

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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Governor Balochistan, Jaffar Khan Mandokhail pose for a photo with newly passed graduates: Photo provided by DGPR

13 Faculty Members of Balochistan University Fail to Return After Studies Abroad

Syed Ali Shah:

Millions of Rupees Misused
Balochistan's government had spent millions of rupees on their travel and education expenses, only for these faculty members to remain abroad, violating their obligations.

The incident starkly contrasts with 50 faculty members from Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, and Management Sciences (BUITEMS), who returned after completing their studies abroad, fulfilling their commitments.

PAC's Directives

Chairman Asghar Ali Tareen called for strict accountability to prevent such incidents in the future. He emphasized the importance of ensuring that faculty members contribute back to their institutions after receiving such significant investments from public funds.

Conclusion

This incident raises critical questions about oversight and accountability within higher education institutions. The PAC's proactive approach is a step toward ensuring that public resources are utilized effectively and responsibly.

The University of Balochistan must act swiftly to regain trust and ensure such breaches do not occur in the future.

Comparison with BUITEMS



Crisis at Balochistan's Oldest University: Mismanagement, Protests, and Financial Woes

Manan Mandokhail:

Key Issues Exposed
• Overstaffing and Mismanagement: The university's bloated workforce has exacerbated financial burdens, with questionable appointments of unqualified or connected individuals.

has provided Rs 22 crore, it is evident that this support falls short of addressing the financial demands of an institution of this scale. Education is not a luxury; it is a necessity. The government must ensure timely payment of salaries to faculty and staff and provide additional support to stabilize the university's finances.

The Way Forward

Accountability: Individuals responsible for fund misuse and mismanagement must face strict consequences.

Revenue Generation: As an autonomous body, the university must explore innovative ways to generate revenue, such as partnerships with the private sector and offering market-relevant programs.

Protests and Employee Rights: The University Act 2022, which imposes fines and imprisonment on protesting employees, must be revisited. Silencing staff is not a solution; addressing their grievances is.

A Call for Balance

It is crucial to separate the actions of a few self-serving individuals from the institution as a whole. Punishing the university, its students, and its dedicated faculty for the misdeeds of a few will only exacerbate the crisis.

Balochistan University has played a pivotal role in shaping the province's educational landscape. The government, university administration, and all stakeholders must collaborate to restore its financial and academic integrity. The future of higher education in Balochistan depends on it.

The Role of the Government

While the Government of Balochistan



PM Increases Laptop Quota and Allocates 3,000 Internships for Balochistan Students

Education Desk:

NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has stressed that investing in youth is vital for building inclusive and robust economies capable of addressing both current and future global challenges. Speaking at the D-8 Summit in Cairo on Thursday, PM Shehbaz highlighted the importance of youth and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in driving economic development. He noted that youth contribute energy, fresh ideas, and creativity, while SMEs are crucial for job creation, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

The announcement was made by Rana Mashhood, the Prime Minister's Advisor on Youths, during the 20th convocation ceremony of the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, and Management Sciences (BUITEMS). Held on Thursday with Governor Mandokhail, who is also the university's chancellor, presiding over the event, the ceremony celebrated the achievements of 700 gradu-

ating students. Governor Balochistan expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister and Rana Mashhood for their efforts, emphasizing that these initiatives will greatly benefit students and contribute to the province's educational and professional development. This development reflects the federal government's commitment to empowering Balochistan's youth and addressing regional disparities.

PM Shehbaz urges D-8 countries to empower youth and support SMEs

The Prime Minister urged D-8 member states to prioritize youth empowerment and entrepreneurship, creating environments where small businesses can thrive. He pointed out that Pakistan, with over 60% of its population under the age of 30, has vast potential for innovation and growth. However, unlocking this potential requires providing the right skills, opportunities, and financial resources.

PM Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that today's summit is an excellent opportunity for D-8 countries to share best practices, pool resources, and create cross-border programmes supporting youth and SMEs. He also highlighted Pakistan's commitment to fostering socio-economic development through its flagship youth programme, which focuses on education, job creation, and empowering young people to become job creators. He mentioned that Pakistan is home to one of the largest freelance communities globally and is investing heavily in IT training to equip its youth with the necessary skills to engage

