

QUETTA VOICE

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Balochistan Cabinet Portfolios Set for Shake-up

Syed Ali Shah:



QUETTA: The Balochistan cabinet is bracing for a significant reshuffle, with key ministerial portfolios expected to change hands in the coming days, according to sources within the provincial government. The shake-up appears to follow the recent visit of senior political figures Nayar Bukhari of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Khawaja Asif of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

Health Ministry to Change Hands

A well-placed source revealed that Sardarzada Faisal Jamali, who currently holds the health portfolio, is likely to be re-assigned to the livestock ministry. In his place, Bakht Muhammad Kakar is expected to assume the role of health minister, marking a

significant shift in the leadership overseeing the province's struggling healthcare system.

Long-Vacant Adviser Position to Be Filled

In a move to fill a position that has remained vacant for five months, Meena Majeed, a PPP Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) from Mekran, is set to join the cabinet as an adviser. Sources indicate that she will be assigned the sports and youth affairs portfolio. This decision follows months of speculation over who would fill the empty advisory role.

New Role for Nawab Changaiz Marri?

Unconfirmed reports suggest that Nawab Changaiz Marri could be accommodated in the cabinet

as a provincial minister. Sources claim that Marri might be appointed to the communication and works department, while Saleem Khoso, the current minister for that department, is expected to take over the home and tribal affairs ministry.

Education Ministry Bifurcation Under Discussion

Further complicating the reshuffle is the ongoing discussion surrounding the bifurcation of the education ministry. Raheela Hameed Khan Durani, the current minister for education, may see her portfolio split, with internal lobbying efforts by Noor Muhammad Dumar and Muhammad Khan Lehr to secure

half of the education ministry for themselves.

Political Underpinnings of the Shake-up

The anticipated changes follow the high-profile visit of Nayar Bukhari and Khawaja Asif, which appears to have accelerated decisions on cabinet appointments. Their involvement has sparked speculation that the reshuffle is part of a broader realignment within the provincial coalition government, with both the PPP and PML-N pushing for stronger representation and influence within the Balochistan cabinet.

542 More Schools Closed in Balochistan Amid Ongoing Education Crisis

Education Desk:

QUETTA: The Balochistan Education Department has released a report detailing the alarming increase in school closures across the province. According to the latest findings, 542 more schools were shut down during the current regime, bringing the total number of inactive schools to 3,694 as of September 2, 2024.

The report reveals a growing educational crisis, with the number of closed schools rising from 3,152 in May to 3,694 across 35 districts. The province is facing a severe shortage of teaching staff, with approximately 16,000 additional teachers required

to reactivate the closed institutions.

Pishin district is the most affected, with 254 schools closed, while Dera Bugti faces the fewest closures, with 13 schools inactive.

The situation reflects a broader challenge in Balochistan's education system, where resources are already stretched thin, and the continued shutdowns are putting the future of thousands of students at risk.

The provincial education authorities have yet to announce a comprehensive plan to address the shortage of teachers or reopen the affected schools.



File Photo of a shelterless school in Balochistan's Killa Abdullah district: Photo by Asmat Khan Kakar

Agha Omar Ahmedzai Likely to Become Balochistan Home Minister

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: The provincial government of Balochistan is considering Agha Omar Ahmedzai as the next Home Minister, sources revealed, following the dethroning of current minister Ziaullah Langove by the Election Tribunal of the Balochistan High Court (BHC). The government is considering Ahmedzai's appointment if Ziaullah Langove failed to win the legal battle at the apex court.

Langove's disqualification came after Sardarzada Saeed Langove of Jamat-ul-Muslimeen-Islami (JMI) successfully challenged his election. The tribunal's decision in favor of Saeed Langove has thrown uncertainty over Ziaullah



Langove's position, with his only recourse being a stay order from the Supreme Court of Pakistan. If this fails, Agha Omar Ahmedzai is

expected to assume the critical role in the Balochistan cabinet.

A source within the provincial government, under Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, confirmed that Agha Omar's name is being actively considered for the post. However, Saleem Khan Khoso, the parliamentary leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in the Balochistan Assembly, has reportedly refused the offer to take charge of the home ministry.

