

## BNP’s Mengal to announce new round of demonstrations tomorrow

Gawadar(News Desk) Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) chief Sardar Akhtar Mengal announced on Wednesday that he would announce new demonstrations tomorrow as his protest against the recent arrests of rights activists entered its sixth day, and his talks with a government delegation a day earlier bore no fruit.

The BNP-M had announced a “long march” from Wadh to Quetta last Friday to protest against the arrests of Baloch Yakjehti Committee leaders and activists, including Dr Mahrang Baloch and Sammi Deen Baloch, as well as

the police crackdown on their sit-in in Quetta. The sit-in is currently at Lakpass, where a provincial government delegation comprising Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, Bakht Muhammad Kakar and Sardar Noor Ahmed Bangulzai arrived to hold talks with the BNP-M chief but could not convince him to end the sit-in.

On Wednesday, Mengal took to X and wrote that he would announce a new wave of demonstrations at 5pm on April 3 (tomorrow). “The delegation that visited us yesterday to negotiate on our legitimate demands lacked the authority to speak inde-

pendently,” Mengal wrote, adding that they were “messengers” and lacked power, which “lies with those who truly control this province.” “Tomorrow, April 3, 2025, at 5pm, we will announce our next phase of demonstrations,” the BNP-M chief said. “If they (the government) believe they can distract us with these hollow negotiations, let it be clear: they’ve miscalculated once again.”

In a separate post, Mengal wrote that there has been a widespread internet “blackout” across Balochistan. “Since late last night, all cellular networks and home WiFi in Balochistan have been shut down,” he

wrote. “The sole purpose of this blackout is to silence the voices of the oppressed.” He later said that senior PTI members, who were on their way to join the sit-in, were stopped from reaching their destination. “In response, trenches have been dug, more containers placed, and additional forces deployed. Every attempt the government makes to wash away its stains only ends up leaving it more tainted.”

Marchers and motorists from different political parties began their journey to Quetta from Mengal’s native town of Wadh at around 9am on Friday.



President Asif Ali Zardari has tested positive for coronavirus and is currently in isolation, according to a statement issued by the presidency on Wednesday.

## President Zardari tests positive for coronavirus: physician

Islamabad(News Desk) President Asif Ali Zardari has tested positive for coronavirus and is currently in isolation, according to a statement issued by the presidency on Wednesday.

Media outlets, quoting sources, had reported yesterday that President Zardari had been hospitalised in Karachi after being brought over from Nawabshah, where he had offered Eidul Fitr prayers. The president’s personal physician, Dr Asim Hussain, was quoted as saying in the statement that following multiple tests,

it was confirmed that Zardari tested positive for Covid-19. “The president is suffering from coronavirus and he has been advised to remain in isolation at this time,” Dr Hussain said. “A team of experts is taking care of the president and his condition is improving.”

Earlier today, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said President Zardari’s health was improving and refuted reports of him being shifted to Dubai for medical treatment. “The reports about Presi-

dent Asif Ali Zardari being shifted to Dubai for treatment is inaccurate,” Memon wrote on X in the wee hours of Wednesday, sharing a collage of sources-based media reports. The minister, a key leader of Zardari’s PPP, said the president’s health was “improving and Inshallah (God-willingly), he will be fine very soon.”

In a message, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed concern over the president’s health and prayed for his quick recovery. The premier issued instructions to provide the

best medical facilities to the president. National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq also contacted President Zardari to enquire about his health and expressed his best wishes for his recovery. “The entire nation’s prayers are with you,” he added.

Earlier, PM Shehbaz had contacted the president to enquire about his health and wish him a speedy recovery. PPP Senator Sehar Kamran, in a post on X, also wished the president “good health and a swift recovery”.

