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Makkah alliance reaffirms regional peace, condemns Houthi attacks on KSA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening trilateral defence cooperation and promoting regional peace and stability during the second meeting of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee of the Makkah Alliance for Defence, hosted by Pakistan on Friday.

The high-level meeting reviewed the evolving regional security situation and discussed ways to enhance coordination on matters of mutual interest, reduce regional tensions and encourage the peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue and diplomacy.

Speaking to the media after the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar said the three countries had agreed to continue consultations and strengthen cooperation to address shared security challenges and support efforts aimed at maintaining regional stability.

Pakistan was represented by Deputy Prime Minister Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir. The Saudi delegation included Defence Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud and Chief of the General Staff General Fayyadh bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili.

The Turkish delegation comprised Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, National Defence Minister Yasar Güler and Chief of the General Staff General Selçuk Bayraktaroglu.

During the discussions, the three sides strongly condemned what they described as persistent attacks by the Houthi militia targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure in Saudi Arabia. They reaffirmed their collective determination to support the Kingdom in protecting its security, sovereignty and territorial integrity in accordance with the collective defence provisions of the Makkah Agreement for Joint Defence.

The participating countries also reiterated their commitment to the agreement's fundamental principles, including collective defence, mutual solidarity and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all member states.

The meeting reviewed progress on implementing decisions taken during previous sessions of the Makkah Alliance for Defence. The three sides expressed satisfaction with developments towards es-

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A group photo of participants of the second meeting of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee (SPDC) of the Makkah Alliance for Defence, hosted by Pakistan.



GWADAR: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti presides over the meeting regarding affairs of Mekran Division.

BHC CJ assures Mastung lawyers of early resolution of issues

Independent Report

QUETTA: Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court Muhammad Kamran Khan Malakhail has assured the Mastung legal community that their outstanding concerns would be addressed promptly, while issuing immediate instructions concerning the bar room of the Anti-Terrorism Court and other matters related to judicial facilities.

The chief justice gave the assurance during a meeting with a delegation of the District Bar Association Mastung, which apprised him of issues confronting the bar and discussed matters related to judicial infrastructure and facilities for lawyers.

The delegation welcomed the measures already taken on several issues and expressed appreciation for the chief justice's directives concerning the conversion of the Sessions Court to solar power, restoration of water filtration plants and the establishment and improvement of consultation rooms.

The delegation included High Court Bar Association President Mir Attaullah Langove, Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan Vice President Abdul Malik Baloch, District Bar Association Mastung President Mir Khalil-uz-Zaman Alizai, Executive Committee Member Muhammad Ali and Advocate Akram Shah, along with other members of the Mastung Bar.



GWADAR: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti distributing appoint orders amongst Women Secondary School Teachers.

Bilawal says

South Punjab constitutional right to separate province, opposes dividing Punjab

RAHIM YAR KHAN (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said he did not support dividing Punjab into four parts and instead backed making South Punjab a separate province. He said the province would be established through democratic struggle and that no undemocratic means would be accepted for this purpose.

Addressing a gathering in Rahim Yar Khan, Bilawal Bhutto said he wanted to warn "conspiratorial elements" that the demand for a South Punjab province would not be allowed to become controversial. He said the people of South Punjab were politically aware and believed in democracy, and would therefore secure their province through democratic struggle.

Bilawal Bhutto said he supported a South Punjab province because it was the wish of the people there. He added that the Punjab Assembly had also supported making South Punjab a province, and said he stood with the people's wishes and the assembly's position.

Expressing his personal view, he made clear that he did not support dividing Punjab into four parts and did not agree with the position that the province should be split into four separate parts.

The PPP chairman said his support was limited to making South Punjab a separate province.

DPM, FM Fidan agree to translate strong political ties into tangible economic dividends

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Türkiye, Hakan Fidan, on Friday agreed to translate their strong political ties into tangible economic dividends and maintain close coordination under the Makkah Agreement for Joint Defence to promote dialogue and de-escalation.

The deputy prime minister and the foreign minister of the Republic of Türkiye, met on the sidelines of the 2nd meeting of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee (SPDC) of the Makkah Defence Alliance here, a DPM's Office news release said.

Both sides expressed satisfaction at the growing momentum in bilateral cooperation, particularly in trade, investment, defence and energy. They reaffirmed their support for each other on matters of mutual interest.

Pakistan seeks verification of reports about migrant boat tragedy

ISLAMABAD (INP) Foreign Office spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan on Friday said that there has been no independent verification so far of media reports regarding a boat carrying Pakistani migrants capsizing off the coast of Libya.

The spokesperson, responding to a media query on the reports, said, "We have seen some media stories pointing to a reported boat capsizing incident off the coast of Libya. There has been no independent verification of such reports so far. We hope and pray it is not true."

He said that the Pakistan Embassy in Tripoli was actively pursuing the matter to ascertain the facts, including the presence of Pakistani nationals.

The spokesperson said that the embassy had contacted the relevant Libyan government authorities, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other relevant stakeholders and that it would share further information as soon as verified details become available.

GoB bans transportation of Iranian oil thru passenger buses

GWADAR (APP): Balochistan government has imposed a complete ban on the transportation of Iranian oil through passenger buses operating on the Makran route, with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti directing the authorities to take immediate and strict legal action against transport companies and vehicles found violating the ban.

The decision was taken during a high-level meeting chaired by the Chief Minister in Gwadar on Friday. Officials were instructed to ensure effective enforcement of the ban and proceed without discrimination against offenders.

"Passenger buses are meant to provide safe travel facilities to the public and cannot be allowed to be used for the illegal transpor-

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No government job will be sold, recruitment to remain merit-based: Bugti

Independent Report

GWADAR: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti has reiterated that government employment opportunities in the province will be offered strictly on merit, ruling out political influence, personal recommendations or any other form of interference in the recruitment process.

He said qualified and deserving candidates had a legitimate right to government jobs and assured that no individual would be permitted to undermine their entitlement through unfair means.

The chief minister made the remarks while distributing appointment orders among 99 secondary school teachers recruited on merit in Gwadar.

Bugti personally handed over appointment orders to successful female candidates and sought their views about the recruitment process. The teachers expressed satisfaction with the transparency of the procedure, saying they had secured employment on the basis of their qualifications and merit without relying on political connections or recommendations. The newly appointed teachers also appreciated the government for providing employment

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President Asif Ali Zardari exchanged views on national matters and the overall political situation in the country during meeting with former Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain in Lahore.

Ahsan pushes major CPEC projects, Gwadar shipping revival in China talks

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday discussed a wide-ranging agenda of infrastructure, energy, industrial and trade cooperation with Vice Chairman of China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) Zhou Haibing, seeking early progress on key projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

During the meeting, the minister also sought duty-free access for all Pakistani goods to the Chinese market through a non-reciprocal arrangement, separate from the existing bilateral free trade agreement and modelled on China's zero-tariff access for African countries.

Highlighting the trade imbalance, he pointed out that Pakistan's imports from China stood at $22.34 billion in 2025-26, compared to exports of $2.71 billion.

He proposed bilateral technical talks on product coverage, rules of origin and an implementation timetable.

The minister called for early completion of the financing agreement for the 102-kilometre Thor Nullah–Raikot section of the Karakoram Highway (KKH), the first priority under the wider Rs576 billion Thakot–Raikot realignment project.

The realignment is aimed at keeping the highway operational in areas where the existing route is affected by hydropower projects on the Indus River.

He also discussed Chinese participation in upgrading the ML-1 railway beyond the Karachi–Rohri section, for which Pakistan is exploring Asian Develop-

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QUETTA: Activists of JUI taken out rally led by District Amer Maulana Abdul Rehman Rafique against arrest of JUI Leader Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman.

PM directs PR ministry to ensure timely completion of projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the Minister for Railways to take effective measures to ensure the timely completion of ongoing projects under the ministry.

He issued the directive during a meeting with Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi, who called on him at the Prime Minister's House.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed ongoing and proposed railway projects, along with other matters related to the ministry.

Petrol price drops by Re1 per litre, diesel remains unchanged

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government has reduced the price of petrol by Re1 per litre and kept the rate of high-speed diesel (HSD) unchanged, according to an Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) notification issued on Friday.

Following the revision, petrol will be available at Rs312 per litre, while diesel still costs Rs346 per litre.

According to Ogra, the revised prices will be effective from November 28-30.

President Zardari meets Ch Shujaat in Lahore, wishes him speedy recovery

LAHORE (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday met former prime minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain here at his residence and expressed good wishes for his early recovery.

The two also discussed national affairs and the prevailing political situation, a Presidency's news release said.

Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider, Federal Ministers Mohsin Naqvi and Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Punjab provincial minister Chaudhry Shafay Hussain, former prime minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Senator Saleem Mandviwalla and Dr Asim Hussain were also present at the meeting.

Tarar slams JUI-F protest, takes aim at Bilawal over referendum

ISLAMABAD (INP): Information Minister Attaullah Tarar stepped up his criticism of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, accusing the JUI-F chief of encouraging confrontation and questioning the PPP chairman's stance on a referendum and Imran Khan's imprisonment.

Speaking in a priviate TV Channel, Tarar downplayed the disruption caused by the JUI-F protests, urging Fazlur Rehman to avoid confrontation and find a way forward rather than block roads.

He alleged that the JUI-F chief was seeking confrontation despite efforts by members of his own party to persuade him otherwise.

Tarar also made a sharp remark about the JUI-F, likening its conduct to that of a militant organisation and questioning whether Fazlur Rehman stood with Pakistan or Afghanistan and the Taliban.

"He (Fazl) will have to decide whether he wants to stand with Pakistan or with Afghanistan and the Taliban. He is behaving like a militant group," he said.

The minister urged the JUI-F leadership to take a step back with a view to seeking new avenues.

"The maulana should step back and find a way forward. If he does not close the channels (of communication), matters can improve," he noted.

Traffic was disrupted in several cities following the JUI-F's call for protests and road closures, although most affected routes had reportedly reopened.

The information minister also criticised Bilawal over his opposition to holding a referendum on the creation of new provinces, arguing that the PPP chairman should not be reluctant to seek public opinion on the matter.



QUETTA: DG Benazir Income Support Program Balochistan Dr. Jalal Faiz meeting with acting Governor Balochistan Captain (retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.

JUI-F claims Fazl held, Lahore police deny detention

LAHORE (INP): The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) claimed its chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman had been arrested near Thokar Niaz Baig, but the Lahore police rejected the claim, saying he had returned to his residence along with his convoy.

JUI-F Deputy Secretary Information for Lahore Hafiz Zain claimed that party chief Fazl had been arrested near Thokar Niaz Baig, alleging that Lahore Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Bilal Siddique Kamyana and DIG Operations Faisal Kamran had detained him.

However, the DIG Operations rejected the claim, saying Fazl had not been arrested as he had returned to his residence along with his convoy.

The police official also said traffic on Multan Road and the motorway was flowing smoothly.

The conflicting statements came amid tensions surrounding the JUI-F protests and restrictions on the party's planned activities in Punjab as per the party officials' statements. The JUI-F had earlier alleged restrictions on Fazlur Rehman's movement in Lahore, prompting the party to approach the Lahore High Court over his alleged confinement. Police, however, denied arresting or formally placing him under house arrest. In the plea filed before the LHC, the petitioner contended that police cordoned off Fazl's residence and restricted his movement, effectively placing him under house arrest.

State responsible for ensuring access to education: Maryam

LAHORE (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif said ensuring access to education for every child is the responsibility of the state, not merely that of parents, stressing that financial constraints should not deprive talented students of educational opportunities.

Addressing a laptop and Honhaar Scholarship distribution ceremony at Chakwal University, she said scholarships and laptops are not government favours but recognition of students' hard work and merit.

"Children who complete their education must serve in every field and bring pride to Pakistan," she said, expressing confidence that students attending the ceremony would make their mark nationally and internationally.

Describing Chakwal as a land of talented people, courageous citizens and martyrs, the chief minister said she was delighted to visit the district, adding that its development and appearance reminded her of Lahore. She also welcomed 500 students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa attending the event.

She said deserving students from across the country, including Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, were equally entitled to opportunities. A share had also been reserved for students from KP under the laptop scheme, she added.

Recalling students' accounts of financial hardships, the chief minister said some parents had even sold their livestock to finance their children's education, while several girls might have been unable to continue their studies without scholarships.

She said she wanted every boy and girl in Punjab to receive an education and urged students to pursue their ambitions, assuring them that the government would support their aspirations.

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz said the provincial government is establishing new academic facilities, including classrooms and artificial intelligence (AI) laboratories, in colleges and universities. The focus, she added, was shifting from conventional degrees to specialised education as AI continued to transform the world.

She said the government was working to bring public-sector schools at par with expensive private institutions, citing the Schools of Eminence and Schools of Excellence as initiatives aimed at eliminating the educational divide between rich and poor. She recalled inaugurating the Nawaz Sharif School of Eminence in Chakwal, adding that the district now had two such institutions.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi poses for a group photo with participants during the inaugural ceremony of Lok Mela 2026 at Lok Virsa, The festival celebrates Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, traditional crafts, folk music and diverse cultural expressions.



A group photo of the 15th Annual Meeting of the Nuclear Security Support Centres (NSSC) Network in Islamabad.

Naqvi reviews medical facilities at CDA Hospital

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday visited CDA Hospital to review medical facilities for patients, inspect hospital wards and discuss issues faced by doctors and nursing staff.

During the visit, the interior minister inspected the emergency department and other wards and met patients receiving treatment.

He inquired from patients about the medical facilities available at the hospital and asked about the treatment being provided to them. The patients expressed satisfaction with the healthcare services and facilities available at the hospital.

Mohsin Naqvi also met doctors and nurses and asked about the issues they were facing while performing their duties.

During his interaction with the nursing staff, nurses informed the minister about a shortage of nursing staff at the hospital and highlighted the need to address the issue.

The interior minister assured them that the shortage of nurses would be addressed at the earliest.

He also directed the hospital administration to improve cleanliness arrangements and ensure proper sanitation across the hospital.

During the visit, the minister reviewed the arrangements for patient care and treatment and sought information about the facilities being provided in different departments.

Mohsin Naqvi said providing the best possible medical treatment to patients in a timely manner was the right of every patient.

He stressed that patients should have access to treatment facilities without delay.

The minister's visit included an assessment of the emergency department, other wards, patient care services and the issues raised by doctors and nursing staff.

He also issued directions to improve cleanliness and assured nurses that steps would be taken to overcome the shortage of staff.

Sherry calls for effective implementation of laws to end child marriages

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice President of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Senator Sherry Rehman has called for effective implementation of laws to prevent child marriages, stressing that legislation alone would not be sufficient without strict enforcement.

