

QUETTA VOICE

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University of Balochistan File Photo

BHC Upholds PML-N Candidate's Victory in NA-252

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: The Balochistan High Court (BHC) election tribunal upheld the victory of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidate Sardar Yaqoob Nasir in the NA-252 constituency.

The tribunal, led by Justice Abdullah Baloch, dismissed a petition filed by Sardar Bahar Busa of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), challenging the election results. The court maintained that Sardar Nasir's win was in accordance with the law.



This decision reaffirms the mandate given to Sardar Nasir by the people in the NA-252 constituency.

No immediate comments were available from the petitioner following the verdict.

PSX sees biggest single-day decline, plummets over 3,700 points

NEWS DESK: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) faced a sharp decline today, with the KSE 100 Index falling by 3.3%, bringing the index down to 111,070.29 points. The KSE-100 Index began the day on a positive note, rising by 1,376.02 points, or 1.2%, to reach an intraday high of 116,236.7. However, the market experienced a sharp reversal, plummeting to an intraday low of 110,896.27.

The index eventually closed at 111,070.29, reflecting a historic single-day drop of 3,790.39 points, or 3.3%. The volume of shares traded amounted to over 506 million, valued at approximately 45.7 billion Pakistan rupees. The significant drop in the market, driven by various economic and political factors, has raised concerns among investors. The trading suspension offers a temporary reprieve as investors wait for further developments. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) maintained on Monday its strategy of a gradual interest rate cut, slashing the policy rate by 200 basis points to 13% on the back of a decline in headline inflation.

Balochistan University Faces Financial Crisis: Rs 28 Crore Spent Monthly on 1,450 Employees

News Desk:

QUETTA: Balochistan University is facing a critical financial crisis, paying Rs 28 crore monthly to its 1,450 employees, while struggling with limited income and reduced grants from the Higher Education Commission (HEC). The dire situation was revealed during a Public Accounts Committee (PAC) meeting chaired by Asghar Ali Tareen at the Balochistan Provincial Assembly.

The PAC reviewed the university's appropriation accounts for 2019-2021 and audit paragraphs for 2022-2023, exposing major financial irregularities, including overstaffing, fund misuse, and administrative lapses.

Key Findings and PAC Orders:

Overstaffing Concerns: The university struggles with escalating expenditures due to a bloated workforce.

Recovery of Misused Funds: The

PAC directed the recovery of Rs 22.876 million from employees for house rent and repair expenses and ordered action against officials who misused 29 laptops meant for students.

Non-Returning Teachers: The PAC mandated the recovery of expenses from 13 teachers who failed to return after being sent abroad for education, with FIRs to be filed against their guarantors.

Need for Revenue Generation: The university, as an autonomous institution, was urged to improve its income generation to reduce dependency on government funding.

Chairman Asghar Ali Tareen expressed disappointment over the ongoing protests by university faculty and staff for non-payment of salaries. He criticized the mismanagement by previous administrations, which included recruiting relatives and misusing endowment funds. The PAC called for strict implementation

of its directives to address the university's financial and administrative challenges.

Nazeer Lehri, the Chairman of the Officers Association Disagrees

Nazeer Lehri, Chairman of the Officers Association at the University of Balochistan (UoB), highlighted the financial struggles faced by the institution, stating that despite the Government of Balochistan providing Rs 22 crore and the university managing pensions for 900 retirees, it still operates at a deficit. He expressed concern over the non-payment of salaries for November, which has prompted staff to plan protests. Lehri also criticized the University Act 2022, which imposes fines and imprisonment on employees participating in protests, further complicating efforts to address their grievances.

PM Shehbaz orders action to curb human trafficking after Greece boat capsiz



NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed authorities to take decisive action against human trafficking, which he said tarnishes Pakistan's global image, and demanded a report on cases involving Pakistani citizens over the past year.

Chairing a meeting on the deaths of Pakistani nationals in a recent boat capsiz near Greece, the prime minister expressed dismay over recurring tragedies and the lack of robust action against traffickers. "The recurrence of such incidents is due to sluggish ac-

tions against the people involved," he said, recalling a similar incident last year where 262 Pakistanis lost their lives.

Sharif instructed the immediate implementation of the Integrated Border Management System (IBMS) to monitor international travel and curb trafficking.

