



This constitutional amendment is a victory for democracy, laying a strong foundation for a bright democratic future. "The victory belongs to Pakistan and its people"

Federal Minister for Interior
Mohsin Naqvi

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Price Rs 8 | Pages 4

Zardari signs constitutional amendments into law



ISLAMABAD: The 26th Constitutional Amendment, which became law earlier on Monday after the approval of both houses of the Parliament, was given assent by President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday. Pakistani politics saw a second "working weekend" in as many months, where the ruling coalition finally succeeded in passing the much-touted 'Constitutional Package' with a two-thirds majority in both the Senate and the National Assembly.

The 26th Amendment brings changes to the Constitution, most of which pertain to the judiciary. Some main reforms include taking away the Supreme Court's suo motu powers, setting the chief justice of Pakistan's (CJP) term at three years, and empowering the prime minister to appoint the next CJP from among the three most senior SC judges.

On Sunday, the bill, which had 22 clauses, was green-lit by the Senate with a two-thirds majority. Then, during a session that began late on Sunday night and continued past 5am on Monday, the National Assembly also passed it with a two-thirds majority. The NA-approved version had 27 clauses after incorporating suggestions made by the Senate.

Following the conclusion of parliamentary procedures, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, according to Radio Pakistan, sent his advice to President Zardari for his assent on the newly enacted law — titled 'The Constitution (26th Amendment) Act, 2024'. Following the passage of the bill, PM Shehbaz delivered a speech in the NA and congratulated the parliament for the "historical achievement". INP

PM felicitates Prabowo Subianto on swearing in as Indonesia president

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday felicitated Prabowo Subianto on taking the oath as the eighth President of Indonesia.

Taking to X, the prime minister said that Pakistan and Indonesia had enjoyed fraternal ties, rooted in shared values and mutual respect. "I look forward to working closely with President Subianto to enhance our bilateral cooperation across all fields of mutual interest as well as to promote regional and global peace and security," the prime minister said.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif signs the advice for presidential assent on the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill.

26th constitutional amendment to safeguard country's future; ascertains parliament supremacy: PM Shehbaz

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the 26th constitutional amendment passed by the parliament would prove to be a milestone in the country's history besides safeguarding its future.

"This is a historic day. The 26th constitutional amendment is not just an amendment but another magnificent example of national solidarity and unity. Today a new dawn will usher in and a new sun will rise which will brighten the whole country," the prime minister said addressing the National Assembly after the House passed the legislation in the early hours of Monday.

Earlier Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar presented the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill in the National Assembly which was passed by a two-thirds majority after its passage by the Senate with the similar required majority. Under the amendment, the term for the Chief Justice of Pakistan has been set at three years. A 12-member parliamentary committee will select the new Chief Justice from a panel of the three most senior judges. This committee, consisting of eight members from the National Assembly and four from the Senate, will pro-

pose the name to the Prime Minister, who will then forward it to the President for final approval. Besides, a Judicial Commission of Pakistan, led by the Chief Justice and including three senior judges, two members each from the National Assembly and Senate, the federal minister for law and justice, the attorney general and a legal expert with at least 15 years of Supreme Court experience, will oversee judicial appointments. Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the new constitutional amendment would also help end the palatial conspiracies to oust the governments and remove the prime ministers besides ensuring the riddance from the verdicts like Reko Diq and Karkey which cost the country billions of dollars.

Besides, this will also address the sufferings of the millions of people who had to wait for years to seek justice from the Supreme Court, he added.

The prime minister said that with the passage of the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill, the unfulfilled dream of the Charter of Democracy had been realized which was signed by Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif in 2006 and also endorsed by Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

Responding to criticism by an opposition member, the prime minister said the legislation

was made by the votes of allied parties and the independent candidates, not by any turn-coats. He said the country had witnessed great judges like Justice Kiana and Justice Robert Cornelius but there were also some others who sacked two prime ministers with one on the basis of Iqama, when nothing was found in the Panama case. He told the members that the 26th constitutional amendment had ascertained the supremacy of the parliament.

The prime minister, who earlier went to the seats of the parties' leaders to thank them, particularly mentioned President Asif Ali Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, JUI-F's Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Salik Hussain, Abdul Aleem Khan, Sardar Khalid Magsi, Aimal Wali Khan, Abdul Malik Baloch, Ijazul Haq, Professor Sajid Mir and others and expressed gratitude for their support to make such an amendment in the constitution that would "strengthen and safeguard the country's future." Prime Minister Shehbaz wished the PTI would have joined the legislation process but he said that despite their absence, the parliament gave a message that the political parties and their leaders set aside their personal interests and went ahead to pass the amendment "which will become a milestone in the country's history."

Ayaz Sadiq seeks nominations for formation of Special Parliamentary Committee under Article 175A of the Constitution

In a letter to Chairman Senate Yousaf Raza Gilani, the NA Speaker requests nomination of four members from the Upper House

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has sought nominations from the Senate for the formation of the Special Parliamentary Committee under Article 175A of the Constitution.

In a letter to Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, the NA Speaker requested the nomination of four members from the Upper House.

Under Article 175A of the Constitution, the Special Parliamentary Committee will nominate the Chief Justice of Pakistan from amongst the three most senior judges of the Supreme Court.

