

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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dquettavoice@gmail.com



File Photo: A girl's smile after enrollment in the UNICEF ALP program at new Kahan Marri Quetta:
Photo provided by Naeqeb Khilji

Earthquake of Magnitude 4 Shakes Zhob in Balochistan

From Our Correspondent:

ZHOB: Earthquake tremors were felt in Zhob district of Balochistan on Monday morning. According to the Seismological Department, the earthquake was recorded at a magnitude of 4.2 on the Richter scale.



The earthquake occurred at a depth of 33 kilometers, with the epicenter located 61 kilometers northwest of Zhob. Fortunately, no casualties or damages have been reported as a result of the earthquake. Residents experienced minor tremors, but the situation remained under control.

Officials have urged citizens to remain vigilant and follow safety protocols during such natural occurrences.

BUTEMS VC Inaugurates Two-Day Art Exhibition on UNHCR Studies

News Desk:

QUETTA: Vice Chancellor of Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, and Management Sciences (BUTEMS), Dr. Khalid Hafeez, inaugurated a two-day art exhibition focused on themes related to UNHCR studies. The event, held at the university's main campus, showcases artistic interpretations of refugee experiences and global humanitarian efforts.



Speaking at the inauguration, Dr. Khalid Hafeez highlighted the importance of such initiatives in raising awareness. "Art has the power to communicate complex humanitarian issues in a way that resonates with everyone," he said.

A Progressive Shift in Balochistan's Education System

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: The Education Department of Balochistan has taken a commendable step by replacing the terms "pass" and "fail" with "promoted" and "retained" on student result cards.

This change, announced by District Education Officer (DEO) Quetta, Syed Nasir Shah, aims to address the psychological challenges students face due to traditional grading terminologies.

Transforming Education: A Step Toward Inclusivity

The words "fail" and "pass" often leave a lasting impact on students' mental health, leading to stress, anxiety, and loss of interest in studies. As DEO Syed Nasir Shah aptly stated, the revised terminology will "discourage students from losing interest in their studies" while fostering a more positive learning environment. By emphasizing im-

provement and self-growth, this initiative paves the way for a supportive education system that prioritizes mental well-being.

Broader Implications for Balochistan's Education Sector

This progressive approach must extend beyond Quetta to all districts of Balochistan. School principals, district education officers, and even the Higher Education Department should adopt this policy. A province-wide notification banning the use of "fail" and "pass" on result cards would ensure a uniform approach to reducing stigma and promoting academic resilience.

Encouraging Female Education

This change holds particular significance for improving female education. In many regions of Balochistan, academic failures often discourage girls from continuing their studies. A more

empathetic grading system can boost female enrollment and retention rates, aligning with the broader goals of gender equality in education.

A Call to Action

Educators and parents have lauded this initiative as a step toward an inclusive and empathetic education system. To amplify its impact, the Higher Education Department should incorporate similar terminology reforms at the college and university levels.

This shift can encourage students across all educational tiers to embrace learning without fear of failure.

Balochistan's education system is evolving, and this bold step reflects a commitment to nurturing confident, motivated learners. By implementing this change province-wide, the government can inspire a generation of students to pursue education fearlessly, fostering a brighter future for Balochistan.

Governor Balochistan Urges Swift Recovery of Kidnapped Child Musawir Khan

Manan Mandokhail:



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has voiced deep concern over the kidnapping of 10-year-old Musawir Khan Kakar from Quetta's Multani Mohalla area. Calling the incident distressing for the entire province, he assured the child's family of full support and vowed to take the matter up with federal and provincial authorities.

Speaking during a meeting with a 22-member delegation led by Malik Amrullah Khan Mehtarzai at Governor House, Governor Mandokhail said,

"Musawir Khan's abduction has caused pain and trouble for all of us. We stand in full solidarity with his family and share their grief equally." The Governor urged law enforcement agencies to take immediate and concrete steps to recover the child safely. The delegation, which included political leaders and family members of the abducted child, highlighted their concerns and sought urgent action.