In her message on the International Day Against Child Marriage, she said child marriage deprived girls of their childhood, education and fundamental human rights, adversely affecting their future prospects. Sherry Rehman said more than 19 million women and girls in Pakistan had been married before the age of 18, while approximately 4.8 million girls had been married before reaching the age of 15.

Globally, around 650 million women and girls had experienced marriage during childhood, highlighting the scale of the challenge, she added. The PPP leader said Sindh had taken an important legislative step by introducing the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act.

Pak to continue constructive role for conflict resolution through peace, dialogue

WASHINGTON (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, Rizwan Saeed Sheikh on Friday said that Pakistan, in its true tradition of constructive diplomacy, will continue to offer its services towards the resolution of conflicts and disputes through peace and dialogue from a futuristic standpoint.

The ambassador, in his message on the occasion of Thanksgiving, said that the last year in particular saw a strengthened bilateral partnership between Pakistan and the United States, mainly because Pakistan was the mediator of choice between the United States and Iran in the conflict in the Gulf region.

He said that Pakistan was chosen as a mediator and played a role, with its leadership engaged at the highest level not only with the leadership of the two countries but also with other important bilateral and multilateral partners in trying to carve out the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which continues to form a baseline for any future agreement in this important conflict that has impacted lives and livelihoods across the globe.

He extended heartfelt felicitations from the Embassy of Pakistan to the government and people of the United States as well as Pakistani Americans across the country.

Aslam Ghori says: Fazlur Rehman gave himself up for arrest to avert bloodshed

ISLAMABAD (INP): Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman gave himself up for arrest to save the country from bloodshed, violence and unrest.

JUI-F spokesperson Aslam Ghori claimed that Fazlur Rehman had been held up for more than 11 hours in Lahore's Thokar Niaz Baig area, where police and the district administration had blocked his way. Fazlur Rehman had set out to attend a rally in Sargodha, but Lahore police stopped him from proceeding.

The Lahore DIG advised him to return home, but he refused. Later, the Lahore CCPO arrived at the scene and informed him that orders had been issued for his arrest.

The JUI-F spokesperson said Fazlur Rehman, anticipating the government's intentions, chose to be arrested rather than risk a clash between party workers and the government, in order to protect the country from possible bloodshed and unrest.

He said party workers had been staging sit-ins on highways across the country for more than 10 hours, and the situation was becoming serious as the number of protesters grew. Fazlur Rehman opted for arrest in view of the difficulties facing the public.

Aslam Ghori apologised to the public for the protests and road closures across the country, saying JUI-F regretted the hardships caused to people.

DFP flays tragic death of Irfan Shah

ISLAMABAD (INP): Acting Chairman of Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) Mehmood Ahmed Saghar has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the tragic death of Irfan Hassan Shah, who reportedly drowned in the Neelum River while attempting to reunite with his children separated from him across the Line of Control (LoC).

Mehmood Ahmed Saghar in a statement in Islamabad said the tragedy underscores the devastating human cost of the division of Jammu and Kashmir and the restrictions that continue to deprive divided Kashmiri families of the opportunity to live together. He said Irfan Hassan Shah's heart-breaking story reflects the anguish, helplessness and emotional trauma endured by countless Kashmiris separated from their loved ones.

According to media reports, Irfan had settled in Muzaffarabad after crossing into Azad Kashmir in the 1990s but returned to his ancestral village in occupied Kashmir in 2012 to look after his elderly parents. He reportedly endured detention and torture and was subsequently separated from his children following their deportation to Azad Kashmir in 2025.

Saghar said it was deeply distressing that people were being driven to risk their lives in desperate attempts to reunite with their families. He maintained that freedom of movement and the right to family life are fundamental human rights and must not be denied on account of political restrictions.

Makkah..

Continued from page 1

tablishing and operationalising the alliance's secretariat in Saudi Arabia.

They also pledged to expand cooperation in defence industries, joint technological development, military training and capacity-building to strengthen the capabilities and coordination of their armed forces. Such collaboration, they said, would help address common security concerns and contribute to broader regional peace and stability.

Describing the meeting as a reflection of the longstanding friendship and solidarity among the three countries, Deputy Prime Minister Dar said the initiative demonstrated Pakistan's continued commitment to promoting regional and international peace and security. He also highlighted the country's growing diplomatic engagement and international standing.

The meeting underscored the three nations' resolve to translate their longstanding political and defence ties into stronger institutional cooperation and a coordinated approach to emerging regional security challenges.



Sindh ombudsman regional office advisor Larkana, Huzoor Bux Leghari, addresses employee concerns at open court program in Larkana.

GoB bans transportation of..

Continued from page 1

tation of oil," Bugti said, emphasizing the need for strict compliance with the new directive.

The meeting also reviewed a comprehensive report submitted by a Secretaries Committee following its recent visit to the districts of Gwadar, Kech, and Panjgur. The report assessed public concerns, the provision of basic services, and the performance of government departments across the Makran Division.

Additional Chief Secretary for Development Zahid Saleem briefed the meeting on public hearings, inspections of educational and healthcare facilities, and the progress of ongoing development projects.

To improve governance and address public complaints more effectively, the meeting approved a time-bound mechanism under which immediate issues would be resolved within 7 to 10 days, medium-term matters within 20 days, and long-term issues within 60 days. Relevant departments were directed to ensure tangible progress within the specified timelines.

The meeting was informed that Makran Division currently has 1,472 schools and 10,236 teaching and non-teaching staff members.

The Chief Minister directed authorities to rationalize staffing according to actual requirements, strengthen teacher training programmes, improve digital monitoring systems, and ensure the observance of national symbols, including the hoisting of the national flag and playing of the national anthem in schools.

Sarfraz Bugti also called for alternative educational arrangements until under-construction colleges are completed, greater autonomy for the Makran Board Turbat, enhanced transparency in examinations, and the expansion of online student services.

In a significant step to improve student transportation, the meeting approved the release of funds for fuel and drivers to make 107 school buses operational across the division.

The performance of hospitals and health centres, availability of medical staff, supply of medicines, and emergency healthcare services were also reviewed.

The chief minister directed officials to present a comprehensive plan within ten days for the efficient management and operation of the District Headquarters Hospital Gwadar and the GDA Trauma Centre. He also ordered that adequate medical facilities be maintained at the Rural Health Centre in the newly established district of Tump until construction of a planned 50-bed hospital is completed.

The authorities were further instructed to ensure continued availability of medicines and vaccines to prevent outbreaks of communicable diseases.

Special attention was given to water shortages and resource management across the region.

Ahsan pushes major..

Continued from page 1

ment Bank financing. He called for progress on four joint road feasibility studies, including the Babusar Tunnel project.

On Gwadar, Ahsan Iqbal sought Chinese support for restoring regular shipping services, including through engagement with COSCO, and proposed a joint study on strategic petroleum storage at the port.

The discussions also covered the Gwadar Free Zone, the second phase of the Eastbay Expressway and a proposed corridor linking Chagai's mining areas with Gwadar for mineral processing and exports.

Under the second phase of CPEC, the minister sought progress on the Kohala and Azad Pattan hydropower projects and proposed joint work to assess the feasibility of converting selected power plants from imported coal to locally available Thar coal. He also sought Chinese approval for the Siah Diq copper project and proposed jointly developing two to three model special economic zones (SEZs).

Pakistan further proposed adding three private-sector projects to the CPEC industrial agenda, including an aluminium complex at Port Qasim, a fertiliser plant in Thar and a refinery and fuel storage complex at Dhabeji.

The meeting also covered implementation of two existing agreements on artificial intelligence, a proposed 1,500-kilometre fibre-optic link from Rawalpindi to Karachi and a jointly financed programme to provide 10,000 doctoral scholarships over 10 years.

Discussing agricultural cooperation, the minister explored Chinese partnerships in farm modernisation and proposed establishing food processing zones to reduce post-harvest losses and support exports.

Zhou Haibing described CPEC as a pillar of China-Pakistan economic cooperation and highlighted its tangible gains.

No government job..

Continued from page 1

opportunities on a transparent basis.

Bugti recalled that his government had announced on its first day in the Balochistan Assembly that government jobs would not be sold, saying concrete steps were now being taken to turn that commitment into reality.

He said the province's young people possessed considerable talent and deserved equal opportunities and an environment in which they could demonstrate their abilities.

The chief minister said removing political intervention from public-sector recruitment would help rebuild the confidence of young people in government institutions while promoting transparency and accountability within the administration.

He termed merit-based recruitment a key pillar of good governance, institutional improvement and sustainable development, stressing that his government would not compromise on transparency or merit.

Bugti said merit was not merely a slogan but a fundamental principle of governance and reaffirmed his commitment to continuing transparent recruitment practices and protecting the future of Balochistan's youth.

CORRIGENDUM

It is hereby informed to all concerned that the Tender Notices bearing TSE Nos. 2627111223743, 2627111223713 and 2627111223663, were published vide PRQ No.2439/13-11-2026,PRQ No.2441/13-11-2026 & PRQ No.2442/13-11-2026 in the daily newspapers, have been amended in the bidding documents and the bid opening schedule has been rescheduled.

Now, the deadline for submission of bids is extended up to 4th December 2026 at 09:00 AM, and all bids will be opened on the same date at 10:00 AM.

All other conditions shall remain the same.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
Urban Planning & Dev: Department Quetta
Division Quetta

PRQ No.2699/26-11-2026

www.dpr.gob.pk @dpr_gob dpr.gob @dgpr.balochistan

TENDER NOTICE

The Balochistan Special Development Initiative (BSDI) invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. **TSE-2627111228932 Only electronic bid will be submitted, No physical bid is required. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB.**

Tender Fee Not required

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Engineering and Research and Technology Based Services (Total Item(s) Count: 1)	2%

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules – 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity Turn over of at least 15,000,000 PKR Amount in 3 Subsequent Previous Years Presence in Active Tax Payer List BRA Registration Certificate The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Must unconditionally agree with all the instructions, terms & conditions specified in the documents Local office establishment with field and support staff enabling local presence for support, service & maintenance. ISO 90001 IAF,ISO 27001 IAF,ISO 20000 Registration from Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) & FIRM must registered with SECP Provide audited financials where legally required; otherwise, accountant-certified financial statements for the last 3 years. The Auditor/firm must be ICAP Registered Atleast one completed assignment related to monitoring and evaluation in last three years in public sector with SLA of Minimum six months.. **Procedure Of Procurement:** Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Gurantee,Deposit at Call of 2 % specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gob.pk **Issuance of tender Documents:** Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gob.pk **Last Date of bid submission:** Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 11 December, 2026till 12:00 PM through supplier dashboard. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at 01:00 PM on EPPS System **Address:** Office of the Balochistan Special Development Initiative (BSDI), Jinnah Road, Quetta Cantt Phone no: 0814245963
Email: piubsdi@gmail.com

Project Coordinator
Balochistan Special Development Initiative (BSDI)

DAB/AB No.601/27-11-2026

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**HEADQUARTERS
PAKISTAN RANGERS (SINDH)**
MUSLIM JINNAH COURTS DR.ZIA-UD-DIN AHMED ROAD KARACHI-4

No. 1617/PRO/1896/2026 Dated 26 November 2026

TENDER NOTICE

1. Sealed tenders are invited from the manufacturers, distributors and sole agents for supply of following stores by Pakistan Rangers (Sindh). Tenders will be opened on **17 December 2026 at 1430 hours** in presence of concerned/ authorized firms representatives:-

Ser	Nomenclature	Tender Fee Rs.
a.	Net Camouflage 26'x26'	500/-
	Net Camouflage 35'x35'	
b.	Tent 2 Men Bed / 40 Lbs	500/-
c.	Search Lights	500/-

2. Manufacturers, Distributors & Sole agents desirous to participate in tender should be registered with Sales Tax, Income Tax Departments, Active Tax Filer at FBR and having valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (as applicable).
3. Tender forms can be obtained from Ordnance Branch Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) with effect from **2 December 2026 to 17 December 2026 from 1000 to 1330 Hours** daily (except Saturday and Sunday/ Public Holidays) after payment of tender fee (non refundable) as mentioned against each in shape of pay order/ bank draft from any scheduled bank in favour of **DG Pakistan Rangers (Sindh).** Tenders can be dropped in tender box till **17 December 2026 upto 1400 hours.**
4. Director General Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders as per Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Rules 2004.
5. For further details please contact on telephone # 99205285-7 (Extension # 3018).

Lieutenant Colonel
for Director General
Pakistan Rangers (Sindh)

PID-K-1737/26

**IN THE HON'BLE COURT OF SPECIAL JUDGE
(CUSTOMS, TAXATION & ANTI-SMUGGLING-I),
KARACHI**

Case No. ASO-205/2020-HQ
Special Case No. 106-A/2020
P.S. CUSTOMS, KARACHI

The State..... Versus.... Najeebullah

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON UNDER SECTION 87 Cr. PC.

Whereas, complaint has been made before me that the absconding accused person namely Najeebullah s/o Abdul Khaliq, holding CNIC No. 54201-1007178-1, R/o Mohalla Collage Road, Ward No. 7, Chaman, District Qilla Abdullah has committed an offence of smuggling and it had been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person cannot be found and whereas it had been shown to my satisfaction that the above mentioned accused persons absconded to avoid the service of the said warrant.

2. Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused is required to appear on 12.12.2026 at 09:00 am before this Hon'able Court to answer the said complaint.

Given under my hand and seal of the Court this 21.11.2026.

Special Judge
Special Court
(Customs & Taxation-I)
Karachi

PID (K)1731/26

CM Bugti announces upgrade of entire Gwadar tehsil to municipal corporation status

GWADAR (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has announced that the entire Gwadar Tehsil will be upgraded to the status of a Municipal Corporation, a move aimed at expanding municipal services and improving civic facilities for residents of the rapidly developing coastal district.

The announcement came during the Chief Minister's visit to the Gwadar Municipal Corporation, where he reviewed the institution's performance, administrative reforms, sanitation system, and public service delivery mechanisms. The visit was attended by Provincial Assembly member Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch, the Inspector General of Police Balochistan, provincial ministers, Makran Commissioner Dr Tufail Ahmed Baloch, Deputy Commissioner Gwadar Naqeebullah Kakar, and other senior officials.

During the visit, Municipal Corporation Chairman Majid Johar and other officials briefed the Chief Minister on the organization's performance, governance reforms, and initiatives undertaken to improve municipal services and urban management. Speaking on the occasion, Sarfraz Bugti commended the municipal administration for transforming the institution into an efficient and functional local government body despite limited resources. He said the success of the corporation demonstrates that transparency, accountability, and effective utilisation of available resources can significantly improve institutional performance.

The Chief Minister particularly appreciated the renovation of the municipal corporation building, the introduction of modern administrative systems, the establishment of a digital laboratory, the creation of a municipal police force and fire brigade, and the deployment of modern street-sweeping machinery to improve sanitation services.