As Ziaullah Langove continues to seek legal recourse, the future leadership of Balochistan's law and order portfolio remains in limbo.

2.6 Million Children to Receive Polio Drops in Balochistan's Upcoming Campaign

Health Desk:

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan chaired a high-level meeting to review preparations for the upcoming anti-polio campaign set to begin on Monday, September 9. The week-long campaign aims to administer polio drops to over 2.6 million children across the province.

12 Polio Cases in 8 Months

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary highlighted the alarming rise in polio cases, noting that 12 out of the 17 cases recorded nationwide this year were from Balochistan. Cases were reported in districts including Chaman, Dera Bugti, Qila Abdullah, Quetta, Jhal Magsi, Zhob, Qila Saifullah, and Kharan.

Call to Action

Shakeel Qadir Khan stressed the importance of parents ensuring their children receive polio drops, warning that failure to do so could lead to permanent disability. "It is a national problem, and we all have to play our part to solve it," he stated, emphasizing the provincial government's commitment to use all available



File Photo: Polio volunteers providing anti polio drops to minor girl child in Quetta, Balochistan: Photo Quetta Voice

resources to eliminate the virus. To maximize the campaign's success, the Chief Secretary urged scholars, tribal leaders, and religious figures to actively participate in convincing hesitant parents.

He further instructed all Deputy Commissioners to attend the evening review meetings throughout the campaign.

Preparation Underway

More than 11,000 teams have been prepared to administer the vaccine to children across the province.

The Chief Secretary expressed confidence that if the upcoming three campaigns are successful, the virus can be eradicated.

Strict Measures for Campaign Success

The Chief Secretary assured that foolproof security would be provided to all teams involved in the campaign. If necessary, Frontier Corps (FC) personnel will be deployed in certain districts to ensure the safety of workers.

"No negligence will be tolerated, and strict action will be taken against anyone attempting to obstruct the teams," Khan warned.

Coordination with Community Leaders

پاکستان
بالیوشستان
حکومت

PROVINCIAL
POLIO
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME

Expanded Program
on Immunisation
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

Your Child is in Danger because Polio Virus is Spreading Rapidly

Parents are urged to make sure that their
children under 5 years are given
polio vaccine

Two Drops
Every Child—Every Time

دو قطرے ہر بچہ کو ہر بار

For more information

HELPLINE
1166

POLIO WHATSAPP
HELPLINE
0346 7776546

Call Now

THE FRAME

Editor: Asim Khan

A Vital Move to Protect Marine Ecosystems Amid Global Challenges

Editorial:

The Government of Balochistan's decision to designate Charma Island as Pakistan's second Marine Protected Area (MPA) marks a critical milestone in the country's efforts to safeguard marine biodiversity. This proactive step, approved by the provincial cabinet, has been met with praise from environmentalists, conservationists, and the global community. It's a reminder of the vital need to protect our oceans as we grapple with the increasingly dire impacts of global warming and climate change.

Charma Island, a coral reef habitat rich in biodiversity, will now receive the protection it urgently needs. This area is home to various species of fish, marine plants, and coral that play an essential role in maintaining the ecological balance of the province. By designating this zone an MPA, Balochistan is sending a strong message that marine conservation is not just a regional priority but a national one, considering the growing threats to marine life from rising ocean temperatures and pollution.

This move follows the earlier designation of Astola Island as Pakistan's first MPA in 2017, creating a legacy of marine protection. Together, Astola and Charma form key conservation sites off the Balochistan coast. These islands also serve as a lifeline for local communities, especially those involved in fishing. Overfishing and degradation of marine ecosystems have placed a strain on local livelihoods, and MPAs can help sustain fish stocks and ensure long-term economic viability for the people who rely on these waters.

Ahla Salam, a prominent environmentalist, commended the government's decision, highlighting the urgency of protecting fragile marine ecosystems, particularly in the face of global environmental challenges. "Charma Island's protection is a step in the right direction," Salam said. "The significance of this decision cannot be overstated, as it sets the tone for future conservation efforts."

