

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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Balochistan Agricultural Minister, Ali Madad Jattak presenting a condemnation resolution against recent terrorist acts in the Balochistan Assembly session: Photo provided by DGPR

Miscrants torch school, detonate IED at police vehicle in KP's Buner

NEWS DESK: Unidentified suspects torched a government primary school on Monday and detonated an improvised explosive device (IED) at a police vehicle returned from the burnt school in Meraqi in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Buner district.

No casualties were reported in either incident.

Iraz Khan, the spokesperson for the Buner district police officer (DPO), told Dawn.com that both incidents happened in the hamlet of Meraqi, located along the border of the Chagharzai area.

"A government primary school [for both girls and boys] was burned by unknown miscreants in the late night. Our police party was returning from the torched school after thoroughly inspecting it and as they passed the area, an IED went off on the rough village road connecting Pshilor Shaugla to Gul Bandai, however no human loss or injury [was] reported."

Fire Ravages Historic Government Science College: Calls for Independent Inquiry Intensify

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: A devastating fire has reduced a significant portion of the ancient Government Science College in Balochistan to ashes, sparking widespread outrage and calls for an independent investigation.

The blaze, which officials attribute to a short circuit, has not only destroyed the historic institution but has also jeopardized the education of thousands of students who relied on its resources.

Balochistan Education Minister Raheela Durran, who visited the charred remains of the college, ordered the formation of an inquiry committee led by Secretary of Higher Education Hafiz Muhammad Tahir.

However, the move has done little to assuage the fears and concerns of those who have dedicated their lives to this institution. "Today, our house burnt and turned into ashes," lamented Raza Ulfat Kakar, a professor at the college, tears streaming down his face as he surveyed the destruction.

"This college was more than just a building; it was a sanctuary for knowledge, a place where countless minds were nurtured. We demand a thorough and independent investigation into this incident. We need answers, not just for us but for the future of students whose future now hangs in the balance."

Balochistan Assembly Approves Resolution Condemning Terrorist Attacks for Debate

Manan Mandokhail, Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: The Balochistan Provincial Assembly has endorsed a resolution condemning the recent terrorist attacks in the province, paving the way for an in-depth discussion in the upcoming session.

The resolution was introduced during a session chaired by Deputy Speaker Ghazala Gola, which commenced 20 minutes behind schedule.

Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Ali Madad Jattak, brought the resolution forward, vehemently condemning the August 26 attacks and urging strong measures against those seeking to destabilize Balochistan.

"The entire nation is grieving over these cowardly acts of terrorism," Jattak stated, offering condolences to the victims' families.

He also pointed out the exploitation of the youth by nefarious elements, citing the recent

tragic suicide of Mahil Baloch in Bela, which left her father in shock.

The resolution garnered support from both government and opposition members.

Opposition Leader Mir Younis Aziz Zehri backed the resolution, and Deputy Speaker Gola merged it with a similar resolution from the opposition, resulting in a joint resolution. The assembly sanctioned the resolution for a one-day debate in the next session.

The five-hour meeting also saw extensive discussions on the aftermath of the recent heavy rains in Balochistan.

Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam member Zabti Reki criticized the government's selective designation of certain districts as disaster-prone, while other severely affected areas, including his own constituency, were ignored. Several members, including

Zamrik Achakzai, Ghulam Dastgir Badini, Zafar Agha, and Dr. Nawaz Kabzai, voiced similar concerns, urging the government to provide relief efforts based on merit and extend support to all impacted regions.

A brief walkout occurred when opposition members objected to the deputy speaker's decision to curtail the debate, but they later returned to the assembly floor at the government's request.

The session concluded with the approval of the resolution condemning the August 26 terrorist attacks, with further discussions set for the next session on October 3.

The assembly's focus on tackling both terrorism and the consequences of the rains underscores the significant challenges facing Balochistan and the necessity for coordinated government action.



Front portion of the ancient Science College burnt: photo: Ismail Khan

professor, echoed these sentiments with a deep sense of loss. "It's as if our home has been burned down," he said, his voice filled with grief. "This college has stood for generations, and its destruction is a blow to the entire educational community. We urgently need the government to prioritize its reconstruction and repair. But more than that, we need transparency and accountability. An independent inquiry is crucial

to ensure that the truth comes out and that this never happens again." The loss of Government Science College is a tragedy that affects not just the faculty and students, but the entire province.

The institution has been a beacon of education in Balochistan for decades, and its destruction is a setback for the community.

As the inquiry committee begins its work, there are growing demands for an independent in-

vestigation to ensure that the true cause of the fire is uncovered and that those responsible are held accountable.

