

# QUETTA VOICE

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File photo: Fortunately, the man swept away by floods suddenly grabbed the bushes and saved his life: Photo grabbed from a video made by Manan Mandokhail

## PIA to resume direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Thursday announced that it will resume direct flights from Quetta to the Saudi Arabian capital of Jeddah from next month, a spokesperson for the carrier confirmed.

The news comes as PIA goes through the process of privatisation. The privatisation of the loss-making state-owned enterprises has long been on the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s list of recommendations for the country, which is seeking to strike a deal with the fund for a longer-term bailout this month.

The privatisation commission pre-qualified six consortiums for bidding in June and expects to conclude the privatisation process soon. PIA's sales officer for Hajj and Umrah coordination, Shabbir Fareen, told Down.com today that the airline would launch direct flights between the two cities by August 6 next month.

"Up to 340 passengers could be taken from Quetta to Jeddah within a week through two flights," he said, stating that the flights between the two cities were discontinued after the coronavirus pandemic halted travelling.

Moreover, due to construction work being done on the runway of the airport, foreign flights could not be launched, he added.

He added that with the reintroduction of direct flights from Quetta to the Kingdom, Umrah pilgrims will be able to avoid the hassle of going to Islamabad, Karachi, or Lahore first.

Balochistan Governor Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail — according to a statement issued by his public relations officer — appreciated the resumption of direct flights between the cities, adding that the decision was a "people-friendly" one and that it was "highly commendable".

"Pakistan International Airlines is resuming direct flights from Quetta to Jeddah [Umrah pilgrims] from August 6," the governor said.

"With this good initiative, the people of the entire province will get rid of the compulsion to go to Islamabad, Karachi, or Lahore before going to Saudi Arabia," he said.

"I would like to express my gratitude to the Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif and his entire team and the PIA officials," he added.

## Urgent Call for Preparedness as Monsoon Threatens Balochistan

Syed Ali Shah:

**QUETTA:** As Balochistan braces for the monsoon season, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has declared a high alert in 17 districts, emphasizing the urgent need for robust emergency preparedness and swift action. The region, historically vulnerable to climate-induced disasters, faces imminent threats from heavy rains and potential floods. This situation demands immediate attention from policymakers to mitigate the risks and safeguard the lives and properties of Balochistan's residents.

**A Pattern of Neglect and Unpreparedness**  
Balochistan's struggle with natural calamities is not new. The devastating floods two years ago, which resulted in significant loss

of life and property, serve as a stark reminder of the region's susceptibility to extreme weather events.

These recurrent disasters underscore a pattern of neglect and unpreparedness that needs to be urgently addressed. Despite the repeated warnings and evident impacts of climate change, the response mechanisms often fall short, leaving the vulnerable population at the mercy of nature.

**Comprehensive Emergency Measures**  
In response to the impending monsoon, PDMA Balochistan has identified 17 high-risk districts and placed the administration on red alert.

Director General Jahanzeb Khan confirmed that relief materi-

als have been dispatched, and an emergency plan has been meticulously prepared. Deputy Commissioners have been instructed to compile lists of safe evacuation locations, and local NGOs are on standby to assist. These measures are crucial, but they must be part of a larger, sustainable strategy to enhance resilience against natural disasters.

**The Role of Policymakers**  
Policymakers must recognize the urgent need for long-term solutions to mitigate the impacts of monsoon-related disasters.

This includes investing in robust infrastructure, such as improved drainage systems, flood barriers, and resilient housing.

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## Balochistan Police Launches New Website for Public Complaints

Manan Mandokhail:

**QUETTA:** In a major advancement towards modernizing law enforcement and enhancing public accessibility, the Balochistan Police has officially launched its much-anticipated website. This new platform empowers the public to file complaints online, representing a significant milestone in the province's commitment to improving transparency and efficiency in addressing public grievances.

The launch event saw the presence of prominent provincial figures including Balochistan ministers Mir Shoaib Nowsherwani and Rabihah Hameed Khan Durani, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Balochistan Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, and Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Operations Aetaz Ahmed Goraya.

Mir Shoaib Nowsherwani, speaking at the event, underscored the importance of techno-

logical advancements in public service. "This website is a major step forward in our mission to make the Balochistan Police more accessible and responsive to the needs of the public. It allows citizens to lodge complaints easily and ensures that their voices are heard."

Rabihah Hameed Khan Durani highlighted the government's commitment to leveraging technology for better governance. "The launch of this website is a testament to our dedication to using digital tools to enhance public services. We are confident that this initiative will lead to more efficient handling of complaints and better service delivery."

IGP Balochistan Abdul Khaliq Sheikh expressed his optimism about the website's impact on policing in the region. "The introduction of this online platform is a significant achievement

for the Balochistan Police. It will streamline the process of lodging complaints and ensure a more systematic follow-up. Our aim is to build trust between the police and the public through such initiatives."

DIG Operations Aetaz Ahmed Goraya also shared his views on the occasion, stating, "This website is designed to be user-friendly and accessible to all. We have taken into consideration the diverse needs of our population and ensured that the platform is simple yet effective. We believe this will encourage more people to come forward and report issues without any hesitation."

The website's launch is anticipated to be a transformative move for the Balochistan Police, fostering greater public participation in law enforcement and ensuring more transparent and accountable governance.

## CM Balochistan Expresses Anger Over Delay in SBK Teachers Result

Manan Mandokhail:

**QUETTA:** The Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, has expressed his frustration over the delay in receiving the results of the teaching test conducted under SBK to the Education Department. Despite court orders and multiple letters to SBK, the results remain pending, according to Shahid Rind, spokesperson for the provincial government.