As Pakistan continues to confront the impacts of climate change—rising sea levels, extreme weather patterns, and increasing ocean acidification—protecting marine ecosystems like Charma Island becomes even more crucial. MPAs offer refuge for biodiversity, allowing ecosystems to recover and adapt to changing conditions brought on by global warming.

However, the designation of MPAs alone is not enough. It is vital that the Balochistan government, local communities, and conservation groups collaborate to ensure the protection zones. Enforcement, monitoring, and regulations, community involvement, and continued funding for research and conservation initiatives are essential to the success of these efforts.

Charma Island's protection stands as a beacon of hope in Pakistan's broader conservation movement, a necessary move in the global fight to preserve our planet's ecosystems amidst an ever-worsening climate crisis.

Autism and SDGs

By Rukhsana Shah:

THE 2024 observance

of World Autism Day is aligned with the implementation status and progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition representing human evolution and neurodiversity among all world populations. The SDGs are universally agreed goals adopted in 2015 by the UN to address 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 news for 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 interventions starting in 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 as the poorest, most vulnerable people.

Continuing injustices through institutional monetary and political instruments play a major role in the lack of progress on SDGs.

The promise of increasing official development assistance by developed countries towards achieving the SDGs has not been kept, and targets on climate change have not met with success, not least because the financial Development Agenda was to be fulfilled by 2030. However, the SDG report of 2023 shows that progress on news for more than 50 per cent of targets is inadequate while in 30pc, it has reversed.

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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 case studies, 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 hottest regions in the province within one division.

Deng Xiaoping was impressed by the unbelievable emergence of development in Singapore, asked once that who visited Lee Kuan and quipped 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-

nomie 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 hottest regions in the province within one division.

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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 dwindling by the appointment of heads from junior officials who lack the influence 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.

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Pro-poor reform

By Dr Niaz Murtaza:

THE new set-up

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 mainly serves the interests of the poor and also ensures that markets provide fair avenues to them. Such reforms must target the state and market, make masses their focus and use their political, skills and technology, and ensure the rule of law to protect them from elite abuses. It must be a business-led, quality education, health, family planning, and other social services, and support community-based groups which mobilise and advoca-

te for the poor to increase their bargaining power in markets and politics. Minorities, women, and far-flung areas must be the top priority.

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 for producers. This, in turn, will expand create jobs, and again inevitably. The poor support a 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.

My sharp focus on the poor would serve as 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 even 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 state enterprise and sectors to generate enough resources for the increased investment.

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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 donated 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 ended 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 and also out of slowly dawn-

ing political sagacity. Going by Sunday's mammoth rally showcasing India's most seasoned opposition leaders, Delhi's Ramilla Grounds, the arrest of two serving chief ministers on election eve—the offering of the tribal chief minister of Jharkhand—appears to have revitalised a 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 rule in 1977. Speaker after speaker cautioned Mr Modi against "fixing the match" or "queering the pitch" even while jailing opponents or

by freezing bank accounts of cash-strapped parties through legally dressed subterfuge.

India's ruling party tried to win the election by fixing the match, or linker 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, the election would look at democracy. Udhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena had supported Mrs Gandhi's emergency. It was now an embodiment of a born-again democrat, so to speak. Confident of winning the elections, he opposed the opposition states united, he went a step beyond Rahul Gandhi's warning. Mr Thackeray promised to put the Modi government in jail after the election. Letting the degree of credibility to the call for

a winning fight was the presence of Derek O'Brien, MP for Manama Banerjee's Trinamool Congress.

Moeen Ali announces retirement from international cricket

LONDON (INP): Moeen Ali, who last played for England in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024, has retired from the international game. Moeen believed that the time was right for him after understanding that he was no longer in consideration for the side's future assignments.

"I'm 37 years old and didn't get picked for this month's Australia series," Moeen Ali said in an interview with former England

captain Nasser Hussain in the Daily Mail. "I've played a lot of cricket for England. It's time for the next generation, which was also explained to me. It felt the time was right. I've done my part."