The committee shall comprise 12 members, including 8 from the National Assembly and 4 from the Senate. The Parliamentary Parties shall have proportional representation on the committee based on their strength in Parliament, to be nominated by their respective Parliamentary Leaders.

The Senate Secretariat, on the other hand, has asked the parliamentary parties, present in the Upper House, to nominate one Senator each for the Special Parliamentary Committee. SABAH

Commodore Shahzad Iqbal of PN promoted to the rank of rear admiral

ISLAMABAD: Commodore Shahzad Iqbal of Pakistan Navy has been promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral. Rear Admiral Shahzad Iqbal was commissioned in Operations Branch in 1995. The Flag Officer is a graduate of Pakistan Navy War College, Lahore, and National Defence University, Islamabad.



He has also done B.Sc. in Naval Sciences from University of Karachi and Gunnery Officer Command Course from China. The Admiral has an illustrious career covering vast experience of various Command and Staff appointments.

His command appointments include Commanding Officer PNS SAIF, Commander Jinnah Naval Base, Ormara, and Commander 25th Destroyer Squadron. He also served as Senior Staff Officer (Operations & Plans) at HQ Commander Pakistan Fleet, Director Foreign Military Collaboration, Director Naval Operational Plans and Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. In recognition of his meritorious services, the Flag Officer has been awarded Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military). PR

IT exports surges to US\$ 876 million in 1st quarter of FY 2024-25: Shaza Fatima



ISLAMABAD: IT export remittances in Pakistan have experienced a significant increase of 33.54%, reaching US\$ 876 million during the first three months of FY 2024-25 (July to September),

compared to US\$ 656 million in the same period last year (FY 2023-24). Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said the remittances from ICT services export amounted to US\$ 292 million in September 2024, a 41.7% increase from US\$ 206 million in September 2023. She said steps are underway for increasing IT exports, adding that IT exports are increasing owing to initiatives for ease of doing business in the country.

Shaza Fatima Khawaja said on the directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the full support of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Ministry of IT and Telecommunication, Pakistan Software Export Board and IT industry are committed to increase IT exports. The IT & ITeS industry achieved a trade surplus of US\$ 764 million, which constitutes 87.21% of total ICT export remittances during the first three months of FY 2024-25. This surplus reflects a 36.67% increase from US\$ 559 million in the same period last year. In contrast, the overall services sector recorded a trade deficit of US\$ 699 million during this timeframe.

The US\$ 656 million in ICT export remittances during July to September 2024 is the highest among all services sectors, with "other business services" following at US\$ 374 million. This robust performance underscores the growing significance of the ICT sector in Pakistan's economic landscape. SABAH

Dar chairs 43rd meeting of Steering Committee on SDGs Achievement Programme



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired 43rd meeting of Steering Committee on SDGs Achievement Programme.

Meeting focused on mechanisms to enhance access to community based basic needs like education, health, clean water, sanitation and electricity interventions leading to United Nations Agenda on SDGs. SABAH

Enactment of 26th constitutional amendment victory of democracy: Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage, and Culture, Attaullah Tarar, on Monday hailed the passage of the 26th constitutional amendment as a victory for democracy, one that will be etched in history.

"The approval of the 26th constitutional amendment marks a significant milestone in Pakistan's history; a new dawn has begun," the information minister stated.

Tarar extended congratulations to Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Ameer Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the members of the federal cabinet, all coalition parties, and the entire nation on the successful passage of the amendment.

He emphasized that the amendment would bring greater stability to Pakistan's constitutional and legal framework. "Extensive consultations were held to ensure as much consensus as possible on the amendment," Tarar added.

The minister noted that the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah laid the foundation for constitutional thought in Pakistan. "History will confirm that this constitutional amendment is in the best interest of the people," he asserted.

The amendment, according to Tarar, will eliminate obstacles to the swift delivery of justice. He stressed that politics requires flexibility, and there is no place for stubbornness. "Today, the people of Pakistan, the state, and democracy have emerged victorious," he said.

He further explained that the approval of the constitutional amendment fulfills the democratic agenda, reinforcing the rule of law and the supremacy of the Constitution in Pakistan. The amendment is also expected to introduce greater transparency in the judicial appointment process and the evaluation of judges' performance. "Parliament will now be empowered to function as the supreme institution, in line with the spirit of the 1973 Constitution," Tarar concluded. APP

Ahsan hopes Pakistan economy volume to reach \$3 trillion in 23 years

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal on Monday hoped that the annual volume of Pakistan's economy will be \$ 3 trillion and the country will be counted among the top 10 economies of the world in 100 years of independence in 1947.

In the current era, data-driven, knowledge economies are ruling the world, and data sets, data integration and Artificial Intelligence are significant for the sustainable economic development of any country, the Minister said. Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal said this while addressing the 'Data Fest 2024, Organized by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) here. Chairman NADRA Lieutenant, General, Muhammad Munir Afsar, Federal Secretary for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Owais Manzoor Samra,

Chief Statistician, PBS, Naem ul Zafar and representatives of federal and provincial ministries and other stakeholders participated in the ceremony.