Officials briefed the prime minister that 174 suspects had been brought before courts this year, with four convictions. He demanded further updates on the public awareness campaign against human trafficking and or-

dered the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the foreign ministry to submit a comprehensive report.

Sharif also emphasised enhanced collaboration with international organisations to prevent such tragedies and called for stricter penalties for offenders.

Federal ministers Khawaja Muhammad Afi, Syed Mohsin Naqvi, Ahad Cheema, and Attullah Tarar, along with Special Assistant Tariq Fatemi and senior officials, attended the meeting.

Gas Leakage Blasts Injure Two in Quetta Amid SSGC's Silence

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Two individuals sustained burn injuries following a gas leakage explosion in Pashanabad's Street No. 18 on Wednesday morning. The injured were immediately shifted to the burn ward of Civil Hospital, where an emergency was declared to ensure their treatment.

This incident occurred just a day after another gas leakage blast on the Airport Road left one person injured, raising concerns about public safety. The prolonged gas load-shedding

in Quetta has compounded the issue, as residents resort to unsafe measures to meet their energy needs. These gas-related explosions have claimed several lives and left many injured in the provincial capital.

Despite repeated incidents, the Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) has remained silent, refusing to comment on the explosions or measures to prevent such tragedies. Residents are urging immediate action to address the hazards caused by gas shortages and leaks.



Govt 'doesn't deny' internet challenges as coalition ally PPP assails disruptive measures

NEWS DESK: Minister of State for Shazia Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday said the government did not "deny user challenges" resulting from slow internet speeds, claiming improvements in the tech sector, as lawmakers of ally PPP criticised measures resulting in internet issues.

In recent months, users have experienced sluggish speeds, difficulty downloading media on WhatsApp, and intermittent connectivity issues. Digital analysts say the government has been testing a "firewall" that monitors some platforms and gives the power to block content, like photos or videos of rallies shared on WhatsApp. The government has said a "web management system" is being updated for increased cyber security.

Earlier this month, as users reported widespread issues accessing social media services, at least two online tools negated the government's claims of uninterrupted internet. Responding to a question during NA's Question Hour today, Khawaja said, "We do not deny that there have been challenges in user experience in the last couple of months.

"But there are certain realities that we have to consider. There is a need to correct perceptions," the IT minister asserted.

Her response came after PPP MNAs Abdul Qadir Patel and Shazia Marri expressed strong reservations about the ongoing internet situation in the country, including the ban on X and the firewall. Khawaja noted that the average internet speed had improved by 28 per cent, citing an annual report by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) for 2023-24. She added that the usage of mo-

bile data services surged by 24pc and IT exports in November increased by 25pc year-on-year. Khawaja said there were "various reasons" that posed challenges, including congestion of the internet spectrum availability issues, and less than 2pc "fiberisation" (use of optical fibre cables) in the country. "Fixed lines were not closed even in the case of internet disruption due to security concerns," the minister of state said.

Khawaja said Pakistan's internet runs at 274 megahertz, which provided limited accessibility and the government was trying to enhance spectrum density to the level of the region's top ten countries. Radio Pakistan reported. It quoted her as saying that four more under-sea cables would be laid down in the next two years to improve internet connectivity and speed.

Khawaja recalled that during the Shan-ghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Islamabad in October when security was at the "highest alert", she received a call from the chairman of software body P@sha of difficulties faced by businesses, at which their offices were opened.

While asserting that the government would not compromise on "unlocking opportunities", Khawaja stated: "There is nothing above national security."

She stressed the need to strengthen Pakistan's cyber security landscape to prevent cyber-attacks, data leakage, and "digital strikes from hostile elements and states", Radio Pakistan reported.

Responding to Khawaja's explanation on the ban on X, Patel remarked: "We thought she would know better why the internet has been completely ruined in this country."



Education's downhill journey

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"She Power" Project: Empowering Women in Balochistan Through Hygiene and Sanitation

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IHC Decision on SZABMU MDCAT Reconduct 2024: Complete Details

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Interior minister hails Saudi's passport system during his visit

RIYADH (INP) Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi, paid a detailed visit to Saudi Arabia's Directorate of Passports, where he was warmly received by Acting Director General Major General Dr. Saleh Al-Murabbaa.

and commended the efforts to integrate state-of-the-art technology in passport processing and fraud prevention. The two officials discussed measures to streamline the process of passport issuance and strengthen efforts to prevent forgery.



RIYADH: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Director General King Fahd Security College Major General Dr. Ali Al-Dajj.

