

QUETTA VOICE

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Levies personnel destroying opium cultivation in Chaghi district: Photo grabbed from a video provided by the author

Free Green Bus Travel for Special People in Balochistan: Government Takes Major Step

Manan Mandokhail:

QUETTA: In a landmark decision under the leadership of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, a meeting was held to discuss the implementation of free travel for people with disabilities in green buses. The meeting, chaired by Provincial Secretary of Transport Balochistan, Hayat Kakar, was attended by key figures, including Social Welfare Director Jalil Khan Mium, Green Bus Operations Manager Owais Anwar, Quetta Online Volunteer Organization representative Zaar Rehman, Riaz Ahmed Baloch, and Jahangir Iqbal.

The meeting concluded that individuals with a NADRA-issued special persons card registered with the Social Welfare Department will be entitled to free travel on the Green Bus service.

This initiative aligns with the Social Welfare Act of 2017, which also ensures that people with disabilities will receive a 50% discount on all local transport services. The provincial government is fully committed to improving the quality of life for people with disabilities, ensuring they enjoy equal opportunities within the community to ensure the effective execution of this program, the meeting emphasized that both the Secretary of PTA and the Secretary of RTA Quetta must oversee the implementation of these decisions. Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti's vision includes providing special persons with dignified access to public transportation, ensuring they are not marginalized. Additionally, transporters have been directed to show utmost respect towards special people, with a firm stance against any social abuse or discrimination. This initiative marks a significant step towards inclusivity, with the Balochistan government taking proactive measures to provide relief and support to special people, emphasizing their important role in society.

'State busy in forming and dislodging govts: SC judge Athar Minalallah

NEWS DESK: Supreme Court's Justice Athar Minalallah remarked on Friday that the "state is focused on toppling and bringing governments" with all institutions targeting political opponents.

The senior SC judge gave these remarks while hearing the bail petition of murder suspect. A three-member bench, headed by Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, heard the murder case.

During the hearing, the top court ordered the immediate arrest of murder suspect Ishaq and directed the SP Supreme Court to hand him over to judicial authorities after his bail plea was rejected.

Justice Athar Minalallah remarked that the case had been pending in the apex court since 2017 while the state is focused on toppling and bringing governments, with institutions primarily targeting political opponents.

Levies Operation Destroys 16 Acres of Poppy in Barab Chah

Riaz Baloch:

CHAGHI: Levies forces have intensified their crackdown on poppy cultivation in the Pak-Afghan border area of Barab Chah, success fully destroying 16 acres of the illegal crop in just one week.

In the latest operation, six acres of poppy were destroyed using tractors.

This follows a similar operation in Klug Mundo yesterday, where 10 acres of poppy fields were eradicated.

Commissioner Quetta, Hamza Shafiqat speaking about the operation, stated,

"The cultivation of poppy not only violates the law but also poses a threat to our society by fueling the drug trade. We are committed to taking strict action against such activities and ensuring the eradication of opium cultivation across the region."

"Authorities have issued warnings to landlords, urging them to refrain from cultivating

poppy. Strict legal measures are being enforced across all areas of the district to deter such practices.

The Levies' ongoing efforts reflect the government's firm stance against drug production, aiming to curb illegal activities and promote a safer, drug-free environment.

This targeted action highlights the importance of maintaining vigilance in border areas to counter the challenges posed by opium cultivation.

Severe Cold Paralyzes Life in Quetta, Ziarat, and Kalat Amid Power Outages

Syed Ali Shah:



QUETTA, Ziarat, and Kalat districts are grappling with freezing temperatures, as severe cold and dry weather disrupt routine life.

The harsh conditions have confined residents to their homes, with many struggling to cope with prolonged power outages and unannounced load-shedding by the power utility company, QESCO.

The lack of uninterrupted electricity and gas supply has compounded the difficulties faced by the people. Residents report a dire need for heating to battle the extreme cold.