The main strategic partners for DataFest-2024 are UNICEF UNFPA, the World Bank, ILO, UNHCR, FAO, ADB and these organizations bring extensive expertise in global development, public health, and education.

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives said that today "we have entered a world that is undergoing the most rapid changes in human history and people who have seen the huge innovations and development in modern time."

He said that now modern data science drives the economic revolution in the world, and data analytic and advanced technology have fueled the modern economic development and digital revolution. He said that data science is the core of artificial intelligence, and its quality is the



foundation of any economic theory and development in the modern world and for that, our economy needs very reliable data.

The Minister said that behind the economic development of any nation are 10 years of continuous policies, which pave

the way for their development. He said that now the government is working on the next five-year plan and today when I read the Vision 2025 made in 2014, it seemed that we had written the same problems we are facing today in the country.

In 2017-18, Pakistan had overcome the

issue of energy and terrorism, the country was moving fast with the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), but today we are back to where we were in 2013. He said that for sustainable economic development in the country, we need continuity of policies to achieve our economic goals. "Our economy needs reliable data, with which we can measure the direction of progress." Similarly, data sets are also required for business development and only the nations, businesses or individuals can use data in a better way can achieve their economic goals, he said.

"I am happy that there are a large number of young people here today, who will determine their future through data science and youth should have the ability to use data properly. Our young generation is going to participate in an economic marathon race based on modern technology and data-driven economies" he said. On the occasion, the minister underscored the importance of data-driven decision-

making in addressing key issues such as poverty alleviation, education, and healthcare while encouraging collaboration between public and private sectors. He highlighted the importance of utilizing big data and data analytics for the prosperity and well-being of Pakistan's future.

He said that today, "We have presented the positive side of Pakistan to the world through the three days head of the government meeting of 'Shanghai Cooperation Organization' in Islamabad." He said that all economic indicators of the country are showing positive.

The inflation rate is down at single digits and our youth have the potential to take Pakistan to a high position in the world. He appreciated PBS's efforts in organizing the successful Data Fest-2024 and thanked all international delegations of Nepal, Oman, Thailand, Australia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Iran for their participation and all university students for joining this event.

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Rethinking agriculture for economic revival

HUMAYUN AKHTAR KHAN

In the last many weeks, I have written in these pages to share ideas for addressing the dire challenges faced by our economy. The government of Pakistan has a choice: it could use this difficult moment to rethink and reform its approach to the economy or it could use the shot in the arm from new IMF loans to continue with business as usual. In the latter case, Pakistan risks going deeper into debt and dependency at the expense of citizen welfare and business progress.

This series of columns aims to offer a fresh approach to economic policy. Each week I focus on a key sector of the economy. A shift in policy is crucial.

Some facts about agriculture are well known. On the one hand, it has about a quarter share in the economy and employs 37 per cent of workers. On the other, despite the large subsidy of about 7.0 per cent of GDP, the sector suffers from low productivity and many inefficiencies. Over the last decade, the government's approach to economic management has been ad hoc, reacting to issues as they arise. Whether in agriculture, manufacturing, or IT, the focus has been on the short term instead of on long-term development. Thus, despite talk of a national policy on agriculture, we have yet to see a meaningful initiative.

Despite fiscal constraints, direct and indirect subsidy for agriculture is not meagre. World Bank estimates it to be about \$2.5 billion per year. Yet, the amount has done little to make the sector competitive. Clearly, the government must reform its subsidy spending.

From its status as a 'water stressed' country, Pakistan has steadily moved to become water scarce — having less than 1,000 cubic metres of water per capita. In 2021, the IMF estimated that per capita supply of water in Pakistan was 1017 cubic metres. It was 1,500 in 2010 and is now estimated to be about 900 cubic metres per capita. Increase in storage is not possible in the near term. Pakistan must improve water productivity.

The World Bank estimates that Pakistan produces only 130 grams of crop per cubic meter of water. This contrasts with 300 grams for India and 800 for China. Outdated irrigation methods and government apathy waste precious water, and leaves farmers at the tail-end of canals dependent on tubewells. In turn, the use of tubewells has depleted groundwater. The old problems of water logging and salinity have worsened. The Abiana water charges is not enough for the upkeep of the irrigation system, leave alone upgrade it. Its modest rate does not encourage conservation. As per the University of Agriculture, two main crops of wheat and rice use "76.27 MAF of water out of the 110 MAF available for irrigation". A shift to 'bed planting', where crops grow on the ridges with water applied to furrows, could save fifty percent water. That is enough to cultivate millions of acres lying barren now. Low-cost credit should be available to fund the Rs50 billion needed to equip all tractors with bed planters.

The government should also promote high-efficiency irrigation systems and provide subsidies or financing to meet initial capital costs. It is possible to do so by reallocating subsidy. The government of Pakistan may shift its focus from help to farmers at the growing stage to such sustainable solutions. Once conservation begins, farmers may no longer need power subsidy for tubewells. There is also good reason to begin discussion with large farmers on cost sharing for irrigation O&M. The government must build political consensus on reforms before launching the initiative. It is in the interest of all farmers, as the rapid fall in per capita water availability, coupled with growing urban demand, would soon affect all growers.