Key points from the statement:  
The Chief Minister has sought an explanation for the delayed results.

SBK has been found guilty of violating its agreement with the Department of Education in several instances.

The tests were conducted by a third party, contrary to the agreement that SBK would conduct them.

The memorandum of understanding required SBK to provide results by May 2023, but the matter went to court in June 2023.

The Chief Minister has directed SBK University to issue a legal notice and has ordered the CMIT to investigate the delay.

The government's stance on the SBK test issue is clear, and court orders will be followed.

Recruitment will be on a contract basis, with scrutiny and interviews to be completed after the release of results.



File photo: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti talking to reporters: Daily Quetta Voice

## No one can ban PTL, says Omar Ayub

**NEWS DESK:** Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Omar Ayub Khan has stated that no one could ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), reaffirming the Supreme Court's stance that PTI is a political party and will remain so.

Speaking to the media outside Adiala Jail on Thursday, Ayub and other PTI leaders shared insights from their recent meeting with the incarcerated PTI founder, Imran Khan.

"The fight for true freedom will continue," Ayub quoted the founder.

He criticised the government, calling its members "naive". "You imprisoned our leader, but our party remains unbroken," he asserted.

Ayub highlighted the Supreme Court's declaration that PTI's political status is unchangeable.

He also addressed the nation's economic challenges, noting the rising prices of gas, petrol, flour, lentils, and sugar.

He accused the current administration of profiting from wheat imports during Mohsin Naqvi's tenure and hinted at upcoming privatisation deals aimed at generating substantial revenue.

"SIFC plans to earn only Rs30 billion through privatisation, while the actual value exceeds Rs1,000 billion," he said.

He also mentioned that the PTI founder had ordered organisational restructuring.

Ayub expressed concerns about jail conditions, alleging interference from intelligence officials during their meeting. "We will summon Islamabad's in-charge, Punjab's IG, the interior secretary, and Adiala Jail's superintendent," Ayub declared.

He condemned the involvement of secret agencies in political affairs, urging them to focus on counter-terrorism instead. Ayub insisted, "This government is out of control; we will get our seats back. The Chief Election Commissioner and commissioners should resign immediately and face Article 6 charges."

PTI leader Raul Hassan warned that any adverse moves against PTI would harm Pakistan, vowing to defend the party's position nationally.

## PPP affirms support for govt, cabinet decisions amid PTI ban controversy

**NEWS DESK:** The PPP secretary general on Thursday said that the party has decided to "stand with the federal cabinet's decisions," days after a few senior party members decried the government's announcement to ban the PTI.

Earlier this week, the federal government announced that it had decided to ban the party and seek Article 6 proceedings against its founder Imran Khan, ex-president Dr Arif Alvi, and former National Assembly (NA) deputy speaker Qasim Suri.

The move appeared to be an attempt to

prevent the PTI from becoming the single largest party in the NA as the announcement was made on the heels of relief given to the party by the top court in the case of the reserved seats as well as to the party chief in the Idarat case.

The announcement attracted flak from across the political spectrum, with stakeholders from different parties terming the move "undemocratic."

Several senior PPP leaders also opposed the move, with former senators Raza Rabbani and Farhatullah Babar openly criticising the idea.

On the other hand, PPP stalwart Khurshheed Shah said the party's leadership — despite being part of the ruling coalition — was not taken on board regarding the decision.

Later, however, the PPP distanced itself from the statements of its senior members, terming them "personal opinions", highlighting that the issue had not been discussed at any level within the party.

On Thursday, PPP Secretary General Nayyar Hussain Bokhari once again clarified the party's stance, solidifying its status as the government's ally.

"PPP stands with the government and will endorse the decisions of the federal cabinet," Bokhari told Dawn.com over the phone.

"We are allies of the federal government, and even if differences of opinion emerged within the party on a particular issue, it was treated as their own viewpoint and has nothing to do with the party's policies."

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in case of PML-N govt's ouster  
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**LHC Administrative Committee undergoes**  
major reshuffle, new duties assigned to 7  
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## Justice and politics

By Muhammad Amir Rana:

## Quetta Safe City Project: Watchful Dawn Breaks Over City Scarred by Tragedy

Editorial:

For too long, Quetta has borne the scars of tragedy etched deep in its heart. From the reverberations of the Civil Hospital blast that snatched innocent lives lawyers to the chilling silence left by the Police Training College massacre, the city has known the harsh sting of terror. But amidst the echoes of pain, a beacon of hope ignites — the Quetta Safe City Project.

This ambitious initiative, finally nearing completion, stands as a testament to the city's resilience and the government's unwavering commitment to its safety. Over 1,400 watchful eyes, embodied in cutting-edge cameras, will soon peer across 255 key locations, woven into a protective tapestry that will blanket the city. No longer will shadows play host to hidden menaces, for Quetta's streets will be bathed in the unforgiving light of vigilant technology.

This symphony of safety transcends mere hardware. It's a collaborative masterpiece, orchestrated by the government, conducted by the expertise of the National Information Technology Board, and played by the dedicated instruments of law enforcement agencies. Together, they harmonize into a powerful chorus of protection, its melody drowning out the discordant notes of fear.