Musawir Khan's abduction has sparked widespread protests in Quetta. Political parties and civil society groups had blocked the

Balochistan Assembly chowk for over a week, demanding his recovery. The protest was called off after Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti assured protesters that all efforts were being made to locate the missing child. The Governor emphasized the need for enhanced security measures to prevent such incidents and reiterated his commitment to ensuring the child's safe return. The abduction of Musawir Khan continues to raise alarm across the province, with demands for swift action and accountability intensifying.

CM Balochistan Awards Appreciation Certificate to Sana Mahjabeen Umrani for Dedicated Service

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, presented an appreciation certificate to Sana Mahjabeen Umrani, the former Deputy Commissioner of Sherani district, in recognition of her exemplary services. The ceremony took place in Quetta on Monday, acknowledging her efforts in delivering efficient governance and promoting development in the region. Speaking at the event, CM Bugti praised Umrani's dedication and professionalism. "Sana Mahjabeen Umrani has set a high standard for public service, showcasing what committed officers can achieve even in challenging circumstances," he remarked. The Chief Minister highlighted her role in addressing the developmental challenges of Sherani

district. "Her leadership and effective administration have brought tangible improvements to the lives of people in Sherani," he said, emphasizing the need for such committed individuals in Balochistan's public service. He also expressed his hopes for future contributions by officers like Umrani. "I believe officers like Sana Mahjabeen will continue to inspire others with their integrity, hard work, and dedication to the people of Balochistan," CM Bugti added. The appreciation certificate serves as a testament to the provincial government's commitment to acknowledging outstanding contributions by public servants in fostering development and good governance across Balochistan.



Polio vaccination teams attacked in K-P's Karak and Bannu, cop killed

NEWS DESK: A police constable was killed, and a polio worker was injured when unknown militants opened fire on a vaccination team in Tehsil Banda Daud Shah of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province's Karak district. The police officer had been assigned to provide security for the team. Authorities have launched a large-scale search operation in the region in response to the attack. Meanwhile another polio vaccination team came under attack in K-P's Bannu district. Further details of casualties from the second incident were not confirmed. The ongoing battle against polio in Pakistan has been marred by a series of attacks on polio vaccination teams, resulting in the tragic deaths of police officers

and injuries to workers. Meanwhile, Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi denounced the attacks, labelling them as an assault on Pakistan's future. He paid tribute to the fallen officers, stressing that protecting polio workers is essential for the country's future health. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also demanded an immediate report on the situation from the Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, emphasising the need for better security measures for polio teams. PPP MNA Asifia Bhutto Zardari strongly condemned the violence on social media, calling such acts cowardly and counterproductive to efforts to protect children from polio.



IT minister acknowledges slow internet speeds in Pakistan, vows improvement

NEWS DESK: State Minister for Information Technology, Shaza Fatima, has acknowledged the slow internet speeds in Pakistan, addressing concerns about the country's connectivity issues. Speaking at the National Broadband Network Forum in Islamabad, the minister highlighted that the situation would improve with the implementation of the Fibreisation Policy and the introduction of 5G technology. Fatima confirmed that the auction for the 5G spectrum would take place in April, and efforts would be made to enhance the

existing 4G infrastructure as well. She also pointed out that Pakistan faces significant cybersecurity challenges, with daily cyberattacks occurring across the country. The minister emphasised the government's commitment to cybersecurity and data protection, recognizing it as a critical responsibility. She also announced that the Prime Minister has formed a National Digital Commission, which will present a five-year roadmap for digital development in Pakistan.

Biden's belated attempt to divert Africa's critical minerals

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Climate Tides and Raising Injustices: The Climate-Gender Violence Nexus in Balochistan

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Shaza announces formation of National Digital Commission

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EDITORIAL

Editor: Asim Khan

Swift Action Needed to Bring Muhammad Musawir Home

Editorial:

The suspension of the two-week-long sit-in at Balochistan Assembly Chowk following Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti's assurances offers a glimmer of hope to the grieving family of 10-year-old Muhammad Musawir, who was kidnapped in Quetta.

While the Chief Minister's empathetic stance and commitment to daily updates from the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) are commendable, words alone cannot heal the anguish of a family waiting for their child's safe return.

Now is the time for the provincial government to match its promises with decisive and effective action.