He described Gwadar Municipal Corporation as a model local government institution whose reforms could serve as an example for other municipal bodies across the province.

Announcing the elevation of the entire Gwadar Tehsil to municipal corporation status, Bugti said the decision would broaden the scope of municipal services and enable authorities to provide improved civic amenities to a larger population. The Chief Minister also assured officials that demands relating to development projects, including the installation of Tuff Tiles and other civic infrastructure schemes, would be met by the provincial government. To further strengthen the institution, he announced that additional financial resources would be provided to enhance the municipal corporation's operational and administrative capacity. Sarfraz Bugti reiterated that the provincial government would continue supporting local government institutions in Gwadar, recognizing their critical role in providing sanitation.



GWADAR: MPA Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman presenting souvenir to Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir regarding during his visit to Gwadar.



QUETTA: DG NAVTEC Dr. Hussain Bakhsh Magsi meeting with acting Balochistan Governor Captain (retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.

Lehri emphasizes concerned sectors to accelerate cleaning of major drains in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): In line with the vision of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti and his commitment to making the provincial capital clean, Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, Mir Liaquat Ali Lehri conducted a detailed inspection of major rainwater drains including those managed by the Irrigation Department across areas including Shahbaz Town, Faqirabad, the University of Balochistan, Ghausabad, and other adjacent parts of the city.

He was accompanied by Administrator of the Quetta Metropolitan Corporation (QMC), Bashir Ahmed Bareach, the Director of Sanitation for the Metropolitan Corporation Quetta, Anwar Lehri, Executive Engineer (XEN) for Irrigation, Mehrab Baloch; Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) Zubair Barozai; Project Director of 'Safa Quetta', Dil Nawaz Shah; and sanitation staff.

During the visit, they closely examined the overall state of cleanliness in these areas, the waste collection process, and in particular the ongoing cleaning operations and drainage arrangements within the main irrigation drains.

Relevant officials from the Metropolitan Corporation, officers from the Irrigation Department, the Metropolitan Corporation's Director of Sanitation Anwar Lehri, and the Project Director of 'Safa Quetta', Dil Nawaz Shah, provided a detailed briefing regarding the ongoing cleanliness campaign, the challenges being faced, and the removal of silt and waste from main drains.

On this occasion, Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) and Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, Mir Liaquat Ali Lehri issued directives that the Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti had given clear instructions that no negligence would be tolerated regarding the restoration of Quetta city's beauty or the provision of better municipal services to its citizens.

He emphasized that the Metropolitan Corporation, the Irrigation Department, and 'Safa Quetta' should work in coordination to accelerate the cleaning of major drains.

He said that this is to ensure that there are no obstructions to drainage during emergencies or rainfall, thereby preventing any hardship for the citizens.

Bashir Ahmed Bareech, Administrator of the Metropolitan Corporation Quetta, instructed Director of Sanitation Anwar Lehri, Irrigation Department officials, and the 'Safa Quetta' staff to utilize all available machinery and resources to ensure the immediate removal of waste piles and silt from drains across the city.

He further stated that the cleaning operations must be monitored on a daily basis, and strict action would be taken against any personnel found to be negligent.

He also appealed to the citizens to dispose of trash at designated locations rather than throwing it into drains or streets and to extend their full cooperation to the administration in keeping the city clean.

Upgrade work under way at Gwadar's Jannat Bazaar

GWADAR (INP): Work is under way to upgrade Jannat Bazaar under Gwadar Development Authority's (GDA) Old Town Rehabilitation Project. The first phase includes the removal of encroachments, debris clearance, earthworks and landscaping. This will be followed by the installation of pavers and tuff tiles, with market sheds to be built in the next phase, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday.

Payments have also been made to the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) to relocate electricity poles and overhead wires. GDA plans to expedite construction in consultation with shopkeepers, traders' associations and other stakeholders to minimise disruption to businesses.

Timely treatment, uninterrupted medicine supply must be ensured

Independent Report

GWADAR: Additional Chief Secretary Development Balochistan Zahid Saleem and Health Secretary Mujeeb-ur-Rehman have directed health authorities to ensure timely and quality medical care at public hospitals, warning that negligence in patient treatment, medicine availability and diagnostic services will not be tolerated. The officials issued the directives during an inspection of Mir Abdul Ghafoor Kalmati Teaching Hospital Gwadar, conducted on the instructions of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, where they reviewed the hospital's overall performance and healthcare arrangements.

Medical Superintendent Dr Hafeez Baloch briefed the visiting officials on the institution's performance, available medical resources, medicines, healthcare facilities, operational challenges and future requirements. Deputy Commissioner Gwadar Naqeebullah Kakar also apprised them of healthcare initiatives being undertaken at the district level.

During the inspection, Zahid Saleem and Mujeeb-ur-Rehman visited the emergency unit, outpatient department, general wards, laboratory and pharmacy. They examined the functioning of medical equipment, availability of essential medicines, diagnostic services, patient-care arrangements and cleanliness.

The officials also met patients receiving treatment at the hospital and obtained their feedback regarding the services being provided.

They directed the hospital administration, doctors, nurses and paramedical personnel to maintain regular attendance and perform their duties with diligence. They also stressed the need for cleanliness, discipline and courteous treatment of patients. The officials said the provincial government was utilizing available resources to raise standards of treatment at public hospitals, improve the supply of medical resources and ensure that healthcare services respond effectively to the needs of citizens. They also inspected the under-construction Trauma Center and OPD Block, reviewing the pace of construction, quality of work.



GWADAR: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti reviews Digital Services during his visit to Municipal Corporation Gwadar.

No child in Kohlu to be left without polio vaccination: Zehri

Independent Report

KOHLU: Deputy Commissioner Kohlu Abdul Hameed Zehri has directed authorities to ensure that every child below the age of five is administered polio drops during the upcoming vaccination campaign, stressing that eliminating the disease is a collective national responsibility.

Chairing a meeting to assess preparations for the anti-polio drive, the deputy commissioner warned that negligence or deficiencies in vaccination activities would not be tolerated.

The meeting reviewed the composition of vaccination teams, microplanning, security arrangements, monitoring mechanisms and possible challenges that could affect the campaign.

Zehri instructed the concerned officials to give priority to door-to-door vaccination, identify children who remain unvaccinated and engage with parents hesitant about vaccination. He also called for follow-up visits to children missed during the initial rounds to ensure complete coverage.

He directed officials to adopt coordinated measures to reach children in remote and sensitive areas, closely monitor the attendance and performance of vaccination teams and address difficulties encountered by field workers without delay.

The deputy commissioner said the support of parents, tribal elders, religious scholars, political and social representatives.



QUETTA: Advisor to CM for Women Development Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi talking to social activists Roshan Khurshid Barocha. Mir Sad Khan Buledi is also present.

DC Jaffarabad orders swift recovery of govt dues on Kharif crops

Independent Report

JAFFARABAD: Deputy Commissioner Jaffarabad Khalid Khan has directed Revenue Department officials and tehsildars to expedite the recovery of outstanding government dues imposed on Kharif crops, making it clear that negligence, inefficiency or avoidable delays in revenue collection would not be tolerated.

He issued the directives while presiding over a meeting convened to assess the recovery position of government dues for the Kharif season across the district.

During the meeting, the deputy commissioner received individual briefings from officials regarding the progress made so far and the status of pending recoveries.

Over 40,000 children to be vaccinated in Kalat polio drive

Independent Report

KALAT: Deputy Commissioner Kalat Engineer Ayesha Zehri has called for coordinated efforts by all segments of society to help eradicate polio, with 40,269 children set to be administered anti-polio drops during a four-day nationwide vaccination campaign beginning December 12.

She gave the directives while chairing a meeting on preparations for the campaign, stressing the need for rigorous monitoring and complete coverage to ensure that no eligible child is missed. District Health Officer Dr. Abdul Malik informed the meeting that the campaign would run from December 12 to 15 and cover children up to five years of age across 19 union councils in two tehsils of Kalat district.



Member of the Provincial Assembly Mir Liaquat Lehri and Quetta Metropolitan Corporation Administrator Bashir Ahmed Barraich inspect drainage in Quetta.

JUI-F says: Arrests cannot suppress constitutional struggle

QUETTA (ANN): Leaders of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) have said that arrests and detentions cannot resolve political disputes, asserting that such measures could further intensify political tensions while reaffirming their commitment to pursuing political objectives through constitutional and democratic means. The leaders were speaking at protest demonstrations organized in different parts of Balochistan against the reported arrest and detention of Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, Senator Maulana Abdul Wasey and other party leaders, lawmakers and workers. Protests were reported in Quetta, Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Chaman, Ziarat, Zhob, Killa Saifullah, Sanjavi, Mastung, Kalat, Khuzdar, Noshki, Naseerabad, Dera Murad Jamali, Jaffarabad, Sohbatpur, Hub, Winder and several other areas. A large number of party workers, leaders and supporters participated in the demonstrations.

The speakers said Maulana Fazlur Rehman had exercised political restraint by voluntarily surrendering to authorities in an attempt to prevent confrontation and possible bloodshed. They maintained that the JUI-F had consistently advocated peaceful and constitutional methods in pursuit of its political goals.

JUI-F Balochistan General Secretary Agha Mahmood Shah separately denounced the reported denial of access to lawyers seeking to meet provincial party chief Senator Maulana Abdul Wasey and other detained leaders.

He termed the alleged restriction a violation of fundamental legal and human rights and called on the authorities to explain the legal basis for preventing lawyers from meeting their clients. The JUI-F called for the immediate release of all detained leaders and workers, unrestricted access for legal counsel and adherence to constitutional supremacy, the rule of law, democratic freedoms.

Fertilizer trade restricted to registered dealers to curb illegal hoarding: DC

Independent Report

DUKKI: Deputy Commissioner Dukki Fazal-ur-Rehman Kabdani has directed that fertilizer sales and purchases in the district be carried out only through registered dealers and in accordance with applicable regulations, with strict oversight to prevent hoarding, unauthorized transportation and misuse of fertilizer.

He said dealers would be required to maintain comprehensive records of fertilizer consignments received, sales, transportation and stocks through the Precursors Tracking and Traceability System (PTTS).

The directives were issued during a meeting of the District Implementation Committee on PTTS enforcement, held in accordance with instructions and a notification issued by the Balochistan Home Department.

DC Badini orders regular medical staff attendance, timely medicine supply

Independent Report

QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehrullah Badini has directed health authorities to ensure regular attendance of medical staff, uninterrupted availability of medicines and improved service delivery at hospitals and health centers across the district.

He issued the directives while chairing a meeting of the District Health Committee, which reviewed the performance of healthcare facilities, attendance of medical personnel and the overall functioning of hospitals and health centers.

Officials briefed the deputy commissioner on staff absenteeism, the status of medicine supplies and the implementation of an artificial intelligence-based system for monitoring attendance.

Badini instructed the relevant officials to strengthen administrative oversight, ensure that medical personnel attend their duties regularly and take practical measures to improve the quality and accessibility of healthcare services. Additional Deputy Commissioner General Muhammad Anwar Kakar, District Health Officer Quetta, PPHI District Manager, District Treasury Officer and Assistant Commissioner City participated in the meeting.

Meanwhile, a public awareness campaign has been launched in Quetta West on the directives of the Balochistan government and Deputy Commissioner Quetta West Sana Mahjabeen.

Special posters and banners have been installed at prominent public locations, government offices and major highways across the district as part of the campaign.



GWADAR: Additional Chief Secretary Development Zahid Saleem and Secretary Health Mujeeb ur Rehman being briefed by MS of Mir Abdul Ghafoor Kalmati Teaching Hospital Dr. Hafeez Baloch.

Rescue 1122 coverage to be expanded across Loralai: Commissioner

Independent Report

LORALAI: Commissioner Loralai Division Wali Muhammad Barrech has directed authorities to broaden Rescue 1122 services across the district to ensure prompt medical and rescue assistance during road accidents, severe weather, natural disasters and other emergencies.

The commissioner expressed concern over the limited availability of emergency response facilities, noting that the district currently has only one Rescue 1122 center. He stressed that the service should cater to a wider range of emergencies rather than remaining primarily focused on maternal and child healthcare.

He issued the directives during a meeting with the in-charge and staff of Medical Emergency Response Center (MERC) Base 1122 Loralai at his office. The meeting reviewed emergency response arrangements, coordination among departments, standard operating procedures, geographical coverage and maternal and child health data collected by lady health workers.

Barrech ordered the concerned officials to expedite the completion of standard operating procedures and expand the geographical reach of emergency services. He also assured that the necessary facilities and resources would be provided through the BSDA fund. In a letter addressed to Deputy Commissioner Loralai Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Haseeb Shuja, the commissioner directed the District Health Officer to extend full cooperation to the Rescue 1122 team.



QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehrullah Badini presides over the meeting of District Health Committee.

Harboi Water dedicated to supporting education, health of orphaned children: Shakeel

QUETTA (APP): Chairman of the Al-Hamd Group Dr. Shakeel Ahmed Roshan Friday said Harboi Water is not merely a commercial venture but a philanthropic mission dedicated to the education, health, and a better future for orphaned children.

Addressing a certificate distribution ceremony, he said 100 percent of the proceeds are channeled into charitable activities through the 'Al-Hamd Foundation,' and there will be no compromise on the provision of clean, high-quality water.

Dr. Roshan said that the primary objective of Harboi Water extends beyond business, it aims to advance a philanthropic mission that supports the education, health, and other essential needs of underprivileged and deserving segments of society particularly orphaned children.

He noted that 100 percent of the revenue generated by Harboi Water is utilized for charitable initiatives through the Al-Hamd Foundation.

Emphasizing that clean water is fundamental to human health, he explained that Harboi Water places special focus on every stage of the process from water quality and bottle manufacturing to packaging, ensuring that the provision of clean, safe, and high-quality water to consumers remains the company's top priority.

Speaking on the occasion, Bureau Chief of APP Quetta, Nazar Muhammad Baloch highlighted the importance of clean water.

Daily Voice of Masses
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Structural reforms

The country's improving macroeconomic health offers little hope when growth remains too weak to create enough jobs or improve living standards. The State Bank's latest annual report makes this contradiction difficult to ignore. It argues that structural reforms are essential for putting the economy on a sustainable high-growth path. The figures underline the scale of the problem. The SBP has correctly identified premature deindustrialisation, weak investment, inadequate skills and widespread informal employment as major constraints. These problems have accumulated over decades of inconsistent economic policies. The state's reform priorities must therefore address the reasons businesses hesitate to invest and expand.