Climate change poses major risks to agriculture. As rain and melting seasons shift, farmers must learn to adapt to new conditions. The above recommendations for sustainable water management are one part of the solution. Higher investment in research is equally critical. Developing heat-tolerant crop varieties and adjusting planting seasons will help farmers manage changing conditions. Pakistan must also promote safe varieties of GMO and hybrid seeds. This needs strict quality control in seed distribution. Research institutes and PSQCA must develop and enforce protocols for seed quality enforcement.

There are many more research inputs that farmers need. They need updated climate data and soil assessments for better use of land and inputs. They must also have new tools to improve productivity. With advancements in drones, farmers can now apply seeds, fertilizer and pesticides more precisely, improving yield and reducing waste. Farmers also need help in optimal and balanced use of fertilizer and pesticide. Under present practices plants do not get the ideal mix of nutrients. Sharing knowledge about which fertilizer to use when could help with productivity. To export, they also need help with compliance with foreign SPS standards. Estimates are that return on research spending can be as high as 100 per cent. In the present context of weak existing policies and many challenges to agriculture, research is especially critical. It is equally important for research to reach the farmers. Provinces have a wide network of extension services. They must ensure smooth coordination between research and extension for updated help to farmers.

Farm productivity would grow with more use of machinery. While tractor use is widespread, farmers do not have the right implements. They need them at all stages of the production cycle, from ploughing, sowing to grading. Better and targeted farm credit would increase use of machinery. With preferred credit and institutional support, the government may help set up service firms from whom farmers can rent modern machinery. Small farmers especially need this service.

Institute for Policy Reforms. He has a long record of public service.



CHRIS DOYLE

Syria facing new crisis due to Israel's war on Lebanon

With most of the focus today on Israel, Gaza and Lebanon, Syria is one Middle Eastern front that gets scant attention.

Israeli attacks on Syria have been a feature for more than a decade. The Israeli red line was always that it would take action to prevent the transfer of advanced weaponry to Hezbollah.

These terms of engagement have loosened. Israel has been targeting Iranian assets, especially since 2017. Attacks have included the bombing of the Iranian consulate in Damascus that precipitated the first Iranian missile salvo on Israel in April. Attacks on areas like Al Mezzeh, where the consulate is located, have led to many Syrians leaving the capital.

Israel has also been encroaching further into Syrian territory on the Golan Heights, where it has cleared landmines and created a new line along the demilitarized zone with Syria. Its official rationale is to keep Iran and its associated forces away from Israel-controlled lines. The Israelis announced they had killed a Hezbollah fighter at Quneitra two weeks ago.

But the Israeli invasion of Lebanon has transformed the situation for Syrians in this conflict. More than 426,000 Syrians and Lebanese have crossed the border into Syria. Back in 2006, Lebanese also sought shelter in Syria. The difference this time is

that about 70 percent of those crossing the border are Syrians, who are being compelled to return to a country that is economically unable to support them anymore. These returnees are also impoverished, so are bringing no funds to support themselves. Thus far, the UN Refugee Agency estimates that about 80 percent have found refuge with friends and families, but this is only a short-term option as the hosts do not have enough resources. Many

decide how to handle returning Syrians. Many are men of conscription age. Conscription was one reason many refugees previously refused to return. This return is far from voluntary. The regime knows it cannot detain them all. Moreover, it is no longer concerned with critical social media posts, given that it does not feel under threat. Those who were previously in the army and deserted have been given one week to return to the armed forces. Others get two

ited a mention in the regime's media outlets. Israel's activity on the Golan Heights has also not been referred to.

The situation in Lebanon is both a threat and an opportunity. Syria has always been dependent on Lebanon economically, so the war will damage it. But once the Israeli armed forces have done their worst, the Syrian regime may fancy reasserting its influence in a country that — until its forced withdrawal in 2005 — it had viewed very much as its own backyard. It does not possess the same capabilities as in the 1990s, but it could still return as an actor.

Many Syria observers believe that Bashar Assad does not want to antagonize Israel and the US by joining the war alongside Iran and Hezbollah. Gone are the days when the regime needed Tehran and its proxy militia's support to survive. Assad sees the advantage in not antagonizing Israel. Hezbollah counters that 5,400 of its fighters died defending the regime and that it expects Syrian support.

On the whole, Israel has left the Damascus regime alone, satisfied that Assad has limited himself to making hollow threats.

In the past, it has been either Lebanon or Syria in crisis. One group of people was always there to offer refuge to the other. However, for some time now, both have been suffering simultaneously. Israel's invasion of Lebanon will escalate the pain for both, with no safety net.

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Given the Israeli operations in Lebanon, it is impossible to estimate how long the Lebanese will remain in Syria

fear threats to Syrian supply chains. Inflation is rampant, with fuel prices in particular shooting up.

Given the Israeli operations in Lebanon, it is impossible to estimate how long the Lebanese will remain in Syria or how many more will cross the border.