But this fortress of safety is not an imported marvel; it's a local masterpiece, crafted by the ingenuity of Quetta's own sons and daughters. From the command center, a nerve center pulsating with digital intelligence, to the intricate network of cameras, the project hums with the heartbeat of self-reliance. This is not just technology; it's a declaration of intent to be defined by its past, choosing instead to forge a future bright with safety and hope.

As the project prepares to unveil its might, Quetta residents whisper dreams of nights untroubled by anxiety, of carefree laughter echoing through bustling markets, and of evenings where children play unafraid beneath the watchful gaze of technology's sentinels. The Quetta Safe City Project is not just a shield against threats; it's a bridge to a future where trust flourishes between citizens and law enforcers, paving the way for a dawn of peace and prosperity.

However, the truly safe haven requires an unwavering commitment. The government must be the unwavering torchbearer, ensuring the project's lifeblood of resources flows uninterrupted. Law enforcement agencies must be the agile runners, adapting their strategies to dance in perfect step with technology's swift rhythm.

The Quetta Safe City Project is more than just circuits and wires; it's a poem of possibility etched in the city's soul. As the cameras begin their vigil, let us remember that the true poem is penned not by technology, but by the collective will to protect. Together, let us turn the final page on fear and open the first chapter of a safe, vibrant future for this city, rising from the ashes of tragedy to become a fortress of safety under a hopeful sky.

This editorial acknowledges the tragic past of Quetta while celebrating the present progress and highlighting the collective responsibility to ensure the project's success. It uses evocative language and imagery to paint a hopeful picture of the future and expresses appreciation for the government's proactive initiative.

After a lengthy trial in an anti-terrorism court, followed by the rejection of appeals from the superior court, the killers of Sarfraz Shah, who was shot by paramilitary forces in 2011, finally appeared to the president of Pakistan for a pardon under Article 45 of the Constitution.

When the President House denied their appeal in 2018, it was a significant step towards restoring the confidence of ordinary citizens in the existing justice system. In a similar incident in 2010, the arrest of Frontier Corps soldier for the killing of a university student in an urban area in Balochistan proved to be a significant confidence-building measure between the local populace and the security forces. However, such examples remain rare in Pakistan's legal and judicial landscape.

Last year, on Jan 23, a dark day unfolded when Rao Anwar, a police officer accused of killing over 400 people in fake encounters, was acquitted in the high-profile Naqibullah murder case. This case had significantly impacted the political landscape of Pakistan-dominated areas, and the army chief at that time had personally assured justice for the victim's family. Adding to the irony, the Sitarra-i-Shujaat was awarded to a police officer from Punjab who was implicated in the Sahiwal tragedy. This tragedy occurred in January 2019, when the Counter Terrorism Department mistakenly killed a family travelling to a wedding ceremony, suspecting them of being terrorists. The court eventually acquitted all the accused officials.

A lot has been written on these four cases from the legal and human rights perspective, but the public's curiosity has no limits. These cases expose the power dynamics of how power corrupts officers in law enforcement agencies (LEAs), how low-ranking and high-ranking officials misuse their authority, and how the security protects them. Sarfraz Shah's case is a rare example of justice done. Perhaps the reason was that the culprits had little defence. Sarfraz, a 22-year-old man who went out for a walk in a public park in Karachi, was killed by Rangers, and a camera captured the entire scene. This began an era of social media activism and vigilante justice. Civil society played a vital role in bringing justice to the victim's family.

The killing of university student Hayat Baloch in Turbat, amidst volatile security and rising political grievances, is enabled by the flawed political, social and justice systems, which continue to sup-

port figures like Rao Anwar and the late Chaudhry Aslam, notorious for their extrajudicial practices. Ironically, LEAs justify such unlawful actions and demand both immunity and reward. Even when caught, legal loopholes and judicial leniency, as seen in the Sahiwal tragedy, often shield them from consequences. The anti-terrorism narrative conveniently allows LEAs to sweep these incidents under the rug, with no real accountability within the civilian, political and judicial systems. An audit of recent 'police encounters' would likely expose a staggering number of injustices, a fact the system is unwilling to confront.

If the state institutions had been vigilant enough, they would have recognised the danger of engaging with the families of missing persons from Balochistan who are protesting in Islamabad. A dialogue with them would have been more effective, but the institutions fear that the issue of the missing persons is complicated and could damage their reputation.

Apparently, not only the state institutions but also political parties are convinced that publicly sympathising with these families will come at a cost, and they are deliberately trying to distance themselves from the protesters. The mainstream

media narrative, especially after genocide. The establishment continues to bully them into silence, but I don't know how much longer for. Advocates of free speech are the ones who suppress the most marginalised voices. These are usually the same people against DEI initiatives which, they claim, is the only reason Gay got the job. But with access to formidable resources, are now trying to equate DEI initiatives with antisemitism. On the other side are Palestinians and their supporters with far fewer resources but with truth on their side.

The media's focus on Gay's 'plagiarism' should be used to explore Iran's rationale for its missile attack, targeting a camp of the militant group in Gaza. It is said to be engaged in an armed conflict with the Iranian state. IRGC should not be allowed to do with asserting its status as the top military force in Iran. Once its attitude towards the Palestinian response in Gaza was always on the cards.

There were many compulsions, and the first obvious, official one was that the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty had been breached and violated violently. Therefore, a response had to come to tell one and all the consequences of attacking Pakistan.

If one were to look at other factors that were 'being mentioned by the country's media, the foremost appeared to be the need to spotlight the defence forces' capacity to respond to any threat posed by external powers, especially the backdrop of criticism of the security establishment for its political engineering.