The professors, students, and citizens of Balochistan are united in their call for justice. They urge the government to take immediate action to rebuild the college and restore it to its former glory, ensuring that the future of education in the province remains bright.

Ziarat's Ancient Forests Under Siege: Urgent Action Needed

Ayub Tareen:

QUETTA: Ziarat Valley, renowned for hosting the world's second-largest cypress forest, is witnessing a tragic loss of its valuable natural heritage. According to local sources, the indiscriminate felling of cypress trees has intensified, with dozens of trees being cut down and used for blinds. This alarming situation raises serious concerns about the effectiveness of the institutions responsible for managing and protecting these forests.

The cypress trees, which grow only one inch per year, are a national heritage. However, the funding allocated for their conservation is reportedly being misused, with crores of rupees distributed on political grounds rather than being utilized for the protection of the forests. Local sources reveal that from the conservator to the deputy conservator, the entire system appears to be in disarray, allowing the continuous and unchecked cutting of these ancient trees.

The onset of winter has only ex-

acerbated the situation, as illegal logging activities have increased. In the Chauri area of Ziarat, where no official writ seems to exist, the destruction of cypress trees continues unabated. The absence of the Deputy Conservator of the Forest Department in District Ziarat has further compounded the problem, with forest employees neglecting their duties, as evidenced by the cutting of dozens of trees.

Tourism, a significant contributor to Ziarat Valley's economy, is also at risk. Millions of tourists visit the valley to experience its ancient and beautiful cypress forest. The failure of the Conservator of Sibi Division to visit and address the situation in Ziarat has left the local community and environmentalists calling for immediate action.

There is an urgent need for a responsible and dedicated non-local officer to take charge and ensure the protection of these invaluable forests before it's too late.



Echoes of the Past: Afghanistan's Medieval Approach to Moral Codification

Zia ud Din:

The recent orthodox treatment of law in Afghanistan, deeply rooted in faith, starkly reminds us of the Taliban's historical stance on social codes. By codifying 35 articles and enforcing them legally, the regime of Mullah Habibullah has mirrored the Afghanistan of Umar's era. Legalizing the denial of education to girls highlights the Taliban's defiance of their commitments to the international community just three years ago in Doha. In the 21st century, where the state exists to serve individuals rather than the other way around, such restrictions on personal freedoms serve as apocalyptic warnings. This brutal code of ethics is not only contrary to Islam but also against the spirit

of conservative attire are matters of grave concern. In addition, the suppression of women's voices outside the home, brutal punishments, and limiting their roles to household tasks create a misogynistic society. Three years ago, many analysts were hopeful that Taliban 2.0 would be progressive, but this regime has crossed every boundary.

Even Islam acknowledges the rights and freedoms of women. During the reign of the second caliph, a woman argued with Hazrat Umar in a mosque, and proved her point, and he accepted it with an open heart. Therefore, the recently documented general population is also



of Pashtun ethical standards. The modern state thrives on enlightened education, the cornerstone of societal progress. Yet, this cruel moral framework undermines the education system of a war-torn country.

The disenfranchisement of women in education manifests a deep-rooted patriarchal mindset. As Mary Wollstonecraft once said, "Strengthen the female mind by enlarging it, and there will be an end to blind obedience." Even though Plato, 400 years ago, recognized the importance of women's education, the Taliban of the 21st century falls short of this social wisdom. Thus, depriving women of education echoes a medieval, inhumane moral structure. The list of social transgressions extends to dress codes for women. Obligatory veiling and

deeply discontented. Those who are late for prayers are subjected to punishment. Similarly, music and photography are banned, and penalties are imposed for any connection with the opposite gender. These restrictions on political freedom, the general will of the people, and state regulation of personal life are all validated by legal frameworks. The regime also promotes the gentle enforcement of these laws and punishments. Now, people must live under the shadow of new moral principles laid down by this theocratic regime. On the other hand, the implementation of these laws has silenced dissent, media, and activists. Such coercive measures will only lead to economic, political, and moral stagnation.

continued to page 4

Unlocking Balochistan's Potential: A Roadmap for Sustainable Development
Continued to page 2

Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps
Continued to page 3

Shahid Zaman Khan: From Quetta to Boston – A Journey of Squash Excellence
Continued to page 4

EDITORIAL

Editor: Asim Khan

Restoring Quetta to Its Former Glory

Editorial:

The completion of the Quetta Solid Waste Management Project in a record time of just three months stands as a testament to the power of effective leadership and public-private collaboration. Under the directives of Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, this initiative has set a new standard for swift and impactful governance. Yet, as we celebrate this achievement, it is essential to acknowledge the individuals who played a pivotal role in turning this vision into reality.

