

QUETTA VOICE

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Grief and anger: Terror strikes in Mastung, 55 killed, 96 injured

Syed Ali Shah, Manan Mandokhail, News Desk

Mastung: At least 55 people, including a senior police official were killed when a suspected suicide bomber blew himself up near a procession commemorating Eid Miladun Nabi (PBUH) in Balochistan's Mastung district on Friday, confirmed police.

Police officials confirmed that DSP Mastung Nawaz Gishkori was among those killed and at least 96 people were injured. Officials expressed fear that the number of casualties may increase. "It was like a doomsday", Niaz Muhammad, a young man who lost a brother in the blast said. With a burst of tears, he said, "I lost my beloved brother".

Heartbreaking scenes outside the hospital

Scores of broken family members and heirs of the Mastung blast were gathered outside the hospital. Heartbreaking scenes of the heirs were witnessed after they saw the dead bodies of their loved ones. "I cannot bear this huge loss", Abdullah Bakht, another young man told Daily Quetta Voice with a burst of tears. Like Abdullah scores of heirs and family members of the victims were crying outside the hospital.

According to Mastung's assistant commissioner, the blast took place near Al-Falah Mosque, where people were gathering to participate in the procession. "Terrorism poses a serious threat to the country", Captain (R) Zubair Jamali, the Caretaker Balochistan Home Minister told Daily Quetta Voice.

CM Balochistan condemns the attack

The Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Ali



Mardan Domki strongly condemned the terrorist attack. In a statement issued after the incident, he said the perpetrators would be brought to justice.

Seriously injured and brought to Quetta

All seriously injured people in the blast were rushed to Quetta for medical treatment. An emergency was declared in all government-run hospitals of this provincial capital. "The death toll is above 50", Asfandyar Khan, the Secretary of Health Balochistan told Daily Quetta Voice. He said over 100 were injured in the attack. "We put all departments on high alert", he said.

Security forces on alert

Following the bomb attack in Mastung, Karachi Police stated that police will remain "completely on high alert" on the directions of Additional Inspector General Khadim Husan Rind. The senior police official ordered the force to tighten security measures to safeguard Eid Miladun Nabi events and processions across the city.

Condemnations

Shortly after the blast, condolences poured in. "The morale of the nation cannot be weakened by cowardly acts of terror," said Interim Information Minister Murtaza Solangi. "All of Pakistan is united against the scourge of terrorism. Terrorist elements do not deserve any concessions," he said, adding that with the cooperation of security forces, the "monster of terrorism" will be eliminated completely. Solangi also offered condolences to the aggrieved families and prayed for the departed souls while strongly condemning the attack. In a similar statement made on X, formerly Twitter, Interim Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti said that attacking innocent people during an Eid Miladun Nabi is a "terrible act".

Pak-Iran Joint Border Meeting Fuels Economic Cooperation and Regional Prosperity

News Desk:

Mir Java, Iran – In a significant one-day gathering held in the picturesque Iranian border town of Mir Java, Pakistan, and Iran took bold strides toward fostering economic ties and resolving border-related challenges. The meeting, spearheaded by Chief Collector Customs Balochistan, Abdul Qadir Memon from the Pakistani side and Mr. Javed Haidari, Director General of Transit and International Transport Department and Ministry of Roads and Urban Development, Iran, signaled a promising era of cooperation between two neighboring nations.

Delving into Key Discussions

The meeting featured intensive discussions on a multitude of crucial topics, emphasizing the mutual benefits that await both nations. Highlights included comprehensive deliberations on Pak-Iran trade, the Mir Java Taffan border, transportation logistics, and the movement of goods and people across the border.

A Focus on Trade and Expansion

One of the primary focal points was trade expansion between Iran's Sistan Balochistan province and Pakistan's Balochistan. Participants dove into intricate matters related to railways, banking, transport, emigration, visas, and trade, with a particular focus on priority issues. While the meeting addressed a wide spectrum of concerns, import-related matters remained a subject of keen discussion, promising potential solutions to enhance cross-border commerce.