with the digital economy. The Prime Minister also underscored the importance of improving transport connectivity among D-8 member states to build efficient trade corridors and reliable supply chains. Addressing the ongoing situation in Palestine and the Middle East, PM Shehbaz reiterated that a ceasefire in Gaza is critical for regional and global peace and prosperity. Additionally, he welcomed Azerbaijan as a new member of the D-8 organisation, strengthening the group's potential for economic cooperation. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met Indonesia's President Joko Widodo in Cairo on the sidelines of the D-8 Summit, discussing ways to enhance bilateral relations, especially in economic and trade sectors. During the meeting, Prime Minister Sharif congratulated President Widodo on his recent inauguration. Both leaders expressed a commitment to strengthening their countries' relations, focusing on political, economic, and trade cooperation. PM Shehbaz emphasised Indonesia's role as a reliable

trade partner for Pakistan, particularly highlighting the crucial import of palm oil from Indonesia to meet Pakistan's edible oil needs. Both leaders agreed on the importance of maintaining close communication to deepen bilateral ties. The Prime Minister also expressed Pakistan's keen interest in furthering its relations with ASEAN and thanked Indonesia for its support in Pakistan's bid for Sectoral Partner status in ASEAN. PM Shehbaz expressed hopes that, with Indonesia's support, Pakistan could soon become a full Dialogue Partner of ASEAN. In addition to bilateral matters, the two leaders reaffirmed their unwavering support for Palestine, advocating for a ceasefire in Gaza and a comprehensive approach to resolving the Palestinian issue. They reiterated their commitment to the creation of an independent Palestinian state based on pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Prime Minister Sharif extended an invitation to President Widodo to visit Pakistan, which was accepted.

Two Dead as Passenger Coach Hits Motorcycle on National Highway in Kalat

Abdullah Lehr:

KALAT: A passenger coach struck a motorcycle on the national highway near Koheng, Kalat, resulting in the deaths of two individuals riding the motorcycle, police reported.



The victims succumbed to their injuries on the spot. Police have shifted the bodies to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHHQ) for necessary procedures.

The tragic incident raises concerns about road safety on the national highway. An investigation is underway to determine the cause of the accident. Further updates will follow as more information becomes available.

Ali Hassan Zehri Declared Winner of PB-21 Hub After ECP Notification

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has officially issued the winning notification for Ali Hassan Zehri, a lawmaker from the Pakitan Peoples Party (PPP), for the PB-21 Hub constituency. The decision comes after Sardar Saich Bhoatani of the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) challenged Zehri's victory.

Senior Minister Mir Sadiq Umrani and Sardar Baba Ghulam Rasool Umrani congratulated Zehri on the decision. The notification ends the electoral dispute, solidifying Zehri's position as the constituency's representative.

Mir Sadiq Umrani remarked, "This is a victory for democracy and the people of Hub. Ali Hassan Zehri has proven his mandate through due process."

Ali Hassan Zehri expressed his gratitude, saying, "I thank my supporters and party leadership for their unwavering confidence in me. This triumph is a win for the people of PB-21 Hub."

The resolution of this case underscores the robustness of Pakistan's electoral system and reinforces the PPP's position in the region.



A Progressive Shift in Balochistan's Education System

Continued to page 2

Halving corruption could free Pakistan from International Monetary Fund (IMF): Asif

Continued to page 4

SZABMU MDCAT-II Date Announced: Registration Fee and Deadline Details

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Editor: Asim Khan

A Progressive Shift in Balochistan's Education System

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 improvement 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 to Quetta is 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 stress 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, 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.

Pakistan, India and growing water disputes

By Dr Shuja Ahmed Maheer:

Water crisis, intensified by the growing climate crisis, has become a major global issue. More than 2 billion people lack access to safe drinking water across the planet. Rapidly accelerating water crisis grips the major parts of the world including South Asia where glacier mass is shrinking causing declining flow of rivers.

Both India and Pakistan are facing a huge challenge of water. The Indus Water Treaty was signed in 1960 to distribute water resources between India and Pakistan. According to this water-sharing treaty, India was to control Eastern Rivers (Beas, Ravi and Sutlej) and Pakistan was to have control over the Western Rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab). A Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) was also set up to resolve water disputes through conflict resolution mechanisms.

While the IWT has survived all kinds of tensions between the two countries, off late India has been violating it by constructing 330 MW Kishanganga dam on the Indus River, violating the IWT. The treaty cannot be modified without the consent of both India and Pakistan. India's unilateral action would be considered a clear violation of the treaty brokered by the World Bank which does not find any problem with the treaty.

In fact, Prime Minister Modi wants to increase diplomatic pressure on Pakistan. He is trying to downplay the importance of PIC and make the treaty ineffective. India is using the term terrorism to confuse the issue as it has done several times in the past. History indicates that India has always taken unilateral actions to disrupt peace and stability in the region. The IWT is a landmark objective of geopolitical tug of war.