Dr. Faisal Ahmed Khan, the Chief of the Public Private Partnership (PPP) Balochistan, has emerged as a central figure in this success. His leadership in navigating the intricate dynamics of the partnership between the municipal corporation and a private company was instrumental in ensuring the project's timely completion. In an era where public projects are often marred by delays and inefficiencies, Dr. Faisal's approach offers a blueprint for future endeavors across the province and the country.

However, the work is far from over. The citizens of Quetta, once affectionately known as "Little Paris," now look forward to seeing their city restored to its former charm and cleanliness. The success of the Solid Waste Management Project must be sustained through continued commitment and vigilance. This means not just maintaining the infrastructure but also fostering a culture of cleanliness and responsibility among the residents.

The government's pledge to keep Quetta clean must be more than just a statement; it must translate into sustained action. As citizens, we too have a role to play in this transformation. The vision of a neat and clean Quetta is within our reach, but it will require the collective efforts of both the government and the people.

As we look ahead, the partnership model championed by Dr. Faisal Ahmed Khan could serve as a catalyst for other essential services across Balochistan, including the newly expanded NADRA registration centers and mobile vans shown in these projects. These initiatives are commendable, and with continued collaboration and dedication, Quetta can indeed reclaim its title as "Little Paris," a city of beauty, culture, and cleanliness.

Autism and SDGs

By Rukhsana Shah:

THE 2024 observance of World Autism Day is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlighting the intersection of neurodevelopmental conditions and global progress. The SDGs are universally agreed goals adopted in 2015 by the UN to bridge economic disparities in 17 overlapping areas including access to quality health, education and safety. They promote gender equality and inclusive economic growth and employment for all.

The Sustainable Development Agenda was to be fulfilled by 2030. However, the SDG report of 2023 shows that progress on more than 50 per cent of targets is inadequate while in 30pc, it has reversed. The most important reason cited is the neoliberal fiscal and monetary policy environment created by the "outdated, dysfunctional and unfair international financial architecture" of the 1940s. Bretton Woods institutions, inequalities within rich and poor countries are increasing, and the North-South divide is deepening. According to the report, the SDGs are in peril; their failure would sound the death knell for the planet.

Centuries of colonisation and exploitation have left developing countries with the

poorest, most vulnerable people. Continuing injustices through institutionalised racism and political instruments play a major role in the lack of progress on SDGs. The pursuit of increasing official development assistance by developed countries towards achieving the SDGs is a chronic energy deficit hasn't been kept, and targets on climate change haven't met with success, not least because the financial co-operation—\$100 billion per year was ignored.

Poor progress on SDGs is bad news for the marginalised. At the same time, the developing countries' governments cannot be absolved of their responsibility of eradicating poverty and providing education, health, access and employment opportunities to their people. In the 2023 Human Development Index, Pakistan ranks 160th, 10th and Rwanda, with only 4.4 average years of education (SDG4), while India and Bangladesh (seven years) are in the Medium Development Index, and Iran and Sri Lanka (11 years) in the High Development Index. The SDG Status Report issued by the Planning Commission in 2021 admits Pakistan's progress has been sidelined.

The options of economic recovery are disappearing for Pakistan and other countries on the radar of the US and EU agendas in their pursuit of capitalist hegemony. The re-cent failure of UN

Dr. Faiz Kakar:

Balochistan, even as a resource-rich province, grapples with alarming rates of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and infant and maternal mortality, indicative of severe underdevelopment. The unmatched policies and irrelevant development strategies, along with poor governance, have resulted in extreme underdevelopment of the province. Though the bleak picture of the province is noticeable to all decision-makers, as highlighted by maps depicting critical poverty levels in red, Balochistan's political and intellectual spheres remain sharply divided.

Balochistan's Political And Intellectual Spheres Divided

Amidst the current devastating scenario in the province, Balochistan's political and intellectual spheres are sharply divided. Supporters of the latter viewpoint draw upon global examples of successful development strategies, particularly the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in various nations.

Learning from global best practices, the potential of Balochistan as a resource-rich province with vast ecological and topographic diversity, coupled with its strategic location, warrants a paradigm shift towards infrastructure development and economic growth. It is evident that uplifting the economic status of the populace will pave the way for the

provision of social services through self-help approaches. Failure to adapt to this evolving development approach over the past 70 years serves as a stark reminder of the need for change.

Potentials of the Province Ensure the Success of SEZ

Balochistan, often referred to as the "fruit basket" of Pakistan, stands out as a resource-rich province boasting the largest landmass and the longest coastline spanning 770 kilometers. Despite its untapped wealth in various minerals, Balochistan remains underdeveloped. Its diverse ecological and topographic zones allow for the experience of different seasons simultaneously, with inhabitants enjoying both the coldest and the warmest regions in the province within one division.