A Diverse and Influential Delegation

The attendees represented a diverse cross-section of professionals and authorities. Collector Customs Appraisal Taffan Naveed Iqbal, Deputy Collector Usman Aziz, Superintendent Abid Durani, and numerous other stakeholders from Pakistan converged at the meeting.

Their presence, spanning various sectors such as business, border management, national security, trade, transportation, and the banking industry, underscored the comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities at hand. Additionally, representatives from the Ministry of Immigration, and Foreign Affairs, and the business community lent their insights and expertise to the proceedings.

A Message of Cooperation and Goodwill

Mr. Javed Haidari, leading the Iranian delegation, extended a warm welcome to the Pakistani representatives, emphasizing the brotherly and neighboring ties between the two nations.

He expressed optimism that this gathering would prove highly beneficial not only for the region but also for the businessmen on both sides of the border. Beyond fostering mutual goodwill, the meeting pledged to tackle pressing business issues, setting the stage for a promising future of collaboration and prosperity.

The Pak-Iran joint border meeting in Mir Java stands as a testament to the commitment of both nations to deepen economic cooperation and resolve border-related challenges, opening doors to enhanced trade and prosperity for their respective regions.



CTD to probe into Mastung blast: CM Balochistan

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: In an emergency press conference held on Friday night, Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Ali Mardan Domki, announced that the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD)



would be leading the investigation into the tragic Mastung bombing. He emphasized that the CTD's investigative team would thoroughly examine all aspects of this incident.

Responding to a query, he expressed that initial assessments pointed towards the possibility of a suicide bombing. "We are on it and terrorists would be brought to justice", the CM said.

Media Organizations Urge Political Parties to Prioritize Press Freedom Ahead of Elections

News Desk:

Islamabad, 28 September: Sixteen prominent media organizations have issued a critical appeal to Pakistan's main political parties, both at the national and provincial levels, as they gear up for the upcoming general elections. The appeal implores these parties to incorporate tangible measures in support of press freedom within their election manifestos.

Amidst growing concerns about the deteriorating conditions faced by journalists in Pakistan, leading press clubs, national and provincial journalists unions, along with the Paris-based global media watchdog organization Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and RSF's Pakistan partner Freedom Network, are jointly calling upon political leaders to commit to defending freedom of expression and ensuring the protection of journalists in their party manifestos.

An end to impunity demanded

The joint letter highlights the alarming levels of impunity surrounding crimes against journalists and the media in Pakistan. The RSF's Pakistan partner, Freedom Network, reported in its Annual Impunity 2022 Report that an astonishing "96% of journalist killings" over the past decade resulted in no convictions. This high rate of impunity poses a grave threat to journalists, denying the citizens of Pakistan their fundamental right to access information, as enshrined in the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan under Articles 19 and 19A.

Key Points: Pakistan's leading press clubs, journalists' unions, and media watchdogs are uniting to press for press freedom commitments from political parties. The joint appeal underscores the shocking impunity for crimes against journalists in Pakistan, with a 96% lack of convictions for journalist killings over the last decade. The statement emphasizes the importance of protecting journalists' independence



and pluralism as crucial elements of a functioning democracy. Traditionally, political parties in Pakistan have supported freedom of expression and press freedom, a tradition that the appeal calls upon them to uphold. The appeal urges political parties to support press freedom, the right to reliable information, and the defense of journalists, as well as to combat impunity for crimes against the media through Pakistan's legal framework.

It also calls for justice to be served against those responsible for crimes against journalists.

Participating Organizations: Karachi Press Club, Lahore Press Club, Quetta Press Club, National Press Club, Islamabad, Peshawar Press Club, Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, Karachi Union of Journalists, Punjab Union of Journalists, Balochistan Union of Journalists, Khyber Union of Journalists, Rawalpindi-Islamabad Union of Journalists, Digital Media Alliance of Pakistan (DigiMAP), Pakistan Journalists Safety Coalition (PJSC)-Federal chapter, Association of Electronic Media Editors and News Directors (AEMEND), Freedom Network, Reporters Without Borders, and TV journalist Hamid Mir.

