green Climate Fund, securing only \$250m compared to India's \$782m and Bangladesh's \$441m, reflects systemic barriers that climate-vulnerable nations face. Complex approval processes, stringent credit ratings, and high borrowing costs continue to direct climate finance towards lower-risk projects in developed economies rather than where it is most urgently needed.

The way forward requires action on both international and domestic fronts. Globally, multilateral institutions must reform their frameworks to ensure equitable access to climate finance for vulnerable nations. The Loss and Damage Fund, while promising, needs streamlined mechanisms for accessibility. Global bodies must recognise that climate finance is not charity but a matter of climate justice.

At home, Pakistan must boost its institutional capacity to develop bankable climate projects. Our commitment to producing 60pc clean energy by 2030 and converting 30pc of vehicles to electric needs to be backed by action plans that can attract both public and private investment. Creating an enabling regulatory environment through targeted incentives, mandatory climate risk disclosures, and public-private partnerships is essential.

Pakistan must also prioritise financial innovation, exploring blended finance models, green bonds, and parametric insurance schemes. Developing specialised expertise in climate finance and technology, while fostering coordination between federal and provincial levels, will be crucial for effective fund utilisation.

The international community must match its pledges with action, while Pakistan needs to demonstrate its readiness to manage climate finance effectively.

By Barrister Usman Ali, Ph.D.

## Pakistan's Unfinished Battle Against Corruption – Ruthless Accountability Needed

**A**ccording to the latest Transparency International report, corruption in Pakistan has worsened, as reflected in the 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). Pakistan now ranks as the 46th most corrupt country in the world, placing 135th out of 180 nations. The country's score on the index stands at 27 out of 100, a decline from its 133rd position in 2023. Moreover, Pakistan's score in the Economist Intelligence Unit fell from 20 to 18, while its ranking in the Varieties of Democracy Project also deteriorated.

This report emerges amidst claims of a major anti-corruption drive in the country. Former Prime Minister Imran Khan has been convicted in a corruption case, while authorities have signaled action against Malik Riaz, the owner of Bahria Town and others. These measures are being portrayed as the beginning of an impartial crackdown on corruption. However, a historical analysis of Pakistan's accountability mechanisms tells a different story. Historically, accountability has been weaponized—used as a tool for political retaliation, power consolidation, and personal gains, rather than as an instrument for genuine reform. As a result, corruption continues to persist despite repeated claims of eradication.

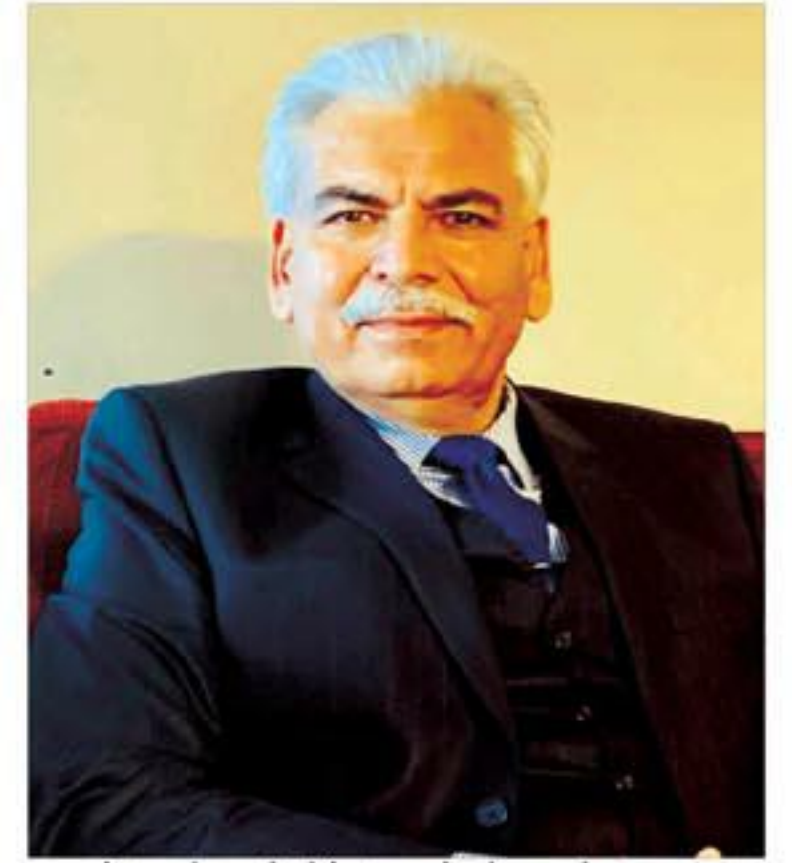
Corruption remains a major obstacle to Pakistan's development. It undermines governance, hampers economic growth, and erodes public trust in institutions. In developing countries like Pakistan, corruption takes various forms, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and abuse of power. Public resources meant for essential services—healthcare, education, and infrastructure—are instead diverted toward illicit activities. Internationally, corruption strengthens authoritarian regimes, empowers political and economic elites, and deters foreign investment.