In brief, the domestic factor was not an insignificant one, particularly with social media counts belonging to one particular political party, whose turn it is to be on the receiving end of the wrath of the powers that be, mocking their nemesis and questioning the latter's ability to respond militarily.

Little wonder Pakistan's response was not as robust as that by several TV personalities known to have close ties with the establishment. One can safely say their tone and tenor would have been much different had the decision been not to retaliate, for example, in any case, some credit was earned by the military leadership, as even their usual

detractors conceded the development as having had a positive impact on their 'popularity' ratings. That Pakistan remains a complex story to tell for journalists like me was demonstrated by some other media personalities who appeared ecstatic that the missile attack would potentially derail elections, as 'this national security challenge' needed to be addressed urgently, setting aside all other national priorities. Whose view were they articulating? The caretaker.

However, the speed of de-escalation, which started with a conciliatory statement from the foreign ministry in Tehran and followed through by diplomats with intelligence background, poured cold water over the dreams of the 'election postponement' camp. This camp's wishful thinking was strange anyway after the Supreme Court endorsed the ECP decision to derail the PTI of its electoral symbol, while overruling the Peshawar High Court verdict on the matter. It should have been clear to all that one of the last obstacles to an establishment-controlled 'reset to 2016' election had been removed.

That decision seems to have convinced the political parties, most notably the PTI, that elections will indeed be held in under three weeks' time and that, in turn, they need to gear up their mass contact campaigns to win, even if their main opponent was fighting with their hands tied.

Despite recent doubts, mainly on account of the 'democratic' Western nations' response to the Gaza genocide, I have long believed that even a watershed democratic order is better than autocratic rule, as the former affords some openness and a semblance at least of basic rights. Call me naive, if you will.

In Pakistan all political parties without exception have justifiably blamed the establishment for the decision-making process and eventually ending up undermining the process in various instances, it helped put in place. They also need to do some serious soul-searching on the matter. With elections round the corner, which party's manifesto has inspired confidence in you? That is, if you have been fortunate enough to have seen one. I haven't.

## Beyond headlines

By Muna Khan:

YOU can't get your news from headlines. I was reminded of this last month in the US, when reading stories about Harvard president

Claudine Gay's resignation following allegations of plagiarism. In reality, her resignation was the result of a well-coordinated campaign which had to do more with race and misogyny than upholding academic principles. But you wouldn't think so reading the headlines.

This campaign to oust the first Black president at Harvard was led by conservative activist Christopher Rufo, who is against DEI (diversity equity inclusion initiatives) and Bill Ackman, Harvard alum and hedge fund billionaire. They were joined by donors and Republican elite Stefank, who headed a Congressional committee looking into accusations of antisemitism on elite campuses. Essentially, they were enraged by Gay's 'failure' to condemn antisemitism, a pro-Palestinian student demonstrations on Harvard.

"Does calling for the genocide of Jews violate Harvard's rules of bullying and harassment?" asked Stefank, who her-

self is a Harvard alum and was removed from an advisory board after she said the 2020 election was stolen from Donald Trump.

When the hearings were held, the results, her detractors amplified the accusations of plagiarism.

An investigation by Harvard into those claims found "few incidents of inadequate citations" but no wrongdoing. In reality, the right-wing (read rich men) cannot tolerate a Black woman in charge of an institute whose history is rooted in protecting white interests.

Gay resigned on Jan 2, but the tritona of Ackman, Rufo and Stefank — as MSNBC's Ali Velshi called them — has vowed to pursue probes into "deep institutional rot" at Harvard. I read this as protecting elite interests, one of which says is freedom of speech on campuses.

But whose speech do they want to protect? US colleges have never been bastions of free speech because Palestinians, and other marginalised voices, have struggled to tell their stories. However, this is changing as DEI initiatives have allowed new perspectives, and younger generations no longer accept mainstream

media narratives, especially after genocide. The establishment continues to bully them into silence, but I don't know how much longer for.

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## Missiles no threat to polls, but...

By Abbas Nasir:

IRAN and Pakistan exchanged missiles, presumably by design, aimed at Baloch 'camps' either side of the border this week, before quickly escalating to a full-scale war and returning to talk of 'brotherly relations'.

As bizarre and pointless as the exchange initiated by Iran appeared, the rapidity of the de-escalation appeared equally surprising, as diplomats quickly took over the discourse from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Pakistani military, both of whom held centre stage, belligerently and spoke through their weapons.

A whole piece would be needed to explore Iran's rationale for its missile attack, targeting a camp of the militant group in Gaza. It is said to be engaged in an armed conflict with the Iranian state. IRGC should not be allowed to do with asserting its status as the top military force in Iran. Once its attitude towards the Palestinian response in Gaza was always on the cards.

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By Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry:

NEARLY every country facing the kind of security challenges that Pakistan confronts maintains a national security council (NSC) as a principal decision-making body that brings together the civil and military leadership onto one platform.

However, in Pakistan, this idea has not been fully embraced. Gen Ayub Khan constituted a national advisory council to give the impression of collective decision-making by the civil and military leadership in 1969. Gen Yahya Khan established an NSC for advice. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto constituted a cabinet committee on national security

in 1976. Gen Zia also created an NSC in 1985, but abolished it the same year. In 1997, the interim government of Malik Meraj Khan established a council for defence and national security to aid the government on a defence committee of the cabinet.