Moeen believed that his call was keeping in mind England's needs, a team looking to rebuild ahead of their upcoming white-ball cycle which features the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup

2026. "I could hold on and try to play for England again, but I know in reality I won't," Moeen said. "Even retiring, I don't feel it's because I'm not good enough."

"I still feel I can play. But I get how things are, and the team needs to evolve into another cycle. It's about being real to myself."

Moeen made his international debut in 2014 against West Indies. He scored 6678 international runs

and picked 366 wickets. He won the 2019 Cricket World Cup and 2022 T20 World Cup with the senior men's side.

As a youngster Moeen tended towards batting, but in the England shirt, he developed his bowling well enough to become their leading bowler in the Tests. He finished with 204 Test scalps, making him the third-best England spinner in the format, sitting behind Derek Underwood (297) and Graeme Swann (255).



PESHAWAR: Activists of Tehreek-e-Jawan Pakistan-Minority Wing chanting slogan during a protest outside Peshawar Press Club (PPC).

Broken tea from China and Pakistan new products for international market, says He Qingyuan

BEIJING (INP): Broken tea from China and Pakistan can be blended and make new products for the international market, said He Qingyuan, a senior official of the Research Institute, Yunnan Academy of Agricultural Sciences, according to a report carried by China Economic Net (CEN).

"In Pakistan, the demand for broken black tea is high. Broken black tea is mainly used to make teabags. Its price is not high in China. Yunnan is also searching for ways to increase its export. Industrial transfer or guidance from Yunnan to Pakistan can be a very effective way for Pak-China tea cooperation."

Mr. Manzoor Ali, Counselor of the Pakistani

Embassy in China, expressed his expectation of further Pak-China cooperation in tea industry, stating, "with a population of over 200 million, Pakistan is a major consumer of tea."

Our Embassy has signed an MOU with the International Business Advisory Council of the China International Engineering Consulting Association (CAIEC).

"Through collaboration with Chinese tea companies in tea production, we aim to not only meet domestic market demand, but also extend to neighboring Islamic countries and even reach European nations."

"Tea is an embedded part of our culture, joy and conversations. One cannot take tea away from a Pakistani's life," said

Sadia Khatri, a writer in Karachi. "Any time is a good time for tea."

Such is the case. As the world's largest tea importer, Pakistan imported more than USD 640 million (about RMB4,033 billion) worth of tea last year, while China's exports of tea to Pakistan were USD 5.76 million during 2023, according to the United Nations COMTRADE database on international trade. The huge gap shows that there is still huge potential for cooperation between China and Pakistan in the tea industry.

"I'm here to look around, hoping to find the right tea variety. As we all know, China is the birthplace of tea, as well as Pakistan has a deep-rooted tea drinking culture. Pakistanis love Chinese green tea, black tea, oolong tea with the high-quality varieties are highly sought after in our market. The tea trade between us is not only commercial transaction, but also a reflection of culture and emotional connection. In other words, aroma of tea merges us together," Pakistani trader Abdul Haq told China Economic Net at the 17th Beijing International Tea Exhibition. "In my country, black tea is the most popular, usually brewed with milk, spices, lemon slices and even chopped nuts." Abdul Haq added, "Nowadays young people in China are also mad about milk tea, which I think is proof that our cultures are blending and thriving together."

Kentucky shooter at large after wounding at least seven along highway

KENTUCKY (INP): Kentucky police were searching rugged terrain near a national forest for a suspect who at least seven people were wounded by gunfire while driving down the rural stretch of an interstate highway, officials said on Saturday evening.

The incident began just before 6 p.m. (1000 GMT) about nine miles outside of the town of London, when officers responded to reports of gunshots directed at vehicles traveling on Interstate 75 in Laurel County. The shots came

from a wooded area or an overpass, according to local media reports.