Corruption has plagued Pakistan since its independence in 1947. Initially, mismanagement and resource shortages contributed to its rise, but over time, corruption seeped into almost every institution—political, judicial, military, educational, and media. Successive governments have vowed to eliminate corruption, yet accountability mechanisms have often been manipulated to target opponents while shielding allies. This

selective application of justice has undermined public faith in the system.

In the early years, the Public and Representative Offices (Disqualification) Act (PRODA) was introduced in 1949 to disqualify corrupt officials, but it was primarily used against political adversaries. In 1959, after imposing martial law, General Ayub Khan enacted the Elected Bodies Disqualification Ordinance (EBDO) to disqualify hundreds of politicians. Instead of tackling corruption, this ordinance was used to suppress opposition and consolidate power. During General Zia-ul-Haq's dictatorship, corruption allegations were weaponized against opposition parties, particularly the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). Despite promises of accountability, no independent anti-corruption body was established.

Throughout the 1990s, PPP and PML-N governments repeatedly accused each other of corruption. Institutions such as the Accountability Commission and the Accountability Bureau were formed but were often used for political vendettas rather than genuine reform. When General Pervez Musharraf seized power in 1999, he launched the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) with claims of impartial and ruthless accountability. However, NAB soon became an instrument for political blackmail and maneuvering, further discrediting the accountability process. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government, led by Imran Khan, adopted a strong anti-corruption narrative, using NAB to prosecute major political figures such as Nawaz Sharif, Asif Ali Zardari, and Shehbaz Sharif. However, corruption persisted, and no action was taken against government allies. The strict measures that were ostensibly aimed at eradicating corruption were instead used as a tool to blackmail and eliminate the opposition. NAB, under PTI's rule, was accused of functioning as a political weapon rather than an independent accountability body. Today, yet again, corruption and accountability are at the center of political discourse. However, nothing has fundamentally changed—accountability remains selective and politically motivated. NAB's effectiveness has diminished, and public confidence in accountability institutions has eroded further. Unless substantial reforms



are introduced, history is bound to repeat itself. If Pakistan is serious about combating corruption, a neutral and robust accountability system is essential. NAB and other anti-corruption bodies must be granted full autonomy, free from political and military pressure. Government transactions should be digitized through blockchain and e-governance systems to prevent financial irregularities. Judges overseeing corruption cases must be free from financial and political influence to ensure impartiality. The public must reject corrupt leaders rather than blindly supporting them. Without a shift in public mentality, corruption will persist. The media must first free itself from massive corruption, blackmailers, and encourage only professional media persons. It must hold all sectors accountable, including politicians, military officials, bureaucrats, and business elites, through fearless investigative journalism. Pakistan must strengthen partnerships with global organizations like the Financial Action Task Force (FAIF) to recover offshore wealth. Ethics and integrity should be incorporated into school curricula to instill transparency and accountability from an early age. If Pakistan fails to implement genuine and unbiased reforms, corruption will persist, and accountability institutions will continue to serve as political tools rather than instruments of justice. The public must demand transparency and reject corruption at all levels—only then can real change occur. Until that happens, the dream of genuine accountability and a corruption-free Pakistan will remain just that—a dream.

By Aqsa Imtiaz and Syed Mohsin Bukhari

## Molecular characterization and genotypic antimicrobial resistance analysis of bacterial pathogens (*Campylobacter jejuni* and *Escherichia coli*) isolated from selected captive avian species off message