PTI founder threatens to call for halting remittances if his demands remain unmet

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has threatened to call for halting remittances if his demands remain unmet.

Aleema Khan quoted Imran Khan, saying that if these two demands were not met, he would soon call for stopping remittances to Pakistan.

Samajwadi Party MP slams rising hate crimes against Muslims in India

NEW DELHI (INP): Samajwadi Party MP Iqra Chaudhry has strongly condemned the rising incidents of hate speeches, and demolition of houses, particularly targeting Muslims in India.

Chaudhry pointed out that hate speech not only affects the general public but also influences those in constitutional positions. She cited the recent remarks made by a judge of the Allahabad High Court, which prompted the Supreme Court to take notice.

Christmas celebration held at AIOU for Christian staff members

ISLAMABAD (INP): A Christmas celebration was held at Alama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) yesterday for Christian staff members.

Extending Christmas greetings to the staff, Vice-Chancellor Dr. Nasir Mahmood while the guest of honor was Reverend Father Azam Sadiq of Saint John Paul II Parish, Iqbal Town.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in a meeting with Saudi Parliamentary delegation led by Chairman of Saudi Arabia Dr. Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh in Parliament house.

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq offers to arrange govt-opposition negotiations

ISLAMABAD (INP): Speaker Ayaz Sadiq on Wednesday offered his services for holding negotiations between the government and the opposition parties.

Assembly said, "I am ready to play a role for talks over political issues or any other matter."

Ahsan Iqbal highlights enhanced security of Chinese nationals in Pakistan

BEIJING (INP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday highlighted enhanced security of Chinese nationals in Pakistan.

with the top brass of Power China company conveyed condolence to the families of Chinese engineers in terror-related incidents, made it clear that the government of Pakistan strongly condemned the terrorist handovers.

Hindutva gangs force cancellation of interfaith couple's wedding reception

ALIGARH (INP): An interfaith couple's wedding reception was cancelled in Aligarh after Hindutva groups threatened violence.

from Hindutva groups, the reception in Aligarh was opposed by Hindutva gangs, including Thakur Dal, Karmi Sena, and Brahman Maha Sabha.

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS. The Executive Engineer Road, CWP/PAH Department, District Jaffarabad, invites sealed bids based on CSR-2023 amended up-to-date from eligible bidders on National Competitive Bidding (NCB) who can prove their eligibility and qualification as mentioned in the Bidding Documents for the works mentioned below. Estimated Money 2% of Estimated Cost. Completion period 18 Months and Tender Fee Rs. 1500/- for each work.

IHC Decision on SZABMU MDCAT Reconduct 2024: Complete Details

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has directed the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University (SZABMU) to re-conduct the Medical and Dental Colleges Admission Test (MDCAT) 2024. The decision comes after widespread complaints from students and parents regarding alleged misconduct and out-of-syllabus questions.

This marks the second time the court has ordered a re-conduct of the SZABMU MDCAT this year. Thousands of aspiring medical and dental students appeared for the MDCAT on September 22,

Syed Muhammad Yaseen:

2024, across Pakistan. Following the exam, numerous petitions were filed against SZABMU, leading the IHC to intervene and mandate a fresh test.

Key Details of the IHC Order

Test Re-Conduct Timeline: The court has instructed SZABMU to hold the re-exam within two weeks, with December 29, 2024, or January 5, 2025, proposed as potential dates.

Registration Fee: Candidates registered for the previous exam will need to pay a fee of PKR 4,000 for the re-

conduct.

Test Difficulty Level: The new test's difficulty will match that of the University of Health Sciences (UHS) MDCAT, as per insider sources.

The court's decision aims to address the long-standing concerns of medical and dental aspirants, ensuring fairness in the admission process. This re-conduct highlights the importance of transparency and standardization in national-level exams.

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



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chairs the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) at the Finance Division.

ECC reviews economic progress, stability under gov't oversight

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb provided a comprehensive overview of the economic landscape, underscoring the government's consistent efforts to implement policies aimed at bolstering economic stability and ensuring sustainable growth.

Chairing the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee, the minister also highlighted the progress made towards economic stability, the continued improvement in various economic sectors, and the government's firm resolve to maintain and accelerate this momentum.

He emphasized that the positive trends observed in economic indicators reflect the effectiveness of the government's targeted measures and commitment to steering the country towards greater prosperity.