Brutalising Syria - lessons and implications

By Inam Ul Haque:

In almost ten days this November, a coalition of Syrian opposition groups, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) under the Military Operations Command, that was led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and supported by Turkish-backed groups in the Syrian National Army (SNA), captured Damascus and almost the entire Syria. It ousted the full public ignominy, the over 50 years' old brutalising rule of the minority Alawite under authoritarianship under the house of Al-Assad.

This operation, the first after the March 2020 Idlib ceasefire, was condemned by rebels - under the overall command of Abu Muhammad al-Julani - as Deterrance of Aggression. The US-backed Syrian Free Army (SFA) joined with the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF)-OIR already operated in the autonomous regions of Northern and Eastern Syria under the overall direction of US CENTCOM. The Syrian Salvation Government, under HTS and other groups, also controlled and administered Northwestern Syria since the outbreak of the civil war. The local chapter of the transnational Salafist jihadist group Daesh, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria/al-Sham (ISIS), also operated in the ISIS-controlled pockets.

Most analysts believe 'whatever happens in Syria will not stay in Syria'. Its explosion radiates in all directions; and being a microcosm comprising Sunnis (74%), Alawite Shites (13%), Christians (3%), Druse Christians (5-10%), it has historically needed a strong Centre to ensure communal peace and security to all sects and segments so that none looks for outside help. Syria's 28 million people and its Arab population, and Gaza,

By Rafia Zakaria:

WHEN the Catholic armies entered the city of Granada in Spain in the late 15th century, they also took over the palace complex whose construction had taken place in 1238 under the Nasrid reign. It was built in stages by the Muslim rulers, with the bulk of their work being completed more than a century later. In 1492, the last Moorish ruler handed over the keys of the city to the new rulers and the palace complex was left to decay. It is seized upon by those tattered remnants of the Islamic culture that have survived. Baths were not popular among the European monarchy. Their castles, palaces and the Versailles - whose construction started in 1661, centuries after the Alhambra was built.

Today, Alhambra is a World Heritage Site and under constant restoration work, with hundreds of people laboriously restoring the plaster and tiles that have survived. Thousands of people are employed in the restoration work. The support to these countries, mostly least developed or island nations, is to help them to start weaving benchmarks for climate resilience and sustainability. Around 7 million Syrians are refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, Germany and elsewhere. Almost 10 million Syrians (36%) are under 24 years. Therefore, competition within Syria and over Syria by various countries is a stark reality. An Israel stuck at that. An Israel stuck to Syria means seven million Israeli lives are at stake. Syria's 28 million people, and Gaza,

the energy that surrounds toxic people, are consumed with envy and malice, is also radiates in a way as if the energy imprints of the people that suffered there is still lingering. The feelings evoked by certain places cast a strange sort of spell on those who encounter them. Perhaps there is some spiritual component to it. Whatever the case, the sense one gets upon entering a place is something one pays attention to, sometimes treating it as an early warning system.

The mystery of a place like Alhambra is that its creators seemed not only to know that intuitive senses of knowing and feeling would exist centuries later but also how to enhance them through the architectural spaces they created. The wafting fragrance of orange blossoms, the delicacy of the arches and the soaring ceilings are all part of an orchestral arrangement that still plays so many centuries after it was created.

All this shows that truth and beauty do not always come from gilt and gold but are part of our senses and emerge when the hidden magic of places leaves its luminous imprint on the human soul.

Accessing the RSF

By Ali Tanqueer Sheikh:

THE IMF is a relatively new player in the climate space. It has moved rapidly to carve a role for itself by formally recognising long-ignored linkages between macroeconomic stability and climate resilience. Pakistan is now seeking the IMF to support its Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF). This offers Pakistan an opportunity to align its climate landscape and engage the IMF on five big strategic pillars to climate action.

In accessing the RSF, this is the time to start weaving benchmarks for climate resilience and sustainability into macroeconomic indicators. RSF is the IMF's newest initiative that became operational in 2022 to provide long-term concessional financing to build climate resilience. It has already committed \$8 billion to almost a dozen countries, starting with Barbados. The last and largest was Bangladesh earlier this year.

And West Bank, and parts of Lebanon and Syria. And that is a fatal strategic oversight in men, money and material. US support notwithstanding. And military history is not very kind to such overreaches. The fall of Al-Assad regime has lessons and waves of implications. On the one side, the historic triumph of 'never brutalising a demographically resurgent with vengeance. You cannot suppress, oppress and brutalise your own people endlessly and with impunity. The demographic numbers ultimately prevail' though it may take some time. Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria are cases in point. It is particularly relevant to the shaly governments in the region. It is not very kind to such overreaches.