**A**vian species have been identified as potential reservoirs of these bacteria, with potential implications for human health. Fecal samples were collected from different avian farms (n=10) in district Kasur. The avian farms were selected from four tehsil of district Kasur. Freshly deposited fecal samples were collected with the help of forceps, from the captive Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) (n=5), Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) (n=5), Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*) (n=5), Chukar partridge (*Alectoris chukar*) (n=5), and Turkey (*Meleagris gallapavo*) (n=5) rearing privately at Avian farms in district Kasur, Pakistan. Fecal samples were collected from the. Fecal samples of these birds were collected in autoclaved falcon tubes under hygienic conditions from the tray and kept at 4°C until processing. Fecal samples were ground into powder form and mixed in phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) solution separately in labelled Eppendorf tubes. The sample mixture was centrifuged in Bio-Rad centrifuge machine at 5000rpm and the sample's supernatant was taken and diluted serially up to 10-6 fold. Prepared samples were cultured on MacConkey agar and Eosin Methylene Blue agar (EMB agar) for sub-culturing. For bacterial growth, the plates were then placed within an incubator for 18-24 hours at a temperature of 37°C. The identification and confirmation of *E. coli* was based on the characteristics observed in the colonies on the agar plate. Three putative colonies from every plate were independently characterized using Gram staining and various biochemical tests to ensure the presence of *E. coli*.

Every sample was examined separately.

Both direct plating of the processed sample on modified Charcoal Cefoperazone Deoxycholate agar (mCCDA) with CCDA selective supplement and selective enrichment in Bolton broth were used to isolate thermophilic *Campylobacter* spp. Prepare and homogenize the sample in PBS, isolate bacterial cells by centrifugation, and wash the pellet to remove contaminants. For analysis, confirm purity by plating, then store the purified cells at -80°C or proceed with further analysis as needed. The specific colonies were chosen and transferred to Blood agar for further sub-culturing at 37°C for 24 hours and the identification process involved a number of methods, such as Gram staining and biochemical tests to confirm the presence of *C. jejuni*.

The plate count technique was used to calculate the total number of *E. coli* and *C. jejuni* colonies per mL of fecal matter sample, using 200µL of every dilution on MacConkey agar and blood agar, respectively. For the calculation of CFU, culture plates containing colonies within the range of 30 and 300 was considered. DNA was extracted from pure cultures of *C. jejuni* and *E. coli* using the Phenol Chloroform (Organic) method. *C. jejuni* and *E. coli* DNA obtained, primers were used as a template for the identification and amplification of 16S rRNA gene. Virulent genes *flaA* (motility), *cdtA*, *cdtB* (cytotoxin production), *dnaJ* (colonization and adherence) from *C. jejuni* and *E. coli* (*fimA*, *eae*, *stx1*, *stx2*) isolates were tested by PCR.

Resistance to antimicrobials was tested using the Kirby-Bauer disk diffusion method. The antibiotics used in this study were ciprofloxacin, enrofloxacin, gentamicin, nalidixic acid, tetracycline, chloramphenicol, streptomycin, erythromycin, doxycy-

cline, and amoxicillin. The set of primers for beta lactams and tetracycline resistance genes in *E. coli* and *C. jejuni* was used to amplify antimicrobial resistance genes.

The results revealed the prevalence of *C. jejuni* (56%) and *E. coli* (87%) among the avian species studied. The 16S rRNA gene was identified and amplified using the primers utilizing the genome of *C. jejuni* and *E. coli*. The 16S rRNA primer for *E. coli* 27F-(5'-AGAGTTTGATCMTG-GCTCAG-3') and 1492R-(5'-CGGT-TACCTTGTTCAGACTT-3') was employed to amplify genomic DNA. The 16S rRNA primer for *C. jejuni* F-(5'-TTGATCCTGGCTCAGAGT-3') and R-(5' TTCACCCAGTCGCT-GAT-3') was used to amplify target region of DNA. The PCR amplification product underwent gel electrophoresis to confirm the PCR. After editing, BLAST was run on the sequenced data, and it was submitted to NCBI to obtain the accession numbers. The virulence genes *cdtA* and *cdtB* were present in all *C. jejuni* isolates.

*FlaA* (80%) was the most abundant gene in *C. jejuni*, followed by *dnaJ* (40%). The *E. coli* isolates tested positive to the virulence factor gene *fimA* (100%), *eae* (20%), *stx1* and *stx2* (10%). Regarding antibiotic resistance, both *C. jejuni* and *E. coli* isolates showed varying levels of resistance to the antibiotics studied. Tet (O) and *blaOXA-61* were the most common antimicrobial resistance genes found in *C. jejuni* isolates (90% and 70% respectively). PCR results showed that all *E. coli* tested isolates had both beta-lactam (*tetA*, *tetB*) resistance genes.