Urgent plea to PM: Restore suspended passenger trains for Balochistan

Editorial: The continued suspension of six trains for Balochistan has plunged countless passengers into a harrowing ordeal... Caretaker PM should direct railway ministry to restore suspended trains...

ELECTIONS should happen, and happen on time. There is no excuse for delay. And there is no reason not to give a 'level playing field' to all contesting political parties...

Who to vote for?

By Faisal Bari: The fiscal and trade deficits by putting pressure on the poor. All of them are going to continue to reward the elite...

By Faisal Bari: The smaller parties who move on old parties to new ones, what will it do for the people?

No reason to gloat

By Asim Sajjad Akhtar: The caretaker prime minister, Anwar ul Haq Kakar belongs to Balochistan and is well aware of the suffering of its people... activities publicly — Canada's independent enforcement of disappearances...

Justice for all

By Qasim A. Moini: ONE of the central messages of the Holy Quran is the establishment of justice and resistance to oppression... One piece of feedback I often hear from readers...

A patriot turns 100

By Ashraf Jehangir Qazi: In the end, no matter what one does, a great army in the middle of a democratic nation will always be a great peril... and participated in it from every angle.

The limits to growth

Khurram Husain: then take the government debt instruments, hand them to the State Bank, and lend more from the OMO window...

Who to vote for?

By Faisal Bari: Then we see the fiscal and trade deficits by putting pressure on the poor. All of them are going to continue to reward the elite...

Senate Body on Interior addresses key legislative matters

ISLAMABAD (INP) Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Interior, Senator Mohsin Aziz, presided over a meeting of the committee held on Thursday to discuss proposed amendments to the Pakistan Penal Code 1860 and the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898. The meeting was attended by Senators Saifullah Abro, Sherry Rehman, Samina Mumtaz Zehri, Shahadat Awan, Danish Kumar, Dilwar Khan, and Kamal Ali Agha. Notable participants also included Senators Mushfiq Ahmed and Palwasha Muhammad Zai Khan, who contributed as bill movers.

ment) Bill, 2023," moved by Senator Mumtaz Zehri specifically focused on providing proper treatment and medico examination reports for rape victims through public and private hospitals. After thorough deliberation, the Committee passed the bill with unanimous approval, incorporating essential amendments. Another significant topic was Senator Mushfiq Ahmed's proposed amendments to sections 375, 375A, and 376 of the PPC and Schedule-II of Cr. CP, aiming to omit section D and the public hanging of rapists.

The bill was passed with majority votes and necessary amendments. Senators Sherry Rehman and Shahadat Awan expressed their concerns about the proposed punishment, emphasizing the need to avoid measures that might in-

ditionally. "The Federal Investigation Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2023" proposed by Senator Zaqra Suhayraway was also rejected. Addressing environmental concerns, the Committee unanimously passed the "Rain Water Harvesting Facility in Urban Areas, Bill, 2023," moved by Senator Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan. This legislation emphasizes the efficient utilization of rainwater, crucial in mitigating the depleting water table. CDA representative also supported the bill, acknowledging its potential to fortify existing regulations. During the meeting, Senator Irfan Siddiqui raised concerns about the bill missing for almost 15 months that was introduced in the Interior Committee and subsequently passed by both houses of the Parliament.



KARACHI: VC Lums Dr Tariq M Jadoon giving prize to a winner of essay competition held by Pakistan Navy on occasion of World Maritime Day.

