

Governor Kundi says KP CM trying to 'erase province's identity' by renaming stadium after Imran

Peshawar (News Desk) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday said Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur was trying to "erase the province's identity" as he criticised the renaming of a stadium in Peshawar to Imran Khan Cricket Stadium. His statements come after the KP cabinet on Friday approved renaming the Arbab Niaz Cricket Stadium — the lone international cricketing venue in the province — to Imran Khan Cricket Stadium. The KP government had decided to honour former

prime minister Imran's "remarkable contributions to Pakistan's cricketing legacy and his pivotal role in shaping the nation's sports landscape". In his statement, Governor Kundi termed the stadium's name change "extremely inappropriate". He accused CM Gandapur of being on a mission to "erase the province's identity". The KP governor further claimed that naming the stadium after the "mastermind" of the May 9, 2023 riots "strengthens anti-state elements". Government officials have often alleged that Imran,

whose party supporters staged violent protests and vandalised military installations throughout the country on May 9, 2023, to protest the ex-premier's arrest, was a "mastermind" behind those incidents. In his statement, Kundi asserted that the people of Peshawar stood "united against the renaming of the stadium". He also criticised the PTI for "failing to renovate and restore the Arbab Niaz Stadium despite being in power for nine years". "On one side, we have an incompetent government, while on the other, the federal govern-

ment and PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board) have transformed stadiums in Lahore and Karachi within weeks," Kundi remarked. Sports minister Syed Fakhar Jahan had said the move was beyond politics as Imran was the biggest name in the country's sporting history. The stadium, according to a summary by the KP sports department presented before the provincial cabinet, was transferred to the sports board from the municipal corporation and the provincial government undertook its development in 1986-87.



A delegation of the Tehreek Tahaffuz Ayeen-i-Pakistan (TTAP) meets with Grand Democratic Alliance chief Pir Pagara and its leaders in Karachi on Feb 22, 2025.

PTI, allies seek Pir Pagara's cooperation

KARACHI: (News Desk) Leaders of the Tehreek Tahaffuz Ayeen-i-Pakistan (TTAP) on Saturday met Grand Democratic Alliance chief Pir Pagara and invited the GDA to a grand meeting of political parties in Islamabad scheduled for Feb 25 and 26. Pir Pagara while welcoming the TTAP delegation emphasised that Constitution was the foundation of the country. He alleged that current parliament was unrepresentative and illegitimate, which was why GDA members, despite being elected, had not taken the oath. Speaking to the media, GDA leaders said that TTAP had scheduled a grand meeting in the capital and the alliance would decide about its participation after internal consultations. The TTAP delegation comprised former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser, Salman Akram Raja, Sardar Latif Khosa, Mehmood Khan Achakzai, Nasir Shirazi, Sahibzada Hamid Raza, Sajid Tareen, Akhuzada Hussain and Haleem Adil Sheikh. The GDA team included Pir Pagara, Syed Sadruddin Shah Rashdi, Dr Safdar Abbasi, Dr Fehmida Mirza, Liaquat Jatoi, Syed Zain Shah, Sardar Abdul Rahim, Dr Zulfiqar Mirza, Syed Muhammad Rashid Shah, Irfanullah Marwat, Moazzam Abbasi, Saira Bano, Barrister Husnain Mirza, Husam Mirza, and others.

Third polio case of 2025 reported in Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) Pakistan has reported another case of wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1), taking the total to three cases in 2025.

According to an official of the Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication, the case has been reported from Larkana, Sindh.

The official said that the victim is a 54-month-old girl. This is the second polio case reported from Sindh this year, with the third one detected in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Pakistan is facing a resurgence of poliovirus, as 74 cases were reported in 2024.

f these, 27 were from Balochistan, 22 from KP, 23 from Sindh, and one each from Punjab and Islamabad.

This year's first nationwide polio vaccination campaign was held earlier this month.

It was followed by a fractional IPV-OPV Polio [injectable polio vaccine] campaign in Quetta and Karachi on Feb 20 and 22, respectively. Around one million children were targeted for vaccination in this campaign, according to the officials. Moreover, a vaccination campaign in 104 union councils bordering Afghanistan or having Afghan refugee camps is scheduled from Feb 24 to 28.