The authors are from Department of Wildlife and Ecology, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore

# DAILY MIRROR

## Senate panel reviews encroachments, building codes, and water issues

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Housing and Works, chaired by Senator Nasir Mehmood, convened at the Parliament House to review encroachments, litigation, and progress in various sectors. The meeting was attended by Senators Khalida Ateeb, Saifullah Abro, Saifullah Sarwar Khan Nyazee, Raja Nasir Abbas, Bilal Ahmed Khan, and Haji Hidayatullah Khan, along with senior officials from the Ministry of Housing and Works, CDA, Pakistan Engineering Council, FIA, and other relevant departments.

The Commissioner of Rawalpindi briefed the Committee on the latest developments regarding Constantia Estate in Murree, reporting that despite efforts for cooperation, PWD officials had been unresponsive. The Deputy Commissioner of Murree clarified that while the administration had sent reports and letters to PWD, their role was limited to facilitation, and illegal encroachments were creating law and order challenges. He noted that the police support had its limits and that while the administration had no objections, the responsibility for further action lay with PWD. PWD officials, however, refuted these claims, asserting that the issue stemmed from encroachments and court orders, and that the administration had failed to provide nec-

essary support. The Committee reviewed the correspondence between the Deputy Commissioner and the PWD department. The Commissioner of Rawalpindi also recommended securing possession of the remaining property, stressing that delays could result in losing control over this prime land in the coming months. The administration assured the Committee that despite ongoing litigation and a status quo order, they were committed to proceeding. The Chairman instructed the M/o Housing and Works to receive updates on the legal team involved, as well as to establish clear timelines to expedite the process.

The Committee was then briefed by senior officials from CDA on the latest Building Code of Pakistan, its implementation mechanism, monitoring framework, and safety requirements. Senator Nasir Mehmood inquired about fire safety in government buildings, emphasizing the need for enhanced emergency preparedness, including fire extinguishing measures. He also sought details on the issuance of NOCs for elevators and emergency exits, recommending that the matter be resolved within six months, with a progress report to be presented at the next meeting.

In addition, the Committee was briefed on the strategy for addressing illegal constructions in sectors F-12 and G-12 and other lands developed for FGHA

housing schemes in Islamabad.

The IG ICT reported that all requests received were processed promptly and provided with necessary assistance, including manpower. In response to Senator Haji Hidayatullah Khan's inquiry about illegal land acquisition in these sectors, the Committee unanimously recommended that a detailed report be presented within two weeks.

A further briefing was provided on the current water situation in Islamabad. Officials reported that 95% of the water supply was allocated to urban areas, with only 10-15% directed to rural regions. Efforts were underway to increase water capacity by the monsoon season, and it was noted that 60 million gallons of water were currently being supplied to Islamabad.

The Committee also received an update on the status of dams and tube wells, with assurances that tube well upgrades and improvements to drinking water filtration plants would be completed within two to three weeks. It was reported that the filtration plants in sectors G-13 and G-14 would be operational within two months. CDA officials further informed the Committee that discussions had begun with the World Bank and IMF for securing funding for future projects, with a focus now on obtaining financial support after completing the planning phase.



SAUDI ARABIA: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a group discussion with the Finance, Economic, and Development Ministers of the UAE, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and other GCC countries on the sidelines of the Emerging Markets Conference 2025 in AIUla, Saudi Arabia.

### 'Efforts underway to improve internet speed:' IT Minister Shaza Fatima

Spectrum auction set for early April to boost connectivity

ONLINE

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, has assured that efforts are underway to improve internet speed in Pakistan.

Speaking at a 5G seminar in Islamabad, she acknowledged the existing challenges in internet connectivity and the pressure on networks that sometimes cause disruptions.

Highlighting ongoing initiatives, the minister stated that Pakistan has already received one of the world's largest submarine cables, which will soon be operational. She also indicated that more submarine cables could be introduced if necessary to further strengthen connectivity.

To enhance internet speed and digital infrastructure, Shaza Fatima announced that Pakistan will conduct a spectrum auction at the beginning of April. She emphasized the significance of 5G technology, noting that global GDP is expected to grow by \$1.3 trillion due to 5G advancements by 2030.

Currently, Pakistan operates on a 274 MHz spectrum. The minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving connectivity and ensuring that the country keeps pace with technological advancements.

The planned spectrum auction and submarine cable operations are expected to provide a significant boost to Pakistan's digital landscape, enhancing user experience and supporting future economic growth.

### Chairman BBISE suspends exam invigilators on failure of prevention cheating

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BBISE)'s Chairman Mir Ijaz Azeem Baloch on suspended invigilators of two examination centers after recovering cheating papers, mobile phones from students. On the special directives of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Chairman of BBISE along with Controller of Examination Abida Kakar raided the ongoing matriculation examination centers established at Tameer-E-Nau College and Government High School Shafiq Ahmed Khan.