Mayor Randall Weddle of London, a small city of about 8,000 near the Daniel Boone National Forest, about 90 miles (145 km) south of Lexington, said in a post said on Facebook that seven people were injured, including some who were shot. He said there were no known fatalities. Police offered no further details about the number or nature of any casualties. Weddle asked everyone in the area to "keep your doors locked while this guy is on the

loose."

The shooting comes days after two students and two teachers were killed and nine others wounded, at a high school in Winder, Georgia high school. A 14-year-old student and his father, suspected of giving his son access to the gun used in the shooting, were charged in the shootings, which took place soon after the school year opened.

A stretch of highway near the Kentucky shootings was closed but later reopened even though the suspect was still at large.

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump held a rally in Mosinee, Wisconsin on Saturday.

About three hours after the shooting, the Laurel County Sheriff's Office named a "person of interest" who it said was "armed and dangerous" and cautioned the public not to approach the 32-year-old man.

"The suspect has not been caught at this time and we are urging people to stay inside," Trooper Scottie Pennington of the Kentucky State Police wrote on Facebook.



ISLAMABAD: People suffer as IJP Road block with container. The administration blocked off multiple arteries leading to the federal capital as the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) public rally at Sangiani locality.



File Photo: A child raising marked finger during anti-polio campaign in Balochistan: Photo provided by Dawatullah, an EOC Photographer

PPP renders great sacrifices for democracy: Nisar Khuhro

HYDERABAD (INP): The President of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Sindh and Member of Sindh Assembly Nisar Ahmed Khuhro has said that the PPP was the country's largest democratic party, having made significant sacrifices for democracy.

He maintained that party workers have endured imprisonment, lashes and even bullets, their contributions and sacrifices must be acknowledged. Khuhro expressed these views while addressing a public gathering in Tando Allahyar.

He said that the party was established by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and well managed by Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, we have learned politics from her. He said that Shaheed Benazir Bhutto always considered TandoAllahyar as second Lyari, for this we should

make the party stronger in Tando Allahyar.

He also praised the leadership of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, saying that the young PPP leader has the full potential to steer the country through tough times.

The PPP leader mentioned that the party has democratically elected district presidents and office-bearers, ensuring that they address the issues of the public. He urged the party representatives to maintain close contact with the people and be present in their joys and sorrows.

On this occasion, Member of Sindh Assembly Imdad Pitafi addressed the gathering and said that we were grateful to the Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari who trusted our family and gave us the district chairmanship of the party. He pledged to work alongside

other office-bearers and the public to serve the people. The newly elected president of PPP Tando Allahyar Zaeer Pitafi thanked the workers and senior leaders for placing their trust in him. He assured the public that any issue faced by them in any institution would be resolved on a priority basis. Members of the Sindh Assembly Dr. Sikandar Shoro, Ali Hassan Hingoro and other party leaders also addressed the gathering.

Earlier, Nisar Khuhro, Ali Hassan Hingoro, Imdad Pitafi, Dr. Sikandar Shoro and the newly elected President of PPP Tando Allahyar Zaeer Pitafi, led a rally of party workers and leaders in vehicles to Tando Allahyar, where they were warmly welcomed. The rally then proceeded to the venue and joined the public gathering.

Journalists trained on RTI's use for investigative reporting, countering fake news

ISLAMABAD (INP): Organized by the Friedrich Nauman Foundation for Freedom (FNF-Pakistan), a two-day seminar with an aim to capacitate journalists on the use of Right to Information laws for investigative reporting and countering fake news concluded here on Sunday.

Punjab Assembly in 2013 had passed the Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act and explained there are five RTI laws in Pakistan. He further described, "The Punjab Information Commission is an independent appellate authority that has the power to rectify, summon, and penalize officials who obstruct the flow of information, he further added."

While talking about critical thinking to counter fake news, it is important for every journalist to know how to

investigative journalism through the use of RTI. He said that this ultimately strengthens the credibility of their stories.

Program Manager of FNF Pakistan, Syed Raza Ali while sharing the legislative landscape of RTI in Pakistan said that access to information is guaranteed under Article 19A of the Constitution and

Access to information and public interest. He said that the RTI Act for investigating and publicizing information of public interest.