The heartbreaking ordeal of Muhammad Musawir is a stark reminder of the growing menace of kidnapping in Balochistan, where incidents of abduction have intensified fear among citizens.

The government's immediate focus must be on utilizing all available resources and modern investigative technologies, such as geo-fencing, surveillance, and artificial intelligence tools, to expedite the child's recovery. Delays in such cases not only shatter the trust of families but also embolden criminal elements operating with impunity.

Chief Minister Bugti's assurance that "all of Balochistan stands with the family" is a powerful sentiment, but true solidarity is demonstrated through action.

His administration must ensure that the JIT operates transparently and delivers concrete results within the promised timeframe.

Moreover, the opening of the CM House to the public is a positive step toward accessibility, but it must be accompanied by robust systemic reforms to address the root causes of abductions and prevent similar incidents in the future.

Civil society's role in amplifying the plight of Muhammad Musawir's family and their insistence on long-term solutions deserve recognition.

Their demand for better law enforcement strategies, advanced training for police personnel, and community engagement programs to combat crime must be prioritized by the government.

The heartache of Musawir's parents is a tragedy no family should endure. As the sit-in committee has given a ten-day reprieve, the clock is ticking for the government to demonstrate tangible progress. Failure to recover the child within this period risks further eroding public confidence in the administration's ability to safeguard its citizens.

This case should serve as a wake-up call for Balochistan to overhaul its approach to security. Preventing such incidents in the future requires not only swift responses but also robust infrastructure to prevent and deter criminal activities. For Muhammad Musawir and countless others who may fall victim to similar crimes, the government must act with urgency, determination, and an unwavering commitment to justice.

The people of Balochistan demand action, not just assurances. Let the safe return of Muhammad Musawir be a testament to the government's resolve to protect its most vulnerable citizens.

Spoiling the youth potential

BY Muhammad Amir Rana:

POLITICAL parties in Pakistan generally do not have a plan to engage the youth in constructive activities and capitalise on their potential.

The exception is the PTI, which has mobilised a large segment of the youth to fuel an agitation movement in the country.

Nevertheless, the party's agenda stems from its focus on its leader Imran Khan, a personality, rather than a deep connection between the youth and democratic values, rights, freedom, and hope. In their comparison of PTI-led activism with the recent student movement in Bangladesh, which led to the ouster of Sheikh Hasina Wajed, political commentators overlooked several vital points. First, the student movement was centred on the pursuit of rights and freedoms, which Sheikh Ha-sina's government had curbed. The movement was not sudden but the result of a continuing dialogue and debate about the situation in Bangladesh, which primarily took place on university campuses, with Dhaka University as the main point. Social media platforms amplified the impact of these discussions, but they were essentially underpinned by robust intellectual discourse.

It was Gen Z — all too often stereotyped as self-centred — which actually came up with compelling arguments for change and successfully executed plans and strategies, drawing strength from marginalised segments. By contrast, PTI-led youth activism lacks the organisation and strong intellectual discourse of the student movement in Bangladesh. In fact, it is mainly jobless youth from KP that constitute the bulk of the party's street power. Moreover, the PTI lacks strong organisational roots on campuses, which has limited its ability to foster sustained youth engagement. A more fitting comparison for the student movement in Bangladesh might be

drawn with the Jammu and Kashmiri Joint Awami Action Committee and the Awami Action Committee of Gilgit-Baltistan, which effectively mobilised the public against the government's efforts to eliminate subsidies. Moreover, political and ideological parallels can be drawn with movements like the Haq Do Tehreek in Gwadar and the Baloch Yaghiti in Balochistan, led by Mehrang Baloch, which have galvanised marginalised segments around the issues of rights and the missing persons.

Imran Khan's political agenda does not address the structural challenges the youth face.

What unites the youth around Imran Khan is his consistent narrative and political rhetoric, coupled with his populist leadership style. For many, he represents a heroic figure, a symbol of resistance against the establishment, and a beacon of hope in a political landscape where mainstream parties have compromised mainly with the establishment. Most importantly, he serves as a symbol of change for the growing middle class of Pakistan, a demographic burdened by the demands of the country's 59 per cent youth bulge.