## Father, 2 daughters dead as coach, car collide on highway in Sindh’s Khairpur district: police

Khairpur(News Desk) A father and his two daughters lost their lives on Wednesday, while four others were injured after a car and a passenger coach collided near the Gambat city of Sindh’s Khairpur district, police said. Fatal road accidents on highways occur frequently in Pakistan, with the main reasons including speeding, hazardous overtaking and disregard for traffic rules. Gambat Station House Officer (SHO) Rafiq Soomro confirmed the casualties to Dawn.com. He said the bodies and the injured have been shifted to the Gambat Institute of Medical Sciences (Gims). The three individuals were heading towards Karachi in a Toyota Corolla while the coach was bound for upcountry, SHO Soomro said. He suspected that the car driver either lost control of the steering wheel or fell asleep while driving and hit the coach on the opposite road.

## Punjab Police officer SP Aisha Butt to receive global award



Lahore (News Desk) Punjab Police Superintendent of Police Aisha Butt has been selected to receive the Excellence in Performance Award 2025 by the International Association of Women Police (IAWP).

The award will be presented to her during the 62nd IAWP Annual Training Conference in Glasgow, Scotland, to honour her “distinguished service and commitment to policing”, according to a letter issued by IAWP president Julia Jaeger.

Punjab Inspector General of Police Dr Usman Anwar congratulated Butt for “bringing glory to Pakistan on the world stage”, according to a recent post on X.

“This award is given every year to a female police officer from around the world in recognition of her exceptional services to her society,” Punjab Police, Annual Training Conference in a recent post on X, recognised her success “a source of pride for all police officers, especially women officers”.



BNP-M chief Sardar Akhtar Mengal addresses demonstrators during a sit-in in Lakpass on April 2.

## Rare Asiatic desert cat found in Sulaiman Range

DERA GHATIKHAN: (News Desk) Chief of Leghari tribes Muhammad Jamal Khan Leghari has confirmed the presence of the extremely rare Asiatic desert cat (Felis lybica ornata) in the Sulaiman Mountain Range of District Dera Ghazi Khan.

The elusive feline, known for its sandy coat and remarkable adaptability to arid environments, is sel-

dom seen in Pakistan. Mr Leghari, who spotted rare Asiatic cat through his lens said that due to its critically low population, conservationists are keeping the exact location undisclosed to protect it from potential threats such as illegal trapping, hunting, or habitat disturbance. Wildlife officials and local researchers have expressed both excitement and concern over the

sighting. “This is a significant find for Pakistan’s biodiversity, but we must act cautiously,” said a conservationist involved in the monitoring efforts. “If poachers or collectors learn of its location, this rare cat could vanish forever,” said the tribal chief. The Asiatic desert cat, a subspecies of the African Wildcat, is already under threat due to habitat loss and human en-

croachment. Its presence in Pakistan highlights the ecological richness of the Sulaiman Mountains, which serve as a refuge for many endangered species. Environmentalists urge the government and local communities to strengthen conservation measures in the region. “This sighting should prompt stricter anti-poaching laws and habitat preservation efforts, Leghari emphasised.

## Despite ‘hefty’ fines, Karachi retailers thrive on booming Ramazan sale

KARACHI: (News Desk) The price checking brigade of Karachi Commissioner has collected around Rs45 million in fine imposed on 4,345 retailers till 27th of Ramazan as compared to over Rs31 million total fine imposed on over 3,500 retailers in the holy month last year. So far, until 27 Ramazan, over 161 shops were sealed and over 155 profiteers were arrested.

Last year 58 shops were sealed while no arrests were made as per a policy. The commissioner got auctioned essential items at over 4,000 spots, while this strategy was not adopted last year.

Besides, prices were checked at 30,371 shops in the city as compared to 12,304 visits to shops in Ramazan last year.

City administration collected Rs45m in fine from 4,345 retailers till 27th Ramazan. According to market pundits and consumers, while these numbers do appear big for the price regulator, in real terms they are insufficient keeping in view the vast landscape of retail markets and consumers suffering at the hands of retailers.

## Kasur district council ex-member succumbs to her burns

KASUR: (News Desk) A former woman member of district council who had set herself on fire in protest against the alleged highhandedness of police some four months back succumbed to her burns here on Sunday.