Pattan says its offices sealed for 'exposing poll rigging'

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) Pattan Development Organisation has said that the house of its chief and its office in Multan have been sealed by authorities in retribution for its report exposing alleged rigging in last year's general election. The properties have been sealed on the orders of the Ministry of Interior, the organisation claimed. The organisation said it does not have any office in Islamabad, as all staff work from home. The address of the house of Pattan's national coordinator, Sarwar Bari, in the

capita is used for correspondence and is mentioned on the organisation's website. A Pattan spokesperson said that around two dozen police officials, along with a magistrate, entered the house located in Sector F-10, Islamabad on Friday night and sealed it. Retribution Earlier this month, Pattan had published a report on the general elections and described them in a statement as "unprecedentedly rigged" with "vote-rigging, fraud and manipulation".

The spokesperson claimed the action was retribution for the report. In Multan, a notice has been placed at the gate of Pattan's office. The order, issued by Registrar Joint Stock Companies, Multan, stated that the action was taken on the Ministry of Interior's letter dated Feb 18. The letter stated that Pattan was dissolved in Nov 2019, and the NGO "did not challenge" the order in any court. The Pattan spokesperson has said that the NGO never received any notice from the registration au-

thority about its dissolution. He added that the Election Commission of Pakistan had issued accreditation to Pattan's election observers, the spokesperson said, adding that all records can be presented to the media. "Our bank accounts [remained] functional and we even paid taxes to FBR." The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan criticised the authorities' action against Pattan and said it was a violation of Article 14(1) of the Constitution.

Afghans denied US resettlement to be deported

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) Pakistan on Saturday warned that Afghan refugees not accepted for resettlement by the United States would be treated as illegal immigrants and deported.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, in an interview with TRT details of which were shared by the FO on Saturday, said that while Pakistan was open to negotiations with the US on the matter, refugees whose resettlement is denied would face deportation. "We will be examining the issue and will negotiate," Mr Dar said. "However, in principle, if any refugee was meant to be taken by another country after due process — no matter the timeline — and if it doesn't happen and the country refuses, that person will be considered an illegal immigrant in Pakistan."

Another plea lands in SC against judges' transfer

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The outgoing president of the Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA), Riasat Ali Azad, has challenged the recent transfer of judges from other high courts to the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

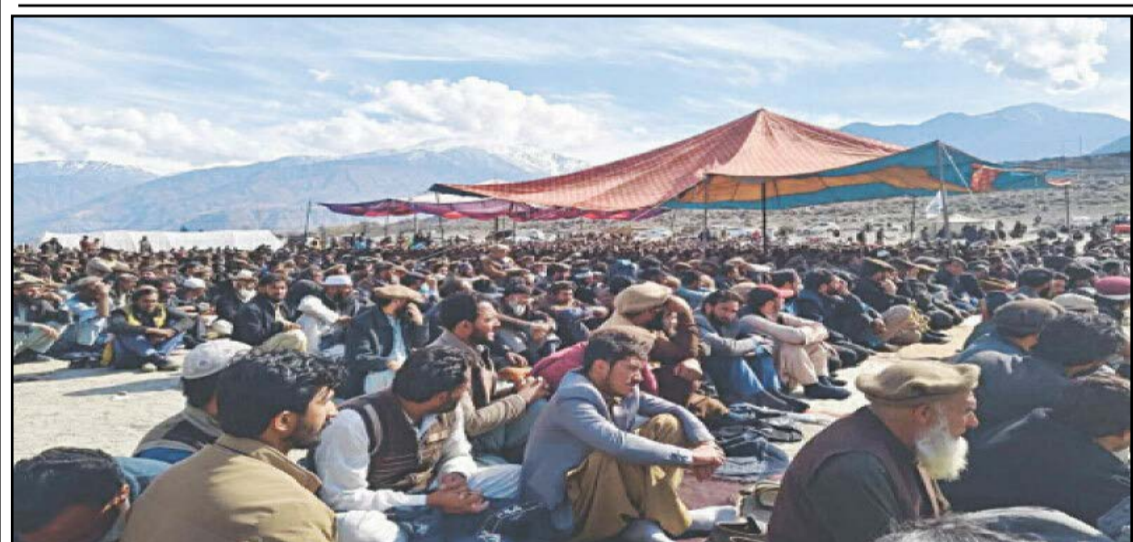
In a constitutional petition filed in the Supreme Court on Friday, Mr Azad also challenged the revised seniority list after the transfers.