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check facts and report, said Mr Ubaid Ur Rehman, a rights activist.

It is a time for news media to take more closely to professional standards and ethics, to avoid the publishing of unchecked information. Investing in critical thinking is more important than ever, as it helps to limit the risks of disinformation posed by the advent of technologies such as the internet and artificial intelligence, he further added.

Speaking on the occasion, former information commissioner of the Punjab Information Commission, Saeed Akhtar Ansari said that journalists should exercise their right of access to information for investigative stories.



PESHAWAR: Students of a local university enjoying during Open Mic event.

Manipur crisis escalates, curfew reimposed after separatist attacks

MANIPUR (INP): Manipur is increasingly slipping out of the control of the Modi government as violence and unrest escalate in the region on Sunday.

According to the report, Indian forces have laid siege to Manipur, with curfew reimposed in the Imphal Valley for several days following renewed attacks by separatist groups.

Despite the heavy presence of Indian forces and strict curfews, armed groups continue to launch rocket attacks, targeting both the ci-

vilian population and state machinery.

Recent reports indicate that militants from the Kuki community, who previously conducted drone attacks, have escalated their operations by using long-range missiles in recent rocket attacks.

Earlier, five houses were set ablaze in a village on the outskirts of Manipur, marking the beginning of a new wave of militancy in the Imphal Valley. The home of former state Chief Minister Myrimama Koreng Singh was also targeted in a previous rocket at-

tack.

The state police, in collaboration with Indian forces, are conducting extensive combing operations in Manipur, which has only further fuelled the insurgency.

Residents are facing severe hardships, living under curfew and in constant fear, with many feeling like refugees in their own homeland.

Critics argue that the Modi government's approach, which they see as promoting extremism and exploiting ethnic, linguistic, and religious divisions,

is exacerbating the situation in states like Manipur.

The government's inability to control the violence has drawn global concern, as armed groups now openly target state infrastructure and personnel.

As the situation in Manipur deteriorates, questions are being raised about how long the Modi government will continue to use force and heavy-handed tactics in pursuit of its political aims, and whether these strategies are pushing the region further into chaos.

Balochistan Basketball Organization Celebrates Defence Day with Thrilling Match

News Desk:

QUETTA: The Balochistan Basketball Organization commemorated Defence Day with an exhilarating friendly match between Balochistan Green and Balochistan White at the Quetta Basketball Court. The event highlighted the talents of young athletes from the academy showcasing their skills and passion for basketball.

In a nail-biting contest, Balochistan Green triumphed over Balochistan White with a score of 102-96. The match drew the attendance of notable officials, including Mir Imran Gichki, President of the Balochistan Basketball Association, and Mr. Sohail Khan, among other distinguished guests.

The participants took a moment to honor Defence Day, paying tribute to the brave martyrs who have defended the nation.



The event underscored the role of sports in fostering unity, discipline, and patriotism.

This event reflects the organization's dedication to promoting basketball in Balochistan and instilling a sense of national pride among the youth.



HYDERABAD: PML-N's MNA Kesoo Mal Kheal Das talking to media at Qasimabad.

Islamabad to get modern digital bus terminal with enhanced security, latest facilities

ISLAMABAD (INP): In a bid to revolutionize public transport in Islamabad, a new modern digital bus terminal is set to be constructed in Federal Capital sector I-11, spanning 32 acres of land.

This ambitious project, supported by the Asian Development Bank, aims to upgrade the city's transport infrastructure and improve the overall passenger experience. It revealed that Asian Development Bank has completed a preliminary feasibility study for the construction of a modern bus terminal to improve the public transport system.

According to the sources, the terminal will feature a comprehensive range of modern amenities, including commercial spaces, dedicated parking areas for large buses and minibuses, and air-conditioned waiting rooms for travelers.

A mosque will also be built on-site to cater to the spiritual needs of passengers and staff.

Security will be a top priority at the new facility. The terminal will implement a high-alert security system, including walk-through gates and advanced scanner machines for thorough baggage checks.

A smart digital intelligence system will oversee vehicle inspections, ensuring that no bus can depart without passing a rigorous fitness test.