Deng Xiaoping was impressed by the unbelievable emergence of development in Singapore quoted once that when visited Lee Kuan and asked how I can make China as Singapore and his response was to establish the SEZs and affirmed the establishment of one thousand SEZs in China.

The province's strategic location grants it access to two international borders with Iran and Afghanistan. Its rich resources, including minerals, natural gas, agriculture, livestock, forests, and fisheries, offer a solid foundation for intensifying the emphasis on Special Eco-

nomics Zones (SEZs). These potentials not only justify the focus on SEZs but also serve as a guarantee of their success.

SEZs The Only Option

Ensuring the full operationalization of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) already identified commenced in Balochistan stands out as the foremost priority area for intervention. The establishment of small and medium-scale industries within these zones will not only create employment opportunities but also incentivize rural-to-urban migration, thus fostering urbanization. This industrial growth at the grassroots level will facilitate the much-needed trickle-down effect, allowing for the experience of different seasons simultaneously, with inhabitants enjoying both the coldest and the warmest regions in the province within one division.

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nomics Zones (SEZs). These potentials not only justify the focus on SEZs but also serve as a guarantee of their success. Moreover, it contributes to the prevailing law and order issues and hampers efforts to combat political insurgencies and religious terrorism.

To address this challenge, the establishment of new cities and towns across the province is essential. However, given the budgetary constraints and the heavy investment required for establishing new cities, leveraging the existing SEZs areas as new cities presents a viable solution. The decentralization of these SEZs into fully functional urban centers with basic facilities and job opportunities will address the pressing needs of the populace.

The momentum for the establishment of industries is being further strengthened by the concurrent development of private housing schemes announced and currently under construction by the real estate industry. These initiatives will compel the working class to seek improved living standards, but also provides a strategic opportunity to enhance the overall quality of life in Balochistan.

Urbanization promotion and establishment of new cities

Appointment of heads of authorities from private sectors

The Government of Balochistan has indeed taken steps to establish authorities focusing on thematic areas such as Economic Zones and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). However, the effectiveness of these authorities is greatly diminished by the appointment of heads from junior officials who lack the competence to navigate bureaucratic hurdles or garner support from higher officials. Additionally, the prevailing bureaucratic culture poses further challenges by not providing an enabling environment for these officials.

To address these issues, it is imperative to appoint heads of these authorities from the private sector. These individuals should possess local knowledge, familiarity with public sector practices, and established connections with politicians and higher authorities within the government. This approach will ensure that the heads of these authorities have the necessary clout and influence to drive meaningful progress and overcome bureaucratic obstacles effectively.

Based on the aforementioned discussion, it is strongly believed that the effective operation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) could play a crucial role in the mainstreaming of Balochistan at the national level.

Pro-poor reform

By Dr Niaz Murtaza:

THE new set-up must quickly undertake substantial reforms to save our moribund economy and ensure durable economic stability, productivity growth, equity and sustainability. The IMF, think tanks, business groups, etc. mainly propose technical reforms, such as deregulation and privatisation, to loosen the hold of an elite-rust state on markets, assuring — against global evidence — that unbridled markets can ensure progress. However, the elites that run our state run markets too. Thus, many state ills actually stem from market ills — twin deficits exist primarily because of the subsidies that keep the state engaged in tax evasion and can't compete globally. The outcome is that one can't reform the state without reforming

markets as market elites will soon recapture it. Reforms in which the bulk of the populace barely figures will produce an elite-run market that covers legislation mentioned above. With the Soviet state-monopolist model proved infeasible, the way forward is a welfare-cum-developmental state that manages the interests of the poor and also ensures that the market provide fair avenues to them. Such reforms must target the state and market, make masses their focus and use their political position as the key force to unleash reform.

The starting point must be a review of the factors that cause poverty among the masses, i.e. small producers and consumers in rural and urban areas in Pakistan. Such bottom-up analysis

will reveal not only the lack of economic and social power in markets and politics. Minorities, women, and far-flung areas must be the priorities. Investment in the poor will drive national progress. The major investment in the ethical will not only serve ethical concerns but also become the main driver of national progress as reduced poverty ignites growth that benefits all. Despite our large population, our internal market is small, given low incomes.

Increasing people's incomes will expand the size of the national market and its products. This, in turn, will again create jobs, and expand income and the national market size, thus igniting a virtuous cycle of

progress. The poor spend more on local goods than the rich, benefiting local producers and the external account. This sharp focus on the poor would serve the foundation for reforms in policy areas that hog mainstream reform agendas, such as fiscal, external, investment, state enterprise and energy issues. But the policy steps in these areas will now centralise and protect the interests of the poor. To achieve fiscal balances, the state would only give targeted subsidies to the poor, eliminate elite and universal subsidies, focus more on direct employment in business sectors to generate enough resources for the increased investment in the poor, and avoid indirect taxes that burden the poor.

