

## ECP PROTEST CASE

## Pak court rejects Imran Khan bail

DAWN/ ANN

An Islamabad court yesterday rejected the request of PTI chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan, for an extension of his interim bail.

The plea was made in a case pertaining to a protest outside the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) following its decision in the Toshakhana case.

The verdict was announced by Judge Raja Jawad Abbas Hassan on the grounds of non-appearance in court.

Earlier yesterday, the court rejected Imran's request for exemption from appearance on medical grounds. "Imran Khan should appear in court by 1:30pm," the judge said in an order announced at 1:20pm.

The PTI chief has been convalescing in his residence in Lahore ever since he was wounded in an assassination attempt.

During today's hearing, Imran's lawyer Babar Awan told the court that Imran tried to travel to Islamabad but could not.

Previously, the court had granted the PTI chief the last opportunity to appear on February 15.

The case was filed against Imran after PTI workers took to the streets and held demonstrations outside ECP offices across the country.

The reference alleging that Imran had not shared details of the gifts he retained from the Toshakhana and proceeds from their reported sales was filed by lawmakers from the ruling coalition last year. On October 21, the electoral body had concluded that the former premier had indeed made "false statements and incorrect declarations" regarding the gifts.

The Toshakhana is a department under the Cabinet Division that stores gifts given to rulers and government officials by heads of other governments and foreign dignitaries. According to Toshakhana rules, gifts/presents and other such materials received by persons to whom these rules apply shall be reported to the Cabinet Division.



A photo taken yesterday shows people wading through flood waters in Napier, a coastal city on New Zealand's North Island. Authorities yesterday confirmed three deaths after Cyclone Gabrielle cut a trail of destruction across northern New Zealand, with helicopters plucking people stranded from their roofs as floods surged overnight.

PHOTO: AFP

## Rising seas threaten exodus of 'biblical' scale

Warns UN chief, says Bangladesh, India, China are in danger

AFP, United Nations

The UN Secretary-General has warned that global warming could force a mass exodus "on a biblical scale" as people flee low-lying communities and called for legal frameworks to be implemented in preparation, especially for refugees. "The danger is especially acute for nearly 900 million people who live in coastal zones at low elevations -- that's one out of ten people on Earth," Antonio Guterres told the UN Security Council on Tuesday.

"Low-lying communities and entire countries could disappear forever... We would witness a mass exodus of entire populations on a biblical scale," he said. It is not only small island states at risk as sea levels rise, he added.

Countries such as Bangladesh, Chi-

na, India and the Netherlands are all in danger, Guterres said, while "mega-cities on every continent will face serious impacts" -- from Cairo to Jakarta to Los Angeles to Copenhagen.

The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says sea levels rose by 15-25 centimeters (6-10 inches) between 1900 and 2018.

If the world warms by just two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) compared to the pre-industrial era, then those levels will rise again by 43 centimeters by the year 2100.

But if it warms by three or four degrees Celsius, sea levels could rise by as much as 84 centimeters, the IPCC says.

The problem must be addressed "across legal and human rights frameworks,"

Guterres warned.

Rising sea levels means shrinking land mass, he said, which could drive possible disputes over land and maritime space.

"The current legal regime must look to the future and address any gaps in exist-

ing frameworks," including in international refugee law, he said.

It must also provide for the future of states that face losing their land territory completely. Guterres said the Security Council has a "critical" role to play in addressing "the devastating security challenges arising from rising seas."

The issue has been controversial in the past: In 2021, Russia vetoed a resolution linking climate change and global security, which was supported by the majority of the Council members.



## Govt set bar too low

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China it is 10mg.

This analysis was presented in a study conducted by the Centre for Atmospheric Pollution Studies (CAPS) at Stamford University. It was revealed at a seminar at the university yesterday.

The DoE also allows 400mg of sulphur dioxide [SO<sub>2</sub>] for plants launched before 2020 and 200mg for those launched later. The numbers are the same for nitrogen oxides [NO<sub>x</sub>].

In China, the SO<sub>2</sub> limit is 35mg and NO<sub>x</sub> is 50mg and in Japan, the limits are 28mg and 40mg respectively.

But the World Health Organization's limit for PM 2.5 is only 5 microgram per cubic metre, SO<sub>2</sub> is 40 microgram and NO<sub>x</sub> is 20 microgram.

Romen Raihan, associate professor of public health and informatics at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, told The Daily Star that inhalation of PM 2.5 beyond limit can cause infections in the upper and lower respiratory tracts that can lead to pneumonia and aggravate asthma symptoms.

The excessive PM 2.5 in

lungs reduces the oxygen level in blood and can result in low birth weight of neonates.

Oxygen deficiency in blood puts stress on the heart which ultimately causes heart diseases, he said.

Ahmad Kamruzzaman Majumder, chairman of Department of Environmental Science at Stamford University, told The Daily Star that the new rules set a standard that would deteriorate air quality. "Our air is already toxic and has hit global headlines for being among the worst in the world."

Easir Arafat Khan, associate professor of Chemical Engineering at Buet, said he and several others made recommendations before the rules were formulated. But some of the recommendations were not reflected in the rules.

PM10 are inhalable particles, with diameters that are generally 10 micrometres and smaller; and PM2.5 are fine inhalable particles, with diameters that are generally 2.5 micrometres and smaller. For context, the average human hair is about 70 micrometres in diameter.

## Iraq dig

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The joint team from the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Pisa discovered the remains of a primitive refrigeration system, a large oven, benches for diners and around 150 serving bowls.

Fish and animal bones were found in the bowls, alongside evidence of beer drinking, which was widespread among the Sumerians.

"So we've got the refrigerator, we've got the hundreds of vessels ready to be served, benches where people would sit...

and behind the refrigerator is an oven that would have been used... for cooking food," project director Holly Pittman told AFP.

"What we understand this thing to be is a place where people -- regular people -- could come to eat and that is not domestic," she said.

"We call it a tavern because beer is by far the most common drink, even more than water, for the Sumerians", she said, noting that in one of the temples excavated in the area "there was a beer recipe that was found on a cuneiform tablet".

ডেঙ্গু ও চিকুনগুনিয়াবাহী মশা থেকে

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