Additionally, punctuality will be enforced strictly for all public transport vehicles operating from the terminal.

The project is part of a larger initiative to eliminate encroachments, streamline traffic flow, and enhance travel efficiency in the capital.

The Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has emphasized the need for adopting the most effective financing model to ensure the project's success and sustainability.

The CDA chief instructed that the bus terminal be interconnected to key locations in Islamabad. He stated that the purpose of this initiative was to improve the public transportation system in the capital and provide modern travel facilities to passengers. He also emphasized that the project would adopt the best financial model to ensure its viability.

Once completed, the terminal is expected to significantly bolster Islamabad's infrastructure, making travel more efficient and convenient for its residents.

It is worth mentioned here that Federal Capital had earlier initiated a trial service for electric buses, marking a significant move towards sustainable urban transport.

The trial began with buses operating along feeder route number four, connecting PMS Hospital to Quaid-e-Azam University.

These eco-friendly buses, painted light blue, run every 10 minutes but are currently not boarding passengers.

The route includes stops at key locations such as Radio Colony, Satara Market, Melody, Aabpara, NADRA Chowk, and Serena Hotel, with the final stop at Quaid-e-Azam University.

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PTI jalsa in Islamabad: Metro bus services suspended between twin cities

ISLAMABAD (INP): In response to the security threat, the Islamabad Police issued a notice ordering the closure of all hotels and shops around the PTI public gathering.

The notice directed that no person should be provided shelter, food, or any other facility.

Police warned that legal action would be taken against any violations of the notice.

Metrobus service between twin cities suspended.

The bomb disposal squad was immediately called to secure the area and recheck the venue for any additional threats while no injuries have been reported.

PTI claimed that Islamabad Capital Police Sangjani Police Station team Sunday arrested PP-151 ticket holder Hamad Awan. The party said Dr. Hasan, son of Mehmood-ul-Rashid, was also arrested. Both the leaders had reached the meeting place along with the party workers.

Both were arrested from the entrance of the jalsa venue.

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HYDERABAD: Winner of Karachi to Hyderabad Cycle race organized by Sui Southern Gas Company in connection with Defense Day celebrations receiving his prize.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addressing the inaugural ceremony of nationwide Special Anti Polio Campaign.

PTI set for power show in capital amid heightened security

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is all set for power show in the capital on Sunday (today) as it has completed all arrangements to hold a mammoth rally, with the party leaders late night visited the venue and showed satisfaction over the rally preparations.

A central stage was set up on containers at Sangjani. PTI Chairman Gohar Ali Khan, Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Omer Ayub and other party stalwarts reviewed the arrangements.

Meanwhile, security has been beefed up after police claimed to have recovered explosive material near the rally site.

Police said in a statement that hand grenades, rocket launchers, detonators and bombs were hidden in a sack.

Officials of the bomb disposal squad have reached the spot and taken explosives into custody.

After the recovery of explosives, the district administration has deployed a heavy contingent of police. On the other hand, roads leading into Islamabad have been blocked by placing containers and barricades. With the closure of Khanna Bridge on Express Highway, motorists were facing great difficulties to reach the destination as long lines of vehicles could be seen on roads.

Containers have also been placed at T Chowk in Rawat, while the Faizabad interchange was completely sealed.

The metro bus service has also been suspended due to the PTI rally, according to the administration.

Meanwhile, the containers were delivered to the Attock Khurd police check post on the border of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab.

GT Road was closed to traffic from both sides by placing containers at Sangjani, while the entrances to Islamabad were closed at Motorway No. 26 Chungi.

Talking to media, Chairman Gohar Ali Khan said that it would be the biggest rally in Islamabad. The rally would be peaceful; there would be no long march, he added. The PTI chief dedicated the rally to the independence of judiciary and said the party founder was in jail for your [judiciary] independence.

Mehmood Achakzai said that the nation wanted the country to come out of crises. Nawaz Sharif has also realised joint efforts would pull the country out of crises. All [political parties] have to sit together [to resolve crises].