Earlier this week, five sitting judges of the IHC had petitioned the top court against recent changes to the high court following the transfer of new judges from different provinces. The friction among IHC judges started earlier this month when Lahore High Court's Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar, Sindh High Court's Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro and Balochistan High Court's Justice Muhammad Asif were transferred to the IHC. The legal fraternity protested the move and accused the government of undermining the court's independence. What further irked the sitting high court judges and lawyers was the controversial revision of the court's seniority list, which saw Justice Dogar become the senior puisne judge in place of Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani. Justice Dogar was subsequently appointed the acting chief justice after the incumbent, Justice Aamer Farooq, was elevated to the Supreme Court.

Citizens affected by Diamer Dam vow to continue sit-in at Chilas

GILGIT: (News Desk) The first meeting of the federal committee discussed issues of Diamer-Basha Dam affected people and decided to meet their genuine demands as thousands of protesters continued their sit-in at Chilas for the sixth consecutive day on Saturday.

The protesters announced that they would not allow the government to complete the dam until their 31-point charter of demands was met. The first meeting of the committee, constituted by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif recently to address the grievances of the affected people, was held in Islamabad on Saturday with Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Muqam in the chair. The meeting was attended by Minister for Water Resources Musadik Hussain Malik, GB Chief Minister Haji Gulbar Khan, Wapda Chairman retired Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani, Committee formed by prime minister holds maiden meeting and promises to resolve genuine issues of affected people. Secretary Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Zafar Hassan, GB Chief Secretary Abrar Ahmed Mirza and others. Speaking on the occasion, Amir Muqam said resolving the legitimate demands of the affected people of the dam was the priority of the federal government. He said as per the instructions of the prime minister, speedy work on compensations, water and sanitation schemes, schools and other projects was underway.



People affected by Diamer-Basha Dam continued their protest sit-in at Chilas in Gilgit-Baltistan for sixth consecutive day on Saturday asking government to accept their 31-point charter of demands.

Mob lynches man for allegedly killing boy in Galiyat: police

Galiyat (News Desk) An angry mob lynched a man in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Galiyat region for allegedly killing a young man over a car parking dispute, the state-owned Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) reported on Sunday. According to local police, the incident took place in the Seer Gharbi area of Changa Gali police station's ju-

risdiction. "Imran Abbasi, a local youth, parked his car in a housing society's parking lot and went home. When he returned the next day, an argument ensued with the watchman," the report said, quoting the police. "During the altercation, the watchman, identified as Khan Zaman, repeatedly stabbed Imran Abbasi, killing him on

the spot and injuring his brother," the police alleged. As soon as the news of the alleged murder spread, a large number of residents gathered at the scene, setting five houses in the society on fire. "Following the incident, police promptly arrived at the scene and arrested the suspect, who was hiding in the basement of a building. However, as soon

as he was brought outside, the furious mob took control of the situation, beating the watchman to death with sticks and stones," the police said. Per the report, several police officers were also injured in the violence. "The watchman's body was later shifted to Abbottabad Hospital for post-mortem examination," the report said.

IHC upholds Auditor General of Pakistan's exclusive power to conduct audits

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The Islamabad High Court, in a significant ruling aimed at strengthening financial oversight and accountability in the public sector, has upheld the constitutional authority of the Auditor General of Pakistan, reaffirming AGP's exclusive power to conduct audits of all entities utilising public funds under Article 170(2). In its detailed judgement on a petition against an amendment in the statute

that empowered the president to appoint an "independent officer" to conduct an audit of the AGP, the court clarified that no statutory law or government directive could restrict the AGP's mandate. According to the verdict, financial accountability and transparency are fundamental to good governance, and the AGP plays a crucial role in ensuring that state resources are utilised properly. Earlier, during the course

of hearing, an assistant attorney general representing the federation argued that the AGP office was subordinate to the federal government; AGP office employees were civil servants; the petitioners who were not personally aggrieved lacked the locus standi to question vires of the impugned legislation; the audit of the AGP office accounts had never been conducted since its establishment and that the audit matters fell within the

purview of Article 73(2) (f). No statutory law or government directive can restrict AGP's mandate, court rules. The court held that the government, including ministries and other public sector organisations, could not limit or interfere with AGP's constitutional functions. The judgement outlined that while government departments could establish their internal audit mech-



anisms, the same could not replace or override AGP's independent authority. It stressed that AGP's role extended be-

yond routine financial checks, as it ensured adherence to international audit standards and constitutional provisions.