Infrastructure gaps require attention. Tax administration needs simplification, with a broader tax base. Businesses also need predictable regulations and consistent policies. Repeated policy reversals have made long-term planning difficult for domestic and foreign investors alike. The domestic labour market presents an equally serious challenge. While overall unemployment has risen to 7.2pc in 2025 from 5.7pc in 2018, low female workforce participation keeps a substantial share of potential workers outside productive economic activity. High youth unemployment reflects weaknesses in education and vocational training. Universities and technical institutions must develop skills that employers actually need. The agricultural sector needs modern irrigation, better technology and climate-resilient practices. However, the most important lesson from the SBP report concerns policy continuity. Structural reforms cannot succeed through isolated announcements or short-lived initiatives. They require political commitment across successive governments. Every change in administration should not bring another round of economic experimentation. The government must recognise that sustainable growth requires a stronger productive base. Without consistent investment, industrial expansion, better skills and higher productivity, economic stability will remain vulnerable. The real test of reform will be whether it creates productive jobs and raises household incomes.

Quetta's water crisis: A slow-moving emergency

The city's growing dependence on groundwater demands a shift from short-term supply measures to scientifically informed and sustainable water management.

Waqass Yaseen



Water scarcity is becoming one of the most pressing challenges facing Balochistan, and Quetta is increasingly at the centre of this crisis. What was once largely regarded as a seasonal difficulty has gradually evolved into a persistent urban and environmental concern. Limited water availability, growing dependence on private water tankers, declining groundwater levels and the rising cost of accessing water are affecting households, agriculture and the broader urban economy. The crisis is no longer simply about the availability of water; it is about how a fragile resource is managed, consumed and protected.

Quetta's vulnerability is closely linked to its geographical setting and climatic conditions. Situated in an arid region, the city receives limited and irregular rainfall, while its water supply relies heavily on groundwater. Across much of Balochistan, rainfall is unevenly distributed, with prolonged dry periods often interrupted by short episodes of intense precipitation. Such rainfall may generate flash floods, yet much of the water flows away before it can be adequately stored or absorbed.

The challenge, therefore, is not merely the scarcity of rainfall, but also the limited capacity to capture, manage and utilise it effectively.

Climate change is adding another layer of uncertainty to this already fragile system. Changing rainfall patterns, rising temperatures and increasingly unpredictable weather conditions can influence water availability, recharge processes and demand. Although, the extent of these effects varies across locations, the broader implications for water-stressed regions such as Quetta are difficult to ignore. Planning for water security must increasingly account for climatic uncertainty rather than rely solely on historical patterns.

However, natural constraints alone do not explain the growing severity of the crisis. Population growth, unplanned urban expansion, construction activities and increasing domestic and commercial demand have placed additional pressure on groundwater resources. When groundwater extraction persistently exceeds natural recharge, aquifers gradually lose their reserves.

As water levels decline, wells may need to be deepened, pumping costs increase, and access becomes increasingly unequal. This creates a cycle in which the availability of water becomes more expensive and difficult, particularly for households with limited financial resources.

The problem is further compounded by inadequate water management. Leakage in distribution networks, inefficient irrigation practices, poorly regulated groundwater extraction and the absence of effective monitoring can contribute to unnecessary losses. In a water-stressed environment, such inefficiencies are not merely technical shortcomings; they represent a failure to protect a resource essential to public welfare and long-term development. Groundwater cannot be treated as an unlimited supply that will continue to meet demand regardless of how extensively it is extracted.

Addressing the crisis requires a scientifically informed understanding of the region's groundwater systems. Geological mapping, hydrogeological investigations, geophysical surveys, rainfall records and groundwater monitoring should form the basis of water-resource planning.

These approaches can help identify aquifer characteristics, understand groundwater flow and recharge conditions, assess resource limitations, and support decisions about where extraction should be managed more carefully. Geophysical surveys, in particular, can contribute to understanding subsurface conditions, but their findings must be interpreted alongside geological and hydrogeological evidence. The objective should not simply be to locate additional groundwater, but to understand the resource, its limitations and the conditions necessary for its sustainable management.

Rainwater harvesting also deserves greater attention as part of a broader water-management strategy. Rooftop collection systems, small reservoirs, check dams and carefully designed recharge structures may help retain rainfall that would otherwise be lost through runoff. However, such interventions must be planned according to local geological, hydrological and environmental conditions.

Not every location is suitable for groundwater recharge, and poorly planned structures may deliver limited benefits. Their success depends on sound assessment, appropriate design, maintenance and long-term monitoring.

Agriculture, too, must be part of the discussion. Efficient irrigation methods, including drip irrigation, improved irrigation scheduling and the selection of crops suited to local water availability, can help reduce unnecessary consumption. At the urban level, repairing leaking pipelines, improving water distribution, strengthening monitoring and promoting responsible household consumption are equally important.

Water conservation cannot be achieved through infrastructure alone; it also requires changes in practices, priorities and public awareness.

The responsibility for addressing this challenge cannot rest with a single institution. Government departments, municipal authorities, universities, scientists, agricultural experts and local communities must work together.

Water-management policies need to be based on reliable data, transparent planning and long-term priorities rather than temporary interventions. Groundwater extraction must be better monitored and managed, while investment in water infrastructure should be accompanied by measures that protect the resource itself.

Equally important is the social dimension of water security. Access to water is fundamental to public health, dignity and economic stability. The burden of scarcity often falls disproportionately on households that cannot afford private water supplies or the additional costs associated with declining availability. Any strategy for Quetta must therefore consider not only the sustainability of groundwater, but also the fairness and reliability of water distribution.

Quetta's water crisis should be regarded as an early warning rather than a problem to be addressed only when shortages become unbearable. Protecting groundwater, capturing rainfall where feasible, improving water efficiency and strengthening scientific planning are no longer optional measures. They are essential to the city's future.

Water is more than a natural resource; it is the foundation of life, development and environmental stability. Protecting it requires foresight, scientific understanding and collective responsibility. The choices made today will determine whether future generations inherit a city capable of sustaining life or one increasingly constrained by the depletion of its most essential resource.

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Resetting the system

Zahid Hussain

The issue of administrative restructuring is back on the political agenda. The interior minister has called for a referendum to seek public approval for the creation of new provinces, arguing that the existing system of governance has "collapsed" and needs a fundamental reset.

In recent months, this contentious issue has been discussed at seminars and other public forums, while political leaders have voiced their individual opinions.

The idea of holding a referendum on such a complex issue is apparently being floated to bypass the constitutional process. Coming from the interior minister, the proposal leaves little ambiguity about whose plan it is. Securing parliamentary approval for a referendum may not be difficult in a pliant house. But can a simple "yes" or "no" referendum resolve the intricate and politically sensitive question of creating new administrative units?

There are certainly compelling reasons to restructure the existing provinces to improve governance. But the approach now being pursued is likely to open a Pandora's box, creating chaos and further aggravating political instability. Several proposals for creating new administrative units may be circulating, but no political party has come forward with a concrete blueprint.

While the PPP has rejected any move to divide Sindh or create new administrative units in the province, the ruling PML-N has yet to adopt an official position, although individual ministers have expressed their views.

There has been an intriguing silence on the issue from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Nawaz Sharif. Not surprisingly, the smaller coalition partners, widely seen as close to the powers that be, have emerged as strong supporters of the restructuring plan, despite its contours remaining unclear.

The question of administrative restructuring cannot be divorced from the broader democratic process. Mr Naqvi, himself a product of a system whose legitimacy remains contested, argues that a referendum is part of democracy. "We all talk about democracy. Parliamentarians represent the people of Pakistan. I request all political parties to consider that most survey reports suggest that new provinces should be created for better governance," he maintains.

Good governance requires rule of law, constitutional supremacy and accountable institutions.

Indeed, an elected parliament represents the will of the people and, in a democratic system, is the supreme legislative body mandated to initiate such changes. Yet, in this case, the debate on a major constitutional issue has not begun in parliament but has instead been initiated from outside it. Has there been any meaningful debate on this critical matter in the legislature, however contested its legitimacy? The interior minister's appeal to political parties to take note of "survey reports" favouring the creation of new provinces is equally questionable. Opinion polls may offer some indication of public sentiment, but they cannot serve as the basis for constitutional change. Moreover, we know how limited in scope and reach many such surveys are in Pakistan. Has the minister also taken note of the numerous other surveys reflecting public dissatisfaction with the existing political order? More importantly, the Constitution clearly lays down the procedure for creating new provinces. The proposal for a referendum appears designed to circumvent these constitutional provisions. The Constitution also prescribes a well-defined procedure for its own amendment. There can be no shortcut to such a fundamental change.

The 18th Amendment provides a useful example. It altered almost one-third of the Constitution, but only after nearly 18 months of intensive deliberations by a multi-party parliamentary committee, which eventually forged a consensus. Why cannot the same democratic and parliamentary process be followed for an issue of such national importance, rather than seeking to resolve it through a referendum?

There is much talk about resetting a system of governance that has supposedly collapsed. There can be little disagreement that the country's political and governance structures are deeply dysfunctional and require fundamental reform if Pakistan is to move forward. It is odd, however, that the rhetoric of resetting the system comes from those who are themselves equally responsible for its present state.

Governance cannot be improved merely by creating new provinces. It requires, above all, a system founded on the rule of law, constitutional supremacy and accountable democratic institutions.

Those now championing administrative restructuring and a reset are also responsible for undermining the democratic process and curtailing judicial independence through the 26th and 27th Amendments, further eroding the Constitution's fundamental principles.

With democratic freedoms increasingly constrained, the country is moving towards authoritarianism. Creating new provinces or redrawing administrative boundaries will do little to improve governance or rescue a collapsing system in such circumstances.

Phrases such as "resetting the system" and "referendum" are familiar instruments. Military rulers in the past have used similar language to consolidate their power and legitimise authoritarian rule. This time, too, the signs are hardly reassuring. The exercise looks less like a genuine attempt at reform and more like an effort to salvage a failing system through cosmetic adjustments.

There has also been talk of a 28th Constitutional amendment. While the contours of the proposed amendment remain unclear, indications are that it could further tighten political control while incorporating administrative restructuring into a broader package of changes. This raises serious questions about the real objectives behind the proposed reforms.

There is certainly an urgent need to break with the status quo and restore the democratic process. But that is not the kind of reset Mohsin Naqvi and others appear to be advocating. Neither a proposed referendum nor an impending 28th amendment, pursued outside a genuinely democratic process, is likely to bring political stability.

Being civil to begin with

Jawed Naqvi

That Pakistan is sending a minister to attend the SCO Civilisational Dialogue in New Delhi on Nov 20 should be applauded even if it's not clear that this could be the proverbial ice breaker between the perpetually aloof neighbours. It is, however, worth hoping for.

The agenda for a civilisational dialogue should be fun for the participants, although India's decade-old Hindu revivalist government may drag its feet on the issue. Bilateral ties can still improve despite this handicap. Reports are circulating of cross-border trade also picking up — albeit discreetly — between India and Pakistan in recent days.

Renowned political analyst Trita Parsi used a phrase to describe the options for a low-key US retreat from the war-torn Gulf region, which may be relevant for India-Pakistan ties. Parsi likened Donald Trump's options for a face-saving pullout from his self-created mess to Swiss cheese. Sanctions on paper and holes inside, like the bubbles within a good Swiss cheese. The US could keep its formal sanctions on the books so the administration can publicly claim it is still maintaining pressure on Tehran. In reality, the enforcement is invisibly relaxed. Which is what might work, if nothing else does, for the South Asian neighbours — an unannounced, even surreptitious discarding of different stages of hostilities.

Behind the scenes, in Parsi's version of a workable Gulf resolution, the US gradually loosens its naval blockade and stops aggressively enforcing sanctions. This creates large "holes" in the economic pressure — much like the Swiss cheese — allowing Asian, Middle Eastern, and Gulf countries to resume trading with and investing in Iran without fear of US retaliation. At some opportune moment, even if the currently tense atmosphere results in another catastrophic flare-up, peace would be the only game in town, possibly giving credence to Trita Parsi's face-saving device.

The immediate trigger for the latest round of signalling, if it indeed adds up to some kind of undeclared rapprochement, springs from very practical and commonsensical exigencies that require all neighbours to collectively deal with the huge economic challenges dogging the world. The platform offered by the SCO has been used and abused by both sides in the past to launch verbal attacks on each other. Could the tide have turned?

The agenda at hand for Dr Musadik Malik, Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, representing Pak-is-tan at the meeting could present challenges as well as chances to resolve them. However, the lar-ger theme of a civilisational dialogue that brings all SCO members together may have to confront some predictable handwringing from India.

An unannounced, even surreptitious discarding of different stages of hostilities could work for South Asia.

The idea of civilisation imagines a palpable and unbroken link between the past and the present. In its understanding of India's past, however, the Hindutva establishment in New Delhi has manufactured demons to comply with a narrow political agenda. Its search for a golden past requires changing names of streets, and identifying, abusing and occasionally lynching the conjured enemy.

Pakistan has been through this motion in the past. That's when schoolchildren were given controversial ideas about non-Muslims. An instructive moment came when a Muslim journalist from India who accompanied Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his visit to Pakistan in 1978 went with his colleagues to meet his cousins. At the emotional meeting, they also wanted to know discreetly if K.K. Katyal, Raghu Rai and Sumit Chakravarty were Hindu. "But they are just like us," one cousin reportedly observed after being told of their Hindu identities.

Today many centres in Pakistan are exploring and retrieving old names of their neighbourhoods with a view to restoring their Hindu or other non-Muslim identity. India, with the advent of Narendra Modi, is heading in the opposite direction. Mughal rule is being airbrushed from school curriculum.

If more Indians could travel to Pakistan they would be able to see things similar to what I saw. A few days before the Lahore summit, I travelled with Sushma Swaraj and K.R. Malkani to the fabled Katas Raj Temple abutting the Lahore-Islamabad motorway. Malkani, an atheist, stood there looking amused as Swaraj dipped her hands into the sacred pond thought to have been used by the Pandavas during their exile. The caring way this temple and countless others have been preserved for Indian tourists will make more sense when people travel across the borders.

This is not to say that minorities don't face prejudice in Pakistan. Pakistani human rights activists have spoken strongly against forcible marriage of Hindu girls. The government has made some laws to deter the phenomenon but its impact is not uniformly felt.

The prevalent bigotry on the Indian side finds state support often enough as it assumes the form of homes, mosques and churches being vandalised or bulldozed accompanied by the occasional lynching of individuals from minorities. There seems to be a competition between bigots from both sides.

At the SCO dialogue, a two-day session will centre on civilisational and cultural expression, art and architecture, language and literature, and religious and philosophical traditions. Delegates will also deliberate on filing joint multinational nominations for Unesco World Heritage recognition based on centuries of shared cultural exchange. Much of this will be problematic for the current ruling dispensation in India.

In 2015, it had dubiously rejected a Unesco plan to declare Delhi a World Heritage City encompassing Old Delhi with its Mughal-era icons and British-era Lutyens' New Delhi.