Both Lebanese and the returning Syrians bring their own political baggage. Many Lebanese fled to Syria as they came from Hezbollah-controlled areas, which is one reason why Israel has bombed the Lebanese-Syrian border crossings. This hit imports of vital goods into Syria. Many Lebanese were corralled into areas around the Shiite area of Sayyidah Zaynab, outside of Damascus. But tensions have broken out. Some Lebanese in Homs were angry that shops did not close when Hassan Nasrallah was killed. The Syrian authorities have had to

weeks to sign up. Those with a security record have to endure interrogation from the security forces. Those who refuse are told to go to opposition-held areas or leave the country. There is a distortion of human capital in the government-controlled areas, whereas in the opposition zones there is a surfeit. The Syrian economy does not need more men in the army, it needs them to rejoin the productive economy and play their social roles as part of their families.

The prospects of massive population movements, including to Europe, explain why Southern European states have become even jumpier than usual. Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has taken the lead on this. How does the Syrian regime see these changes? Strangely, it has been quiet over many incidents. The killing of Yahya Sinwar hardly mer-

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

History of Pakistan

Today in History

The country's largest province and a traditional stronghold for Sharif's PML-N party. As the PTI gained momentum, however, Khan faced a slew of legal challenges, and the party's fortunes began to reverse. In October, while on interim bail for charges related to a speech he had given in August and for allegedly having received foreign funding for his party, Khan was temporarily barred from holding public office after the election commission alleged he had concealed assets. Heightened tensions in the country were on full display in early November when an attempt was made on Khan's life, at which time he sustained injuries to one of his legs. He made repeated assertions that a military officer was responsible for the attempt, claims that the military dismissed in May 2023 as "highly irresponsible and baseless." When Khan was taken into custody days later,

supporters took to the streets and attacked military installations and government buildings. The PTI was subsequently subjected to a crackdown, and dozens of party members defected.

Meanwhile, violence increased in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as talks between the government and the TTP failed to progress. The attacks largely targeted security forces in the region, and in January 2023 an attack on a police compound killed more than 100 people. In July an attack by the Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISKAP; also called ISIS-K or IS-K), which opposes the TTP, killed more than 60 civilians at a political rally. That attack alarmed many observers, who believed it indicated that the fighting in neighbouring Afghanistan between the ISKP and the Afghan Taliban had spilled over into northwestern Pakistan.

As the end of the parliamentary term

approached in August, Sharif and his government resigned three days early. His handing the reins to a caretaker government allowed elections to be delayed beyond their original set date in October. Although Sharif was expected to retain his parliamentary seat in the elections, he intended for his brother Nawaz Sharif to return to power as prime minister.

Related Topics
 Kabul River, river in eastern Afghanistan and northwestern Pakistan, 435 miles (700 km) long, of which 350 miles (560 km) are in Afghanistan. Rising in the Sangl Range 45 miles (72 km) west of Kabul city, it flows east past Kabul and Jalalabad, north of the Khyber Pass into Pakistan, and past Peshawar; it joins the Indus River northwest of Islamabad. The river has four major tributaries—the Lowgar, the Panjshir, the Konar (Kunar), and the Alingar. The Kabul River crosses two major

climatic belts. Its upper reaches have a continental warm-summer climate with a mean July temperature of about 77 °F (25 °C) and a mean January temperature below 32 °F (0 °C); annual precipitation there is less than 20 inches (500 mm), although precipitation is higher on the mountain slopes around its headwaters. In its lower reaches in Pakistan, the Kabul River crosses a region with a dry desert climate, with maximum daily temperatures in early summer that often exceed 104 °F (40 °C) and mean monthly temperatures in winter above 50 °F (10 °C). Much of the Kabul's course is tapped for irrigation, so much so that segments of the river often dry up in summer. Irrigation is also extensive in the Jalalabad and Peshawar areas. A few miles below the junction with the Panjshir, a hydroelectric plant has been built.

To be continued....

Nicole Kidman stuns onlookers with old Hollywood look at red carpet event

Nicole Kidman appears on the red carpet days after her mother's funeral

The Australian actress, Nicole Kidman, wowed the crowd as she posed on the red carpet at the 4th Annual Academy Museum Gala in Los Angeles on Sunday, October 20th.

The 57-year-old opted for a timeless fashion ensemble inspired by old Hollywood, for the star-studded event.

The Big Little Lies star was seen sporting a sleek black gown that touched the floor, featuring an elegant train and long black gloves covering her arms.

The Babygirl star completed her look with minimal accessories, adding just a gold watch and



matching statement earrings.

Nicole wore her long hair parted in the middle and tied back with a classic '60s style back-comb.

The celebratory event honoured veteran Rita Moreno, Gladiator II star Paul Mescal and Pulp Fiction director Quentin Tarantino for their contributions to the entertainment industry.

The Perfect Couple actress' red carpet appearance comes just days after her mother's funeral took place in Australia.

The actress had flown back to her native land of Sydney to join her family for the sad procession.

Virtually-controlled rovers to help scouring moon, Mars

Taking samples, digging or assembling on the moon is about to get easier as teleoperated rovers are going to work on the natural satellite with humans controlling the tools from Earth. The new teleoperated system has been tested at the European Space Agency's (ESA) European Centre for Space Applications and Telecommunications at Harwell in Oxfordshire by researchers of the robotics laboratory at the University of Bristol, according to Space.com.

The researchers were able to manipulate a robotic arm of a rover by controlling the virtual simulation of the rover. They then dug up a sample of a pretend lunar regolith called "simulant". "This simulation could [...] help us operate lunar robots remotely from Earth, avoiding the problem of signal delays," said Bristol's Joe Louca in a statement, as quoted by Space.com.