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Is there now a winning team?

By Jawad Nagvi:

FOR India's opposition, the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was the final straw that broke the camel's back. It's now known that a key witness against Kejriwal is a tidy sum to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's campaign fund through electoral bonds.

What began as a domestic skirmish ahead of the make-or-break general elections starting this month, found international interest. Germany and the US counselled transparency on Kejriwal's behalf. They annoyed India but were joined by the UN secretary-general's office, whose concern for probity was couched in diplomatese.

The harassment of a key baiter of crony capitalists also spurred the opposition to regroup, partly in self-interest but also out of slowly dawning

political sagacity. Going by Sunday's mammoth rally showcasing India's most seasoned opposition leaders, the Delhi's Ramilla Grounds, the arrest of two serving chief ministers on election eve — the other being the tribal chief minister of Jharkhand — appears to have revitalised the founding campaign to dislodge Mr Modi in the multi-stage elections starting on April 19. Results are expected on June 4.

Hope and fervour were plentiful, but apprehension was also lurking at the grand park that links New Delhi with the old city, the venue where a landmark opposition rally turned the tide against Indra Gandhi's emergency. Her 1977 Speaker after speaker cautioned Mr Modi against "fixing the match" or "queering the pitch" — whether by jailing opponents or

by freezing bank accounts of cash-strapped parties through legally dressed subterfuge. India's Speaker when you try to win the election by fixing the match, orinker with the constitution." The sharp sentiment was expressed by Rahul Gandhi, and everyone on the podium seemed to agree with the intent.

If Modi was not stopped this time around, it could be India's last look at democracy. Udhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena had supported Mrs Gandhi's emergency. He was now an embodiment of a born-again Democrat, so to speak, confident of winning the elections provided the opposition stays united, he went a step beyond Rahul Gandhi's warning. Mr Thackeray promised to put the Modi government in jail after the election. Letting a legend of the rally essentially was,

had come too little, too late to fetch victory. Before lifting the 1983 World Cup, the Indian team that had won't a TV camera stationed at the Nevill Ground in Kent to record Kapil Dev's once-in-a-lifetime 175 not out. It rescued the team from yet another humiliating World Cup exit. The largely unwatched match against Zimbabwe would put India on course to rewriting cricketing history.

That event had a canny resemblance to the one in New Delhi on Sunday. There was no news channel to cover the rally. That's what the Modi media does. Typically, the huge story about electoral matches started two days before the BJP's quad pro quorum was quickly brushed. For the Modi-friendly TV channels the story never

broke. There were on the stage leaders of state representing governments in major states including Punjab, West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. And there were leaders from Mr Modi's associates by inducing defections. They are hungry for revenge. And there was no TV channel, unbelievably, to cover this event.

"When pressure is put on umpires and captains, players are bought off and the match is won in cricket, it is called match-fixing." Mr Gandhi continued. "We have a Lok Sabha election before us. Who selected the umpires? Before the match started two days before the BJP's quad pro quorum was quickly brushed. For the Modi-friendly TV channels the story never

the slogan of getting 400 seats but without EVMs, match-fixing, pressuring media and buying the match. It will be able to reach even 180 seats," he said. "Granted that looking at Bihar and Bihar whose state government were torpedoed by Mr Modi's associates by inducing defections. They are hungry for revenge. And there was no TV channel, unbelievably, to cover this event.

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Today's Kejriwal who looks primed to swing the match against Modi, even a rigged one. Applaud him.

Mystery prevails as Russian 'spy' whale found dead in Norway

MOSCOW (INP): A Beluga whale whose strange harness sparked suspicions it was trained by Russia for spying purposes has been found dead in Norway, according to an NGO that tracks its movements.

removed an attached man-made harness with a mount suited for an action camera and the words "Equipment St. Petersburg" printed on the plastic clasps.

Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the simulation of human intelligence in computer systems. In simple terms, AI enables machines to perform tasks that require human intelligence.

AI will cause the death of creativity in humans. AI along with synthetic biology can transform the world shaped until now.

Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

Every invention had various positive and negative impacts on human civilization. According to Google's CEO, Sundar Pichai "AI will have a more profound impact on human beings than fire, electricity, and the internet."

AI-driven cars neither have sleep problems, consequently, companies are manufacturing AI-driven cars to avoid road accidents. Journalists and content writers demand huge salaries for their work.

Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

Deep Fakes Through Generative AI: In the age of information technology, misinformation is a major issue. The introduction of generative AI into public space has further worsened the predicament of information flow.

AI is learning more skills and human's reliance on AI is further increasing. This increase in reliance on AI is used for various purposes. In the following paragraphs, some advantages of AI are described.

Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

Another example of the deep fakes that generated uncertainty was pictures of the former US president, Donald Trump's arrest, which provoked his supporter's sentiments against the state.

AI is learning more skills and human's reliance on AI is further increasing. This increase in reliance on AI is used for various purposes. In the following paragraphs, some advantages of AI are described.

Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

Using AI for the purpose of AI will have ferocious results. Because AI unlike humans has no fear, doesn't get tired, and has no mercy. So, it can fight much better than a soldier.

AI is learning more skills and human's reliance on AI is further increasing. This increase in reliance on AI is used for various purposes. In the following paragraphs, some advantages of AI are described.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired a meeting of CCoSOEs at the Finance Division.

Pakistani Exporters showcase Textile Offerings at Intertextile Shanghai Autumn Edition

SHANGHAI (INP): Pakistani Exporters showcased diverse Textile Offerings at Intertextile Shanghai Autumn Edition, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday.

in showcasing the best of Pakistani textiles," said assistant manager marketing from Kohinoor Mills. "This fair is an excellent opportunity for us to connect with buyers from around the world and introduce our latest fabrics."

Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

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Another seasoned participant of the biennial exhibition, Waseem arrived this time with an exquisite collection of hand-woven wool rugs and intricately designed floor cushions capturing the essence of Pakistan's rich textile heritage.

Khawarij attack on Mianwali police check post thwarted

MIANWALI, Sept 02 (INP): In Mianwali's Isa Khel area, the police successfully repelled an attack by Khawarij terrorists on the Qabul Kheil Checkpost following an effective counter-operation forcing the assailants to flee on late Sunday night.

(IG) Punjab Dr Usman Anwar commended the police officers and praised their bravery. The Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Isa Khel and the Station House Officer (SHO) were also rushed to the checkpost with additional forces.

Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

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The police spokesperson said a search operation has been launched in the area to capture the fleeing terrorists, who are believed to have suffered significant losses.

Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

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perpetrators. Security has been heightened in the vicinity, with additional checkpoints established to prevent further incidents.

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TENDER NOTICE: Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission... The EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PROJECT DIVISION QUETTA invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates.

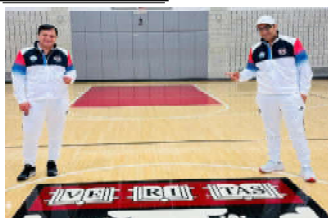
TENDER NOTICE: The DIRECTOR GENERAL, SOGTH invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates.

Shahid Zaman Khan: From Quetta to Boston – A Journey of Squash Excellence

By Manzoor Ahmed Magsi:

Shahid Zaman Khan, a name synonymous with Pakistani squash, has recently taken on a prestigious role as the Head Squash Coach at Boston University. Born in Quetta in 1982, Shahid hails from a family deeply rooted in the sport. His father, Gul Bahadur Khan, was a renowned squash coach, and his brothers—Ali Jan, Abdul Wahid, and Zahid Gul—are all accomplished squash players.

Shahid's career in squash saw him rise to a career-high international ranking of No. 14, making him Pakistan's top player for several years. Despite his success, opportunities in Pakistan dwindled, leading him to North America in 2009. Over the years, Shahid established himself as a respected coach in Boston, serving at institutions like The Tennis and Racket Club, Equinox Sports Club, and various prestigious schools. Earlier this year, he was also signed as a coach for the top tier by Harvard Business School. The legacy of Shahid's fam-



ily continues with his nephew, Hamza Khan, who won the World Junior Squash Championship in Melbourne in 2023, ending a 37-year title drought for Pakistan. Shahid Gul, Shahid's brother, played a significant role in Hamza's triumph.

Despite his success in the US, Shahid remains deeply connected to his roots. "My heart always beats for Pakistan," he says.

He expresses a strong desire to serve Pakistan's squash, inspired by the achievements of his family and the opportunity to help the next generation of players reach their potential.

Shahid Zaman Khan's journey from Quetta to Boston is a testament to his dedication to squash, both as a player and a coach. His story continues to inspire and bring pride to Pakistan.

Uyghur Muqam music emerges as strong cultural heritage to connect Silk Road Region: Report

ISLAMABAD (INP): Diversity Xinjiang Uyghur Muqam, composition of songs, dances, and folk has emerged as strong heritage to connect the entire Silk Road region.