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throng to the palace every day having paid hundreds of euros for tickets that must be booked months in advance. A sense of serenity and wonder persists as the tourist wanders through courtyards full of fragrant orange trees. Despite the crowds, there is magic at Alhambra. The genius underlying the place's construction entrances anyone who manages to walk its halls. It is uncanny, this magical ethereal feeling that surrounds the visitor - that the palace rooms are not very large or terribly luxurious and that the inhabitants in the day of its decline, and that the palace of a king commonly ends in being the resting place of the beggar. The Alhambra is in a rapid state of similar transition.

Whenever a tower falls to decay, it is seized upon by those tattered remnants of the Islamic culture that have survived. Baths were not popular among the European monarchy. Their castles, palaces and the Versailles - whose construction started in 1661, centuries after the Alhambra was built.

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Adopting innovative financing mechanisms

adopting innovative financing mechanisms such as public-private partnerships and an emissions trading system, as pointed out by the finance minister in international climate finance talks last month while launching the National Climate Finance Strategy (NCSF). How can Pakistan start mobilising domestic private sector investments. Its share in Pakistan is woefully small, compared to its peers. In 2019, for example, private sector investments in climate-related projects barely totalled \$1.4bn - just 0.5pc of GDP, according to another report. Can we imagine the relationship with the private sector without furthering elite capture and marginalisation?

Fourth, while taxpayers are taxed increasingly, the regime for domestic climate taxes and levies is weak. There is space available to expand climate-related tax provisions by introducing carbon taxes, climate-proofing subsidies, integrating climate-smart manufacturing, and our

structures at these former camps have been torn down for the most part, a heavy and dark energy hangs in the air as one approaches the sites. It is as if the energy imprints of the people that suffered there is still lingering. The feelings evoked by certain places cast a strange sort of spell on those who encounter them. Perhaps there is some spiritual component to it. Whatever the case, the sense one gets upon entering a place is something one pays attention to, sometimes treating it as an early warning system.

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UN experts call for three key transformations to protect nature

DUBAI (INP): Human societies need a radical overhaul to stop the destruction of the planet, according to the UN biodiversity expert panels' transformative change" report released. The assessment, the second by the expert panel this week, says overconsumption in richer countries, a concentration of wealth and power, and a society increasingly disconnected from nature were driving ecological destruction. It offered ideas of how to respond to "biodiversity loss, nature's decline, and the projected collapse of key ecosystem functions." Taking action will be difficult -- but not impossible, the report said. "It is not just governments. It is not just business. It is not just civil society. It is all of us. We all need to work together," said Arun Agrawal, one of the lead authors of the report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Here are three examples of successful transformations, big and small, according to IPBES. In 2002, Spain suffered what was at the time its worst environmental disaster, when the Prestige oil tanker broke in two, spilling fuel that blackened swathes of the Atlantic coastline. It also inspired new guidelines for the UN's agriculture body and a network of more than 20 million fishers in Europe and across parts of North and South America. The local authorities working together. "Os Minarzos" reserve model was "not without tensions", IPBES said. But more than 17 years later, the area has better fishing practices, more species, and higher incomes -- as well as improved trust and cooperation. Fishing communities in Galicia responded to the devastation by pioneering a new way to manage a marine reserve, with fishers, scientists, and the local authorities working together. "Os Minarzos" reserve model was "not without tensions", IPBES said. But more than 17 years later, the area has better fishing practices, more species, and higher incomes -- as well as improved trust and cooperation. It also inspired new guidelines for the UN's agriculture body and a network of more than 20 million fishers in Europe and across parts of North and South America.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Shura Council of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Dr Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh, along with members of the Shura Council called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Awwas-Sadr.

Injured Maharaj, Mulder included in South Africa squad for Tests against Pakistan