NNF discusses progress, future plans for Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Policy & Programming

ISLAMABAD (INP): Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan on Thursday chaired the meeting of the National Nutrition Forum (NNF) held here to discuss the progress and future plans for Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Policy and Programming. The meeting was presided over by the MoPDSI, Member FS&CC, high level representatives from Federal ministries and provincial P&D and Boards attended the meeting. The country representatives from bilateral agencies, UN, INGOs and other development partners including SUN Networks were present on the occasion.

ment commitment to address the issue of malnutrition. He emphasized that nutrition is development and development is nutrition and it is central in achieving SDGs. He further added that the government has initiated Pakistan Nutrition Initiative (PANI), a Multi-Sectoral National Nutrition Program to promote healthy dietary practices, prevent and treat wasting and stunting, focus on local causes and local solutions, advocacy, foster public-private partnerships, and priorities early childhood development. He added that this initiative will target 36 heavily affected districts (Balochistan 12, Sindh 10, GB 5, KP 5, Punjab 2, and AK 2) with high stunting rates, floods, and poverty. The Chief Nutrition MoPDSI presented the nutrition importance, the nutrition landscape and compliance on the recommendations of the previous NNF meeting. He further elaborated on the PANI initiative.

FS&CC Planning Commission Ms. Nadia Rahman stressed upon the significance of multi-sectoral coordination and integration up to the household level. She also mentioned that nutrition development partners may align their resources with PANI. She further added that we may track nutrition investment and map out all the ongoing activities implemented by federal, provincial and other stakeholders. She added that we may conduct a multi-sectoral nutrition survey for updated and comprehensive data. He added that there should be financial tracking of all nutrition sensitive and specific interventions that are implemented in provinces and at the federal level. The participants appreciated the government efforts especially PANI for addressing the issue of malnutrition. The partners mentioned that the issue of malnutrition is long standing hence we need to think out of the box by fo-

using on the underlying determinants. They also highlighted the importance of fresh data considering the epidemics such as COVID and floods for effective planning and programming. In his concluding remarks the DPCP Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan emphasized on the multispectral approach to address the issue of mother and child nutrition. He added that the role of development partners is catalytic, and government must take the responsibility. He showed his concern on some of the nutrition indicators which have worsened such as exclusive breast feeding which has no cost. He recommended to have a national nutrition dashboard to track the nutrition indicators. He also added that Early Childhood Development (ECD) lays the foundation for a life-time of success by nurturing cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth, shaping resilient and capable individuals.



KARACHI: Donkey cart holder on the way loaded with steel drum going toward their destination in provincial capital.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Pakistan Obyek Arif Usmanov called on Jamal Shah, Interim Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture at his office.

Pakistan to enhance pharmaceutical collaboration with SCO countries

BEIJING (INP): "The 2nd SCO Pharmaceutical Cooperation Development Conference has demonstrated the commitment of SCO members are committed to working together to ensure the availability of essential medicines, strengthen health systems and improve the overall well-being of their populations. The CEO took the opportunity to share Pakistan's achievements in research and development collaboration, and expand market access," said Asim Rauf, CEO of Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP).

He attended the conference in Suzhou as a Chief guest, delivered the keynote address highlighting Pakistan's commitment to promoting pharmaceutical development and regulation. He also emphasized the need for collaboration and partnership in the pharmaceutical sector, so that we can bind each other and share knowledge on those global issues that may affect public safety and people's health. These meetings aimed to foster closer ties and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise in areas such as drug regulation, quality control, and capacity building. The conference provided a platform for participants to exchange best practices, discuss regulatory challenges and explore avenues for future collaboration. Experts from SCO member countries shared their experiences and insights on topics such as drug registration, pharmacovigilance and pharmaceutical research and development. The conference concluded with the Suzhou Initiative, injecting new and strong impetus into the building of an even closer SCO community of shared future. The health and pharmaceutical regulatory authorities, relevant institutions and industries of the participating countries attach great importance to cooperation in the field of medicine and health.

mentship in the pharmaceutical sector has become even more critical. Pakistan and other SCO members are committed to working together to ensure the availability of essential medicines, strengthen health systems and improve the overall well-being of their populations. The CEO took the opportunity to share Pakistan's achievements in research and development collaboration, and expand market access," said Asim Rauf, CEO of Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP).