However, the PTI is similar to other political parties in the country, many of which have transformed into political dynasties. Power and leadership within the PTI are increasingly concentrated around Imran Khan and his family, with crucial decisions made only with his consent. Despite widespread public support, the party needs a solid organisational structure and an effective secondary leadership capable of uniting its cadre when the top leadership is absent.

The PTI often displays overconfidence, as evident in its "solo flight" approach when it holds protests. It prefers this to building consensus with rival political parties. Its agitation re-

volves around Imran Khan's release from jail, instead of broader democratic principles. Even its stance on judicial independence is selective, as evidenced by its approach to the 26th Amendment to the Constitution. While Pakistan's efforts to eliminate subsidies have done good, they have also done harm.

America wants to use Lobito Atlantic Railway to secure critical minerals, required for global low-carbon transition such as electric vehicles, solar panels and semiconductors, with the Corridor being

the quickest route for exporting these raw materials to the US.

China and its clean energy competitiveness, however, much of those investments did not bring visible benefits to average Africans, raising doubts whether America would be able to replace China in near future.

The US efforts could also suffer a setback as more and more African countries are

considering reducing export of raw materials to promote local processing. Sensing African demands, China has already pledged to develop local value chains, manufacturing and deep processing of critical minerals, which will be backed by direct investment in refining and processing. This would allow Africa to tap its potential of generating \$16 trillion revenues from extraction of just four key minerals—copper, nickel, cobalt and lithium—over the next 25 years and reduce the \$100 billion annual trade deficit in infrastructure financing gap.

As America looks to serve its own interests and blunt China's influence in Africa, many in the continent accuse West of holding a predilection towards the continent citing their colonial legacies, admitting that Chinese investments have modernised the continent and generated thousands of jobs.

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I do hope, and this goes for all political parties, that the workers, the cannon fodder, should not let their ideals become a revivified and tapped into, even exploited, by compromised political leaders. And sadly, for democracy and Pakistan, the number of such leaders is astounding whether it is PTI or PML-N or PPP.

Chandni Kakar:

Throughout history, crisis situations, be they wars, natural disasters, or extreme economic downturns, inevitably unmask the ugly face of social inequality. Among the different types of inequality, gender-based violence (GBV), often considered a shadow pandemic, regrettably seizes these crisis situations as a breeding ground, leveraging emotions of fear and uncertainty. Strikingly, in the windswept terrains of Balochistan, a menacing overlord of climate change and GBV rises like a monstrous specter, particularly in the flood-prone areas.

Catastrophic Climate Events and GBV-Mysterious Puppets on the Same String

Here's the curious case: aggravated climate change, leading to increased extreme events and a rising tide of GBV are not isolated incidents. An upward

trend in extreme climate events in the same timeline correlates with this rise, painting a chilling picture of their correlation. This isn't incidental but consequential, a nexus amplified by the continuous environmental changes and socio-economic fallout they induce.

Climate Change in Balochistan: More Than Just an Environmental Issue

Climate change in Balochistan isn't calming down, like a seemingly ceaseless sandstorm that obliterates ways of life. In July 2022, unprecedented torrential rains in Quetta led to submerged communities, damaged infrastructure, and homeless families. Similarly, Naseraabad faced daunting floods in August, with farmlands, the vital backbone of their economy, laid to waste.

This consistent harsh climate rattles the socio-economic balance, where women, due to systemic patriarchy and gender biases, bear the heavy toll. Societal roles designate farming household work, and gathering water and firewood as feminine duties, all of which become perilous with fluctuating climatic conditions.

Recent Case: An Appalling Tale from Naseraabad

Consider the heart-wrenching drama that unfolded in Naseraabad. Amidst the devastating floods, several women and girls reported being victims of horrific violence when they went out to collect clean water or seek shelter. A specific case that sounds alarm bells was that of a seventeen-year-old girl who, seeking refuge during the floods, was brutally assaulted.

The Future: Deciphering the Complex Jigsaw Puzzle

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A party that controls so much of the narrative and has all the modern communications tools at its disposal has been very short in sharing images where the leaders are displaying sympathy with the affected families.