To conclude, a telling story from the Maldives where Muslim zealots set fire to a Pakistani pavilion during a 2011 Saarc event and India watched the mayhem without a word of camaraderie with Pakistan. The event involved a display of national cultural treasures by Saarc states. Pakistan showcased its Buddhist heritage with tableaux of relics from Moenjodaro's Indus civilisation. Extremists set fire to the Pakistan pavilion. The SCO dialogue offers as good an occasion as any to make amends to this witless aloofness between the two.

Sindh CM interacts with over 105 participants of 28th National Security Workshop

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that Karachi remains one of the country's most progressive, inclusive and economically vibrant cities, offering employment and livelihood opportunities to people from across Pakistan.

He said improved law and order, expanding infrastructure, healthcare facilities and industrial development reflected the provincial government's performance, despite attempts by political opponents to create a negative perception of the city.

"If Karachi were underdeveloped, life difficult and employment opportunities scarce, why would people continue to settle here? This shows that Karachi is meeting people's essential needs and providing employment opportunities," he said.

The Chief Minister was speaking during an interactive session with more than 105 participants, including 25 women, of the 28th National Security Workshop, led by Major General Muhammad Raza and accompanied by eight faculty members, at the Chief Minister's House on Thursday.

Responding to questions, Mr Shah highlighted Sindh's development achievements, improved security, investment opportunities, religious harmony and youth empowerment. He said Karachi's ranking among the world's most dangerous cities had improved from sixth in 2013 to 138th, reflecting sustained efforts to improve law and order.

He cited Thar coal power generation, Shahrah-e-Bhutto, improved drainage and road infrastructure, free cancer treatment through CyberKnife and extensive cardiac treatment facilities at NICVD as major achievements.

He said international donor agencies had confidence in the provincial government and were partnering in its development initiatives.

"Donor agencies have confidence in the provincial government, which is why they are partnering with us in the province's development. Our PPP unit has successfully completed and undertaken projects that previous governments could not," he said.

Rejecting attempts to divide Sindh, the Chief Minister recalled that Hyderabad Division had been divided into four districts in 2005, creating administrative complications and political fiefdoms. He said the people of Sindh would not allow similar attempts to divide the province.

On the recent building collapse in Karachi, he termed the incident tragic and said the government had taken strict action, removing the Secretary Local Government and the Director General of the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA).

He said the construction was illegal, but the builder had obtained a stay order against the SBCA's action. Acknowledging institutional failures, he directed the Chief Secretary to conduct a comprehensive audit of the SBCA's manpower, expertise and efficiency.



Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah meets Kenyan Health Cabinet Secretary Aden Bare Duale at CM house in Karachi.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi in a group photo with a delegation of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council at the Governor House.

Governor assures support to address lawyers' issues

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday assured the legal fraternity of his full support in resolving their professional issues.

He said this during a meeting with a delegation of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council at the Governor House.

Adviser to the Governor on Law Amir Javed was also present on the occasion. The delegation was led by Vice Chairman of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council Muhammad Rafiq Mohmand, member Babar Yousafzai and other office-bearers of the council.

During the meeting, the delegation apprised the Governor of key issues facing the legal community, including the establishment of an Endowment Fund for lawyers, construction of a Lawyers' Academy and other professional matters.

The Governor assured the delegation that he would play his role and extend every possible cooperation for the resolution of lawyers' issues. He also sought a report from the Communication and Works (C&W) Department regarding the construction of the Peshawar High Court Parking Plaza.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said the legal fraternity was playing a vital role in ensuring the dispensation of justice in society. He said lawyers had a significant responsibility in facilitating the timely delivery of justice to the public and reiterated that all possible efforts would be made to address the issues faced by the legal community.

Punjab govt issues important update regarding E-Bike balloting process

LAHORE (INP): The Punjab government has issued an important update regarding the balloting process for the second phase of the Chief Minister Punjab E-Bike Scheme, saying that the selection process for students will be held soon.

In a statement shared by the Punjab Transport and Mass Transit Department, the government renewed hopes among thousands of students awaiting the results of their applications to determine whether they will receive an electric bike under the scheme.

The provincial government plans to distribute 100,000 electric bikes among students through a computerised balloting process.

More than 600,000 completed applications have reportedly been received, making the selection process highly competitive.

PA speaker highlights

Importance of Punjabi language, culture and historical identity

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Assembly (PA) Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan has said that the Punjabi language, culture and identity are important foundations of the region's strength and historical character.

He said this while addressing the 4th Annual International Punjabi Conference here on Friday. He said that understanding Punjab's contemporary identity required a proper study of its history, language and cultural heritage.

"Change is a natural part of time, but preserving one's identity and cultural roots throughout this process is equally important," he added.

Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad said that political change and identity politics were two distinct subjects and should not be confused with each other. He added that Punjabi poetry had consistently reflected resistance against deprivation and social injustice.

"Baba Bulleh Shah challenged the class system through his poetry and highlighted the rights of ordinary people.

Similarly, Shakir Shujaabadi raised his voice against social divisions and deprivation through his poetry," he said.

Two PTI leaders granted bail in Jinnah House attack case

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday granted post-arrest bail to two Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, Haji Muhammad Fayyaz and Saeed Lodhi, in the Jinnah House attack case.

ATC Judge Manzer Ali Gill announced the verdict while allowing the bail petitions filed by the two accused through their counsel, Advocate Yousaf Wain.

The court directed the accused to furnish surety bonds worth Rs200,000 each to secure their release from jail.



Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) activists protest alleged house arrest of Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman and detention of party workers at Karachi press club.

Governor Sindh inaugurates "Captured Moments" Photography Exhibition

KARACHI (APP): Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi organised a photography exhibition titled "Captured Moments", featuring the works of renowned photographer Abid S. Masti Khan, at Ahmed Pervez Art Gallery. Governor Sindh Syed Nihal Hashmi, the chief guest, inaugurated the exhibition alongside President Arts Council Muhammad Ahmed Shah.

Secretary Arts Council Ejaz Farooqi, renowned artist Shahid Rassam, photographer Abid S. Masti Khan and other personalities from the world of art and culture were also present.

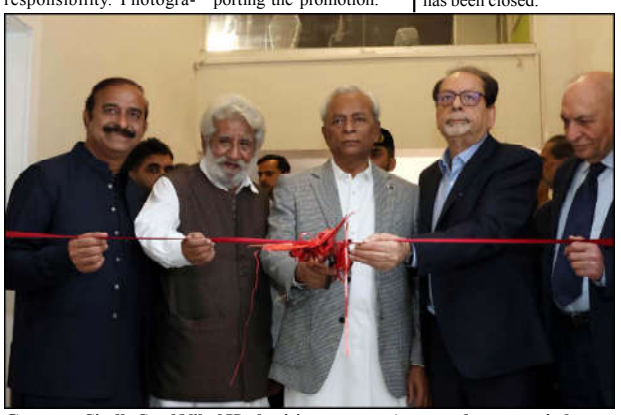
The exhibition features Abid S. Masti Khan's photographs of snow-covered mountains in the northern areas, natural coastlines of Sindh and Balochistan, and other scenic landscapes. It will remain open to the public on 28 November, from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, at Ahmed Pervez Art Gallery, Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Governor Sindh Syed Nihal Hashmi has said that Pakistan's natural beauty, historical landmarks and cultural heritage are integral to the country's national identity, and their preservation and promotion are a collective responsibility. Photography is not merely an art of capturing images but also a means of preserving beautiful and meaningful moments and projecting Pakistan's positive and peaceful image to the world.

The Governor Sindh congratulated Abid S. Masti Khan on his artistic contributions and appreciated his efforts in capturing Pakistan's natural beauty through his camera. The exhibition reflects the country's geographical diversity and scenic splendour, ranging from the snow-covered mountains of the northern areas to the beautiful coastal landscapes of Sindh and Balochistan.

Governor Sindh Syed Nehal Hashmi said that the towering mountains of the northern areas and the coastal regions of Sindh and Balochistan are valuable national assets that must be protected. He emphasised that ancient historical sites also deserve special attention and preservation.

Appreciating the role of Arts Council Karachi in promoting art and cultural activities, he said that such institutions provide young people with opportunities to showcase their creative talents while promoting peace, tolerance and positive thinking in society. He assured that Governor House would continue supporting the promotion.



Governor Sindh, Syed Nihal Hashmi, inaugurates 'captured moments' photography exhibition by Abid S. Masti Khan at Ahmed Pervez art gallery in Karachi.

Azma Bukhari says: Maryam Nawaz officially invited for Nobel Prize

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari dismissed reports about Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's visit to Hong Kong, claiming that the Punjab chief minister had been officially invited for the Nobel Prize.

Sharing a screenshot of a journalist's post on X, Bukhari said she had heard that Tariq Aziz had deleted his false report. She said it was regrettable that reports were spread without verification.

Bukhari clarified that the aircraft used by Maryam Nawaz does not require special permission and that she is not travelling to Hong Kong with any family members. She added that the chief minister's trip is not private.

Bukhari claimed that this was the first time a chief minister had been officially invited for the Nobel Prize, adding that false reports would not affect the matter.

She also said that, under the country's established procedure, the Pakistan Air Force is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the aircraft, as it is for other aircraft.

KU enhances academic infrastructure with new smart academic hall

KARACHI (APP): Vice Chancellor, University of Karachi Professor Dr Wasim Qazi inaugurated the Irfan Ul Haq and Anisa Khatoon Smart Academic Hall, a modern teaching and learning facility equipped with contemporary educational resources, at the Department of Economics, on Friday.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, KU VC Professor Dr Wasim Qazi said that education remains the most effective means of overcoming intellectual, moral, social and economic deprivation. He emphasized that a conscious, self-reliant and progressive society can only be built by providing quality education to the younger generation.

He appreciated Azfar Ahmed and his family for contributing the state-of-the-art smart academic hall to the Department of Economics.

He described the initiative as a commendable example of carrying forward the values and legacy of one's parents through meaningful actions. He noted that individuals are a continuation of their parents' hard work, sacrifices and upbringing, while the values imparted by them form the foundation of character and personality.

Overseas Pakistanis, Kashmiris, backbone of national economy

MIRPUR (APP): A prestigious reception on Friday was hosted in honour of the Pakistani and Kashmiri communities at Quaid-e-Azam Hall in Birmingham, UK, by prominent British Pakistani businessman and former Presidential Adviser on Overseas Pakistanis in the UK, Muhammad Aslam Mughalit was officially said.

Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Tourism Sardar Yasir Ilyas was the chief guest, while Chairman of the Pakistan Overseas Foundation Syed Qamar Raza, along with a large number of distinguished members of the Pakistani and Kashmiri communities, business personalities, social and political leaders and journalists from across the UK, attended the event, a message reaching and released to the media here on Friday.

Hosts Muhammad Aslam Mughal and Aamir Aslam Mughal warmly welcomed the guests upon their arrival at Quaid-e-Azam Hall, the message said.

The venue was beautifully decorated with national flags, while participants exchanged greetings and demonstrated a strong spirit of unity and solidarity within the community.

Addressing the gathering.

CM GB issues directives for establishment of Sasta Bazaars across all districts of the region

GILGIT (APP): Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan Amjad Hussain has issued directives for the establishment of Sasta Bazaars (subsidized markets) across all districts of the region to provide quality daily essential commodities to the public at affordable and fair prices. He instructed all Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners to formulate and submit actionable recommendations for setting up these markets in their respective districts within the next three days.

The chief minister issued these directives while chairing a high-level meeting with all Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners here Friday.

He announced that in the first phase, Sasta Bazaars would be established at the divisional headquarters in Gilgit, Skardu, and Chilas, after which the initiative would be expanded to all remaining districts in a phased manner.

Highlighting the objectives of the initiative, Chief Minister Amjad Hussain stated that the primary aim of the Sasta Bazaars was to offer quality essential items under one roof at reasonable rates, thereby easing shopping difficulties for citizens while simultaneously reducing traffic congestion.

He directed the administrative heads to identify suitable locations for the markets, noting that the provincial government will construct temporary infrastructure at these sites to hand over to interested traders. He emphasized that public accessibility must be a top priority when selecting locations so that the maximum number of citizens can benefit from the facility.

Fog forces closure of several Motorway sections

LAHORE (INP): Several sections of motorways have been closed to traffic due to dense fog, affecting commuters and motorists in different parts of the country.

According to details, the M-2 Motorway has been closed from Lahore to Kot Momin. Traffic has also been suspended on the Lahore-Sialkot Motorway, while the M-4 section from Faisalabad to Pindi Bhattian has been closed.



Damaged pedestrian bridge in Mauripur area highlights negligence of concerned authorities in Karachi.

Governor inaugurates modern educational Facilities at two Dhernal schools, Attock

ATTOCK (APP): Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan on Friday inaugurated modern educational facilities at Government Boys High School and Government Girls High School in Dhernal, Attock, established with the support of The Church of Jesus Christ to improve the learning environment in rural areas. The newly provided facilities include examination centres, modern furniture, 10 KVA solar power systems, computer laboratories and water coolers, aimed at improving access to quality education and providing students with essential amenities. Mark Birmingham, Mrs Shelly Birmingham of the international non-governmental organisation (INGO), and Chief Executive Officer of the District Education Authority Attock Dr Muhammad Azhar were also present on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, the governor highlighted the role of education in eliminating illiteracy and addressing rural backwardness. He urged parents to enrol their children in schools, stressing that education was essential for social development and equipping younger generations with the skills and knowledge needed for a better future. Dr Muhammad Azhar also encouraged parents to send their children to government schools and cooperate with teachers in their education and upbringing. Appreciating the governor's efforts to promote education and healthcare, he thanked The Church of Jesus Christ for supporting public-sector institutions and reaffirmed the education authority's commitment to improving facilities.



Commuters face traffic disruptions due to fallen tree on M.A Jinnah Road in Karachi, urging attention from concerned authorities.

Lok Mela 2026 opens with grand celebration of Pakistan's rich cultural diversity

ISLAMABAD (APP): A vibrant celebration of Pakistan's cultural diversity, folk traditions and indigenous craftsmanship opened in Islamabad on Friday, bringing together hundreds of artisans and artists from across the country at Lok Mela 2026, inaugurated by Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi.

With 522 stalls and around 1,500 artisans and artists participating over 10 days, the festival at the National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) offers a national platform for showcasing the country's rich cultural heritage, traditional skills, regional identities, folk music, dance and indigenous crafts.

Held under the theme "Naqoosh-e-Watan: Our Heritage, Our Future," the festival features representation from Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, alongside participants from friendly countries.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Federal Minister Aurangzeb Khan Khichi described Lok Mela as an expression of Pakistan's cultural identity and national cohesion, saying it provided artisans and artists with valuable opportunities to demonstrate their talent and promote traditional skills.

PM directs simplification of SME loan procedures to improve access to finance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the relevant authorities to simplify loan procedures for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and facilitate their access to finance to boost economic activity, generate employment and promote entrepreneurship.