During the raid, several mobile phones and cheating papers were seized and duplicate candidates were also arrested and they were handed over to the police for further investigation. The Chairman immediately suspended the examination staff of both centers in this regard.

On this occasion, Chairman Mir Ijaz Azeem Baloch said that Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Durrani have strict instructions

that concrete steps are being taken to prevent copying system from examination centers.

He said that matriculation examinations are ongoing across Balochistan and there are instructions to strictly prohibit the use of mobile phones and take strict action against those who sit in their seats.

He said that we are visiting examination centers located in Quetta and other areas of the province to prevent cheating processes with the aim to improve quality of education saying that no negligence would be tolerated in this regard. The Chairman Board said that the Section 144 imposed throughout Balochistan during the matriculation examinations.

BBISE's Controller Examinations Abida Kakar said that no unrelated person is allowed to roam near the examination centers across the province under Section 144, action would be taken against such persons according to the law.

She said that prevention of plagiarism is the need of the hour to improve the quality of education in Balochistan.

She said that such action would be continued for elimination of cheating system from exam centers for improvement of education centers.

### Revenue Minister announces Rs, 2.5 mln for organizers of Sibi Mela

APP

Quetta: Balochistan Minister for Revenue Mir Asim Kurd Gellu on Monday announced Rs. 2.5 million for organizers of Sibi Mela including students and band teams who presented various items on behalf of the provincial government. He made this announcement while conclusion of annual historic Sibi Mela as chief guest.

On this occasion, Commissioner Sibi Division Syed Zahid Shah, DG Livestock Dr. Shahzad Ahmed, DG Livestock Dr. Samad Kharoti, Deputy Commissioner Jahanzeb Sheikh, SSP Dostain Dashti, Chairman District Council Sardarzada Mir Bijar Chakar Domki, Chairman Municipal Committee Sardar Muhammad Khan Khajak, ADC General Ali Asghar Magsi, Assistant Commissioner Mansoor Ali Shah, tribal and political leader Sardarzada Mir Hair Bayar Khan Domki, along with a large number of high-rank-

ing officials and tribal elders were present.

Addressing at the conclusion of ceremony, the Provincial Minister for Revenue said that Sibi Mela is the identity of livestock, Balochistan and this historical fair has been inherited by us which has always been a source of economic and other activities for the people.

He said that he is happy that the people of Balochistan province have kept their thousands of years of historical heritage alive in the form of Sibi Mela.

Traditions like bravery, hospitality, and sanctity of the tribes of Balochistan are famous all over the world, he said. He said that not only provides entertainment to the people of the area, but also strengthens the economy of the area. At the end of the ceremony, the Provincial Revenue Minister thanked the organizers of the Sibi Mela for keeping the tradition of the fair and the culture of Balochistan alive with everyone's joint efforts.

### National Police Academy to be upgraded on lines of PMA Kakul: Mohsin Naqvi

INP

ISLAMABAD: The National Police Academy (NPA) will be upgraded on the lines of Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) Kakul.

It was decided in a meeting chaired by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi during his visit to NPA in Islamabad on Monday.

Mohsin Naqvi was briefed about the National Police Academy's upgradation plan during the visit.

The upgradation plan includes establishment of an Elite Force Training School and Technical Training Center along with indoor and outdoor firing ranges at the academy.

The interior minister directed the authorities concerned to increase the area of the parade ground while making it larger and more aesthetically appealing.

He also directed to establish a residential block for the training officers on priority basis.

He said the government's goal is to make the National Police Academy an institution of international standards while attracting officers from abroad for training.

The meeting was also attended by key officials including the Commandant of the National Police Academy, CDA chairman, IG Islamabad, DC and other relevant officials.

### Three bills presented in the Senate

APP

ISLAMABAD: At the outset, the House offered Fateha for those martyred in recent acts of terrorism in the country.

Three bills were laid before the House today. These included: The Mental Health Amendment Bill, 2025, The Income Tax Amendment Bill, 2025 and The University of Business, Sciences and Technology Bill, 2025. The Chair referred the Bills to the Standing Committees concerned. The Senate also passed the Members of Parliament (Salaries and Allowances) Amendment Bill, 2025.

It was moved by Senator Danesh Kumar. Other bills that were passed included: "The Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) (Amendment) Bill, 2023".