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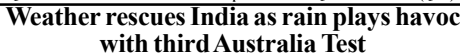
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Fernandes then missed a glorious chance to equalise 15 minutes from time when his drive over Ederson drifted wide with just the Brazilian to beat.




There were more rain delays after lunch as Rahul and Pant tried to rescue the situation, but with the score on 44, Pant got a thin edge off Pa Cummins to Carey.

Shaukat Yousafzai slams Government's contradictory approach

rative. "If the government does not negotiate, our people will also oppose it," Yousafzai declared, em-

**sh to hold
n late 2025**



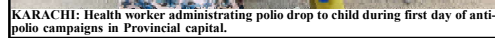
TENDER

Note: In All Procurements of G

outs of rival tribes and seize their weapons. Peace has alluded the area resulting in an uncertain future.

he says are needed, and setting an election date depends on what political parties agree. "Throughout, I have emphasised that reforms should take place first before the arrangements for an election," he said.

"If the political parties agree to hold the elec-



Key among the reforms needed is an updated voter list, a "complex" challenge after years of turbulent democratic processes, requiring both the stripping of false names from lists.

PRQ No.2360/16-12-2024

Karachi records lowest temperature of the season

KARACHI (INP): Karachi is experiencing cold weather as the minimum temperature dropped to 8.9°C on night, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD).

As per details, the lowest temperature of 8.9°C was recorded at Jinnah Terminal, while other areas, including Gulistan-e-Jahur and Shahrah-e-Faisal, recorded 10.5°C and 11.5°C, respectively.

In Maori Pur, the temperature was recorded at 12.5°C. The Meteorological Department stated that the city's weather is currently cold and dry, with the daytime temperature expected to reach 27°C.

On the previous day, the maxi-

mum temperature also touched 27°C. Winds are blowing from the northeast at a speed of 7 km/h, while humidity stands at 50%.

Meanwhile, the city's air quality remains a concern, with particulate matter levels recorded at 183 on the Air Quality Index (AQI), indicating unhealthy conditions.

The icy winds from Balochistan have made the weather in Karachi even colder, causing the temperature to feel 2 to 4 degrees lower than the actual temperature.

The lowest temperature in the past 24 hours was recorded in Leh at -13°C, followed by Skardu at -7°C, Kalamat -6°C, and Islamabad

at -1°C. Peshawar, Lahore, and Multan had recorded temperatures of 3°C and 7°C, respectively. In Gilgit-Baltistan, heavy snowfall had covered the mountains, and roads, homes, and trees were blanketed in snow.

Northern Balochistan had also been under a severe cold wave, with temperatures in Quetta falling to -6°C, and -5°C in Kalat and Ziarat.

The PMD had issued a warning that the cold wave would persist in many regions of the country. The weather had been expected to remain cold and dry in Islamabad and surrounding areas.



RIVADH: Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi visiting Saudi Anti-Narcotics Headquarters.

Renewed calls to crush terrorism as nation pays tribute to APS martyrs

ISLAMABAD (INP): The 10th anniversary of the tragic terror attack at Army Public School Peshawar was observed on Monday to pay tribute to the martyrs amid calls for continuing the war against terrorism till complete elimination of this menace from Pakistan.

Special prayers and Quran Khawani were held for the martyred students and teachers of Army Public School.

On 16th of December 2014, six terrorists stormed the Army Public School in Peshawar and martyred 147 innocent students and teachers.

President Asif Ali Zardari said the day of December 16, 2014 reminded the nation to get united against terrorism and increase their efforts to eliminate this menace. In a message on the 10th anniversary of the Army Public School Peshawar attack, he said on 16th December, 2014 the terrorists attacked the future of our children and nation.

On this day, he said the terrorists mercilessly killed our citizens including our children, adding the terrorists showed their animosity towards public by attacking teachers and children. Attack on the children was cruel and against humanity, he added. The President said the tragedy of APS made it clear that agenda of the terrorists was to create chaos and anarchy in the country. The day of December 16 left unerasable imprints on the collective memory of the nation, he continued.