Ganda Singh police, some four months back, had detained Muhammad Jamil, brother of the district council ex-member Sakina Bibi, and put him in the lock-up. The SHO refused to release him despite Sakina Bibi’s request. Sakina Bibi, who claimed her brother’s arrest was unjustified, set herself ablaze on the premises of Ganda Singh police station in protest against police. She was rushed to the DHQ hospital where doctors referred her to Jinnah Hospital, Lahore, given her serious condition, where she remained under treatment. She had burnt herself against her brother’s arrest four months ago. However, she was shifted by her family to her home in Chohrupura village a few days back, where she succumbed to her burns on Saturday. The victim had recorded her statement to an investigation officer after the incident.

## Dera sugar mills seek protection against TTP threats

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: (News Desk) The outlawed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan has purportedly started demanding money from sugar mills in Dera Ismail Khan, and threatened to launch armed attacks on factories if their demands are not met.

The chairman of Pakistan Sugar Mills Association, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zone, has written separate letters to Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, and Peshawar Corps Commander Lt-Gen Umar Bukhari, highlighting the grave issue.

According to the contents of the letters, militants allegedly linked to the TTP have been making threatening calls to the general managers of sugar mills in the Ramak area of Dera, demanding that they pay ‘taxes’ to them instead of the government.

The letters further state that failure to comply with these demands has resulted in serious threats, including the possibility of armed attacks on factories. The situation has caused distress among those working in the area, raising security concerns. Addressing a news conference at the police lines here, deputy inspector general of police at the CTD’s Counter-Terrorism Finance Unit Imran Shahid said two members of the racket, including Faizullah of Ambar area in Mohmand tribal district and Afghan national Saeedullah living in Lahore, were taken into custody during raids in Mardan and Punjab’s capital.

The sugar mills association has urged the authorities to take immediate action to ensure peace and security in Ramak and protect the industry from militant threats. Authorities have yet to issue an official response to these alarming reports.

## Larkana court orders CAA to restore flights from Mohenjo Daro airport

LARKANA: (News Desk) The Larkana circuit bench of the Sindh High Court has directed the Civil Aviation Authority to immediately enforce its earlier order passed on March 9, 2022, asking the authority to restore flights to and from Mohenjo Daro Airport, and submit compliance report.

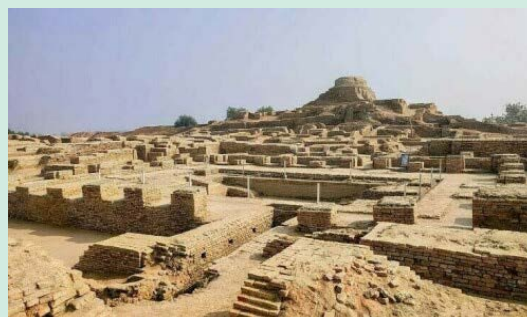
A constitutional bench comprising Justices Mohammad Saleem Jessar and Adnan-ul-Karim Memon issued the direc-

tive here the other day while hearing three identical petitions filed between 2017 and 2019. The petitioners Advocate Sajjid Hussain Mahesar (Constitutional Petition No.D-922, 2017), Advocate Imdad Ali Mashori (CP No.D-959, 2017) and Advocate Rafique Ahmed Abro (CP No.146, 2019) requested the court order resumption of PIA flights at Mohenjo Daro Airport. Despite having promised to restore full services,

the PIA violated its commitment and suspended flights at Mohenjo Daro Airport on Nov 22, 2018, which had not since been restored, according to Mr Mahesar.

The bench stressed that the federal government (aviation division) must explain why compensation for the [suspended] routes [to and from Mohenjo Daro] had not been determined, and submit a report. The court ordered direc-

tor general of the CAA to conduct a comprehensive inquiry to determine designated airlines for Mohenjo Daro Airport as a secondary route, their actual service delivery and the CAA’s obligations in cases of non-compliance. The petitioners said that Mohenjo Daro Airport suffered from infrequent and unreliable PIA flights, despite prior court order, while private airlines had reportedly been prevented from operating at the



airport. They requested the court to mandate two PIA flights daily between Larkana and Karachi, and sought authorisation for p-

ivate airlines to operate flights on Mohenjo Daro-Larkana route by restoring the old Sukkur via Menara Airport route.