A key highlight of the meeting was the presentation of the most recent Consumer Price Index (CPI) data, which recorded a significant drop to 4.9% in November 2024.

This represents the lowest level of inflation since April 2018, when CPI stood at 3.96%.

The current CPI figure marks the lowest in the past 78 months, signaling a positive

shift in the country's inflationary trends.

The decline in CPI reflects the government's success in managing inflationary pressures and restoring price stability, particularly for essential commodities.

The ECC was also briefed on the substantial reduction in the prices of several essential goods and services.

Among the items that have seen price drops are wheat flour, chillies powder, diesel, petrol, pulses, onions, basmati rice, electricity charges, sugar, plain bread, tea, soap, chicken, eggs, tomatoes, garlic, firewood, and salt.

These reductions are seen as critical measures that have eased the financial burden on the common man and strengthened the purchasing power of the population.

Minister Aurangzeb reiterated that the government remains fully committed to ensuring that the positive trajectory of the economy continues.

He emphasized that the government's fiscal policies, including effective management of public finances, trade, and energy sectors, have contributed significantly to the improvement in these indicators.

The Minister also reassured the public and business community that the government would

remain focused on addressing inflation, stabilizing the currency, and improving domestic production.

During the meeting, it was noted that while the country is experiencing a period of economic stability, continued efforts are required to maintain this progress. The government plans to enhance economic diversification, invest in key sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, and infrastructure, and pursue reforms to strengthen the financial system.

The ECC also acknowledged the critical role of public-private partnerships in achieving long-term economic growth and job creation.

The meeting reaffirmed the government's commitment to ongoing reforms and stabilization measures aimed at ensuring economic growth and improving the living standards of the people.

The Economic Coordination Committee will continue to closely monitor developments and take proactive steps to safeguard economic stability and foster sustainable growth.

The Finance Minister expressed optimism that the progress made so far would serve as a foundation for future successes, as the government remains dedicated to building a prosperous and stable Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif departs for his 2 day official visit of Egypt.

PM directs authorities concerned to take actions against human trafficking

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday directed the authorities concerned to take swift actions against human trafficking bringing defame to Pakistan and sought a report on the incidents of human trafficking during the last year involving Pakistani citizens.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to discuss the death of Pakistani nationals in a boat capsizing incident in Greece and the measures to curb human trafficking, called for strict action against the people involved in the trafficking of innocent people to other countries.

He recalled that 262 Pakistani

nationals had lost their lives in another incident in the same area last year and expressed his displeasure over inaction against those responsible. The recurrence of such incidents is due to the sluggish actions against the people involved, he added.

The prime minister instructed the immediate implementation of the Integrated Border Management System (IBMS) to monitor international travelers.

Prime Minister Shehbaz

sought details on the public awareness campaign on human trafficking and asked the FIA and foreign ministry to furnish a report on the incidents involving Pakistani nationals over the last year. He also stressed the need to enhance collaboration with international institutions to prevent the recurrence of such tragic incidents.

Federal ministers Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Syed Mohsin Naqvi, Ahad Cheema, and Antaulah Tarar, Special Assistant to PM Faruq Fatemi, Coordinator to PM Rana Ehsan Afzal and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

Energy issue eases in Gwadar with growing use of solar system

ISLAMABAD (INP): Energy issue is getting resolved in Gwadar with growing public tendency of using solar system.

Throughout 2024, sales of solar systems in my store have increased by about 60 percent, as well as revenue has been on an upward trend. Chinese brands are particularly popular because they are good value for money compared to other foreign brands in the Gwadar region," said Muhammad Baloch running business at Dashti market, one and only trading hub of electronics and solar systems in the Gwadar city, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Wednesday.

"This growth trend did not appear suddenly in one or two weeks. The Gwadar region has long suffered from energy shortages, but now there is an adequate supply of high-quality solar panels, equipment, kits and batteries in our local market, so sales growth is an inevitable trend.

In 2021, the Chinese government donated a batch of solar systems to the Gwadar region, and the public feedback was very good, so the public's tendency to choose to buy solar panels and systems has also shown an astonishing growth momentum," Baloch listed.

Majid Baloch, another shopkeeper at the Airport Road Market, agreed. "By using solar energy to power their homes, homeowners can reduce their reliance on the unstable grid and

significantly reduce their monthly utility bills."

Years back, solar panels, batteries and operating systems were not available in these markets.