He added that "we have developed very rapidly in the field of regulation and the acceptance of its drugs is also increasing in the world. Especially during the pandemic, we have done a lot of work, including independent trials, starting the digitalization process, introducing the CTD format, automating, etc." The CEO added that "recently, we have noted the surge in Pakistan's pharmaceutical exports as a result of these advances. We are ready to share the steps and experiences we have taken with other SCO

countries, so that we can bind each other and share knowledge on those global issues that may affect public safety and people's health. These meetings aimed to foster closer ties and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise in areas such as drug regulation, quality control, and capacity building. The conference provided a platform for participants to exchange best practices, discuss regulatory challenges and explore avenues for future collaboration. Experts from SCO member countries shared their experiences and insights on topics such as drug registration, pharmacovigilance and pharmaceutical research and development. The conference concluded with the Suzhou Initiative, injecting new and strong impetus into the building of an even closer SCO community of shared future. The health and pharmaceutical regulatory authorities, relevant institutions and industries of the participating countries attach great importance to cooperation in the field of medicine and health.



HYDERABAD: Commissioner Hyderabad Khalid Haider Shah laid an awareness walk to reduction Polio, at Government Shah Bhitai Hospital Lafafabad, Hyderabad.

CJP-led SC bench hears review pleas against Faizabad sit-in verdict

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court (SC) is hearing a set of review petitions challenging the court's verdict on the 2017 sit-in by the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) at Faizabad in Islamabad. According to media reports, a three-member bench including Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa, Justice Amundind Khan and Justice Athar Minallah has taken up the pleas. Pleas were subsequently moved against the verdict by the Ministry of Defence, the IB, the PTI, the Penra, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), the Muttahida-Qaumi Movement (MQM), Awami Muslim League and Ejazul Haq. However, earlier this week the Intelligence Bureau and the

Pakistan Election Commission announced the verdict has been returned, therefore, this case was not fixed before that bench. The apex court, seeking the withdrawal of their review petitions in the case, stating that they did not wish to pursue the matter further. Meanwhile, Review Advocate Mehr Khan Malik, had also requested the Supreme Court to adjourn the hearing. At the outset of the hearing, CJP Isa observed that Rashid's counsel had been appointed as a minister, therefore he should have arranged another lawyer in his place. He then noted, "I want to make a few things clear. This is a regular bench, not a special bench. Review petitions are immediately fixed [for hearing] but these were not fixed for four years. "One of the judges who pro-

posed the verdict has retired, therefore, this case was not fixed before that bench. The apex court, seeking the withdrawal of their review petitions in the case, stating that they did not wish to pursue the matter further. Meanwhile, Review Advocate Mehr Khan Malik, had also requested the Supreme Court to adjourn the hearing. At the outset of the hearing, CJP Isa observed that Rashid's counsel had been appointed as a minister, therefore he should have arranged another lawyer in his place. He then noted, "I want to make a few things clear. This is a regular bench, not a special bench. Review petitions are immediately fixed [for hearing] but these were not fixed for four years. "One of the judges who pro-

Withdrawal of Section 7E vital to promote investment, revive economy: ICCI

ISLAMABAD (INP): President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the introduction of Section 7E through Finance Act 2022 has emerged as a major disincentive for investment in the real estate sector due to which the economy is suffering and stressed that the government should withdraw it to promote investment in the real estate and construction sector and revive the economy.

Talking to a delegation of real estate developers and builders during their visit to ICCI on Thursday, he said that after a judgment of the Lahore High Court (LHC), the collection of deemed income tax under Section 7E has been stopped in Punjab and stressed that the government should withdraw it across the country to end such discrepancies. Ahsan Zafar informed the delegation that ICCI is making strenuous efforts for the withdrawal of this tax in the next budget to facilitate the growth of business and investment activities in the real estate and construction industry.

He said that the over-seas Pakistanis prefer to invest in the real estate sector in Pakistan, but hike in taxes is discouraging them. He emphasized that the government should give serious consideration to this issue and offer attractive incentives that would boost foreign investment in the country and provide crucial support to the fragile economy.