Mohammed Aslam from Quetta expressed frustration, stating,

"The ongoing load-shedding has made life unbearable in this freezing weather." Similarly, Bilal Ahmed from Ziarat urged authorities to address the crisis, emphasizing, "CASCO's failure to provide stable power supply is making survival extremely challenging for families."

"Sarith and Kala residents have also joined the call for uninterrupted electricity and gas, warning that prolonged neglect could escalate public grievances. Local markets and schools remain

largely empty, while small businesses are bearing the brunt of reduced customer footfall due to the severe weather.

The absence of essential utilities has further aggravated the situation, with many households unable to use electric heaters or gas stoves.

Authorities have yet to issue a response to these growing concerns, leaving citizens to endure worsening conditions.

Immediate action is needed to restore electricity and gas supplies, ensuring relief for the affected districts.

CM Balochistan Visits Gwadar to Address Ship-Breaking Yard, Illegal Trawling

Gwadar, Balochistan: The Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, visited Gwadar alongside elected regional members of parliament and the Chief Secretary of Balochistan.

During his visit, CM Bugti was briefed on the proposed site for the ship-breaking yard in Surbandar, a coastal area adjacent to Gwadar.

Detailed Report on Ship-Breaking Yard Ordered

CM Mir Sarfraz Bugti directed officials to prepare a comprehensive report detailing the potential benefits and drawbacks of the ship-breaking yard project for the local population.

He stressed the importance of consulting all stakeholders before moving forward.

"Before implementing any project, it is necessary to take local representatives and the population into confidence," CM Bugti stated.

He added that the project would be ineffective if the concerns of local fishermen were not addressed.

Public Interest a Priority

The Chief Minister emphasized that no decision would be made

against the public interest. "We need to consider what positive impacts this project will have on the lives of ordinary people," he said, CM Bugti instructed that a solution acceptable to local elected representatives, community elders, and the public should be developed through extensive consultation.

Strong Stance Against Illegal Trawling

During his visit, CM Bugti also expressed severe concern over the issue of illegal trawling along Balochistan's coastline.

He warned that continued illegal trawling could lead to the extinction of marine life within a few years. "Illegal trawling has brought marine life to the brink of destruction, and this must be stopped immediately," CM Bugti stated firmly.

Consulting Services for Comprehensive Review

To ensure all aspects of the ship-breaking yard project are thoroughly evaluated, the Chief Minister directed that professional consulting services be hired. The aim is to guarantee that the local population remains unaffected and benefits from any proposed development.



6 arrested after polio team 'attacked' by family in Karachi's Korangi

NEWS DESK: Six people were arrested on Friday after a polio vaccination team and policemen accompanying them were allegedly "attacked" by residents in an informal settlement in Karachi's Korangi.

Pakistan is one of the last two countries in the world, alongside Afghanistan, where polio remains endemic, with the disease mostly affecting children under five, and sometimes causing lifelong paralysis.

Despite global efforts to eradicate the virus, challenges such as security issues, vaccine hesitancy, and misinformation have slowed progress.

Amid persistent alarm over polio, the Sindh government launched a week-long immunisation drive on Monday against the debilitating disease that has so far affected 18 children in Sindh. This year's last polio vaccination drive targeted 10.6 million children under the age of five. A total of 64 children in Pakistan have contracted the poliovirus this year.

A statement from the Korangi senior superintendent of police's (SSP) spokesperson said police personnel and their security staff arrived at the door of a tribal family in an informal settlement and

were subsequently "attacked" by the women present there. It added that the Korangi deputy superintendent of police (DSP) arrived at the spot along with other female police officers and Rangers, upon which the family "reacted strongly and started pelting stones at the police".

The statement said the police immediately took control of the situation and arrested four women and two boys, adding that a case was being registered against the suspects on the government's instructions.

Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah took notice of the incident and said any abuse of police workers would not be tolerated. The chief minister was informed by Karachi Additional Inspector General of Police Javed Odho that action had been taken against the suspects. CM Shah ordered all deputy commissioners (DC) to review the security of polio workers and directed the Korangi DC to meet and console the affected team. Sindh Chief Secretary Syed Asif Hyder Shah directed the provision of immediate medical treatment to the impacted personnel and said the safety of polio workers was a top priority and should be ensured.



