

New Gwadar airport starts operations with landing of first PIA flight

Islamabad (News Desk) A Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight landed at the Gwadar International Airport, making it the first commercial aircraft to arrive at the new airport after its inauguration on Monday. An official of the Pakistan Airport Authority (PAA) said in a statement that the first commercial flight, PK-503, had landed at the airport at 11:15am. The statement read that the flight departed from Karachi at 9:50am and "touched down at the state-of-the-art Gwadar facility at 11:15 AM, carrying 46 passengers". Meanwhile, Defence and Aviation Minister Khawaja Asif,

along with Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti, welcomed the passengers. Addressing the gathering, Minister Khawaja Asif emphasised the strategic importance of the airport in driving economic growth, fostering regional tourism, and strengthening international connectivity. The statement read: "Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti walks alongside other guests at the New Gwadar International Airport — Abullah Zehri. The defence and aviation minister also distributed certificates and shields to guests for their contributions to the airport's success." The statement emphasised that the

new airport is poised to play a critical role in "connecting Pakistan to global markets and facilitating trade, tourism, and economic development". Furthermore, the inaugural flight was also greeted with a water salute. Constructed with a \$230m grant from the Chinese government, Gwadar Airport features a 3,648-metre runway and a 14,000-square-metre passenger terminal equipped with auxiliary facilities, including air traffic control, community hospital and utility services. Covering about 4,300 acres of land, the airport has an annual passenger capacity of 400,000, expandable to 1.6m. Additionally, its 3.6

kilometres long runway is capable of accommodating large aircraft such as the Boeing 747 and Airbus A380. It also includes advanced air traffic control systems, navigational aids, and advanced security features. Defence and Aviation Minister Khawaja Asif walks alongside Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti inside the New Gwadar International Airport Abdullah Zehri. Previously, the New Gwadar International Airport had remained largely inactive due to the failure of aviation and port authorities to market the facility internationally or engage consultants for its commercialisation.



Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti walks alongside other guests at the New Gwadar International Airport —

PTI to challenge £190m case ruling tomorrow

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The opposition Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) on Sunday announced its intention to challenge the decision in the £190 million Al-Qadir Trust case in the high court tomorrow (Tuesday), with PTI leader Salman Akram Raja alleging that the funds were misinterpreted by the current government, claiming they were to be deposited into property tycoon Malik Riaz's account, not returned to the state. The party also decided to continue talks at different levels, including with the government and the powers that be.

Speaking at a news conference at KP House, Mr Raja revealed that nine accounts of Malik Riaz's family were seized over suspicious transactions in the United Kingdom and one of the transactions was with Hasan Nawaz, son of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif.

On the other hand, there was an allegation that 16,000 acres of land were given to Malik Riaz, and the Supreme Court gave a verdict that the property tycoon had to pay Rs460 billion to the Malir Development Authority (MDA).

UK authorities then decided to send the amount to the Supreme Court and directed the Malik Riaz family to leave the United Kingdom, he said.

He claimed that the UK authorities did not find any crime in it and just directed the family to leave the country in light of the Supreme Court's verdict.

5 injured as sewer caves in following gas explosion in Korangi's Bilal Colony



Karachi (News Desk) Five people were injured on Monday when a gas explosion occurred in a sewer in Korangi's Bilal Colony, police officials said. The explosion occurred after gas filled a sewer line running along the road. The slab above the sewer caved in, injuring five people, according to a statement by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) District Central Zeeshan Shafiq Siddiqui. The incident took place along the footpath at the junction of North Karachi Sector 5JD.

The injured were taken to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, according to the statement.

Bilal Colony police were present at the spot and relevant authorities had also been summoned.

PTI to end talks on Jan 28 unless allowed to meet Imran: Salman Akram

Karachi (News Desk) PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja said that the party would abandon talks with the government by January 28 unless they were allowed to meet with incarcerated party founder Imran Khan. Since Imran's incarceration last year in several cases, PTI's relations with the government and the establishment have deteriorated sharply, marked by protests that frequently escalated into violence amid state repression. Talks between the government and the PTI

commenced in the last week of December to bring down political temperatures, but despite weeks of negotiations, the dialogue process has hardly moved forward on major issues — the formation of a judicial commission and the release of PTI prisoners. The third meeting kicked off on January 16 under the NA speaker's oversight and was attended by six people, including three PTI leaders, from the opposition, while eight represented the government. During the meeting, the PTI formally

presented its demands in written form. The three-page document, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, was signed by the six opposition members who attended today's huddle. Speaking on the Dawn News programme 'Doosra Rukh' on Sunday, Raja alleged that the government had not allowed the PTI to meet Imran, despite requests. "In the last meeting, we asked to meet him alone, without the tools or officers of the state present," the PTI leader said. "But it does not seem to be hap-

pening now." The PTI secretary general warned that if no such meeting takes place, then the party would abandon talks. "If such a meeting does not happen, I see talks ending on January 27 or 28." He added that even if the meeting takes place, the only person capable of moving the date of the talks is Imran himself. When asked if the PTI would negotiate with the establishment, Raja replied, "We will talk with them. We want a constitutional system in place in this country."



Women activists gathered in Malir to condemn the police action against BYC

Karachi water supply affected due to power breakdown at Dhabeji station

Karachi (News Desk) faced a shortfall of 100 million gallons of water per day on Monday due to a sudden power breakdown at the Dhabeji Pumping Station, affecting the city's water supply.