Former President ICCI and CEO Centaurus Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that the cut in heavy taxes on the real estate sector can bring foreign investment of billions of dollars to Pakistan and help revive the economy. He said that the business activities of many allied industries are linked with the real estate and construction sector and reducing high taxes on this sector would boost the business activities of all allied industries and stimulate the economic growth of the country.

ICCI Group Leader Khalid Iqbal Malik said that the real estate sector is the major source of attracting remittances and foreign investment, however, the imposition of unnecessary taxes has led to a significant decline in remittances and investment. He urged that the government should rationalize taxes on this sector, withdraw tax on deemed income and create a conducive environment for this sector to spur the economic development of the country.

Vice President ICCI Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar said that after the announcement of the construction package in the past, many mega construction projects were started in Pakistan, but due to high construction cost and high taxes, work on many projects is suspended, which is harmful for the investors and the economy. He said that the government should take notice of this situation to save this sector from further damages.



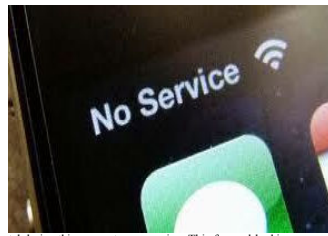
ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi in group photo with a delegation of the members of the British Parliament and the representative of the Pakistani and Kashmiri diaspora in the UK at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Mobile service to be suspended in Quetta on the eve of 12 Rabi ul Awal

staff Reporter:

QUETTA: In a decisive move to prioritize public safety and uphold law and order, the Balochistan government has opted to suspend mobile services in Quetta on the eve of 12 Rabi ul Awal, observed on Friday. This decision is prompted by the deployment of thousands of policemen across the city, tasked with overseeing and managing various processions and gatherings.

While the exact duration of the mobile service suspension has not received official confirmation, a credible source within the Balochistan home department has affirmed the temporary halt of cellular services. This strategic choice to suspend mobile services perfectly aligns with the comprehensive security measures established to facilitate the seamless execution of numerous processions scheduled in the provincial capital during this momentous occasion.



This forward-looking measure primarily seeks to safeguard public safety and curtail potential disruptions, ensuring a peaceful observance of this significant event. To navigate this period, both residents and visitors are strongly advised to plan ahead and remain updated on the latest developments regarding the mobile service suspension in Quetta.

Balochistan Abduction Update: 4 of 6 Young Footballers Recovered

From Our Correspondent:

DERA BUGTI: Four of the six young footballers who were abducted from Balochistan's Dera Bugti on their way to Sibi on September 9 have been recovered. With the efforts of the law enforcement agencies, local administration, and the provincial government, the four abducted footballers were safely rescued and brought to their homes. Law enforcement agencies and the provincial government

say that two more children will be recovered soon.

Family members of the football players heaved a sigh of relief after the recovery of kidnapped players. And they expressed the hope that the remaining two abducted players would also be recovered soon.



ISLAMABAD: MD Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation Engr Asad Ahmad and CEO Hub Salt Ismail Sattar signing MoU for projects on Thursday.

Pakistan President, UK MPs call for end to India's HR abuses in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (INP): President of the United Kingdom's parliament has expressed deep concern over the human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and the persecution of the minorities in the region.

The matter was discussed as the Members of Parliament (MPs) and the representatives of the Pakistani and Kashmiri diaspora in the UK called on President Alvi at the Aiwan-e-Sadr in Islamabad, the delegation was led by Chairman of Labour Friends of Kashmir UK, Shadow Minister Andrew Gwynne.

The meeting highlighted the need for an action by the international community to put pressure on India to stop its human rights abuses in IIOJK. President Alvi said that India was involved in the genocide of Muslims, persecution and suppression of minorities, burning and destroying the churches in Manipur, and the extra-judicial killings of the leaders of minority communities regionally and internationally.