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

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Shabana Habib Tareen: Pioneering Women's Empowerment in Law Enforcement

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Commissioning of central control of new Gwadar airport completes

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QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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

Editorial:

The University of Balochistan (UoB), the oldest and most prestigious institution of higher education in the province of the country, finds itself grappling with a severe financial crisis.

With monthly expenditures of Rs 28 crore to pay 1,450 employees and dwindling grants from the Higher Education Commission (HEC), the situation demands urgent and comprehensive action.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), chaired by Asghar Ali Tareen, has shed light on alarming issues, including overstating funds, misuse, and administrative failures. These revelations highlight the long-standing mismanagement that has pushed this vital institution to the brink.

Key Issues Exposed

- **Overstating and Mismanagement:** The university's bloated workforce has exacerbated financial burdens, with questionable appointments of unqualified or connected individuals.
- **Fund Misuse:** Rupees 22.876 million meant for house rent and repairs, along with laptops for students, have reportedly been misused, raising serious accountability concerns.
- **Non-Returning Teachers:** Thirteen faculty members sent abroad for higher education failed to return, prompting PAC to call for strict legal actions, including FIRs against their guarantors.

The Role of the Government

While the Government of Balochistan 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.

Asking questions

By Neda Mujji:

RECENTLY, a student of Grade 8 asked a few questions in a rapid sequence during a science lesson. Her mind was racing, and she questioned her teacher's answers. The questions were met, as they inevitably are, with suspicion, and the teacher retorted with "don't act too smart".

That rebuttal is flawed at many levels. Firstly, aren't students being sent to school to become smart? Isn't the purpose of all learning geared towards asking questions relentlessly to engage with content on a deeper level? Unfortunately, our schools have always laid more emphasis on discipline and compliance than on learning. Any behaviour that breaks the flow of the teacher's talk time is met with rebuke. It's almost as if the teachers are racing against the clock to regurgitate what they know in each chapter of the textbook, being taught.

Students cannot be involved in learning in depth, nor can they learn to answer questions if they don't ask. Questions don't arise in a vacuum, they are the result of a thinking mind. Fostering a culture where questions are encouraged and appreciated helps instill a love for learning in students.

It teaches them that curiosity is a strength and that questions demonstrate critical thinking. This mindset is particularly crucial in primary and secondary classrooms, where students are still shaping their views of the world and belief systems and, at this stage, it is important for adults to value their self-expression as they learn to think, express, and share ideas. Besides, questions in class, and indeed later on in professional life, provide valuable feedback that allows us to understand as well as gaps in knowledge.

They also encourage collaboration, help students develop a voice and gain confidence in their abilities. Questions can create a vibrant learning environment, albeit noisy and chaotic. Change is often misunderstood in our culture as a lack of discipline, even though the sparks of intelligence and evolution often take root in chaos. Educators who fear too many questions are often vying for control. Educators who fear too many questions in class are often vying for control, hoping that they can orchestrate an environment where the teacher remains the main character in the movie. If students are to develop the confidence to ask, explore and un-learn their potential, they need a safe, non-judgemental environment where the quality and frequency of questions is not controlled. In an ideal world, students would not hesitate to ask or answer questions.

A sport above the clouds

By Waqas Bin Najib:

Pakistan has a unique mountain landscape, where the Himalayas, Karakoram and Hindu Kush ranges converge and have different characteristics.

It is home to five of the 14 peaks higher than 8,000 metres, collectively called the eight-thousanders, including two of the most beautiful mountains in the world: K2 and Nanga Parbat. Compared to the sea level, the partial pressure of oxygen in the air, reflecting the oxygen concentration, is around half at 5,000m and only a third above 8,000m, where the oxygen pressure is so low that a human body cannot adjust anymore. Hence, it marks the start of the death zone. Without pressurised oxygen, cells die, and the organ systems slow down. Cerebral and pulmonary oedema are only a mat-

ter of time as the body struggles to find oxygen by increasing blood circulation, which is already thicker with more red blood cells at that altitude.