In October 1998, Gen Jehangir Karamat floated the idea of an NSC for institutionalised decision-making on national security. However, the suggestion was resisted by the Shariq government on grounds that it would give constitutional status to the army's role in political

governance. Gen Musharraf revived the idea in 2004 and set up an NSC as a statutory body, which worked till 2008. In 2013, prime minister Nawaz Sharif softened up to the idea but reconstituted it as a national security committee (not council), subservient to the cabinet.

Everly, the idea of having an NSC could never take root in Pakistan.

The story is no different when it comes to the office of national security adviser. Pakistan had NSAs in 1969, 2004 to 2008 and then 2013 to 2022. Since April 2022, there has been no NSA.

Clearly, there is no consensus in Pakistan about the powers and

role of an NSC. Civilian rulers perceive it as a forum to give the military a greater say in political governance, which they regard as undermining authority on our borders with Iran, Afghanistan and India. Pakistan needs an NSC to address security challenges.

It is worth noting that national security is not defined merely comprehensively as a tripod of traditional security, economic security and human security. Given the interconnected and wider spectrum of threats to national security — from terrorism to non-traditional — a whole-of-the-nation approach is needed.

It would address the relevant to make in-

rest of the world is managing decisions on issues of national security. In the US, the NSC was created in 1947 as the president's principal forum for considering national security and foreign policy matters. It is staffed by the president and his regular attendees include the vice president, secretaries of defence, domestic and foreign relations, and homeland, chairman joint chiefs of staff and director of national intelligence.

It has become the president's principal arm for coordinating defence, domestic and foreign policies and across federal agencies. Time has shown that this forum has enabled the president to make in-

formed policy decisions. One of our neighbourhood, India's prime minister Vajpayee established an NSC in 1998, six months after the South Asia nuclear tests, and one month after Gen Karamat had proposed the idea in Pakistan. Since then, India's NSC has functioned regularly on matters relating to the external and internal security of India, with key union ministers and military leaders in attendance.

Five NSAs (three with diplomacy and two with intelligence background) have served the country. The NSC has a three-tiered structure, comprising a strategic policy group, an advisory

board, and a joint intelligence committee. Pakistan can learn from these and several other examples where national security interests have been better served by institutionalised decision-making. Given that we have border security issues with our neighbours to the east, west and south, and with the forces of terrorism rising over their head again, the next elected government needs to consider setting up a fully empowered NSC, chaired by the prime minister, and also appoint an NSA, so that serious challenges to Pakistan's national security can be addressed collectively and more effectively.



## “Chinese Bridge” summer camp held in Ganzhou for Pakistani students

BEIJING (INP): The 2024 “Chinese Bridge” Summer Camp for Pakistani students kicked off at the Jiangxi University of Science and Technology (JXUST) in Ganzhou, marking the beginning of a two-week immersive experience for 20 Pakistani educators and students.

It was part of an effort to further strengthen the friendship and cultural exchange between China and Pakistan, Gwadar Pro

reported. Representing institutions including the Punjab University (PU), Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), and the Atichon College in Lahore, the participants gathered in Ganzhou to embark on a journey of language learning and cultural discovery.

The summer camp, a program under the auspices of the Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban) and supported by the Center for Language Education and Cooperation (CLEC) of the Ministry of Education, China, offers a unique opportunity for the Pakistani students and teachers to learn Mandarin Chinese, decipher the intricacies of Chinese characters, and delve deep into the rich tapestry of Chinese culture. The two-week program is designed to be a comprehensive experience, blending

intensive language classes with cultural workshops, traditional Chinese art classes, and excursions to iconic historical sites across China, and providing participants with firsthand experiences of China’s heritage.

Additionally, the camp facilitates a two-way cultural exchange. Participants will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the daily life of the Chinese people and they are encouraged to share their own rich culture and heritage.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Mir Shoaib Noshirwani, Mr Zahoor Ahmed Buledi are meeting.

## Niger floods toll increases, 53 dead, 18,000 affected: UN

ABUJA (INP): Floodwaters also destroyed 1,636 homes, 29 classrooms, and killed 10,930 livestock, the agency said, citing the Niger Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management.

OCHA warned that more than 247,000 people could be affected by the floods before the end of the rainy season, which typically concludes in late September.

As of July 15, the floods had claimed 53 lives, impacting 2,501 households and a total of 18,098 people, according to a United Nations report.

port the Nigerian government by mobilising food stocks, emergency shelter and hygiene kits in the areas most severely impacted by the worsening weather conditions. “Exacerbated by global climate change, flooding is a recurring threat in Niger,” the UN agency said.

According to Nigerian authorities, nearly every region of the country has been affected, with the south-central region of Maradi particularly hard-hit. But the capital Niamey and its two million inhabitants, often struck by deadly floods, have been spared thus far.

To mitigate the effects on the population, authorities have been sending text messages “urging people” to “stay sheltered”, “secure livestock”, and to call a toll-free emergency number.

The rainy season in Niger, spanning from June to September, regularly results in fatalities, even in the country’s typically dry desert regions. Floods were particularly deadly in 2022, causing 195 deaths and affecting 400,000 people.

## Pakistani jeweler eyes bigger role in China-ASEAN trade

BEIJING (INP): Pakistani jeweler eyes bigger role in China-ASEAN trade event, held in Nanning, the provincial capital of Guangxi, China.

According to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Thursday, in an effort to bolster the global footprint of Pakistani jewelry, Pakistani jeweler Aqeel Chaudhry attended the event and made a bigger show to promote the Pakistani jewellery.

He highlighted his commitment to the Chinese market and exploring new horizons for business expansion within the ASEAN region.