Interestingly, the teleoperator specifically designed for moon, can also be functional for Martian missions.

"In the next decade we're going to see several

crewed and uncrewed missions to the moon, such as Nasa's Artemis program and China's Chang'e program," said Louca. "This simulation could be a valuable tool to support preparation or operation for these missions." The virtual simulant also gives the user a sense of touch giving the teleoperators an idea of how much force they need to dig or lift up a sample in a scoop. The new system can also be used to train astronauts for missions to the moon. It could give them an idea of what to expect from the environment of the space. "We can adjust how strong gravity is in this model, and provide haptic feedback, so we could give astronauts a sense of how moon dust would feel and behave in lunar conditions — which has a sixth of the gravitational pull of the Earth," said Louca.

Moreover, upon observation, Louca's team found that the teleoperator was efficient 100% of the time while scooping up regolith simulant while it was trustworthy 92.5% of the time.

07 Easy High-Fiber Breakfast Recipes to Make for Busy Mornings

Start your morning with an easy, high-fiber breakfast recipe. Each dish is packed with at least 6 grams of fiber, which has been associated with health benefits like promoting regular bowel movements and lowering your risk of heart disease. And as a bonus, these morning meals take just 15 minutes or less to make, to help make eating healthy easier. Recipes like Salsa-Topped Avocado Toast and Chocolate-Coconut Breakfast Banana Split are filling and healthy.

01: This anti-inflammatory smoothie draws its bright tropical flavor from frozen passion fruit pieces available in the frozen fruit section of well-stocked supermarkets or natural-foods stores.

02: Spin leftovers from taco night into this easy salsa-topped avocado toast for a quick snack or use it as a jumping-off point for breakfast by

adding an egg on top. Single-serve packages of mashed avocado or guacamole can stand in for the fresh avocado.

03: Eating dessert for breakfast has never been easier, thanks to this twist on a classic banana split. We swap in strained yogurt (e.g., Greek-style or skyr) for ice cream, but you'll still get the same ice-cream-scoop look because the yogurt's thicker consistency helps it hold its shape well. Plus, strained yogurt has more protein for staying power. Pineapple and coconut give this banana split tropical vibes.

04: Give plain oats a makeover with this quick, five-minute breakfast idea. Adding just a bit of toasted coconut, some vanilla extract and fresh (or frozen) mango provides plenty of flavor. We use oat milk here, but feel free to switch it to dairy or any other plant-based,

unsweetened milk too.

05: Wheat berries, a nutty-tasting whole grain with a pleasantly chewy texture, are the base of this hearty breakfast bowl recipe. The fiber-rich grain freezes very well, so cook up a batch to stash away for salads, bowls and more. Topped with spinach, peanuts and an egg, these bowls make for a satisfying breakfast. Sprinkle with crushed red pepper for extra heat.

06: Kale, cherries and beets team up in this powerful anti-inflammatory smoothie. All three of these fruits and veggies contain unique anti-inflammatory compounds that may help stave off diseases associated with chronic inflammation, including cancer, heart disease, arthritis and diabetes.

07: This healthy toast recipe combines chickpeas, kale and feta for a savory bite.



Health

Interior Minister Congratulates nation on approval of 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi has congratulated the entire nation on the approval of the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill, terming it a victory for the people of Pakistan. The Interior Minister said, "This is success of the people of Pakistan and we bow down to Allah in gratitude." He specifically thanked JUI (F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman and leaders of allied parties for their support, saying, "Maulana Fazlur Rehman's positive and historic role will always be remembered." Mohsin Naqvi praised the efforts of President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, stating, "their tireless efforts have borne fruit." He emphasized that all leaders worked jointly and relentlessly for the 26th Constitutional Amendment. The Interior Minister emphasized that this constitutional amendment is a victory for democracy, laying a strong foundation for a bright democratic future. "The victory belongs to Pakistan and its people," he said. Mohsin Naqvi paid tribute to leaders of all democratic parties, acknowledging their collective efforts. He reiterated that the approval of the constitutional amendment bill is Parliament's right. Interior Minister stated that the collective efforts and consensus-building have yielded positive results, adding that this amendment holds key importance for balancing powers among institutions.

26th Constitutional Amendment passed to restore dignity of Parliament: Khawaja Asif

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Asif on Monday said that the passage of the 26th Constitutional Amendment was aimed at restoring the respect and dignity of the parliament, as guaranteed by the Constitution of Pakistan. Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he said that elected representatives should have the authority to legislate for the welfare of the public and that the minority should not impose its decisions on the majority. "We are empowering the parliament, as agreed in the Charter of Democracy (CoD) signed by all political parties," he said. "Today's amendment restores power to the people of this country, through their elected representatives." He reiterated that the power had been devolved to the parliament and not to individuals. "The amendment reflects the principles laid out in the CoD and addresses issues that have been a part of its agenda for years," he added. Asif highlighted that thousands of cases were pending in the superior courts, and he expressed optimism that reforms in the judiciary would help improve the performance of the courts. He also stressed the importance of protecting the respect of the parliament. He said, "Politicians face disqualification, they sacrifice their lives and endure imprisonment—why can't the judiciary be held accountable?" he added. APP

Inspector General (IG) Islamabad visits Red Zone checkpoints



ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police, Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, visited the Red Zone checkpoints and reviewed security measures on Monday. On the occasion, SSP Security Division, Capt (Retd.) Syed Zeeshan Haider, along with other senior police officials were also present, a public relation officer told APP. During the visit, the IGP Islamabad inspected various duty points within the Red Zone and evaluated the security measures in place.