The House will now meet again tomorrow at 11:30 in the morning.

### Pakistan, Bahrain to strengthen parliamentary relations

APP

ISLAMABAD: A high-level parliamentary delegation from Bahrain led by Speaker of the Council of Representatives of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Dr Ahmed bin Salman Al-Musallam, visited the Parliament House in Islamabad on Monday.

Upon arrival at the Parliament House, Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq warmly welcomed the delegation.

Later, the two sides discussed in detail the bilateral relations, trade opportunities and promoting parliamentary cooperation. Both the leaders agreed to further strengthen Pak-Bahrain parliamentary relations.

Speaking on the occasion, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq said Pakistan attaches great importance to its bilateral relations with Bahrain and increased parliamentary ties can play a significant role in bringing the two nations closer. He said the relations between Pakistan and Bahrain

are based on religion, culture and historical values.

The Speaker said there are vast opportunities for promoting cooperation in economic, trade and other sectors between the two brotherly countries.

He said both the countries have similar positions on important regional and global issues and always supported each other's stands at regional and global forums. In his remarks, Speaker of the Council of Representatives of Bahrain said his country wants to promote cooperation with Pakistan in parliamentary, trade, IT and various other fields. He said the Bahraini Parliament will also provide all possible cooperation with the Pakistani Parliament in the IT sector. Dr Ahmed bin Salman Al-Musallam stressed the need to further promote trade relations between Pakistan and Bahrain. He also thanked the Speaker National Assembly and his team for accord a warm welcome to them in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: High-level Bahraini parliamentary delegation led by the President of the Council of Representatives, Ahmed Bin Salman Al Musallam, called on Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House.

### Foreign investment witnessing substantial increase: Jam Kamal

INP

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan says foreign investment in the country is witnessing a substantial increase, which reflects economic stability.

Addressing a pre-budget seminar in Islamabad on Monday, he expressed the government's commitment to addressing the challenges, faced by industries.

The Minister said inflation is decreasing while policy rate in the country has also dropped due to prudent policies of the government.

He said the government is engaged with different relevant sectors and consultations are underway to prepare the

budget for the next fiscal year.

Jam Kamal also stressed the crucial role of the National Export Development Board in tackling

industrial issues and highlighted the importance of discussions on tariff-related matters to formulate new National Tariff Policy draft.

He noted that a transparent tariff structure is key to encourage foreign investment. He acknowledged the private sector's significant role in driving economic growth.

The Commerce Minister reaffirmed the government's determination to improve ease of doing business, addressing concerns such as tax regimes, sales tax issues, and capital mechanisms.

### Trump administration turns to US Supreme Court in bid to fire agency head

By Khawaja Farooq

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump's administration has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to intervene in its bid to fire the head of an independent

U.S. agency that protects government whistleblowers, bringing its first legal battle involving Trump's actions to the nation's highest judicial body since he took office in January.

The Justice Department asked the court to immediately lift a federal judge's February 12 order that temporarily blocked Trump's removal of Hampton Dellinger as the head of the Office of Special Counsel while litigation continues in the dispute, according to a copy of the filing reviewed by Reuters. The case has not yet been docketed by the court.

The case could offer a preview of how the Supreme Court will view Trump's aggressive moves to remake the federal government, including by removing heads of independent agencies. The court has a 6-3 conservative majority and includes three members appointed by Trump during his first term in office.

The judge's action blocking the termination is an "unprecedented assault on the separation of powers," Acting Solicitor General Sarah Harris said in the filing.

"This court should not allow lower courts to seize executive power by dictating to the President how long he must continue employing an agency head against his will," Harris wrote.

Appointed by former President Joe Biden, Dellinger's five-year term was set to expire in 2029. He sued after receiving an email on February 7 informing him that Trump had fired him from the watchdog role, "effective immediately." Dellinger's lawsuit said Trump exceeded his power in purporting to fire him, given that federal law permits removal only for "inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office."

The Special Counsel's "ability to protect the civil service and investigate alleged misconduct is needed now more than ever," Dellinger's lawsuit said. "Over the preceding three weeks, an unprecedented number of federal employees with civil service protections have been terminated without cause."

U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson in Washington, D.C. issued a temporary restraining order on February 12, restoring Dellinger to his position pending a further, preliminary order. Jackson said Dellinger was likely to prevail in the suit given that the effort to fire him without identifying any cause "plainly contravenes" the Special Counsel's job protections.



QUETTA: Employees of Utility Stores Corporation hold protest against the dismissal of their employees.