The event, which attracted 110 international companies and investment promotion agencies in atten-

dance, including 73 Fortune 500 companies and industry leaders, served as a platform for fostering international business collaborations and unlocking new market opportunities.

Chaudhry’s presence underscored his keen interest in Guangxi’s strategic position as a gateway to ASEAN countries, thereby expanding the reach of Pakistani jewelry.

“Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has emerged as a vital link, fostering closer trade ties and communication between China and ASEAN,” the jeweler noted.

“For us, Guangxi represents not just a gateway but a bridge, enabling seamless B2B and B2C market access.

This event presents unparalleled opportunities for us to expand our horizons and deepen our connections within the region.”

The event served as a precursor to the upcoming 7th China International Import Expo (CIIE), scheduled in Shanghai from November 5 to 10, 2024, where Chaudhry’s jewelry brand will once again be a prominent participant for the 7th consecutive year.

“Participating in CIIE has always been a milestone for us,” he stated. “This year, we aim to further strengthen our international presence by showcasing an array of innovative products. We believe that by offering an interactive and experiential

display, visitors will be able to personally appreciate the unique charm and craftsmanship of our jewelry.”

Chaudhry’s plans for the upcoming CIIE go beyond mere product showcases. He intends to leverage the expo’s global reach to expand the network of international buyers for Pakistani jewelry brands and explore potential partnerships that could open new avenues for growth.

“We are excited about the prospect of connecting with like-minded businesses and investors from around the world. Our ultimate goal is to establish a leading brand in the international jewelry market, and CIIE provides us with the perfect stage to achieve this,” he added.



HYDERABAD: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah visit along with advisor attending the mourning procession of Ashura on Youme-e-Ashura, the 10th day of Muharram-ul-Haram station road.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti is presiding over the meeting held regarding the supply of drinking water to Dera Bugti.

## FIA Interpol arrests nine wanted criminals from UAE

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) National Central Bureau (NCB) Interpol has arrested nine wanted criminals from the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

According to the FIA spokesperson, the arrested individuals were wanted by the Punjab Police in various cases.

The arrested suspects include Irfan Asghar, Farhan Nazakat, Samar Abbas, Najibullah, Saddam Hussain,

Muhammad Rafeeq, Muhammad Saqib, Muhammad Usman, and Tariq Mehmood. The FIA spokesperson revealed that the accused were involved in murder and attempted murder cases, with some of them evading arrest for up to 14 years.

The arrested individuals will be brought back to Pakistan, with a team already dispatched to UAE for their extradition.

Earlier, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Interpol arrested

a wanted criminal, Rafeeq Ahmed, from Saudi Arabia.

The suspect identified as Rafeeq Ahmed, was wanted in several cases, including murder, and had been on the run since 2016.

The FIA Interpol had issued a Red Notice for Ahmed’s arrest, and he was finally apprehended in Saudi Arabia after eight years and brought back to Karachi.

In May, it was reported that over the

last six months, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) National Central Bureau (NCB) Interpol of Pakistan successfully apprehended 66 accused individuals wanted for serious crimes across various countries.

These arrested individuals were wanted in cases involving murder, attempted murder, robbery, kidnapping, and corruption, while, Red notices were issued by FIA-NCB Interpol Pakistan to facilitate their apprehension.

## PML-N wishes to finish PTI, its founder in one bite: Fawad Chaudhry

JHELUM (INP): Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry said that the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders were taken by surprise after the government announced decision to ban the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

Speaking at a private TV channel program, he said that the government will have to state reasons to justify the ban on the Imran Khan-founded party.

“Even PML-N leaders were surprised by

the announcement of banning the PTI,” he said, adding that the country’s politics cannot move forward without the PTI founder.

Responding to a question regarding the political environment of Pakistan, he said that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz wished to finish the PTI and its founder. However, the former leader party managed to secure majority in the election, he added.

For Fawad Chaudhry, the country’s

political strategy and was only relying on lawyers.

The politico said that the former ruling party should have made alliance with parties who object the February 8 election.

“The political strategy shows what will you do in future. The PTI should have talked to JUI-F, Jama-e-Islami and GDA.”

Even if you don’t need to talk, at least give an agenda,” Chaudhry added.



QUETTA: Murad Jan Gachhi meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jar Khan Mandokhail.

## Top Democrat Adam Schiff calls on Biden to exit presidential race

LOS ANGELES (INP): Representative Adam Schiff on Wednesday became the most heavyweight Democrat so far to publicly urge US President Joe Biden to step aside for another candidate to face Donald Trump.

He called on his ally to “pass the torch.”

Schiff, a key congressional powerbroker, praised Biden but told the Los Angeles Times that he doubts that the 81-year-old incumbent can defeat Trump — a threat to “the very foundation of our democracy.”

The Californian, who is expected to win a Senate seat this November, is one of the party’s most influential members and a key ally in the legislature for the White House.

He served as chairman of the House intelligence panel when Democrats had the majority in 2019 and shot

national prominence as lead prosecutor during then-president Trump’s first impeachment trial.

In a statement to the Los Angeles Times, Schiff aired his worry gripping the party, although often in private, that questions over Biden’s age and health will doom him in the November election. Those concerns rocketed after Biden performed badly in a televised debate with Trump last month, often looking confused and unable to articulate.

Since then, Biden has repeatedly said he intends to stay in the race, arguing that he remains the best person to defeat Trump. Polls show a tight overall contest, but with Trump pulling ahead in key swing states. Schiff called Biden “one of the most consequential presidents in our nation’s history.”