AIOU publishes first Algerian novel in Urdu by Dr Fadila Melhag

ISLAMABAD: For the first time in the history of cultural relations between Algeria and Pakistan, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has published the first Algerian novel in Urdu by the writer Dr Fadila Melhag, in a second edition titled (When Life Desires You), with an introduction by the university Vice Chancellor, Professor Nasir Mahmood. The novel (When Life Desires You), a joint translation by Dr Abdul Majeed Baghdadi, Head of the Department of Language and Literature at AIOU and Dr Lubna Farah, Director of the Translation Department at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML). It is pertinent to mention here, this novel was published in 2023 in a first edition by the "Pen League of Karachi," along with two short story collections, "Outside the Field of Discovery" and "For Display Unpaintable," translated by Dr. Lubna Farah. Commenting on the initiative to publish this pioneering literary work, VC AIOU Prof. Nasir Mahmood said in the introduction of the novel, "A desire to enhance cultural cooperation between Pakistan and Algeria, which had enjoyed good historical relations since the fifties, when Pakistan was one of the countries that supported the glorious revolution of November 1, 1954, and supported the Algerian interim government in 1958". In this context, Professor Nasir Mahmood said, "The translation and publication of Dr. Fadila

Melhag's literary works in Pakistan represents a historical precedent and a pioneering step in introducing Algerian literature in Pakistan and all of South Asia. It is considered a valuable achievement that encourages the translation and publication of Arabic literary works in Urdu and the translation and publication of Pakistani literary works in Arabic". Prof Nasir said, the novel (When Life Desires You) is worthy of reading and study by a brilliant writer who deserves admiration and appreciation. It is a distinguished creative experience in presenting the issue of illegal "secret" immigration to the north in its current manifestations, with its complex ideological, economic, historical and cultural dimensions. Dr. Fadila Melhag is distinguished by her high and diverse education, abundant intellectual production, and creativity in multiple literary genres (poetry, novels, and stories). She holds a PhD in law and national and foreign certificates in the judiciary, law, diplomacy, information technology, and foreign languages. Dr. Fadila Melhag has published several books in legal studies, political science, and literature (novel, poetry, story). Her books have been published in Algeria, Egypt, France, and Pakistan and have been translated into French, English, Spanish, and Urdu. She received the Genius Award from the Ministry of Culture and Arts in Algeria this year.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam talking to a delegation of international red cross and red crescent societies (IRFC) that called on her led by country head, Farid Abdulkadir Mohamed Aiywar to discuss climate resilience and environmental sustainability related matters.

Participants of the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament visit the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

ISLAMABAD: Participants of the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament, who are on a visit to Pakistan from 20-23 October 2024, visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Monday. According to a statement issued by Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, they were briefed by Director General (Arms Control and Disarmament) Ambassador Tahir Andrabi, on Pakistan's stance on arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation. He also emphasized the importance of unrestricted access to dual-use technologies for peaceful socio-economic applications. The United Nations Disarmament Fellows, belonging to 25 countries, are visiting Pakistan as part of their international study tour.

The visit, which has been organized by the Government of Pakistan in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), aims to familiarize international diplomats with Pakistan's policies and institutional frameworks in arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation. During their visit, the fellows will tour the Pakistan Centre of Excellence on Nuclear Security (PCENS), the Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science & Technology (PINSTECH), the Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF) in Wah Cantt, the Heavy Mechanical Complex (HMC) in Taxila, the National Centre for Physics (NCP), and the Centre for International Strategic Studies (CISS). At PCENS, the participants will receive

detailed briefings on Pakistan's nuclear safety and security architecture, regulatory frameworks, and the safeguards adopted in line with international standards, which have been recognized by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). At PINSTECH, they will observe the Pakistan Atomic Research Reactor and the peaceful applications of nuclear technology in health, industry, agriculture, food security, and power generation. Established in 1978, the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament is a prestigious programme of UNODA and offers valuable training and exposure to young professionals. Pakistan is hosting the international study tour for the UN Disarmament Fellows for the second time. SABAH

CDA vows to fast-track sector development in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) is ramping up efforts to expedite the development of Islamabad's sectors, as announced during a high-level meeting held on Monday. Chaired by CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa, the session brought together CDA Board Members and senior officials to address ongoing issues such as land acquisition and Built-Up Property (BUP) challenges. Chairman Randhawa emphasized the need for coordinated efforts between the Engineer-

ing and Estate Wings to ensure the smooth execution of development projects. He also committed to personally visiting the sectors to monitor progress and push for faster resolution of obstacles. In a progress report, the meeting revealed that 68% of development work in Sector C-14 is complete, with culvert construction underway. For Sector C-15, resolving possession issues was highlighted as a priority, while major works in Sector C-16 are almost finalized,



with only a few streets left. In Sector E-12, the meeting was informed that 65% of the work in sub-sector E-12/1 is complete, with estimates being finalized for the remaining tasks. Chairman Randhawa directed immediate land acquisition to move forward with tenders for the unfinished development. — VOM Report

Singapore FM invited to visit Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan High Commissioner to Singapore Rabia Shafiq on Monday said that she had handed over an invitation letter from Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar to Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore.