He said the psyche of India was changing as it had been influenced by the extremist Hindutva ideology which aimed to marginalize minorities, particularly the Muslims.

He mentioned that Pakistan was committed to safeguarding the rights of its minorities, and took prompt action if any injustice was done to them. The President highlighted that India was trying to change the demographic structure of the IIOJK to transform the Kashmiri people into a minority in their own land.

He urged the world to put pressure on India to reverse its illegal demographic changes in the occupied territory. UK Shadow Minister Andrew Gwynne expressed grave concern over the human rights violations and denial of rights to the people of IIOJK. The torture and brutalities being committed by India are unacceptable, he added.

Gwynne mentioned the support for Kashmiri case in the British parliament and underscored the need for putting pressure on India to hold a plebiscite in IIOJK to grant the people of Jammu and Kashmir their right to self-determination.

He said revoking the special status of IIOJK was allowing India to change the demography of the valley. He further said that Pakistan and the UK enjoyed excellent relations in the fields of education and business that needed to be further improved for the betterment of the two countries.

The delegation also expressed concern over the plight of minorities, particularly the Muslims, in the Indian Gujarat and IIOJK. President Alvi lauded the support of the Kashmiri diaspora in the UK and members of the British parliament for supporting the Kashmir cause.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights Khalid George speaking at a session on Human Rights in National College of Arts.

Sub-Committee reviews initiatives taken by oil & gas companies in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chaired by Senator Prince Ahmed Omer Ahmedzi, the Sub-Committee of the Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum meticulously reviewed the initiatives and endeavors undertaken by oil and gas companies in both the public and private sectors concerning corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Balochistan.

Convener of the sub-committee, Prince Ahmed Omer Ahmedzi emphasized that efforts should not be confined solely to Balochistan but encompass the entire nation of Pakistan. He also stressed the imperative presence of all Pakistan's oil and gas companies in the committee meeting.

The Ministry for Energy (Petroleum Division) provided a comprehensive overview of its operations in the province of Balochistan, highlighting the substantial funds allocated for the province's betterment. Senator Saadia Abbasi expressed reservations regarding the diminishing impact of these expenditures over the years, despite the significant sums allocated to their policies.

The Ministry for Energy (Petroleum Division) explained that these funds are administered by the social welfare committee, chaired by a nominated official, and executed by the district government. It was emphasized that this falls outside their jurisdiction, and political factors often hinder their operational processes.

The Convener of the Sub-committee countered that political disparities should not impede essential measures like school and hospital rehabilitation, which are urgently needed. The committee unanimously agreed on the necessity of educational advancement in Balochistan, particularly for girls, emphasizing the long-term benefits of school rehabilitation, sanitation, healthcare, and sports empowerment in the province.

The Ministry for Energy (Petroleum Division) officials told the committee about numerous national-level scholarships and initiating training, development, and healthcare programs. The convener of the sub-committee suggested extending need-based scholarships to students in Balochistan's cities. He also cited the benefit of employing local consultants instead of those from different regions, explaining that local consultants have a better understanding of the procedure.

Additionally, Senator Saadia Abbasi stressed the inclusion of special funds for diabetes and heart-related medications in policies targeting elderly impoverished individuals.

Further, the sub-committee highlighted the importance of promoting sports at both local and international levels. Senator Fida Muhammad proposed extending sports initiatives to benefit disabled individuals. The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum affirmed their efforts to support the visually impaired and disabled.

Convener committee recommended supporting orphanages in Balochistan, taking into account their dire conditions. In conclusion, the committee recommended the participation of all oil and gas companies in the upcoming committee meeting for a thorough review and assessment of their operations. Committee also emphasized the presence of the Minister for Energy (Petroleum Division) and all Managing Directors in the next agenda meeting.

The committee was attended by Senator Saadia Abbasi, Senator Fida Muhammad, and senior officials from the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division).



HYDERABAD: All Sindh primary teachers association city President roshan Ali speaking at a press conference at HPC.