Rich in music, dance, and art, the region is renowned for its traditional Muqam, bustling bazaars, and unique cuisine, all reflecting a deep history shaped by Silk Road traders, says report carried by Gwadar Pro on Monday.

These heritages are also a testament to the enduring spirit and resilience of the people of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. "Seeing is believing!"

After visiting the region with friends, I witnessed the remarkable development Xinjiang has undergone under China's Poverty Alleviation Program. Alongside economic progress, there has been a dedicated effort to preserve and revitalize traditional cultural practices, including the cherished Muqam, the cornerstone of Uyghur music.

Effective counter-terrorism and counter-extremism measures have curbed violence in the region, allowing residents to live in peace and security.

Today, Xinjiang's vibrant cultural heritage thrives once more, with communities embracing their traditions while enjoying the benefits of modern development.

For much of the outside world, it was assumed that China's focus was solely on technological advancement and that the Chinese people were entirely driven by a work-centric lifestyle, with little room for

social life.

However, it was completely wrong. The Chinese people deeply cherish their culture and heritage, more than I ever imagined. This love is evident in their daily activities and their dedicated efforts to preserve and celebrate their rich cultural traditions.

Wherever you go in Xinjiang—whether it's the International Grand Bazaar in Urumqi, the Kazanqi Ethnic Culture Street in Yining, Huoqiang County, the ancient Shaanxi Mosque, or Khorgos near the China-Kazakhstan border—you are immediately immersed in the region's beauty and rich cultural heritage. Song and dance performances abound, each with its unique history and ability to tell a compelling story.

Among these cultural treasures, Xinjiang Uyghur Muqam stands out as one of the most profound and captivating traditions, embodying the essence of Xinjiang's artistic soul.

A mix of songs, dances, folk, and classical music, Muqam is more than just entertainment; it is a living symbol of the region's cultural identity. During a visit to the Xinjiang Art Theater Muqam Art Troupe, we had the privilege of engaging in discussions with experts and Muqam artists. Upon entering the building, we were greeted by an impressive statue of Tardi Akhun, a revered artist renowned for his mastery of all Twelve Muqam.

This central figure symbolizes the rich cultural heritage and artistic excellence that the region proudly upholds.

The traditional songs we watched varied in rhyme and meter, performed both solo and in groups. We enjoyed three performances by leading Muqam singers, instrumentalists, and dancers.

Our interpreter explained that the songs revolved around themes of love, weather, and the beauty of the countryside.

One Muqam depicted performers dancing and preparing to overcome challenges in their love affairs, reflecting the emotional depth of these traditional art forms. "Muqam music in Xinjiang reflects a rich blend of Eastern influences, seamlessly connecting the cultures of Turkey, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Indian subcontinent. The melodies and dance styles resonate with a shared heritage, making it difficult to distinguish between Urumqi, Istanbul, Tehran, Kabul, or Lahore—it's a cultural thread that unites the region," said Former Interim Information Minister Murtaza Solangi after watching the performance.

"Culture and language are powerful bonds that unite people. Music and dance play a key role in this connection, just as vital as economic ties in holding the region together," he added.

Beyond its economic impact, Muqam plays a crucial role in cultural empowerment. More than just a symbol of unity and peace in Xinjiang, Muqam is a blend of Eastern music with the potential to connect the entire Silk Road region through the universal language of music.

Echoes of the Past: Afghanistan's Medieval Approach to Moral Codification

These oppressive moral frameworks have consequences beyond Afghanistan's borders. For instance, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), inspired by this regime, has imposed similar restrictions on personal and social life in some regions of former FATA. The deadlock between the militants of TTP and Pakistan persists because they aim to impose their own version of Islamic Sharia in the country. The Taliban's codification of laws in Afghanistan is nothing more than a moral boost to conservative militant groups. This raises a critical question: how can armed groups govern a country already devastated by long-lasting war? They have no

de jure power to rule, only de facto control of the land. To date, only the UAE has recognized the Taliban as the legitimate ruler of Afghanistan. The UN, European Union, and Amnesty International have all expressed concerns over the situation.

Some voices have praised the regime for its governance efficiency, comparing it to the previous democratic administrations. However, such arguments lack merit, as the earlier regimes governed amidst war. The modern state exists to serve the masses, and public welfare is the ultimate goal. Even if governance resonates with some level of effectiveness, the many restrictions

CM Bugti Briefs Bilawal Bhutto on Surge in Terrorism in Balochistan

News Desk:

ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, held a crucial meeting with Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at Zardari House, Islamabad. The discussion focused on the current political landscape of Balochistan, with an emphasis on addressing the ongoing challenges in the province.