Chairing a high-level meeting on improving access to credit for the SME sector, the prime minister directed that SMEs' export data available through the Pakistan Single Window, as well as their participation in supply chains through Exim Insurance and digital invoicing, be considered as alternative collateral for securing bank loans.

He also called for the cash flow of SMEs to be considered an alternative criterion for assessing their eligibility for financing and directed a review of the prudential regulations governing bank lending to the sector.

The prime minister further instructed that banks be provided access to relevant data held by government institutions to speed up the loan disbursement process.

Emphasising the need for comprehensive banking support, he said banks should extend assistance to SMEs not only through loans but also by facilitating the issuance of Letters of Credit (LCs) and bank guarantees.

He added that banks achieving their designated SME lending targets would be encouraged and rewarded. The meeting was informed that banks were taking steps to strengthen their institutional capacity to accelerate lending to SMEs.

The banks expressed their commitment to providing Rs2,000 billion in loans to SMEs by June 2028 and increasing the number of SME borrowers to 775,000.

The target includes the disbursement of Rs886 billion in new loans and the provision of financial facilities to 449,000 new SME borrowers.

The prime minister observed that SMEs were the backbone of the country's economy and said facilitating the sector would help expand economic activity, create employment opportunities and promote entrepreneurship.

He also stressed the need to provide SMEs with effective guidance and support in accessing financial resources.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding SME Financing.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Cheema in meeting with Mr. Imad N. Fakhoury, Regional Vice President for the Middle East and Central Asia at the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

Pakistan, IFC discuss enhanced cooperation in priority sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Senator Ahad Khan Cheema here on Friday met Regional Vice President for the Middle East and Central Asia at the International Finance Corporation (IFC), Imad N. Fakhoury to discuss ways to further strengthen cooperation between Pakistan and IFC.

According to press release issued by Economic Affairs Ministry, Cheema while welcoming Fakhoury on his first visit to Pakistan in his current capacity, appreciated the significant expansion of IFC's portfolio in Pakistan and its growing engagement with the government.

He expressed satisfaction with the recent momentum in engagement and emphasized the importance of building on it to mobilize greater private investment in support of Pakistan's development priorities. The discussions covered a range of priority areas, including housing finance, public-private partnerships, privatization of distribution companies (DISCOs), agriculture and access to finance for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The Minister highlighted the importance of IFC's support in strengthening long-term housing finance, expanding access to affordable housing and facilitating financing for developers.

He appreciated IFC's engagement with the Public-Private Partnership Authority (P3A) on developing a bankable Federal PPP pipeline and strengthening the regulatory framework. Discussions also covered IFC's support for the privatization of DISCOs, including assistance with the privatization process and post-privatization arrangements. Cooperation in agriculture, including modern storage, value-chain financing and electronic warehouse receipts, was also discussed, with a focus on improving farmers' access to finance.

The Minister further highlighted the importance of expanding access to finance for MSMEs, while ensuring that financing delivers tangible benefits for businesses and supports employment generation.

Cheema reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening the enabling environment for private-sector investment and assured IFC of the continued support and facilitation in advancing its role in Pakistan's development.

ADB approves $468 million financing for resilient agriculture in Pakistan's provinces

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Friday approved two loans totaling $468 million to improve water and agriculture management in Pakistan's provinces, strengthening community resilience to shocks related to the changing climate, boosting rural livelihoods, and enhancing food security for about 728,000 people. A $208 million concessional loan for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Resilient Irrigated Agriculture Livelihoods Development Project will help scale up agricultural productivity and increase incomes for smallholder farmers in Nowshera, Swabi, and Upper Chitral districts through resilient irrigation systems and modern agricultural technologies, said ADB press release issued here.

Additionally, the project will provide livelihoods training for women, while supporting measures to increase the role of women in water governance.

A $260 million concessional loan for the Integrated Hill Torrent Management Project will help mitigate flash flood risks and enhance floodwater harvesting in hilly areas of Punjab.

"These projects will significantly contribute to strengthening food security, while responding to growing environmental pressures and the impacts of the changing climate," said ADB Country Director for Pakistan Emma Fan.

"Resilient water management infrastructure and sustainable farming practices are vital for the economic potential of rural communities in these two provinces," Emma added.

The project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will construct and rehabilitate irrigation systems to be more resilient to disasters. It will introduce modern water management practices, provide capacity-building activities for farmers, and promote smart agricultural technologies.

The project in Punjab will bolster flood resilience by building critical water management infrastructure for water retention, drainage, and flood protection.

It will also promote sustainable agricultural practices including spate irrigation, as well as nature-based solutions that use floodwater as a resource to improve community water access, recharge aquifers, and restore ecosystems.

The projects will not only safeguard communities from the adverse impacts of natural hazards, advance provincial disaster preparedness, but also increase agricultural yields, create more jobs, and provide a reliable water source for agriculture, community consumption, and ecosystem restoration.

Privatisation of public sector entities to improve efficiency: Muhammad Ali

KARACHI (APP): The Advisor to Prime Minister on Privatisation and Chairman of the Privatisation Commission Muhammad Ali, has said that the primary objective of privatisation is to improve the efficiency of public sector entities, reduce financial losses, ensure the effective utilisation of national resources and ease the financial burden on the national exchequer.

He expressed these views during his visit to Korangi Association of Trade and Industries (KATI).

He said the government was committed to ensuring a transparent, merit-based and nationally beneficial privatisation process, while safeguarding the productive capacity of institutions, the legitimate rights of employees and the services provided to the public.

He informed that work was underway on 17 major privatisation projects, including nine power distribution companies, three major airports, financial institutions and the insurance sector. He said the privatisation of PIA and First Women Bank demonstrated that significant economic objectives could be achieved through the cooperation of all relevant stakeholders.

The meeting was attended by KATI President Sheikh Umer Rehan, Deputy Patron-in-Chief Zubair Chhaya, Senior Vice President Farrukh Qandhari, Vice President Nasir Sheikh, former chairmen Syed Johar Qandhari, Ehteshamuddin, Rehan Javed and Bashir Jan Muhammad, former NEPRA Chairman Tauseef H. Farooqi, along with industrialists and association members. Muhammad Ali said that the due diligence process for the privatisation of FESCO, GEPCO and IESCO was underway, with bidding expected in the first quarter of 2027. The privatisation of HESCO and SEPCO would also be taken up in subsequent phases.

Chinese firm signs $50 miln deal for Pak donkey products

ISLAMABAD (INP): A US$50 million annual purchase agreement for Pakistani donkey meat, hides and bones was signed between Hangeng and Zhongchen International at the FoodAg Pakistan 2026 exhibition.

Hangeng acknowledged the support of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and the Government of Pakistan in facilitating efforts to bring Pakistani products from Gwadar to the Chinese market, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday.

The agreement was concluded during the fourth edition of FoodAg Pakistan 2026, held from November 23–26 at the Expo Centre Karachi.

Organised by TDAP under the theme "Harvesting Innovation, Cultivating Sustainability," the four-day exhibition brought together 400 Pakistani exhibitors and around 820 international delegates from 72 countries.

Fair competition vital for transparent markets: Ikram

KARACHI (APP): Director General (Market Intelligence Unit) of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), Dr Ikram ul Haq said that fair competition is the foundation of every vibrant and transparent market.

In a competitive environment, businesses strive to improve the quality of their products, reduce prices and provide better services to consumers, resulting in greater efficiency, transparency and innovation across the market.

He mentioned that companies producing substandard products gradually lose their position in the market, while businesses charging unnecessarily high prices are compelled by competition to reassess their pricing strategies. Ultimately, consumers benefit directly through access to quality products at reasonable prices and a wider range of choices.

He expressed these views while addressing an awareness session on competition laws organized by the School of Law, and Office of the Students' Adviser of the University of Karachi, in collaboration with the Competition Commission of Pakistan at the KU's Jinnah Auditorium located at the Dr. A.Q. Khan Institute of Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering, on Friday.

Explaining the role and powers of the Competition Commission of Pakistan, Dr Ikram said that the Commission is a quasi-judicial law enforcement body vested with the authority to conduct hearings, impose penalties and issue orders. In addition, it performs a quasi-regulatory role by reviewing the policies and actions of other regulatory institutions from the perspective of competition law.

He said that the Commission also plays an important role in matters relating to various government and regulatory bodies.

He mentioned that whenever a policy, regulation or proposed legislation is likely to adversely affect market competition or consumer interests, the Commission issues policy notes to the relevant institutions to help prevent potential negative consequences in a timely manner.

Dr Ikram stated that the primary objective of the Competition Commission of Pakistan is to promote healthy competition in the market and prevent anti-competitive practices.



Pakistan sugar mills association chairman Asim Ghani Usman addresses media in Lahore.

SBP injects over Rs 651bln to maintain liquidity in the market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), on Friday, injected Rs 651.8 billion through Reverse Repo Purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operations (OMO) for maintaining liquidity in the market.

The central bank conducted the Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) for 7 and 14-day tenors on November 27, 2026, and injected Rs 375.9 billion against 10 quotes while other Rs 275.9 billion were injected through Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based OMO.

The central bank, for the Reverse Repo Purchase of 14-day tenor, received 8 bids cumulatively offering Rs 970.7 billion at the rate of return ranging between 12.06% to 12.09%. The SBP accepted Rs 360 billion against 7 quotes at 12.07% rate of return. The total amount offered at 12.07% was Rs 751 billion, out of which SBP accepted Rs 290 billion on a pro rata basis.

Moreover, the SBP also received 3 bids for the 7-day tenor, cumulatively offering Rs 15.9 billion at the rate of return ranging between 12.04% to 12.07 %. The SBP accepted all the 3 quotes with the entire amount at 12.04% rate of return.

Meanwhile, SBP also conducted Shariah Compliant Mudarabah-based Open Market Operation for the 7 and 14-day tenors. The central bank received 4 bids for the 7-day tenor, offering Rs 93.9 billion at the rate of return ranging between 12.06% to 12.07%. SBP accepted all the 4 quotes with the entire amount at 12.06% rate of return.

The central bank, for the 14-day tenor, received 6 quotes offering Rs 257.8 billion at rate of return ranging between 12.06% to 12.07%. SBP accepted an amount of Rs 182 billion against the 6 quotes at 12.06% rate of return.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity remained active at the port where five ships namely, BSG Barbados, Eraclea, Pacific Era, Pangeo and Star Raptor scheduled to load/offload Containers, Cement, Palm oil and Coal, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Liquid Terminal, HFP&S Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Thursday.

Meanwhile six more ships scheduled to load/offload Rice, Coal, Palm oil, LNG and LPG also arrived at outer anchorage of Port Qasim during last 24 hours.

A total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them, a container vessel BSG Barbados is expected to sail on today afternoon.

Cargo throughput of 181,149 tonnes, comprising 123,996 tonnes imports cargo and 57,153 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 3,600 Containers (imports 2,500 TEUs and exports 1,100 TEUs) was handled at the Port, during the last 24 hours.

A total of 25 ships are at outer anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them.

Chinese were invited to invest in agriculture and food processing

BEIJING (INP) Sindh province is seeking Chinese investment in food processing, agricultural machinery, seed production and cold storage facilities to diversify farming and improve the use of underproductive land. Sindh Agriculture Minister Sardar Muhammad Bakhsh Khan Mahar invited Chinese investors to explore joint ventures at a dinner hosted by International Multi Group of Companies (IMGC) for a Chinese delegation in Karachi, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday.

Mahar said Chinese buyers were already purchasing rice and seeds from Pakistan, while Sindh was exploring ways to expand castor bean cultivation.

He said the provincial agriculture department had initiated a castor cultivation programme and IMGC had expressed willingness to support additional planting. Mahar said waterlogging and salinity limited the suitability of some agricultural land for conventional crops. He said commercially viable alternative crops could help farmers diversify their incomes and improve land use.

Gold prices surge by Rs11,500 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The prices of gold witnessed a sharp increase in the local market on Friday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola surging by Rs11,500 to settle at Rs390,136, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association.

Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold increased by Rs9,859 to Rs334,478, while 10 grams of 22-karat gold rose by Rs9,037 to Rs306,615.

In the international market, the price of gold increased by $115 to $3,676 per ounce, the association reported.



HYDERABAD: Farmers busy harvesting spinach at a field.

Digital Balochistan Expo 2026 to showcase province's progress in digital development

QUETTA (APP): Vice Chairman of the Balochistan Board of Investment and Trade (BBoIT), Bilal Khan Kakar, has said that the upcoming Digital Balochistan Expo 2026 represents a significant step towards realizing Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti's vision of modernising public services and governance through digital reforms and technology-driven solutions.

Speaking during a meeting held to review preparations for the expo, Bilal Khan Kakar said the initiative aims to align the province's service delivery systems and government operations with the demands of the digital age. The meeting was attended by BBoIT Chief Executive Officer Abdul Manaan and other relevant officials, who briefed participants on organisational arrangements, planned activities, and progress in preparations for the event.

Bilal Kakar said that the expo would be organised in accordance with modern and international standards to effectively showcase advancements in digital technology, innovation, and the digitalisation of public services across Balochistan. He said the event would provide a platform for introducing modern digital solutions designed to enhance institutional efficiency, strengthen public sector capacity, and improve service delivery for citizens.

"The Digital Balochistan Expo will highlight the province's growing focus on technology and innovation while creating opportunities to accelerate digital transformation in government institutions," he said.

The Vice Chairman noted that the recently held Balochistan Investment and Trade Expo (BITE 2026) was a historic success.



QUETTA: Vice Chairman BBoIT Bilal Khan Kakar presides over the meeting to review preparation of Digital Balochistan Expo.

PSX turns bearish, loses over 396 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bearish trend on Friday, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index losing 396.79 points, a negative change of 0.22 percent, to close at 177,663.90 points against 178,060.69 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 717.779 million shares, compared to 618.812 million shares traded in the previous session. The traded value of the ready market stood at Rs19.515 billion, up from Rs18.204 billion a day earlier.

Meanwhile, total market capitalisation decreased to Rs19.299 trillion from Rs19.363 trillion recorded in the previous session.

Out of 495 companies that traded in the ready market, 156 posted gains, 309 suffered losses, while 30 remained unchanged.

Pervez Ahmed Co led the volume chart with 83.811 million shares, followed by Yousuf Weaving with 57.716 million shares and Agha Steel Industries with 52.734 million shares.

Among the top gainers in the ready market, Tandlianwala Sugar Mills Limited surged by Rs48.41 to close at Rs532.55, while The Premier Sugar Mills advanced by Rs36.32 to settle at Rs486.33. On the losing side, Sitara Chemical Industries Limited declined by Rs56.05 to close at Rs517.62, while Pakistan National Shipping Corporation fell by Rs29.89 to Rs620.51.