CAPE TOWN (INP): South Africa have gambled on the fitness of Keshav Maharaj and Wiaan Mulder, and included both in the Test squad to play Pakistan over the festive season. Maharaj suffered an 11th-hour groin strain in the warm-ups for the first ODI in Paarl on Tuesday and had to be removed from the team sheet just before the toss. He will undergo a scan later to determine the severity of the injury. Left-arm spin-bowling allrounder Senuran Muthusamy is the only other spinner in the squad, which means if Maharaj is unavailable, South Africa may have to cast the net wide for reinforcements. Test coach Shukri Conrad said a decision on any additions to the squad would only be made after the results of the scan are known. "Based on the outcome of that, we'll do the necessary," he said. "We'll see how severe it is, whether it's only potentially the first Test (the misses) or both Test matches. Once I get the results of the scan, I'll be in a better position to either replace [or] chat to the other coaches and make up my mind on the back of that." Given that the first Test takes place at the same time as the SuperSport Park in Centurion, if Maharaj is unavailable for that game, it may not affect South Africa too much. The last time they played there, against India last year, South Africa went in all pace and won. "Where they will miss him, is in the brains trust, which suggests he will remain part of the squad. "Kesh is obviously one of the senior players in the side. He is a great sounding board. He's got a huge amount of experience and he's such a calming influence in the change room as well," Conrad said. "And he's an excellent spinner. Him, KG [Kagiso Rabada] and Marco [Lintjes] back, they're really the triumvirate that will ensure that we get the bulk of the 20 Test match." Mulder will have another scan on Thursday morning to check on his progress, which has been described as being in the final phase of his recovery. If he is passed fit for the Boxing Day match, top-order batter Matthew Breetzke will be released from the squad. Mulder will have another scan on Thursday morning to check on his progress, which has been described as being in the final phase of his recovery in a Cricket South Africa press release. "He has started hitting balls and doing some work with Kruger [van Wyk, fielding coach] up in Pretoria," Conrad said. "I'm not going to get ahead of ourselves in terms of where he's at right now. We'll see what the scan throws out and then we'll obviously take it very conservatively. We're not going to do anything daft and rush him into action if he's not quite ready yet. But that decision will only be taken pretty much when we get together next week." As bowling cover, there are two uncapped players in the mix, seam bowlers Corbin Bosch and Kwena Maphaka. Bosch, the son of former international Tertius, has earned his first call-up to an international side. He recently featured for a South African Invitation XI against the England Lions and took 1 for 21 in five overs and has a first-class batting average over 40. "Corbin Bosch adds so much to our attack. On the Highveld, we need a little bit of pace in and Corbin provides that. [I SuperSport Park] is his home ground if he gets to play. And he's in top form. He's doing well domestically," Conrad said.

52 killed injured 65 in two bus accidents in central Afghanistan

KABUL (INP): Two bus accidents involving a fuel tanker and a truck on a highway through central Afghanistan killed 52 people and injured 65, the Taliban government spokesman said Thursday. The accidents happened in Ghazni province on the same highway between the capital Kabul and southern Kandahar city late Wednesday, provincial head of information and culture Faramdullah Nisar said on X, without specifying how many people were killed and injured in each accident. "We learned with great regret that two fatal traffic accidents occurred on the Kabul-Kandahar Highway, in which 52 of our compatriots were killed and 65 others were injured," Nisar said. Rescue teams rushed to the site and transported the injured to hospital, with some in "serious condition", he added. Traffic accidents are common in Afghanistan, due in part to poor roads after decades of conflict, dangerous driving on highways, and a lack of regulation. In March, more than 20 people were killed and 38 injured when a bus collided with a fuel tanker and burst into flames in southern Helmand province. Another serious accident involving a fuel tanker took place in December 2022, when the vehicle overturned and caught fire in Afghanistan's high-altitude Salang Pass, killing 31 people and leaving dozens more with burns.



PUNJAB: Hon'ble Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, Chief Justice of Pakistan in a group photo with Bar representatives of different remote districts of Punjab at Sadiq Abad.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq addressing the Inaugural Session of 18th Speakers' Conference at Parliament House.

