



Legal challenge launched against PTI's planned march on capital

• IHC CJ Dogar to take up petition against Sept 27 protest today • Petitioner fears disruption of routine life, traffic, and businesses, seeks court intervention against use of provincial resources for march • KP CM asks Karachi lawyers to join protest, says Imran not cutting any deals

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has been moved against the PTI's planned sit-in and nationwide protest scheduled for Sept 27, with the petitioner apprehending disruption of routine life, traffic and business activities in the federal capital.

IHC Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar will hear the petition filed by citizen Waqas Ahmed on Tuesday.

The petitioner has made the inspectors general of police of all four provinces, Islamabad Police and Motorway Police, besides other relevant government authorities, as respondents. According to the petition, the PTI has announced a sit-in in Islamabad on Sept 27, which could cause inconvenience to citizens and commuters and adversely affect business activities in the capital.

The petitioner particularly raised concerns over the proposed participation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, who, according to the PTI's announcement, would lead the Islamabad-bound protest. The petition expressed apprehension that the resources and machinery of the provincial government could be utilised for political activity.

It sought directions to the provincial authorities not to involve themselves in any political activity and to confine themselves to their official responsibilities. The petitioner also sought appropriate directions to the respondents to ensure that the rights of ordinary citizens, commuters and business communities were not affected by the proposed protest. The petition came ahead of the PTI's preparations for its Sept 27 mobilisation, which

the party leadership declared would not remain confined to Islamabad.

CM invites lawyers

KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi spent the past few days in Sindh to mobilise the party supporters for the Sept 27 protest. Speaking at a convention organised by the Sindh High Court Bar Association on Monday, the CM, who reached Karachi despite hurdles, invited lawyers to participate in the PTI protest and maintained that his leader Imran Khan was standing firm for the future of the country and was not striking any deal for his release.

He said the Islamabad High Court had ordered his meeting with the party founder, while the Supreme Court had ordered hospitalisation of former premier, but that was to no avail. He added the judiciary was reluctant to timely fix the contempt applications for hearings.

The CM also complained about the obstacles on the route of his convoy. PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari posted a welcome message on social media while his party's government in Sindh placed obstacles in the way of his convoy and arrested the participants. The CM apologised to the people of Sindh and Karachi for the inconvenience caused by his convoy's movement. He, however, said the province already lacked adequate infrastructure and that even the available thoroughfares had been blocked.

Sept 27 protest

According to PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja, the party's call for Sept 27 is aimed at mobilising people across the country for the supremacy of

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Nepra clears key hurdle to competitive power market

• Approves uniform charges for all Discos; participating bulk power consumers to pay Rs6.23-Rs19.62 per unit
• Clears path for first 400MW open-access electricity auction

By Khaleeq Kiani

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) on Monday approved use of system charges (UoSC) ranging from Rs6.23 to Rs19.62 per unit for bulk power consumers (BPCs) of all distribution companies participating in the competitive electricity trading market.

The approval paves the way for open-access consumers to participate in an upcoming 400-megawatt auction. The consumers will pay the fee to the national grid to transport electricity from the source to the user. The charge includes transmission and distribution costs, fixed grid charges and cross-subsidies.

Put together, a B-3 industrial consumer will be charged Rs6.23 per unit by the national grid, while a B-4 industrial consumer will pay Rs9.09 per unit. These charges will be in addition to the power supply rate, including generation costs, to be settled between private-sector power suppliers and BPCs. Currently, there are more than 3,000 BPCs across the country.

The UoSC for C-3 and C-2 single-point distribution consumers is set between Rs14.95 and Rs19.62 per unit. General supply consumers in the A-2 and A-3 categories will be charged Rs19.14 per unit.

Bulk power consumers who choose not to participate in the competitive wheeling auction will face significantly higher trans-

port rates, ranging from Rs19.17 to Rs32.56 depending on their category. Non-participating B-3 and B-4 consumers will be charged Rs19.17 and Rs25.45 per unit, respectively. C-2 and C-3 consumers will pay Rs31.30 and Rs32.56, while A-2 and A-3 categories face a Rs32.08 charge.

A fixed grid charge of Rs1 per kilowatt per month, based on sanctioned load, will apply to all categories regardless of whether they participate in the competitive auction.