Zardari said that our sympathies were with the heirs of the

innocent children. This day reminded of the sacrifices of the nation in the war against terrorism, he remarked, adding the incidents like APS tragedy exposed the real face of terrorists and Khawarij and the Pakistani nation would not let the terrorists succeed in their nefarious designs.

The APS tragedy united the nation against terrorism. The history was a witness that Pakistani nation did not lose courage in the face of tragedies, he stressed. He said the political leadership of Pakistan also sacrificed in the war against terrorism, adding, "Today we pay tribute to the brave soldiers, security organizations and citizens for their sacrifices against terrorism. We will not let go vain the sacrifices of our children, leaders and the citizens."

He reiterated the determination to root out the remains of terrorism and extremism from Pakistan. "The international community have to make collective efforts to eradicate terrorism," The President concluded.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that the whole nation was standing against coward terrorists as a wall of fortified steel and will remain standing and would not forget the tragedy of attack on Army Public School, Peshawar on December 16, 2014. In his message, the prime minister said today 10 years had passed after an unforgettable tragedy and loss of lives at Army Public School and "our heart is still in grief and we are shedding tears of blood". It was a tragic event which brought grief to our hearts, he remembered.

Gillespie cites his exclusion from key decisions by PCB, poor management as a reasons for resignation

LAHORE (INP): Jason Gillespie, the former head coach of Pakistan's red-ball team, has disclosed the reasons behind his resignation, citing dissatisfaction with communication and decision-making processes.

In an interview with Australian media, Gillespie expressed frustration over being kept uninformed about key decisions, including the ending of contract of high-performance coach Tim Nielsen. "I was completely unaware of the decision not to retain Nielsen, which caused dissatisfaction. It made me question the viability of my role," he stated.

Reflecting on past incidents, Gillespie said, "I began to wonder whether I was needed. My role as head coach felt reduced to conducting catching practice on match mornings, which was not aligned with my coaching objectives."

Gillespie stressed the importance of collaboration, saying, "A head coach must be in full communication with selectors and management. For planning, I should be informed about the squad at least a day prior. Without this, performing effectively becomes challenging."

The former coach revealed

that he learned about a new selection committee via a group text message after the first test against England. Additionally, decisions such as dropping Babar Azam were made without consulting him.

Despite his frustrations, Gillespie acknowledged Pakistan's abundant cricketing talent and its potential to become a formidable team if properly managed. "Positive progress was being made with the team, but I was not given any role in squad selection," he concluded, emphasising the need for systemic improvements in Pakistani cricket.



QUETTA: JUI leader and Provincial Assembly member Haji Mir Ali Reki talking to media after appear in election tribunal outside BHC.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Ms. Raheela Durrani is meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (R) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.

Shaza announces formation of National Digital Commission

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunications Shaza Fatima Khawaja has announced the formation of a National Digital Commission (NDC) to pave the way for Digital Pakistan.

Addressing National Broadband Forum in Islamabad, she said legislation in this regard will be introduced in the National Assembly this evening.

The Minister of State detailed that the Commission will be headed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and will include all provincial chief ministers and representatives from major regulatory authorities like NADRA and PTA.

She announced that the Digital Authority will be formed later to ensure a comprehensive national framework and a master

plan for digitalization with three main priority areas of economy, governance and society.

Shaza Fatima said 5G and 4G spectrum auctions will be made in April next year which will significantly improve internet services in the country.

She said availability of these spectrums and investment in telecom infrastructure will enhance internet speed in the country which is a big problem for our freelancers and IT professionals.

The Minister of State expressed the hope that these initiatives will unlock the true potential of our country in an era where technology touches every aspect of our life.

Addressing the forum, Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani called for creating

favourable environment for public private partnerships to drive the digital agenda and ensure the effective deployment of advanced technology.

He said demand for connectivity is increasing with an increase in population therefore, it is our responsibility to bridge the digital divide and ensure that all Pakistanis have high quality broadband services.

The Chairman Senate urged all stakeholders to join hands for ensuring that every school has high speed internet, every individual can participate in digital economy and businesses can thrive in villages.

He said the Broadband Forum will serve as a platform for fostering collaboration and evolving conducive strategies.