Human Rights Watch says Israel's deprivation of water in Gaza is act of genocide

WASHINGTON (INP): Human Rights Watch said on Thursday that Israel has killed thousands of Palestinians in Gaza by denying them clean water which it says legally amounts to acts of genocide and extermination. "This policy, inflicted as part of a mass killing of Palestinian civilians in Gaza, means Israeli authorities have committed the crime against humanity of extermination, which is ongoing. This policy also amounts to an 'act of genocide' under the Genocide Convention of 1948," Human Rights Watch said in its report. Israel has repeatedly rejected any accusation of genocide, saying it has respected international law and has a right to defend itself after the cross-border Hamas-led attack from Gaza on Oct. 7, 2023 that precipitated the war. In a statement on X, Israel's foreign ministry wrote: "The truth is the complete opposite of HRW's lies." "Since the beginning of the war, Israel has facilitated the continuous flow of water and humanitarian aid into Gaza, despite operating under constant attacks of Hamas terrorism organisation," the statement said. Although the report described the deprivation of water as an act of genocide, it noted that proving the crime of genocide against Israeli officials would also require establishing their intent. It cited statements by some senior Israeli officials which it said suggested they "wish to destroy Palestinians" which means the deprivation of water "may amount to the crime of genocide." "What we have found is that the Israeli government is intentionally killing Palestinians in Gaza by denying them the water that they need to survive," Lama Fakih, Human Rights Watch Middle East director told a press conference. In its response, Israel said it had ensured water infrastructure remained operational. It said international partners had sent water tankers through Israeli crossings, including last week, and Israel had facilitated the entry of more than 1.2 million tons of humanitarian supplies into Gaza. Human Rights Watch is the second major rights group in a month to use the word genocide to describe the actions of Israel in Gaza, after Amnesty International issued a report that concluded Israel was committing genocide. Both reports came just weeks after the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former defence chief for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity. They deny the allegations. The 1948 Genocide Convention, enacted in the wake of the mass murder of Jews in the Nazi Holocaust, defines the crime of genocide as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group". The 184-page Human Rights Watch report said the Israeli government stopped water being piped into Gaza and cut off electricity and restricted fuel which meant Gaza's own water and sanitation facilities could not be used. As a result, Palestinians in Gaza had access to only a few litres of water a day in many areas, far below the 15-litre-threshold for survival, the group said. Israel launched its air and ground war in Gaza after Hamas-led fighters attacked Israeli communities across the border 14 months ago, killing 1,200 people and taking over 250 hostages back to Gaza, according to Israel's allies. Israel's campaign has killed more than 45,000 Palestinians, displaced most of the 2.3 million population and reduced much of the coastal enclave to ruins. The families would also be resolved promptly. Responding to queries, he mentioned that measures were being taken to address the concerns of affectees residing in the Bakakel Camp. He said efforts were underway to resolve their demands efficiently adding that PDMA was committed to assisting the public in times of need and would not tolerate any negligence in this regard.

PDMA releases Rs 720m for affectees of Zarb-e-Azb operation in NW

PESHAWAR (INP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has released Rs 720 million in funds for the affectees of North Waziristan's (NW) operation Zarb-e-Azb. According to a statement issued from the office of PDMA Director General Asfandyar Khattak, funds, disbursed in two instalments, would be delivered to all registered affectees via SIM card messaging systems. The release of funds was made possible due to the special interest and efforts of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and Minister for Relief Haji Nek Muhammad Dawar. Asfandyar Khattak stated that approximately 18,000 registered affectees of Zarb-e-Azb would receive financial aid of Rs 40,000 per family, covering the months of August and September. The DG PDMA assured that funds for pending instalments would be released soon to alleviate the financial challenges faced by the affectees. He emphasized that PDMA, alongside Minister Haji Nek Muhammad Dawar, was actively working to address the grievances of the displaced families. He expressed optimism that in addition to monthly financial aid, other issues affecting



ISLAMABAD: SCCI President presenting a souvenir to Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Khan during his visit to the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, accompanied by Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Finance Minister Senator Aurangzeb.

'No regrets' about retiring, says Ashwin on return to Chennai

CHENNAI (INP): R Ashwin has "zero regrets" about his sudden decision to retire from international cricket at the end of the Gabba Test, stating his desire to play for Chennai Super Kings for "as long as I can because "I don't think Ashwin the cricketer is done". After announcing his retirement in Brisbane, Ashwin was back in Chennai on Thursday morning and was received at home by his family and friends amid much fanfare which included flower garlands, autograph hunters and a band. "I never thought so many people will come here. Just wanted a quiet entry, and was looking forward to relax at home. But you have made my day," Ashwin told the crowd gathered near his residence. "I have played Test cricket for so many years, but the last time I saw something) like this was after the 2011 World Cup. It's emotional for a lot of people, and may be it will sink in (sometimes) but for me, personally, it is a great sense of relief and satisfaction," Ashwin said of his decision to retire. "It was very instinctive and it has been running in my head for a while. I just felt (it) on day four and I just called it a day. "To be honest, we ets, making runs, but those memories are not there in the last two years. So, that was a clear indication that we need to take a different route now." "I have played Test cricket for so many years, but the last time I saw something) like this was after the 2011 World Cup. It's emotional for a lot of people, and may be it will sink in (sometimes) but for me, personally, it is a great sense of relief and satisfaction," Ashwin said of his decision to retire. "It was very instinctive and it has been running in my head for a while. I just felt (it) on day four and I just called it a day.