No system can function without justice. Had the PTI founder committed blunders, why are you repeating it, he added. Former speaker Asad Qaiser said that everyone has to come out to rid the country of the usurpers. He called it a tragedy if the judiciary is attacked.

He said our MNAs and senators are being intimidated.

Qaiser said [the government] was legislating arbitrarily.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is accused of using state machinery for the PTI rally in Islamabad. Dozens of Rescue 1122 vehicles have reached Swabi.

Rescue 1122 fire vehicles and ambulances were present in Swabi. Rescue 1122 DG has instructed his personnel to attend the rally with at least two vehicles from each district.

Dozens of emergency rescue personnel have been instructed to go to Islamabad with vehicles; ambulances have been dispatched along with convoys of members of National and provincial assemblies coming from the northern and southern districts.

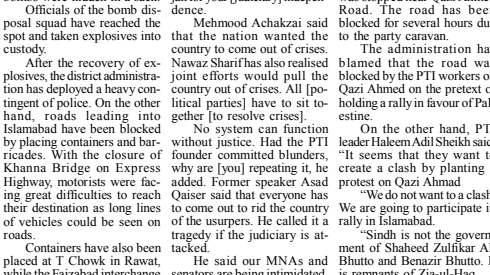
The PTI Sindh caravan was stopped near Qazi Ahmed Road. The road has been blocked for several hours due to the party caravan.

The administration has blamed that the road was blocked by the PTI workers on Qazi Ahmed on the pretext of holding a rally in favour of Palestine [to resolve crises].

On the other hand, PTI leader Haseem Adil Sheikh said, "It seems that they want to create a clash by planting a protest on Qazi Ahmed."

"We do not want to a clash. We are going to participate in rally in Islamabad."

"Sindh is not the government of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto. It is remnants of Zia-ul-Haq."



QUETTA: General Secretary Grand Alliance Metropolitan Corporations Nadeem Khokar addressing a press at Quetta Press Club (QPC).



Third-party audit of QAU Alumni Association ordered for 2012-2023 Period

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU) Administration has given the green light for a thorough audit of the former QAU Alumni Association, covering the financial and operational dealings from 2012 to 2023. This comprehensive audit will be conducted by a certified third-party firm, a decision made with unanimous support from the university's administration and the four major panels participating in the 2024 alumni elections: the Founder Group, United Panel, QAU Forever Panel, and QAU Stars Panel.

The approval for the audit during a meeting chaired by Dr. Muhammad Idrees, Chairman of the QAU Election Steering Committee.

The audit is seen as a necessary step before proceeding with the QAU Alumni Association's elections for 2024, ensuring transparency and accountability in the association's financial affairs over the past 12 years.

In addition to the audit, two other significant issues were discussed: the digitalization of alumni records dating back to 1970, and plans to ensure the smooth and transparent conduct of the upcoming elections. Dr. Idrees highlighted the critical need for support and funding for the digitalization project, emphasizing that out of thousands of alumni, only around 8,000 have registered as voters so far.

Another key decision made during the meeting was the relaxation of the 15% voter registration requirement for the upcoming elections.

This change will allow approximately 700 new voters to participate, adding to the growing list of registered alumni. Furthermore, new nomination papers will be issued to reflect these additions.

Dr. Idrees also shared that a new interim constitution for the Alumni Association has been drafted and will be shared with all contesting panels within a few days. Additionally, it was firmly agreed that the outgoing QAU Alumni Association would not be permitted to conduct any activities or fundraising campaigns under its name, and no group would be allowed to use the official QAU logo for any purposes during this transition period.

The meeting was attended by key representatives from all major panels: Rehan Saeed, Dr. Ghulam Ali Mallah, Azam Habib, and Shahid Minhas from the QAU Forever Panel; Aziz Nishtar, Muhammad Farooq, and Taiba Batool from the United Panel; Wajahat Latif and Ch Zulfiqar from the Founder Group; and Saeed Ch from the QAU Stars Panel.

The next meeting to review progress and further steps is scheduled to take place before September 20.

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