Trump backs Iraqi leader's efforts to assert more state authority

Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: United States President Donald Trump on Friday backed the Iraqi leader's drive to assert state control, including stopping the smuggling of Iraqi oil, moves that put Baghdad in direct confrontation with Iran's militia allies and Kurdish authorities.

"We support Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi's efforts to assert state authority throughout Iraq, stop the smuggling of Iraqi oil, end corruption, and bring all weapons under the exclusive control of the state," Trump said in a Truth Social post.

The post appeared shortly after Iraqi government spokesman Haider al-Aboudi said Baghdad considered crude oil exports that bypass state oil marketer SOMO to be smuggling as the proceeds do not reach the state treasury, the state news agency reported.

Speaking to the Iraqi state news agency, Aboudi added that Iraq lost an estimated $100 billion to oil smuggling through its Kurdistan region from 2008 to 2025. It was unclear how the government calculated the figure.

Iraq is hoping to attract wide-scale foreign investment in its often struggling economy.

Iraq on Thursday closed two border crossings in the Kurdistan region, one with Syria and one with Iran, after Zaidi ordered federal authorities to take control of crossings run by the semi-autonomous regional government.

Thousands of Kurds protested on Thursday against Zaidi's moves to put oilfields under federal control and deploy federal troops along the region's international borders.

The moves against the Kurds, just a week after Zaidi ordered a showdown against a heavily-armed militia aligned with Iran, Kataib Hezbollah, put Zaidi in confrontation with two major factions in a country where armed groups have amassed power over decades of ethno-sectarian civil war. Both crackdowns have been linked to alleged oil-smuggling rings.

Iraq's highest court ruled on Wednesday that Baghdad can deploy federal forces along all international borders including in the Kurdistan region.

The court decision appears to be a victory for Zaidi, a 41-year-old multimillionaire businessman and political novice who came to power in a compromise just six months ago. But political analysts say it may yet prove difficult to implement measures that challenge entrenched interests.



Turkish fans display a banner with Palestine and Turkish flags during the game in Georgia.



European Council President Antonio Costa, center, and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen address a media conference at the EU summit in Brussels.

Famine expect to rise due to global conflict, El Nino, warns UN

Monitoring Desk

UNITED NATION: Hunger set to worsen significantly in 16 global hotspots over the coming six months, mainly due to armed conflict and extreme climate events, two United Nations agencies said in a new report.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) warned on Friday that Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, northern Nigeria and Yemen faced the gravest threats of famine, driven by violence, displacement, economic hardship and extreme weather, including the El Nino phenomenon.

Listings in the report, released twice a year through the Global Network Against Food Crises, have risen from 13 hotspots in June, with Chad, Uganda and parts of both Southern Africa and Central America added, while Lebanon was removed.

Armed conflict and violence were driving hunger in 12 of the 16 hotspots, the report said, as soaring food, energy and transport costs were eroding people's ability to feed themselves.

El Nino, which is set to intensify to exceptional levels in the coming months according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), is a major driver behind three of the four newly identified hotspots: Southern Africa, the Central American Dry Corridor and northeastern Uganda.

Covering December 2026 to May 2027, the agencies warned that shrinking humanitarian funding was affecting efforts to avert catastrophe.

In the five countries most at risk, all repeatedly cited on the hotspot list since 2022, humanitarian assistance has declined by nearly two-thirds over the 2022-2025 period, from $5.1bn to $2bn.

"While conflict, economic shocks, climate extremes and access constraints have remained the primary drivers of these crises.

Erdogan completes Turkiye's ratification of Makkah defence pact

Monitoring Desk

ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has formally approved the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement (MJDA) with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, the country's Official Gazette said on Friday, completing Turkiye's ratification process following parliamentary approval earlier this month.

The three countries signed a joint defence agreement in Makkah in August amid escalating concerns over the US-Israeli war against Iran and are scheduled to hold a meeting in Islamabad on Friday and Saturday.

Turkiye's parliament ratified the agreement on November 5, clearing the way for Ankara to send military support to Riyadh amid attacks by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi militants against the kingdom. Under the agreement, an attack on one party constitutes an attack on all.

A ruling party lawmaker told Reuters last month that Turkiye would also submit to parliament a mandate allowing military personnel to be deployed to Saudi Arabia under the pact.

Turkiye has NATO's second-largest military. Saudi Arabia is home to Islam's holiest sites and is also one of the world's top oil exporters, while Pakistan is the only nuclear-armed Muslim country.

The upcoming Islamabad meeting will be the third session of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee established under the agreement to oversee its implementation.

During the committee's first meeting in Istanbul on August 31, the three countries agreed to establish a permanent secretariat in Riyadh, with Pakistan assuming its leadership for an initial three-year term. At an emergency meeting in Riyadh on October 5, the three countries agreed to make arrangements for the deployment of military forces in Saudi Arabia in accordance with their respective national laws. Retired Lieutenant General Nauman Mahmood was also appointed as the alliance's first secretary general.



Reportedly shows the aftermath of a Saudi air strike on a power station in the Red Sea coastal city of Mocha in Taiz governorate.

Zelensky defends attacks on Russian ships outside combat zone

Monitoring Desk

KYIV: Ukraine coordinates with countries that may be affected before attacks on Russian ships in other parts of the world, President Volodymyr Zelensky said in an interview published on Friday.

The Ukrainian armed forces have never attacked without coordinating with other partners, he said in an interview with the British broadcaster BBC. He said there were diplomatic contacts.

Ukraine recently sank the Russian warship Merkury with sea drones in the Libyan Mediterranean port of Benghazi, raising questions under international law.Italy criticized the attack as a violation of the sovereignty of the North African country, which has been weakened by civil war.

Zelensky, however, justified operations outside the actual combat zone. He called the Merkury an "absolutely fair goal."

He said Ukraine could not allow Russian ships to attack or transport weapons and similar items, according to BBC News Ukraine's account of the interview published in Ukrainian.The Ukrainian president accused Russia of trying to divide the country by attacking bridges over the Dnipro River. He said the capital, Kiev, faced a harsh winter. Ukraine would defend the city by all means.

"We need our capital. Without a capital, you don't have a country," he said.Zelensky said the throttling of Starshield satellite internet had been partly lifted. It works at full speed over Ukrainian-controlled territory, but not in Russian-occupied areas, where Ukraine could not shoot down incoming Russian jet drones.

Serbia's Student List nominates chemistry professor for president

Monitoring Desk

SERBIA: Serbia's Student List, which won last month's parliamentary elections, said on Friday it had nominated chemistry professor Radomir Saièiæ as its candidate for the presidential election on December 27.

Saièiæ, 65, is a member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts and holds a seat in the newly elected parliament as a representative of the Student List.

The movement, which emerged from anti-corruption protests that swept the country following the deadly 2024 collapse of a train station canopy in the city of Novi Sad, has an outright majority in parliament.Speaking at a televised press conference in Belgrade, Saièiæ said the movement must now prioritize strengthening the rule of law and fighting corruption.

IRGC says tanker hit mine, exploded in Strait of Hormuz

Monitoring Desk

TEHRAN: A tanker hit a mine and exploded in the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said on Friday, according to Al Jazeera. Earlier, the IRGC claimed that its advanced air defence system fired warning shots at a US F-16 fighter jet near Hengam Island in the Gulf, forcing it to retreat.

In a statement carried by state broadcaster IRIB, the IRGC said the jet approached Iranian airspace southeast of the island while escorting and providing air cover for vessels it described as "violating" maritime rules, before making a sharp manoeuvre and turning away following the air defence response. "Any attempt to circumvent the regulations governing the control and management of maritime traffic in the Strait of Hormuz is unacceptable," it said, vowing to give a "decisive defensive" response in case of "repeated violations" by US military aircraft.There was no immediate response from American officials regarding the IRGC statement. A tanker was hit by an explosion after striking a mine while attempting to cross the Strait of Hormuz through what the Revolutionary Guards' navy called an unauthorised route, the Guards said in a statement carried by the state broadcaster Iran's Navy announced on Friday that its forces had recovered two Iranian oil tankers that it said were "stolen" by the US military.

Ex-Kenyan governor jailed for 25 years over pregnant girlfriend's murder

Monitoring Desk

KENYA: A former Kenyan governor has been jailed for 25 years for the murder of a university student who was seven months pregnant with his child.

The High Court on Friday sentenced Zacharia Okoth Obado, the former governor of Migori County, along with two former aides, over the 2018 killing of Sharon Belyne Otieno. The investigation established that an "intimate relationship" had existed between Obado and Otieno, which "subsequently led to a pregnancy with the deceased that the governor was unhappy about".Both Obado and Otieno's legal teams said they would appeal.

Saudi strike kills '11 civilians' in Yemen's Taiz: Houthi media

Monitoring Desk

YEMEN: Saudi air strikes have killed 11 civilians in Yemen's Taiz governorate, according to news media affiliated with the Houthi armed group.

The attack reported on Friday hit the city of al-Turbah, located south of the provincial capital, Taiz.

The alleged strike comes as hostilities in Yemen continue between the Iran-backed rebel Houthi group and government forces backed by Saudi Arabia.

A local source said that a residential building was struck and that "most" of the victims were children, according to the media report.

Rescue teams retrieved eight bodies from the site, the report said. Three people remain missing beneath the rubble.

Al Jazeera could not independently verify the reports. The Saudi Arabia-led coalition supporting the internationally-recognised Yemen government did not immediately comment.

The coalition said later on Friday that it had destroyed a drone launched by the Houthis toward Saudi Arabia's Riyadh region.Yemen has been racked by violence since the Iran-backed Houthis seized the capital, Sanaa, and other parts of the country in 2014, prompting Saudi Arabia to lead a military coalition in support of the internationally recognised government in March 2015.

Fighting between Yemeni government forces and the Houthis resumed in July, as the United States' war on Iran escalated hostilities and the collapse of a 2022 ceasefire.

Some 13,343 people have been killed or injured since August, according to the World Health Organization, while the country is sliding into a humanitarian crisis.The Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme said on Friday that Yemen is among conflict hotspots that face severe food insecurity.



Women and children gather at a water collection point. The scene was documented during a Caritas press trip highlighting ongoing humanitarian and resource challenges in the region.

Iraq puts its Chinese drones back into action against Islamic state

Monitoring Desk

BAGHDAD: Iraq used its Chinese-made CH-5 medium-altitude long-endurance reconnaissance and strike drones for two airstrikes against suspected "terrorist elements" in the country's western Anbar province on Wednesday. While it wasn't the first strike Iraq executed using its new CH-5 drones, it was yet another indication that Baghdad's Chinese drones are serving an active role in its fight against Islamic State remnants years after their utility was brought into question.

"Based on accurate intelligence information from the Military Intelligence Directorate, and in coordination and continuous follow-up with the Center for Surveillance and Air Monitoring in the General Command of the Armed Forces, two successful strikes were carried out today, Wednesday," Iraq's Security Media Cell announced Wednesday in an official Facebook post. The post clarified that the strikes were executed using CH-5 aircraft belonging to the Iraqi Army Aviation Command, IAAC, which targeted a covered vehicle of "terrorist elements in the Suhoul Rawa area".

UN warns that El Niño could exacerbate hunger crises

Monitoring Desk

UNITED NATION: The World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on Friday warned of the impact of the El Niño weather pattern on the food situation in Africa and Central America.

A report published by the UN organizations lists 16 hunger hotspots - up from 13 in June. It is forecast that by March 2027, up to 3 million people in Zimbabwe, 2.6 million in Malawi and 1.8 million in Mozambique will be affected by severe acute food insecurity.

Hackers breach US Air Force flagship Cloud One computing platform

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: Hackers have breached the US Air Force's flagship cloud computing platform, three people familiar with the matter told Reuters, in a development that could jeopardise a vast swathe of sensitive tactical, personnel and logistics data.

The intrusion at Cloud One was within the past month or so during work to upgrade the system, two of the people said, adding that the discovery has led to disruption across the platform. Reuters could not establish the hackers' identity, the full scope of the intrusion, or whether any data was stolen.

In a statement to Reuters, the Air Force said it "does not comment on the security posture, vulnerabilities or operational status of specific networks and systems. We continuously take prudent measures to protect Department (of the Air Force) information, systems and mission capabilities."

Initiated in 2017, Cloud One was meant to serve as a one-stop shop for the Air Force's IT needs, combining the resources of four operators — Microsoft, Amazon, Oracle and Alphabet — to power scores of applications, including ones that manage personnel data and pay or logistics and maintenance.

Among them are the Air Force's Cloud-Based Command and Control, which collates air-defence radar and other data feeds from across North America, and the Theatre Integrated Combat Munitions System.

German police raid 51 premises in investigation into illegal gambling

Monitoring Desk

GERMANY: More than 1,000 police officers have raided 51 premises in northern and western Germany as part of the crackdown on illegal gambling.

Two men - aged 55 and 47 - were arrested during the operation, according to a statement issued by the police and the public prosecutor's office on Friday. Both are due to appear before a magistrate.

According to the statement, cultural associations, gambling venues and flats were searched in the districts across the states of North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony.

A total of 108 people were checked and 21 had their details recorded.

Indian police say

Dismantled international cyber fraud ring, rescued 164 foreigners

Monitoring Desk

NEW DELHI: Police in India have said they rescued dozens of Malaysian and Indonesian who were illegally confined and forced to participate in a cyber fraud operation in a suburb of national capital Delhi.

A total of 92 Indonesians and 72 Malaysians were rescued, Delhi police said in a statement late on Thursday. They were lured to India with promises of employment and "lucrative opportunities", but were later forced to participate in the scam that cheated unsuspecting people through fake investment schemes, police said.

In a statement, police said they had dismantled a "major international cyber fraud network" allegedly involved in human trafficking, illegal confinement and forcing foreign nationals to carry out online scams.

"Further investigation is underway to identify and apprehend other persons involved in this international criminal network," police said.

Police said the foreign nationals had been brought to India under various pretexts.



Protesters gather in Madrid to pay tribute to Maricarmen Abascal, an 87-year-old pensioner whose eviction triggered nationwide protests over Spain's chronic housing crisis and a political debate that culminated in early elections.



UN World Food Programme staff conduct a thorough inspection as relief food is dispatched from a warehouse in northeastern Uganda, listed as a hotspot for food insecurity.

PM highlights PCSIR's key role in boosting export-led growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) could play an important role in promoting export-led growth and increasing the country's exports.

He was chairing a meeting on matters related to the PCSIR, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

The prime minister said the PCSIR could also contribute significantly to the ecosystem for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the expansion of exports.

He directed all PCSIR laboratories obtain accreditation in line with international standards so that internationally recognized certification and validation of Pakistani export products can be facilitated.

The prime minister also directed the PCSIR to make its research role more effective in order to enable domestic products to compete in global markets.

He further directed that cooperation with the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) be enhanced for the industrial and technical training of youth.

The prime minister called for the report of the third-party validation conducted on the PCSIR.