The Dhabeji Pumping Station is a water supply facility that serves the city of Karachi. It is one of the major pumping stations

operated by the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC).

Over the last decade, the pumping station has been facing multiple problems related to maintenance and technical issues that often lead to the suspension of water supply to the metropolis. KWSC spokesperson Imran Rana said today that the disruption

was caused after "two water pipelines burst due to a power outage." "Two lines belonging to the water corporation burst due to a power breakdown, he said. "A 72-inch PRCC line number 1 and 72-inch MS line number 5 were affected," he added. KWSC Chief Engineer Zafar Palejo said, "Water supply to the city continues through alter-

native lines." "Repair work of affected line number 5 will be completed in the next 24 hours while the repair work of affected line number 1 will be completed in the next four days," the chief engineer added. Due to the repair work, the city will face a daily water shortage of 100 MGD out of the total water supply of 650MGD, Shaikh said.

Operation to rid Kurram of 'spoilers' launched

PESHAWAR/ KURRAM: (News Desk) In order to rid restive Kurram of miscreants and secure the highway connecting the district with other parts of the country, a security operation has started in the Bagan area of the tribal district, officials said on Sunday.

"The forces have begun the operation to sanitise the area in and around Bagan by taking over check posts and destroying bunkers along the route," sources privy to the details of the operation said.

They said security forces and paramilitary Frontier Corps were leading the operation, with the police closely following behind. According to officials, the law enforcement agencies' personnel were moving into the villages, but the miscreants had already fled and evacuations were already underway from the residential areas. "The plan is to secure the road in the next couple of days to allow the trucks to start moving (between Kurram and Peshawar)," they said.

GB govt urged to reverse hike in royalty, mountaineering fees

GILGIT: (News Desk) Tour operators have expressed concerns over the steep hike in royalty and mountaineering fees, alleging that the Gilgit-Baltistan government's decision is detrimental to the region's growing adventure tourism sector.

They claimed that the move has already rendered many people jobless due to a significant drop in tourist footfall.

Expressing serious concerns over the move, representatives from Pakistan Association of Tour Operators (Pato), Gilgit-Baltistan Tour Operators Association (GBATO) and other tour operating associations have written to GB Chief Minister Haji Gulbar Khan, federal government officials and other stakeholders, urging them to withdraw the decision.

They were of the opinion that the mountainous region was home to the world's highest peaks including five eight-thousanders and over 100 seven-thousanders. Foreign and national adventure-seekers, including climbers and trekkers, visit Gilgit-Baltistan in large numbers every year. Tour operators expressed reservations that they were not considered a stakeholder while formulating the policy.

CDA may take up Monal case in Supreme Court again

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to challenge the closure and demolition of the Monal restaurant, which was recently shut down by the Supreme Court for encroaching on protected land.

Talking to Dawn, CDA's Director Environment Dr Irfan Niazi said: "The CDA will again take up the issue of Monal in the Supreme Court in a separate case of the Municipal Corporation Islamabad (MCI) to explain the existence of the restaurant was not unjustified."

The official hoped that the authority would try to convince that under the law, the CDA's acquired land could not be given to anyone without payment.

The Supreme Court had ordered the closure of Monal and the adjacent La Montana restaurant in August last year, and they were closed in September to protect the biodiversity of the Margalla Hills National Park (MHNP). "The Supreme Court ordered the closing of Monal only because the word 'restaurant' was not mentioned in its conceptual document," the CDA official claimed.

"Rather, it was mentioned in the document that a hotel, recreational facility, and tourist spot will be established at the site of Monal. I had requested to consider Monal as a hotel, tourist place, and recreational facility which also houses restaurants; however, the court ordered its closure and razing only because the word 'restaurant' was missing," he claimed.

Justice Shah asks deputy registrar why case of SC jurisdiction not fixed for hearing

Islamabad (News Desk) Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah on Monday asked the Supreme Court deputy registrar why the case related to the court's jurisdiction was not fixed for hearing yet.

Last week, the SC was supposed to deliberate on a recurring question about whether regular benches could hear matters involving the constitutionality of laws, following the establishment of the Constitutional Bench under the

26th Amendment. However, at a January 16 hearing, the SC deferred the deliberations until Jan 20 (today).

Headed by senior puisne judge Justice Shah, a three-judge SC bench earlier noted that it had become necessary to resolve the controversy in light of objections raised during proceedings and the reply provided by one of the lawyers.

The deliberation was pushed to Jan 20 follow-

ing a change in the bench's composition, with Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi replacing Justice Irfan Saadat Khan as its third member, who was previously part of the court when the issue initially cropped up.

The bench was hearing an appeal filed by the federal government through the revenue division against the Sindh High Court's decision to strike down Section 221-A(2) of the Customs Act, 1969.

At the outset of today's hearing, Justice Shah summoned additional registrar Nazr Abbasi. Advocate Salahuddin Ahmed, representing the respondents, also appeared in court. He noted that he had travelled from Karachi just for this case but the cause list had not been issued. "The court had ordered to schedule the case for today."

"We were not informed about anything in this regard," Justice Shah said,



following which he summoned the additional registrar to inquire why the case had not been scheduled. However, deputy registrar Zulfiqar Ahmed

appeared in court, stating that the additional registrar was unwell and on leave. When asked, the deputy registrar responded.