The uniform rate announcement for all distribution companies, including K-Electric, is aimed at formally launching the competitive wholesale electricity market. Under the first phase, the

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THE image released by the Houthi forces on Monday, purportedly shows a ballistic missile strike on trucks carrying military equipment from Saudi Arabia to the Al-Wadiah military camp in Yemen's Hadhramaut province. Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis and Saudi-backed, internationally recognised government forces have been fighting for days over control of Bab al-Mandab on the Red Sea, marking the deadliest flare-up in Yemen since a 2022 ceasefire collapsed in July.—AFP

Pakistan rejects India's claims on status of held Kashmir

• FO says disputed territory's final disposition must be decided in accordance with UN resolutions, the will of Kashmiris • Urges international community to ensure end to rights violations in held Kashmir

Dawn Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday rejected Indian claims about the status of occupied Kashmir, saying New Delhi's "unilateral claims of sovereignty have no bearing on the internationally recognised disputed status of the territory".

The statement came after the United Nations voted on Friday to back a resolution spearheaded by several African countries aimed at "a more accurate representation" of continental landmasses, making their continent bigger while shrinking North America and Europe. India was among the 164 countries that voted in favour of the resolution.

However, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on Sunday issued a statement, saying that the resolution did not constitute the endorsement of any specific map, projection or depiction of natural boundaries. It also said that its territory, including occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, must be depicted in accordance with its

"official map", adding that any deviation was "unacceptable".

In the statement issued on Monday, Foreign Office spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan said: "Pakistan categorically rejects India's baseless assertions regarding the status of held Jammu and Kashmir which are contrary to internationally recognised facts. India's unilateral actions and continued illegal occupation cannot alter the internationally recognised disputed status of Jammu and Kashmir."

He added that the Kashmir issue remained one of the oldest unresolved internationally recognised disputes on the agenda of the United Nations Security Council.

"The relevant UN resolutions stipulate that its final disposition must be made in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and the will of the Kashmiri people, expressed through a free and impartial plebiscite under UN auspices," the spokesperson added.

"The official UN maps, which depict Jammu and Kashmir as a disputed territory, remain the only cartographic representation

of its current legal status. India's so-called official maps and unilateral claims of sovereignty have no bearing on the status of the disputed territory," he said.

"Pakistan urged the international community to ensure that India immediately stops human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, and fulfils its commitment towards the realisation of the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people, in line with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions," the FO spokesperson concluded.

The UN resolution said the new map, known as the Equal Earth cartographic projection, "is a relevant option for improving the accuracy of the cartographic representation of the world". It urged member states to adopt the new map in place of the traditional Mercator projection, which was designed for maritime navigation by Flemish cartographer Gerardus Mercator in 1569.

The United States had slammed the resolution, saying such moves are "the reason this institution is losing its credibility".

Senate panel passes bill proposing death penalty for acid attacks

• Interior body okays several criminal law amendments despite govt opposition • Approves bill criminalising domestic worker abuse, proposing life imprisonment in case of serious injury or death

By Iftikhar A. Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Interior on Monday passed a series of key criminal law amendments, including a bill proposing the death penalty for acid attacks, as it moved to strengthen protections for vulnerable groups and public safety.

Chaired by Senator Faisal Saleem Rehman, the committee considered private members' bills relating to acid crimes, protection of domestic workers, LPG safety, anti-rape legislation and consumer protection. Interestingly, the bills were passed despite opposition from Minister of State for Interior Tallal Chaudhry, with PPP law-

makers also voting in favour.

The Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, moved by Senator Muhammad Abdul Qadir, seeks to amend Section 336-B of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) relating to hurt caused by corrosive substances. In an unusual move, the bill was passed in the absence of the mover.

Citing "the recent incident of an acid attack on a lady doctor in Quetta", the bill states that despite the 2011 amendment, acid attacks continue to cause lifelong disfigurement and trauma. It proposes punishment of "death or imprisonment for life or imprisonment of not less than fourteen years and a fine of two million rupees" to serve as a strong deterrent.

The committee also unanimously passed the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill moved by Senator Sarmad Ali, proposing to criminalise the abuse of domestic workers. The statement notes that domestic workers are among society's most vulnerable groups, often facing violence, abuse, forced labour and mistreatment.

It adds that "existing provisions... do not specifically address the abuse arising from dependency and control inherent in domestic work settings".