He also constituted a committee to review the mandate of the PCSIR, its performance to date and its potential future role.

The committee will examine the objectives behind the establishment of the PCSIR, its legal responsibilities, the measures taken so far and the possibilities for making full use of the institution's capacity in the future.

It will also determine how the PCSIR can be made more effective in contributing to the national economy, industrial development and the growth of exports.

Earlier, the meeting was briefed on the responsibilities and performance of the PCSIR.

The briefing was informed that the PCSIR has 10 research laboratories and units across the country, along with seven technical training institutes, while 12 new laboratories are in the final stages of completion.

The meeting was told that the PCSIR provides the industrial sector with modern technology, research and low-cost technical solutions to improve the productivity and quality of domestic industry.

It was further informed that the institution has so far provided technical training to more than 12,000 youth.

The briefing also noted that the PCSIR conducts research and development activities in food, agriculture, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, textiles, leather, minerals, engineering, energy and other sectors.

The meeting was told that the institution's laboratories offer domestic industries and exporters facilities for product testing, quality verification and calibration of technical instruments.

The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Ahad Khan Cheema, Attaullah Tarar, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Ali Pervaiz Malik and Khalid Magsi, Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani, Adviser to the Prime Minister Haroon Akhtar Khan, and senior officials of the relevant departments.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairing a meeting to review the affairs of Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) in promoting export-led growth and enhancing the country's exports.

Ahsan seeks zero-tariff access to Chinese market to boost exports to US$ 25bln

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal has sought China's support for preferential, zero-tariff access for Pakistani goods to its market, aiming to increase Pakistan's annual exports to China from around US$ three billion to US$ 20-25 billion.

The proposal was discussed during a meeting between Ahsan Iqbal and Liu Haixing, Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee (IDCPC), a news release said on Friday.

The minister followed up on a proposal discussed on November 3 and previously raised by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

He cited China's tariff concessions to African countries as a possible model for enhancing the competitiveness of Pakistani exports in the Chinese market, which imports nearly $3 trillion worth of goods annually.

Ahsan Iqbal also sought support for the proposed Pakistan-China Knowledge Corridor, envisaging doctoral studies and specialised research opportunities for around 10,000 Pakistani scholars over ten years.

The initiative would involve scholarships, partnerships with leading Chinese universities and co-financing, with priority areas including artificial intelligence, engineering, advanced manufacturing, modern agriculture, biotechnology and mineral sciences.

Discussing the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), he identified industrial and agricultural cooperation, business partnerships, technology transfer, minerals and green development as key priorities.

He said the first phase of CPEC had attracted around US$ 25 billion in investment, added more than 8,000 megawatts of power generation capacity and delivered 888 kilometres of highways and motorways, while creating an estimated 236,000 direct and indirect jobs.

He linked the next phase of CPEC with Pakistan's URAAN development programme and China's 15th Five-Year Plan, emphasising the importance of policy continuity.

Marking 75 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China, the minister observed that bilateral ties had enjoyed broad political support across successive governments in Pakistan.

He proposed designating focal persons and setting timelines for implementing the May 2026 memorandum of understanding between the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the CPC.

The proposed cooperation covers political dialogue, governance, youth leadership, cultural exchanges and regional cooperation.

The minister also called for joint training and faculty exchanges between the CPC Central Party School and Pakistan's National School of Public Policy under their existing agreement.

He followed up on a proposed short orientation programme for senior Pakistani political leaders and welcomed the IDCPC programme for young PML-N leaders in Guangxi, scheduled from November 23 to December 3.

He also proposed reciprocal exchanges beginning in 2027, subject to mutual agreement.

Ahsan Iqbal reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to ensuring the security of Chinese personnel and projects and requested updates on the market access and Knowledge Corridor proposals.

Pakistan will promote international cooperation under OIC: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar said that Pakistan would promote international cooperation, particularly with African countries, to address the issue under its OIC Chairmanship.

Inaugurating the "National Framework to End Child Marriage in Pakistan" here on Friday, the Federal Minister said that ending child marriage remained his top priority and the government was committed to translating its legislative commitments into action and ensuring effective implementation of the minimum age of 18 years across Pakistan. He said the law against child marriage was mandatory in nature and violations would carry legal consequences.

Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar said Pakistan would promote international cooperation under its OIC Chairmanship, particularly with African countries, through joint working groups to exchange experiences, measures and effective strategies aimed at ending child marriage.

The Federal Minister appreciated efforts undertaken in Punjab and Balochistan to address child marriage and emphasized the need for further progress and cooperation across all provinces.

The five-year National Framework (2027–2031), developed by the Ministry of Human Rights with technical support from UNFPA and UNICEF, provides a shared roadmap for federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen prevention, improve protection and accelerate efforts to end child marriage across the country.

Secretary Ministry of Human Rights Abdul Khalique Shaikh, UNFPA Representative in Pakistan Dr. Luay Shabaneh, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan Pernille Ironside, British High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriott and other participants also addressed the ceremony, emphasizing the need to translate the National Framework into practical action.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.



GWADAR: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti being briefed about Municipal Corporation Gwadar. Provincial Ministers, MPA Gwadar Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman and others high ups are also present.

IAEA, Pakistan renew focus on Intl nuclear security cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 15th Annual Meeting of the International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres (NSSC Network), hosted by Pakistan in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), concluded here after four days of technical discussions, expert exchanges and engagements aimed at strengthening international cooperation in nuclear security.

Held from November 23 to 26, the meeting brought together international delegates and nuclear security experts to discuss emerging challenges, institutional sustainability, human resource development and the future of international cooperation in nuclear security training.

The meeting commenced at the Pakistan Centre of Excellence for Nuclear Security (PCENS), where senior officials from Pakistan and the IAEA delivered opening remarks. A commemorative plaque was also unveiled to mark ten years since Pakistan first hosted the NSSC Network Annual Meeting in 2016.

A special event was organised on the second day at the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) Headquarters to mark 20 years of Pakistan–IAEA cooperation in nuclear security.

The event featured an exhibition of indigenous nuclear security technologies developed by Pakistan's national industry, providing local technology developers an opportunity to interact directly with IAEA representatives and international delegates.

The event also highlighted the contributions of PCENS and the National Institute of Safety and Security (NISAS), an IAEA Collaborating Centre, in professional training, research and capacity building.

As part of the programme, delegates visited the Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS) in Islamabad.

Minister for Power calls on PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Friday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and briefed him on matters related to the Power Division.

During the meeting, the minister apprised the prime minister of the proceedings and outcomes of the 11th session of the Pakistan-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC), held during his recent visit to Russia. The two sides also discussed matters related to the ministry.

11 killed in Kamalia road accident

KAMALIA (APP): At least eleven persons were killed in a road accident took place in Kamalia area of Punjab, tv channels reported on Friday.

Initial reports said that the incident occurred when a rashly driven tractor-trolley collided with a car, killing the victims on the spot. Following the accident, rescue team rushed to the site and shifted the bodies to hospital. Police have arrested the driver of the tractor-trolley, and started investigation.



BEIJING: Federal Minister Professor Ahsan Iqbal met Zhou Haibing, Vice Chairman of China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), to discuss duty-free access for Pakistani products to the Chinese market, expansion of bilateral trade and enhanced cooperation under CPEC Phase II.

DPM, Iranian FM discuss regional situation

ISLAMABAD (INP): Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a telephone conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi and discussed cooperation at multilateral fora, including within the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).

Foreign Minister Araghchi reiterated the invitation to Pakistan to participate in the 18th ECO Summit, scheduled to be held in Tehran next month.

The two leaders also exchanged views on the wider regional situation and efforts to promote peace and security in the region.

Pakistan's leadership committed to national development, prosperity and global peace: Syedaal Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar received warm welcome from prominent members of the Pakistani community, including political, social, business and media personalities, local parliamentary representatives and other distinguished figures, upon his arrival in Toronto, Canada on Friday. A reception and dinner were hosted in his honour by senior journalist and host Tauseef Shah. The event was attended by Irfan Siddiqui and Mian Azeem from New York, along with senior journalists from the United States and Canada and representatives of electronic, print and digital media.

Another dinner was hosted in his honour by social leader Chaudhry Joya. Local parliamentary representatives, business personalities, civil society members and prominent Pakistani political and social figures attended the event.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chairman Senate said that Pakistan's current political leadership was actively working towards national development, prosperity and stability. He said that Pakistan's diplomatic efforts to promote peace and resolve international conflicts were being appreciated worldwide.

Referring to the Makkah Agreement, he said that it would be an important development not only for the region but also for the wider international community, paving the way for peace and stability. He emphasized that Pakistan was playing a constructive role through diplomacy and mediation to promote global peace.

Highlighting the contributions of overseas Pakistanis, he said that the Pakistani community in Canada was playing a significant role in projecting Pakistan's positive image and strengthening bilateral relations. He urged the business community to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan and contribute to trade, economic cooperation and national development.

Naqvi checks fire brigade response time, orders faster emergency operations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday visited the Capital Development Authority (CDA) Fire Brigade Station to review firefighting arrangements and assess the response time of emergency vehicles.

During the visit, the interior minister inspected the vehicles available at the fire brigade station and reviewed their operational readiness.

He also visited the station's call centre and appreciated the staff for being present on duty.

To check the response time, Mohsin Naqvi boarded a sky lift vehicle alongside its driver and travelled from the fire brigade station to F-11 Markaz.

The minister personally assessed the time taken by the sky lift vehicle to reach F-11. The vehicle completed the journey from the fire brigade station to F-11 in approximately 12 minutes.

After reviewing the response time, Mohsin Naqvi directed the authorities to ensure that firefighting vehicles move immediately from the station whenever an emergency call is received.

Nawabzada Mir Aminullah Raisani dies, Bugti expresses condolences

Independent Report

QUETTA: Nawabzada Mir Aminullah Khan Raisani, eldest son of former Balochistan Governor Shaheed Nawab Ghaus Bakhsh Khan Raisani, has passed away at a private hospital in Lahore.

He was the elder brother of Chief of Sarawan and former Balochistan Chief Minister Nawab Muhammad Aslam Khan Raisani, as well as Nawabzada Asadullah Khan Raisani, Nawabzada Babu Abdul Nabi Raisani, Nawabzada Haji Lashkari Khan Raisani and Shaheed Nawabzada Siraj Khan Raisani.

Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti expressed deep sorrow over the death, describing it as a profound loss for the Raisani family.

In his condolence message, the chief minister conveyed his sympathies to Nawab Muhammad Aslam Khan Raisani and other members of the bereaved family.

Bugti prayed to Almighty Allah to bless the deceased with a high rank in Jannah and grant the bereaved family strength and patience to endure the loss.

The schedule for funeral prayers and the burial location will be announced later.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi inaugurates Lok Mela 2026 at Lok Virsa, The festival celebrates Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, traditional crafts, folk music and diverse cultural expressions.

Dialogue, tolerance vital for national unity and lasting peace: Dr. Rubaba, Shahid

Independent Report

QUETTA: Provincial Adviser Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi and Special Assistant to the Balochistan Chief Minister Shahid Rind have called for greater dialogue, tolerance and mutual respect to promote national unity, lasting peace and social harmony.

Addressing the "National Dialogue for Peace and Unity," attended by political and social leaders, distinguished personalities and representatives from various sectors of society, they urged political, social and intellectual circles to work through a common platform for the country's stability, development and prosperity.

Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi said a strong and prosperous society could only be built by respecting diverse viewpoints, cultures, traditions and sentiments. She described dialogue, tolerance and mutual understanding as effective tools for resolving differences and fostering harmony.

Shahid Rind said maintaining national unity and achieving sustainable peace was a collective responsibility rather than an obligation resting solely with the government.

He emphasized that addressing differences through dialogue, understanding alternative perspectives and respecting dissent were essential attributes of a strong and cohesive nation.

The speakers also highlighted Pakistan's rich linguistic and cultural diversity, observing that greater tolerance and respect for differences could further reinforce national cohesion.

Participants underscored the need for constructive dialogue, mutual trust and a coordinated national approach, reaffirming their commitment to collective efforts aimed at building a peaceful, united and prosperous Pakistan.

ECP rules out role in allocation of tickets to women

ISLAMABAD (APP): Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has clarified that political parties have the exclusive authority to allocate tickets to women candidates on general seats under existing electoral laws, and the commission cannot intervene in their internal decisions or direct them to award tickets for constituencies where women have better chances of winning. In a clarification issued on Friday, the ECP spokesperson responded to a news report published in an English-language newspaper regarding directions allegedly issued by a parliamentary committee, asking the commission to ensure that political parties allocate the mandatory five per cent quota for women under Section 206 of the Elections Act.

DGPR Askar orders timely public information, greater office discipline

Independent Report

QUETTA: Director General Public Relations Balochistan Askar Khan has directed officers and staff to ensure timely dissemination of information to the public, maintain office discipline and strengthen departmental performance through efficient execution of their professional responsibilities. He emphasized that the Public Relations Department serves as a key link between the government and the public, making timely communication, operational efficiency and professional accountability essential to effective public service.

He issued the directives during surprise inspections of various sections of the department on Friday, accompanied by senior departmental officers. During the visits, Askar Khan reviewed departmental performance, administrative matters and the execution of official duties. He also interacted with officers and staff and sought information about their respective responsibilities and ongoing work.

The director general instructed personnel to perform their duties with dedication, integrity and accountability, while ensuring regular attendance, punctuality and strict compliance with departmental rules and regulations.

He further stressed the importance of teamwork, professional competence and a constructive approach to work, saying these factors were vital to improving institutional efficiency and strengthening public service delivery.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Agriculture Haji Ali Madad Jattak listening the problems of the people during open katchery at his residence.

Public grievances to be addressed on priority basis: Ali Madad Jattak

Independent Report

QUETTA: Provincial Agriculture Minister Haji Mir Ali Madad Jattak has reaffirmed his commitment to public service, saying resolving citizens' grievances promptly remains among his foremost priorities.

He said elected representatives had a responsibility to remain accessible to the public, listen to their concerns and take practical steps to resolve the difficulties faced by people in their constituencies.

The minister was speaking during an open court held at his residence, where a large number of residents, tribal elders, political and social representatives and party workers attended.

Citizens raised a range of local concerns, basic service requirements and other issues during the session. Jattak listened to the complaints and assured the participants that all possible measures would be taken to facilitate the resolution of their problems.

He said regular interaction with the public was essential for gaining a better understanding of people's needs and developing effective responses to their concerns. The agriculture minister also pledged to strengthen initiatives aimed at public welfare and said every possible effort would be made to address issues confronting local communities.

Tribal elders and party workers shared their recommendations concerning development priorities and matters affecting residents of the area. Jattak said open courts and direct engagement with citizens would remain an important part of his public service approach, enabling authorities and elected representatives to respond to grievances in a timely manner.

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