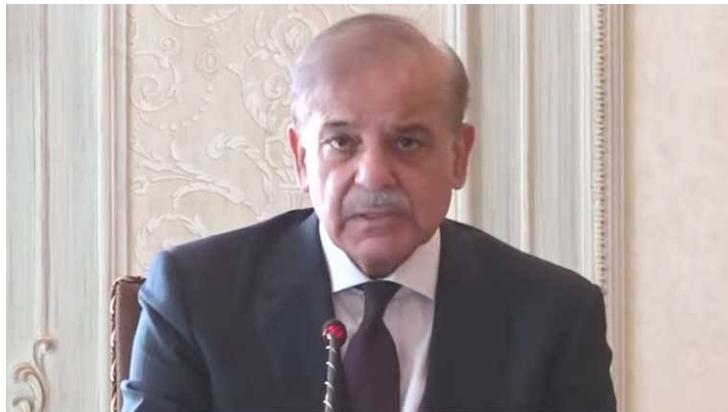


26th constitutional amendment a milestone for country's stability: PM



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ISLAMABAD:

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday declared that the 26th Constitutional Amendment Bill, passed by the parliament with a two-thirds majority, would be a significant milestone for the country's political and economic stability as well as public welfare. Addressing a meeting of the federal cabinet, which he chaired, the prime minister said that the new legislation would alleviate the burdens of the common man, who had long suffered from delays in obtaining justice. He added

that the 26th constitutional amendment, passed after extensive consultations between the ruling coalition and opposition parties, fulfilled the vision of the Charter of Democracy, originally signed by Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif in 2006. The prime minister noted that tireless efforts had led to this successful legislation, which embodied the true spirit of consultation. Prime Minister Shehbaz expressed his gratitude to the leadership of supporting political parties, including President Asif Ali Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, MQM, National Party, ANP, Balochistan Awami Party, and independent candidates for their votes in favour of the bill. He also congratulated the government on the successful hosting of the 23rd meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) in Islamabad, which, he said, enhanced Pakistan's global image. He highlighted the achievement of holding the summit despite challenges, particularly in terms of terrorism and security, and extended appreciation to the ministries of foreign affairs, information and broadcasting, interior, law enforcement agencies, police, Pakistan Rangers, Pakistan Army, and intelligence agencies for their efforts. The prime minister further praised the Capital Development Authority (CDA) for beautifying Islamabad during the summit, noting that the prime ministers of China and Russia had specifically complimented the city's appearance. Turning to the economy, the prime minister pointed out that national inflation had decreased to 6.9%, along with a declining policy rate, signaling improvement. Commenting on

Israel's continued aggression in Gaza and Lebanon, Prime Minister Shehbaz criticised the disregard for the UN Security Council's resolutions and rulings from the International Court of Justice, saying they had been "thrown into the dustbin of history." He reiterated his call for donations to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Gaza and Lebanon, emphasising that the government was developing a comprehensive plan to send relief supplies. A committee, led by Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, is overseeing the initiative.