The proposed section covers physical violence, sexual harassment, threats, forced labour, wage theft, confiscation of identity

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Dr Asma's body airlifted to Skardu from Spantik

By Jamil Nagri

GILGIT: The body of 34-year-old female climber, Dr Asma Mushtaq, was finally airlifted to Skardu and shifted to hospital from Spantik Peak base camp, as weather improved on Monday.

The climber died on Aug 20, apparently from high-altitude sickness, during her descent after successfully climbing the 7,027-metre mountain.

Baltistan Division Commissioner Kamal Khan said after fulfilling legal proceedings, the body would be dispatched to Lahore via PIA flight for her burial on Tuesday.

Ayaz Shigri, general secretary of the Alpine Club of Pakistan, said helicopters safely airlifted the body as bad weather prevented helicopters from flying earlier.

While she was in good health at the time of reaching summit, she developed a serious medical emergency at an elevation of about 6,400m during her descent and later died from high-altitude sickness.

High-altitude sickness encompasses a range of pulmonary and cerebral conditions caused by hypoxia, or oxygen deprivation, due

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FUEL PRICES	
PETROL	
Today	Rs358.77 ↑
Yesterday	Rs345.87
DIESEL	
Today	Rs381.77 ↑
Yesterday	Rs378.05
Source: Petroleum Division	

ON OTHER PAGES



ECC okays Rs6.6bn for 30 vehicles

The Economic Coordination Committee of the federal cabinet has approved a supplementary grant of Rs6.6 billion to purchase 30 bullet-proof vehicles for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit next year and allowed continuation of gas supply to two Punjab-based fertiliser plants. The summit is set to be hosted by Pakistan in September 2027. **Page 9**



Trump floats renaming New Mexico

US President Donald Trump's name-changing spree found an unlikely new target when he suggested the US state of New Mexico could become 'New America'. His proposal was immediately dismissed by the state's governor. The White House reposted an image showing the Mexico part of the state's name crossed out and replaced with 'America'. **Page 12**

Seven GB roads set for federal takeover to boost tourism

• 464km of thoroughfares to be rehabilitated, maintained by NHA • Federal cabinet to consider proposal after approval by GB cabinet
• Roads frequently damaged by landslides and flash floods • Tour operators, hotel owners and transporters welcome PM's initiatives

By Jamil Nagri

GILGIT: The federal government has identified seven roads spanning 464 kilometres across Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) for federalization under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's tourism initiative, with the routes to be constructed, widened, rehabilitated and maintained by the federal authorities to improve connectivity and promote tourism in the mountainous region.

An official of the National Highway Authority (NHA) told *Dawn* that Federal Communications Minister Abdul Aleem Khan had proposed to the GB government that seven key roads across the region be handed over to the Centre under PM's tourism initiative. The seven roads identified include the 54km Astore-Chilim Chowik Road, 31km Deosai-Skardu Road, 100km Skardu-Khaplu Road, 17km Skardu (Thorgu)-Shigar Road



THE 36km Karakoram Highway-Naltar to Satrangi Lake Road is one of the key thoroughfares proposed for takeover by the federal government.—Dawn

and the 36km Karakoram Highway-Naltar to Satrangi Lake Road.

The remaining two routes, the 121km Thalichi-Astore-Rattu-

Shounter Road and the 105km Gorikot-Shagarthang-Skardu Road, are currently under construction.

The NHA official said the proposal

had been approved by the GB cabinet and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) had also been signed in this regard.

The move comes as the government seeks to expand tourism infrastructure in the region, where difficult terrain and limited road connectivity remain major challenges to exploiting its tourism potential.

The initiative is aimed at strengthening road connectivity to some of the region's major tourism destinations, improving access to remote communities and facilitating travel across GB.

Roads in GB are frequently blocked by landslides, mudflows, heavy rainfall, avalanches, flash floods and glacial lake outburst floods (Glofs).

NHA's role

Under the plan, the roads will be constructed, widened, rehabilitated and maintained by the NHA to

improve connectivity and facilitate access to popular tourist destinations.

The official said that the proposal would be placed before the federal cabinet for approval. Once approved, the NHA would assume responsibility for the development and long-term upkeep of the seven road links, including their construction, widening, rehabilitation and maintenance.

Asked about funding, he said the federal government would provide funds for the project. Previously, the GB government had been bearing the cost of maintenance, widening and rehabilitation of the roads, he added.

The official said it had also been proposed that a toll tax be introduced for tourists visiting the scenic region, with a blanket exemption for local residents.

Revenue generated through the toll would be spent on improving the

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