Last month, Sirbaz Khan became the first Pakistani to summit all 14 eight-thousanders. A few days later, Shehroze Kashif completed his 14 at the young age of 22. These are tremendous personal achievements that deserve a celebration. It takes tremendous physical and mental strength and grit to summit an eight-thousander. An expedition to climb an eight-thousander is usually many weeks long. There are days-long hikes to reach the base camp at around 5,000m. From there, members make day trips to the higher camps and return to the lower camps, helping the body acclimatise to lower oxygen levels. The

high-altitude porters carry the equipment, tents, gear, fuel, and food to the higher camps in these rotations. Pakistani high-altitude porters remain invisible.

Expedition companies mostly hire Nepalese sherpas, even for the mountains in Pakistan. Climbing expeditions depend on high-altitude porters. Above the base camp, all the way to the death zone, where life is not meant to exist, these porters lead the climbing, make routes, fix anchors and ropes, carry equipment and supplies, pitch tents, cook food, and care for the people paying to climb the mountains.

Some hardcore climbers still climb in alpine style without the help of porters or oxygen, but they are few in number. Most climbers today join commercial expeditions. Commercial mountaineering has changed the sport over the past few decades.

Mountaineering used to be a sport of elite athletes carrying national flags in a race to be the first to conquer a mountain and its different routes. Commercial mountaineering started with Mount Denali in the US, where enthusiastic amateurs were taken to the summit. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many trained Russian climbers became available as mountaineering guides, and the industry took off. Today, mountaineering is a commercial industry.

Expedition management companies offer a range of options, services and luxuries, including personal high-altitude porters. For decades, sherpas and high-altitude porters climbed mountains with low wages. They were often restricted to the last

Sara Sadiq:

Quetta: Shabana Habib Tareen, the trailblazing Deputy Superintendent of Police (Traffic) in Quetta, is reshaping societal norms and advocating for gender equality in a male-dominated field.

Her journey, from humble beginnings to becoming a symbol of women's empowerment, highlights her commitment to justice, safety, and women's rights in Balochistan.

Early Life and Inspiration

Born in a traditional family in Quetta, Shabana took it upon herself to fulfil her dream. Today, her two daughters are also inspired to follow in her footsteps.

Despite societal expectations, Shabana joined the police force in 1994 as one of the few female officers trained at Sihala Police Academy. Her journey into law enforcement was not only a personal triumph but also a bold challenge to gender stereotypes in



Balochistan.

Career Achievements

Breaking Gender Barriers: Shabana faced skepticism from colleagues and the public but proved her competence through action. Her leadership as one of Balochistan's few female officers shattered stereotypes and established her authority.

Promoting Road Safety: As DSP (Traffic), she implemented stringent traffic laws in

Personal Triumphs

Advocating Women's Rights: Beyond her professional duties, Shabana has championed women's empowerment, raising awareness on issues like domestic violence and honor killings. Her efforts include establishing schools for girls in her community, enabling access to education for countless young

Impact on Society

Balancing responsibilities and professional challenges, Shabana excelled in the 2012 Central Superior Services (CSS) examination, securing the top rank in Balochistan and ranking 21st nationally. Her success inspired women across Pakistan to pursue civil service careers.

Shabana's influence extends far beyond her role in law enforcement. By promoting education, engaging with local communities, and advocating for women's rights, she has become a beacon of hope in Balochistan. Her initiatives include transforming a primary school in her village into a high school and college, empowering future generations through education.

Broader Implications

Shabana's leadership role challenges societal norms, inspiring a cultural shift towards recognizing women's contributions in all sectors. As a role model for countless young women, she underscores the potential for change when individuals defy limitations.

Shabana's story is more than a personal success; it symbolizes progress for women's rights in Pakistan. Her work calls for policy reforms to ensure women's voices are heard and protected, paving the way for a more equitable future.