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PRO No. 276/19-07-2024 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (MS) PHE DIVISION QUETTA

## Fitch predicts technocrat setup in Pakistan in case of PML-N govt's ouster

ISLAMABAD (INP): Global credit rating agency Fitch has predicted the possibility of a technocrat setup in Pakistan in case the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government is ousted.

In its report on Pakistan, the rating agency predicted that the PML-N led coalition government will remain in power for the next 18 months with no immediate plans for fresh elections.

The incumbent government will continue to implement the reforms mandated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that will enable the economy to grow.

However, Fitch mentioned that the political upheaval might affect the economic activities in Pakistan along with the impacts of climate change including floods and drought.

According to the rating agency, former prime minister Imran Khan is unlikely to get released from jail in the fore-

seeable future despite getting relief in a number of cases.

The agency went on to predict that the next general elections in Pakistan will be held in 2029.

On the economic front, Pakistan's current account deficit is projected to remain 1% in FY 2024/25.

The Fitch report suggested that the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) might reduce its key policy rate from 22% to 16% in 2024.

A day earlier, Moody's said that Pakistan's recent staff-level

agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will improve funding prospects for the cash-strapped South Asian nation.

The Shehbaz Sharif-led government and the IMF reached a three-year, \$7 billion aid package deal on Saturday, providing much-needed respite to the nation. This agreement marks a critical step towards

stabilizing Pakistan's economy, which has been under severe strain.

Moody's commented that the new IMF programme would enhance Pakistan's (Caa3 stable) funding prospects. However, Moody's cautioned that the government's ability to sustain reform implementation is crucial for Pakistan to continually unlock financing throughout the IMF programme's duration, thereby easing government liquidity risks durably.

Moody's also acknowledged potential challenges, noting that social tensions arising from the high cost of living could impede reform implementation, especially with higher taxes and future adjustments to energy tariffs.

"Moreover, risks that the coalition government may not have a sufficiently strong electoral mandate to continually implement difficult reforms remain," the agency added.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Moinis Naqvi chairing a meeting of Committee regarding National Drug Survey.

## Second monsoon spell likely in next two days in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Karachi is currently experiencing hot and humid weather, with temperatures soaring and sea breezes suspended. The Met Department has forecasted that the weather will remain hot for the next three days, but relief may be on the way as the second spell of monsoon is expected to arrive from July 19 or 20.

Residents of Karachi are enduring a situation of humidity accompanied by light clouds, exacerbating the heat due to the lack of sea breezes.

On Thursday, the city recorded a minimum temperature of 32.5 degrees Celsius, with the maximum likely to reach 39 degrees Celsius. However, the intense humidity, currently at 75%, is causing the heat index

to feel closer to 40 degrees Celsius. The heat intensity will be felt more due to the humid weather.

The current temperature in the city is 34 degrees Celsius, with winds blowing at a speed of 10km per hour, according to the Met Department. The absence of sea breezes has intensified the feeling of heat and humidity, making conditions uncomfortable for residents.

The department has indicated that sea breezes are likely to resume in the evening, which could provide some relief from the oppressive heat. Additionally, light rain is predicted in the suburbs of Karachi today, which might offer a temporary respite from the high temperatures.

Earlier, it was reported that the temperature in Karachi is expected to reach between 35 and 37 degrees Celsius during the daytime, with the humidity levels hovering around 65%. Due to the suspension of sea breezes, the heat index was expected to feel as high as 40 degrees.

While the heat remained intense in the city, there was a chance of rain forecast accompanied by thunderstorms in certain areas.

Monsoon winds were said to be making their way into Sindh, which could bring some relief, particularly in rural regions. Westerly winds are also anticipated on Thursday and Friday, possibly influencing the weather patterns.

## LHC Administrative Committee undergoes major reshuffle, new duties assigned to 7 judges

LAHORE (INP): The Administration Committee of the Lahore High Court (LHC) comprising seven senior judges undergone a reshuffle of responsibilities on Thursday.

According to the report, LHC Chief Justice Ayesha Neelum approved the reassignment of administrative duties for the seven judges.

Following the LHC Chief Justice's approval, the amended Allocation of Business Order was issued.

According to the order, the Chief Justice will have authority over the transfer, posting, promotion, and disciplinary action of district court judges.

The Chief Justice also has control over the Directorate of Judicial and Case Management and the Directorate of District Ju-

diectary, Administration, and Supervision.

Additionally, the Chief Justice holds administrative powers related to HR and the training of judicial officers.

The new assignments of the seven judges are as follows:

Justice Shujaat Ali Khan: Appointed as the administrative and monitoring judge for special courts of customs, taxation, and anti-smuggling, banking courts, special courts for offences in banks, and special central courts.

Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza: Assigned as the administrative and monitoring judge for narcotics control courts, consumer courts, drug courts, and all jails across the province.

Justice Syed Shahbaz Ali Rizvi: Designated as the administrative and monitoring judge for the session criminal cases, and the research centre.

Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh: Designated as the administrative and monitoring judge for the In-

tellectual Property Tribunal, Punjab Environmental Tribunal, Child Protection Court, and museums.

Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan: Appointed as the administrative and monitoring judge for special courts of customs, taxation, and anti-smuggling, banking courts, special courts for offences in banks, and special central courts.

Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza: Assigned as the administrative and monitoring judge for narcotics control courts, consumer courts, drug courts, and all jails across the province.