SZABMU aspirants Seek Intervention in MDCAT Retake Delay

Syed Muhammad Yaseen:

ISLAMABAD: A significant number of 24,000 students who appeared in the Medical and Dental Colleges Admission Test (MDCAT) on September 22nd have appealed to President Asif Ali Zardari and the Islamabad High Court to intervene in the ongoing delay of the retake exam.

Students are expressing deep concern as the repeated postponement of the retake exam is causing significant anxiety, particularly after the recent MDCAT retake in Sindh.

With admissions processes commencing nationwide, many students who took the exam in Islamabad intend to apply to universities in Sindh, Punjab, and Balochistan.

The students have urged President Zardari, the chairman of the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University (SZABMU), to take immediate

action to safeguard their future and direct the university to conduct the retake exam promptly.

They have also appealed to the Chief Justice of the Islamabad High Court to intervene and ensure compliance with the court's previous order regarding the retake exam.

It is important to note that the SZABMU conducted the MDCAT on September 22nd in Islamabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. However, numerous complaints led the Islamabad High Court to order a retake of the exam.

Students from Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Balochistan, lower Punjab, and overseas who took the SZABMU MDCAT exam are facing significant distress due to the delay. They claim that the original exam was marred by several irregularities,

including violations of PMDC guidelines, and that a fair retake is crucial to ensure equal opportunities for all students.

On the other hand, a university official, who requested anonymity, expressed concerns about the potential financial implications of conducting a retake exam.

The official suggested that awarding grace marks to students might be a more viable solution.

However, students have firmly rejected the idea of grace marks, insisting on a fair retake to address the issues with the original exam and ensure a level playing field for all aspiring medical and dental students.

The author is MBBS student and Founder of Student Nexus by SMC, an online educational and counseling platform.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Ataulah Iqbal addressing IHS dialogue titled "Leveraging Pakistan Culture Diversity to Foster peace Within and Without".

Greece boat incident: MOFA releases names of 47 rescued Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs released the list of 47 Pakistanis who were rescued following the tragic boat incident near Greece.

The list was compiled based on interviews conducted by the Embassy of Pakistan in Athens and information provided by Greek authorities.

The names on the list include: Umar Farooq, Muhammad Ahmad Shahzad, Mohsin Riaz, Talha, Raja Sajid, Raja Omar Nasir, Mehtab Rafiqat, Amir Habib, Muhammad Saifdar, Nayab Ahmed, Nadeem Ahmed, Umair Ahsan, Muhammad Bilal, Rahat Dilwar, Manzoor Ali, Ahmed Mukhtar, Haroon Asghar, Muzamil Hussain, Jamshaid Ali, Jaffar Iqbal, Muhammad Majid, Muhammad Salmaan, Qasim Ali, Muhammad Abdullah, Osama

Ali, Husnain Zafar Iqbal, Muhammad Hammad, Hassan Ali, Bilal Hussain, Sarmad Akbar, Usman Ahmad, Shoaib Mushtaq, Abdul Hanan, Ali Hamza, Fahad Ali, Muhammad Imran, Abdul Latif Rehman, Salman Khalid, Harnain Ali, Zain Ali, Usama Basharat, Mirza Kamran, Muhammad Waqas Syfyar Zulfiqar, Tahir Kaza, Shahroz Ali, and Shahzeel Ahmad. Earlier, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said that as per initial reports, a total of 47 Pakistanis were among those rescued following yesterday's incidents of capsized boats in the south of Crete Island of Greece.

"One Pakistani is confirmed to be among the dead. At this stage we are unable to confirm the number of deceased or missing Pakistani na-

tions," the spokesperson said in a press release.

The Embassy of Pakistan in Athens was in contact with the Hellenic Coast Guard and with the Coast Guard of Chania, which were directly dealing with the search and rescue operation.

The embassy officials have reached the Crete to meet with the rescued Pakistanis and provide them with any assistance required, it was added.

Families of the missing Pakistanis can contact the Embassy of Pakistan to share details on this number: +30-6943850188.

On December 14, the foreign media reported that a wooden boat carrying migrants capsized off the island of Gavdos in southern Greece, killing at least five of them.