During the meeting, CM Bugti provided a detailed briefing to Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on the recent surge in terrorism in Balochistan. He outlined the steps being taken by the provincial government to combat these threats and ensure the safety of the region's residents. In addition to the security situation, CM Bugti also informed the PPP Chairman about the recent flood crisis in



Balochistan caused by heavy rains. He discussed the provincial government's efforts in managing the flood situation and the measures implemented to mitigate the impact on the affected communities.

The meeting underscored the importance of cooperation between federal and provincial authorities in addressing Balochistan's critical issues, with a focus on restoring peace and stability in the region.

Punjab government launches innovative 'Smart Classroom' project with Huawei

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Sharif has unveiled the 'Smart Classroom' Project at the government Kinnaird Girls High School, Empress Road on Monday.

This cutting-edge initiative, developed in collaboration with Huawei, represents a major leap forward in transforming education in Punjab by integrating advanced technology into the classroom.

The Smart Classroom project is a key component of the "Back to School" enrollment campaign. It introduces state-of-the-art technology, including cameras that record lectures, allowing students to review and engage with lessons outside of class time.

This initiative aims to conduct regular inspections at all fuel stations every month to verify that the fuel meets the required standards.

The operation has been initiated under the Punjab Environmental Protection Act, reflecting the government's commitment to environmental conservation and consumer protection. According to the order, staff from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and oil marketing companies will also help in curbing the sale of adulterated or substandard fuel, which can have harmful effects on vehicles and the environment.

Meanwhile, from Sept 1, the federal government announced a reduction in the prices of petroleum products, effective immediately. The new pricing structure reflects modest decreases across several fuel types, providing some relief amidst the rising cost of living. The price of petrol has been reduced by Rs1.86 per litre, bringing it down to Rs259.10 per litre. Similarly, the cost of high-speed diesel has been slashed by Rs3.32 per litre, now priced at Rs262.75 per litre.

The authorities have emphasized that this operation is crucial for maintaining the integrity of fuel sold in Punjab, ensuring that consumers receive high-quality products that meet regulatory standards. The in-

spections will also help in curbing the sale of adulterated or substandard fuel, which can have harmful effects on vehicles and the environment.

By integrating Huawei's advanced technology, Punjab sets a new benchmark for educational excellence and technological integration in schools.

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz highlighted the significance of the project, stating, "Incorporating Huawei's technology into our classrooms is a testament to our commitment to providing high-quality education to every student in Punjab.

Our goal is to elevate every government school to the standards of the best private institutions."

Punjab launches operation to check fuel quality at petrol pumps

MULTAN (INP): The Punjab provincial government has launched a grand operation targeting petrol pumps in a significant move to ensure the quality of fuel being sold across the province.

The operation has been initiated under the Punjab Environmental Protection Act, reflecting the government's commitment to environmental conservation and consumer protection. According to the order, staff from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and oil marketing companies will also help in curbing the sale of adulterated or substandard fuel, which can have harmful effects on vehicles and the environment.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Dr. Musadik Malik, Abdul Aleem Khan, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Jam Kamal Khan held a meeting with CEO of FI SMidh Mr. Mikko Keto and Danish Ambassador H.E Jakob Linulf.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Sher Afzal Marwat says no compromise on Sept 8 rally

SWAT (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Sher Afzal Marwat has stated that the rally scheduled for September 8 would take place regardless of circumstances.

Speaking to a private TV Channel program, Marwat affirmed that he would return to Islamabad to prepare for the rally.

Marwat criticized delays and said that the PTI founder had stressed the importance of making the rally a success.

He mentioned that the PTI founder's cause was harmed by repeated postponements and that the rally had been canceled without valid reasons.

Marwat told that following Barrister Gohar's statement regarding his inclusion in PTI, Marwat was re-added to a WhatsApp group. Marwat said that it was necessary to follow the PTI founder's orders.

According to Marwat, a movement for the release of the PTI founder and the return of the mandate has been decided which would soon commence.

"This movement will be for the Pakistani people, aiming to eliminate fear and intimidation. It will start in Punjab and will include marches and protests," Marwat reiterated.

Marwat asserted that whenever Imran Khan would give a call for a protest, the leadership would be on the streets, undeterred by threats.

Regarding efforts to secure the PTI founder's release, Marwat insisted that political prisoners were usually freed by mass mobilisation, not by military tribunals. He criticised the idea of presenting the PTI founder before a military court.

Marwat also addressed internal conflicts within Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, calling them highly regrettable. He advised against escalating these conflicts further.

On Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Marwat warned that if Rehman were to join the government, it would come with political costs.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) met with a delegation from Jazz Cash led by Ibrar Khan, Vice President Corporate Affairs, and Ali Nasser, Chief Strategic Officer at BISP Headquarters.