SZABMU MDCAT-II Date Announced: Registration Fee and Deadline Details

ISLAMABAD: The Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University (SZABMU) has officially declared the date for its MDCAT-II examination.

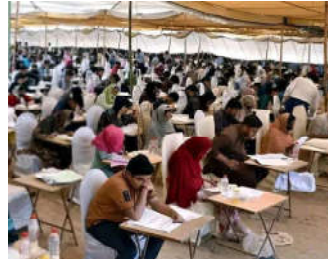
The test is scheduled to be held on Monday, December 30, 2024. Registration Fee and Deadline:

Fee: Rs. 6,000
Last Date for Registration: Sunday, December 24, 2024
Important Note: No late fee will be accepted.

Candidates interested in appearing for the MDCAT-II are advised to register before the deadline and follow the official instructions provided by SZABMU.

For the latest updates and official notifications, please visit

Syed Muhammad Yaseen:



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



OMAN: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf called on Minister of Royal Office, General Sultan Mohammad Al Nu'amani during his visit to Oman.

PPP stages protest over absence of ministers during NA session

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has staged protest in National Assembly over the absence of federal ministers after parliamentary secretaries fail to satisfy lawmakers during question session.

During the session, which started under the chairmanship of Deputy Speaker Syed M. Ghulam Mustafa Shah on Thursday, PPP parliamentary leader MNA Naveed

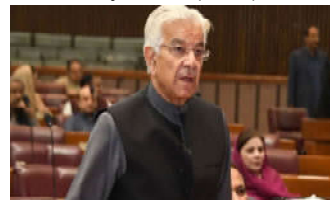
Qamar expressed dissatisfaction with the response of the parliamentary secretaries and the absence of ministers. PPP leader said that it seemed government had given federal ministers free hand and they do not need to come in the house, moreover, parliamentary secretaries were not being properly briefed. Speaker

Halving corruption could free Pakistan from International Monetary Fund (IMF): Asif

NEWS DESK: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif stated that Pakistan could eliminate its dependence on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) if the country successfully reduced corruption by 50%. Addressing industrialists in Sialkot, Asif said that the reduction in corruption would unlock the potential for Pakistan to chart its own path of development and economic independence.

He added that such a change would eliminate the need for IMF support and lead the country towards long-term progress.

The defence minister pointed out that Pakistan had endured considerable pressure from the IMF over the past year, with the country struggling to meet the requirements set by the global lender. He noted that the persistent pressure had created an unstable economic environment, yet he remained optimistic that internal reforms and reduced corruption could help stabilise the nation's finances.



Asif emphasised the importance of policy reforms, citing the recent reduction in the policy rate by 9% as a positive step towards economic improvement.

Moreover, the minister spoke about the impact of regional issues on Pakistan's economy, acknowledging that external factors also played a crucial role in the nation's challenges. He referenced the development of Sialkot's airport, highlighting the success of private-public partnerships, a model that had proven effective in the city.



ISLAMABAD: Newly elected body of Islamabad Union of journalists 2025-27 pose for photo with supporters.



CAIRO: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with Chief Adviser of Bangladesh Professor Dr. Muhammad Yunis on the sidelines of the D-8 Summit.

Khawaja Asif says corruption eating away Pakistan like termites

SIALKOT (INP): Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Thursday conceded the rampant corruption plaguing Pakistan, saying that the country is suffering from a disease of corruption, which has become a major obstacle to progress.

In a scathing address to industrialists at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Khawaja Asif said that even a 50 percent reduction in corruption would eliminate the need for International Monetary Fund (IMF) assistance to Pakistan.

The defence minister lamented that corruption has become so entrenched that customs collectors routinely accept bribes of 400 to 500 million rupees.

Khawaja Asif also expressed concern over the lack

of distinction between halal and haram. Quoting former Punjab Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi, the defence minister cited a happening where a bureaucrat earned Rs 4 billion from 'Salami' of a wedding reception. "Corruption is eating away our country like termites," Khawaja Asif said.

Speaking on the recent reduction in the policy rate, he said that Pakistan slashed the rate by nine percent in few months. The defence minister also stressed the need for stability within the country, highlighting the success of private sector partnerships in establishing airports and airlines.

International's 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index ranked Pakistan with a score of 29, indicating a high level of corrup-

tion. Earlier a report by an inspection team formed by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Mirad Ali Shah revealed that Rs 3.22 billion worth of wheat 'disappeared' after floods in 2022. According to the details, a 205-page report has been leaked which revealed that following the terrible floods of 2022, the officials of the Sindh Food Department mixed 379,000 sacks of substandard wheat with dirt. This resulted in an astounding loss of almost Rs 3.22 billion to the public treasury.