On her X handle, Pakistan's envoy further posted that it was an absolute honour to call on the minister and discussed increasing trade, people to people and political linkages. APP

Bukhari praises Bilawal's key role in passing 26th Constitutional Amendment

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Secretary General Syed Nayyar Hussain Bukhari on Monday commended party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for his relentless efforts and pivotal role in the approval of the 26th Constitutional Amendment by the parliament. Bukhari, in a news statement, lauded Bilawal's hard work, describing him as a "strong and effective voice for upholding the Constitution both inside and outside the Parliament." Bukhari expressed pride in Bilawal's leadership, stating that his commitment to constitutional supremacy reflects the core values of the PPP. He further acknowledged the contributions of other key leaders, including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Mian Nawaz Sharif, Maulana Fazlur Rahman, and others, for achieving another milestone in Pakistan's democratic journey. The 26th Amendment, approved by both the Senate and National Assembly, he said was

presented by a special parliamentary committee, a mandatory part of the parliamentary process. Bukhari congratulated the government's coalition partners and other political parties for their collective success in passing the amendment. "This amendment marks a significant step toward improving the judicial system, ensuring faster justice delivery, and promoting equal representation," Bukhari noted. He emphasized that the judicial reforms, a promise made in Benazir Bhutto's Charter of Democracy, are now coming to fruition. Additionally, he mentioned that the Pakistan Bar will also have representation in the commission for appointing judges in higher courts, alongside members of Parliament and judiciary. Bukhari also appreciated Bilawal's facilitation of the PTT's negotiation delegation during their meeting in jail, showcasing the PPP's commitment to maintaining a flexible and cooperative political approach.

BISP, Population Council to initiate efforts for improving maternal and child care facilities



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid and Population Council Country Director, Dr. Zeba A. Sattar in a meeting agreed to initiate efforts for improving maternal and child care facilities. The meeting, held at BISP headquarters, focused on joint efforts

to improve women's reproductive health, promote adequate birth control, and support the healthy development of newborns through the cooperation of BISP and the Population Council. Speaking on the occasion, Senator Rubina Khalid highlighted BISP's ongoing initiative Benazir Nashonuma to combat malnutrition in

provincial health officials to enhance measures related to reproductive health, birth control, and newborn care. They discussed the proposal to establish Population Council desks near Benazir Nashonuma Centers, where women can access essential awareness and guidance on these health related issues.

children by providing nutritious food to pregnant and lactating mothers and their children under two years of age, along with conditional financial assistance. She emphasized the importance of maternal health to ensure the birth of healthy children. Both parties also agreed on the need for consultations with top

24th annual DGs conference kicks off at NAB headquarters



ISLAMABAD: The 24th two-day annual director generals (DGs) conference chaired by chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Lt Gen Nazir Ahmed has started at NAB Headquarters in Islamabad. Deputy Chairman NAB Sohail Nasir, Prosecutor General Accountability, Directors General of NAB Regional Offices, and other officials are attending the conference. Regional Directors General, as well as heads of various prosecutions, operations, and Awareness and Prevention Division (A & P), will present their performance reports during the event. The conference will review NAB's performance, action on public complaints, implementation of new policy guidelines, case proceedings, and proposed reforms.

SC throws out PTI's review plea on intra-party polls

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court of Pakistan Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa has dismissed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party's review petition challenging the decision regarding its intra-party elections. The Chief Justice noted in the court's order that the PTI lawyers failed to present any substantial arguments on the merits of the case.



Justice Musrat Hilali expressed concerns regarding the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party's failure to conduct its intra-party elections in a timely manner. "I prefer people who talk on TV rather than talking on TV," remarked the Chief Justice, highlighting the disconnect between public statements and actual actions. The court noted that a significant decision was made on January 13, with elections subsequently held on February 8, leading to questions about why PTI did not request a postponement from the Election Commission to conduct its internal elections properly. Justice Hilali pointed out that the party could have sought additional time from the Election Commission during that period. In response, PTI's lawyer, Hamid Khan, stated, "I said this here then, the court told me that if there is an adjournment, then they will suspend the decision of the Peshawar High Court." INP

Journalists play vital role in strengthening democracy, says Amir Muqam

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Engineer Amir Muqam on Monday said that journalists' community had played a pivotal role in the strengthening of democracy in the country. In a statement, the minister said that the present government was taking all possible cooperation and measures for the safety and welfare of journalists, as it values their services and sacrifices. He said that Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan beat reporters were playing their role in resolving the problems of both areas, adding that Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Beat Reporters Association was highlighting the Kashmir issue on the media front. Amir Muqam expressed his best wishes for the injured Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan beat reporter Asghar Hayat and also prayed for his early health recovery. Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan were regions with unique political and geographical conditions, he concluded.