After China announced to popularize solar systems among the neediest sections of society in Gwadar, the people of Gwadar began to realize that off-grid solar systems are the key to solving the electricity problem.

According to an official with Gwadar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, business of selling China-made solar panels and systems is in high gear. "Compared with past, residential and commercial buildings are also being solarized with solar apparatus," he added. When asked to Noor Muhammad, a customer at Airport Road Market about his reason to purchase solar sets, he said that the perpetual power failure has become a pain in the neck. "Going solar is the sole solution to get rid of such dilemma."

"Power outages are no longer a problem now, the Chinese solar system is providing excellent service to the people of Gwadar, we are saved," Abdul Basheed, a fisherman in the Ghazalwan area near the Al-Agwa Mosque in the old city of Gwadar, who benefited from the solar system donated by China, told Gwadar Pro.

The Chinese Embassy in Pakistan cooperated with the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China to donate 4,000 solar photovoltaic systems and LED

lights to the local area in 2021.

Then, China Communication and Construction Company and Consulate General of China in Karachi, jointly carried out the project to light up main streets and the public places of Gwadar. Raheem Buksh, a social worker told Gwadar Pro that according to his information, these solar donation reached in 42 regions in Gwadar City.

Pakistan's pace of solar energy adoption is rapidly accelerating, driven largely by an open market. As a result, Pakistan is now the world's sixth-largest solar market and the third-largest buyer of Chinese-made solar panels, with imports set to surge to 13 gigawatts (GW) in the first half of 2024.

With grid electricity costs skyrocketing, consumers, industries, and businesses are turning to solar power as a more cost-effective and reliable solution. This shift is reshaping the country's energy landscape.

Meanwhile, the Pakistani government plans to partner with Chinese companies to produce solar panels in Pakistan, a major milestone in Pakistan's efforts to produce green energy and increase its footprint in a climate-smart global world. The plan will also help Pakistan cut its annual import bill of \$27 billion.

The Alternate Energy Development Board has finalized a 10-year policy on the solar panels and allied equipment manufacturing policy.

Marwat underscores necessity of political dialogue to steer country out of crises

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Sher Afzal Marwat Wednesday underscored the necessity of political dialogue to steer the country out of crises.

PTI's MNA Sher Afzal Marwat in his media talk revealed that negotiations between the government and PTI were underway until November 25, however, a deadlock has occurred then.

He mentioned that a committee has been established to facilitate smooth negotiations.

Sher Afzal Marwat further indicated that a movement of civil disobedience will be initiated when all other options have been exhausted.

He emphasized that PTI is attuned to the needs of the country.

Additionally, he stated that the independence of the judiciary holds greater significance

than economic stability.

He remarked that the issues facing the country have escalated, making negotiations unviable.

Read more: KP CM says waiting for PTI founder's call for civil disobedience movement.

It is to be noted that on December 17, Sher Afzal Marwat suggested constitution of a committee of the house over the country's situation in the National Assembly session.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran Dr. Reza Amiri Moghadam called on Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony Chaudhary Salik Hussain.

Larkana Deputy Commissioner (DC) reviews polio eradication drive

LARKANA (INP): Deputy Commissioner Larkana Dr Sharjeel Noor Channa monitored and paid a surprise visit on Wednesday to Larkana district Tehsils Dokri and Bakrani to make the ongoing anti-polio campaign successful and reviewed the polio eradication drive.

He visited different areas of both Tehsils and got information about the ongoing polio campaign from the polio workers' teams.

He urged the polio workers to play their role in making the campaign successful and go door-to-door and find miss-

ing children who are kept away from polio eradication vaccination.

He emphasized that the polio vaccine is necessary for children who are up to 05 years old and it is my responsibility to protect them through this vaccine and save their disability future from this infectious disease forever and parents should fully cooperate with the teams of the health department and polio workers and give their children like Gilan the polio vaccine in any case so that they can be protected from this infectious disease, he said.

He also visited the health centers of the entire district Larkana to get information about the health facilities available to the people of the talukas. During the visit, officials of health officials briefed him about the facilities available to the people of the talukas.

On this occasion, the Deputy Commissioner of Larkana instructed the officials to take maximum care of the common and needy people, provide them with all possible facilities and adopt a better attitude towards the patients coming for treatment.



JAMSHORO: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah champion trophy the 62nd Parents' Day of Cadet College Petaro.