The report held concerned officials responsible for the negligence that led to Rs 3.22 billion worth of wheat damage. The inquiry committee examined which storage facilities in 14 districts across Sindh province.

PEMRA's ISPR approval rule for defence analysts on TV suspended

NEWS DESK: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has suspended a Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) notification that made it mandatory for defence analysts to obtain approval from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) before appearing on television channels.

The court heard the case regarding the PEMRA notification, which stipulated that only retired officers of the armed forces could participate in TV programs, provided they received prior permission from ISPR. Express News reported.

The notification, issued in 2019, had drawn criticism for placing restrictions on retired defence personnel's media participation.

During today's proceedings, Justice Babar Sattar issued a written order against the notification, noting that PEMRA's legal counsel did not appear in court.

An associate lawyer, citing the illness of a senior counsel, requested a postponement.

Based on the arguments presented during the hearing, the court decided to suspend the PEMRA notification.

The Islamabad High Court further stated that the suspension of the notification would remain in place until the final decision in the case.

Following the hearing, the court adjourned the case until February 11.

Earlier in September, the IHC had sought clarification on why the military's media wing, the ISPR, had considered it a special privilege to determine defence analysts presenting the viewpoints on TV channels.

Justice Babar Sattar had issued a written order regarding the hearing of a case, challenging a Pakistani

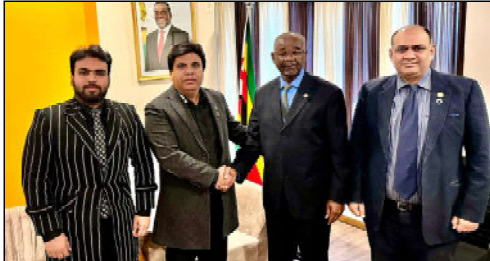
Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) notification that restricted defence analysis on TV channels to only retired military officers.

The court had also sought the original records and inquired about the basis of Pemra's notification.

It had also asked the defence ministry to clarify the legal standing of the ISPR and why the ISPR deemed the designation of defence analysts as its exclusive authority.

Saif lashes out at federal govt for remaining tight-lipped over Kurram massacre

PESHAWAR (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Adviser Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif on Thursday lashed out at the federal government for remaining tight-lipped over escalation in the restive Kurram Agency. In a statement, the adviser blamed the government for treating Kurram Agency as if it was part of Afghanistan, not Pakistan. "The government is only interested in fanning the flames of racial profiling and sectarianism. Someone should convey this to Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi that he isn't only the minister of Islamabad territory as all parts of Pakistan falls under his jurisdiction," he added. Saif also took aim at Defence Minister Khawaja Asif for using derogatory language against his opponents, adding that the federal government's involvement in addressing the grievances of the people of Kurram Agency was missing. Meanwhile, he lauded KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur for giving his helicopter to the people.



ISLAMABAD: Mazhar Hussain Dhatlhal, Chairman/CEO Global Trade & Expo Center Meets Ambassador of Zimbabwe Titus M.J. Abu-Basutu Strengthens Trade Relations with Zimbabwe in Key Trade Sectors.

Current political system won't bring stability, says Shahid Khaqan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi Thursday said that existing political system could not bring stability in country. "In our system leaders want to rule like kings"

This country could not be governed without democracy," Shahid Khaqan said. He said Pakistan has only made progress during democratic rule. "Money came to Pakistan in Ziaul Haq and Ayub Khan's rule but the country didn't progress," he said.

"Why the government has been failed to privatize the DISCOs having Rs 800 billion annual losses," he asked.

"PIA's privatization is a government hobby, they yet to decide what they want to sell in the airlines," Abbasi said. "Our bureaucracy has utterly failed," he said.

He said, since last 15 years, we have started to sell the Senate's seats. The country won't move forward until and unless the government will talk to the opposition, former PM said.

"The economic development has been impossible in presence of political anarchy and instability," he added.

Addressing a gathering on Wednesday, former prime minister said that the election theft has been the only cause of

Pakistan's debacle. "I have held the prime minister's office. I knew about the election theft before the polls held," Abbasi said. "I have informed my party one year ago that I could not walk on their path," he said. "We back, 'respect to the vote' but not 'respect to the power'," former PML-N leader said.

"I knew it that the election will be stolen thus didn't contest the poll," Shahid Khaqan said.

"I am saying without any exaggeration that 50 percent senators won seats by paying money," he claimed. "The country is needed supremacy of the constitution, the rule of law and reforms," he stressed.