Justice Syed Shahbaz Ali Rizvi: Designated as the administrative and monitoring judge for the session criminal cases, and the research centre.

Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh: Designated as the administrative and monitoring judge for the In-



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja chairing 60th Board of Directors meeting of Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB).



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on the reforms and digitisation on the Federal Board of Revenue.

## PM Shehbaz wishes US President Biden swift recovery from Covid-19

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif extended good wishes to US President Joe Biden for his "swift and complete" recovery after he tested positive for Covid-19 after which he went into isolation, which will take him off the election campaign trail for days.

In a post uploaded on X platform on Thursday morning, PM Shehbaz Sharif wrote: "Wishing President Biden swift and complete recovery from Covid. Good wishes."

Earlier, President Biden tested positive for Covid with mild symptoms Wednesday shortly after conceding he would consider dropping his re-election bid if doctors diagnosed him with a serious medical condition.

The 81-year-old Democrat gave reporters the thumbs-up and said "I feel good" as he cut short a trip to Las Vegas and flew to his beach home in Delaware to go into isolation,

which will take him off the campaign trail for days.

Biden thanked well-wishers on X, adding that "I will be isolating as I recover, and during this time I will continue to work to get the job done for the American people."

The infection comes at a critical moment for Biden's campaign, with the president seeking to show he is up to the job after a disastrous debate performance against rival Donald Trump sparked concerns about his health and calls from some Democrats for him to step aside.

It is also the latest development in a tumultuous few days in an already frenetic White House race that saw Trump survive an assassination attempt at a campaign rally.

Biden was forced to cancel a speech to a union representing Latino workers who will be crucial for his election bid, having attended a campaign event earlier in the day

and given a radio interview.

His spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre said Biden was vaccinated and boosted, was now taking the Covid medication Paxlovid and "continues to carry out the full duties of the office while in isolation."

White House doctor Kevin O'Connor said Biden had complained of suffering from a runny nose, a cough and "general malaise," and after attending the campaign event he tested positive. "His symptoms remain mild," O'Connor said, adding that Biden's respiratory rate, temperature and blood oxygen levels all remained normal. Biden was seen walking from his limousine to his plane at Las Vegas without a mask. "Good," he said when asked how he felt. "I feel good."

Janet Murguía, the president of the Unidos union for Latino workers, told the crowd about the diagnosis shortly before the White House announcement.

## PTI demands issuance of reserved seats notification, CEC resignation

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has demanded the issuance of notification regarding allocation of reserved seats to the party, declaring imposing any ban on the PTI would tantamount to government's countdown.

Talking to media men after attending joint parliamentary party meeting of the PTI and Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) in Islamabad on Thursday, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said the government was on "a collision course" with the judiciary. "It's time to get Supreme Court's decisions including the reserved seats one implemented," he added.

Omar Ayub once again demanded the resignation of the chief election commissioner after

the apex court's verdict to allocate reserved seats to the PTI.

Shibli Faraz said the PTI getting back its "snatched" mandate. "The Supreme Court's decision has rocked the government and the rulers are running out of options," he added.

Shibli Faraz further said that it is being said that the government is there only for 18 months after which and technocrats' set-up will take over. According to sources, Gohar Ali Khan, Omar Ayub, Shibli Faraz, Sahibzada Hamid Raza and Sheikh Waqas Akram attended the joint parliamentary party meeting which was held at the Parliament House.

The meeting was also attended by Asad Qaiser, Ali

Muhammad Khan, Zartaj Gul, Atif Khan, Shandana Gulzar, Awab Abbas Pabbi, Moinis Azz, Faisal Saleem, Raja Nasir Abbas and Humayun Mohmand.

The members discussed the four-point agenda including re-implementation of the Supreme Court's decision regarding reserved seats and gave their input, the sources said, adding the PTI leaders later stage a protest march outside the Parliament.

Before the meeting, Gohar Ali Khan said that appointing ad hoc judges in the Supreme Court is meant to undermine the apex court's decision on reserved seats. "We will respond to any government's decision to ban the PTI. Nothing can challenge the public's power," Gohar said,



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with the Delegation of Pakistan Mobile Phone Manufacturers Association (PMPMA).

## Urgent Call for Preparedness as Monsoon Threatens Balochistan

Furthermore, it is essential to implement comprehensive land use planning and enforce strict regulations to prevent construction in flood-prone areas.

Education and community engagement are equally important. Residents must be well-informed about the risks and equipped with the knowledge to respond effectively during emergencies. Regular drills and awareness campaigns can empower communities, making them active participants in their own safety.

**Addressing Climate Change**

The root cause of these increasing natural disasters lies in climate change and global

warming. Balochistan, like many other regions, is bearing the brunt of these global phenomena. It is imperative for policymakers to advocate for and implement policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable practices. This includes transitioning to renewable energy sources, protecting natural habitats, and promoting sustainable agriculture.

**A Call to Action**

The current high alert in Balochistan should serve as an eye-opener for policymakers at both the provincial and national levels. It is a call to action to prioritize the safety and well-being of the people over short-term economic gains.

The cost of inaction is too high, as evidenced by past disasters. By investing in preparedness, infrastructure, and sustainable practices, we can build a resilient Balochistan capable of withstanding the challenges posed by climate change.

The time to act is now. Policymakers must rise to the occasion and ensure that the necessary measures are in place to protect the people of Balochistan.

The monsoon season brings with it the threat of disaster, but with proper preparation and proactive policies, it also offers an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and commitment to a safer, more resilient future.