Stay tuned for more inspiring stories from Balochistan and beyond.

The impasse persists

By Maleeha Lodhi:

FOR all the speculation during last month's SCO summit about a thaw in Pakistan-India relations, there has been no melting of the ice between the two neighbours. Instead, subsequent developments indicate the long-standing diplomatic impasse persists and may even have deepened.

The speculation was sparked by the visit to Islamabad last month of Jaishankar to attend the meeting of the 10-member Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the first by an Indian foreign minister in over a decade. But he made clear ahead of the trip that no bilateral engagement was envisioned. Nor did Islamabad seek a meeting on the sidelines. The media noise over the customary exchange of handshakes and pleasantries did not obscure the reality that Jaishankar's 24-hour stay did nothing to

break the diplomatic deadlock — and wasn't intended to. In fact, overtures to New Delhi by former prime minister and head of the ruling party Nawaz Sharif and his daughter, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, elicited no response from the Indian government.

Nawaz Sharif said he saw Jaishankar's visit as a positive sign that might lead to improved relations and hoped the two countries would restore sports and trade ties. Maryam Nawaz publicly called for "climate diplomacy" with India to deal with the growing challenge of smog on both sides of the Punjab border. This was met by silence from New Delhi. But the chief minister of Punjab ridiculed Maryam's claim that smog from the Indian side was reaching Lahore.

Expectations that sports would help to pave the way for a

thaw did not materialise. Although cricket diplomacy has played a part in the past to ease tensions and bring the two countries closer, not so this time. Despite informally conveyed urgings by Pakistani officials, India announced it would not send its cricket team to play in Pakistan for the eight-nation Champions Trophy, which Pakistan will host in February/March 2025.

The Indian cricket board apparently cited security concerns for its decision. For their part, Pakistani officials rejected the Indian suggestion to play their matches in Dubai or elsewhere and ruled out any 'hybrid solution'. The row continues.

Recent developments are not encouraging for Indo-Pakistani diplomatic re-engagement. Meanwhile, to add to disputes between the two countries, in late August, New Delhi formally asked Islamabad for a review of the Indus

Waters Treaty. The 1960 treaty, brokered by the World Bank, has for over six decades survived wars, confrontations and tensions to provide a framework that governs the sharing and management of trans-border rivers. The fate of the treaty may now be at risk due to India's insistence on modifying it on the grounds of what it calls "fundamental and unforeseen change" in circumstances as well as security concerns.

The latest communication follows an earlier one in January 2023, when India notified Islamabad of its intention to amend the treaty's dispute settlement provisions. According to Indian media reports, the latest one includes India's concerns over issues such as "demographic changes, environmental challenges, and the need to accelerate clean energy development".

Delhi formalised its stance by a terse statement expressing

willingness to discuss any concerns in the relevant body, the joint Indus Waters Commission, while calling on India to comply with the treaty.

The two countries have disagreed in recent years over the treaty's dispute settlement mechanism; India boycotted a court of arbitration hearing in January 2023 at the Hague on Indian hydroelectric projects on the Chenab and Jhelum rivers disputed by water-stressed Pakistan.

These developments do not create a propitious climate for India-Pakistan diplomatic re-engagement. But this government's stance is India's obstacle in discussing the Kashmir dispute. Relations, in fact, were ruptured in August 2019 when India illegally annexed and absorbed the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir into the Indian union — in violation and defiance of UN Security Council resolutions.

camp before the summit and not allowed to the summit. The Western expeditions wanted to keep the glory private. The Nepalese climbing community has changed the status of the sherpas as they differ from the expeditions themselves, ensuring that sherpas are paid well and recognised for their achievements.

Pakistani high-altitude porters remain invisible, and the industry is still nascent. Expedition companies mostly hire Nepalese sherpas, even for the mountains in Pakistan.

The sherpas do the rope-fixing and lead climbing, and Pakistani porters are used to carry the loads.

Local companies offer management services for the base camps. The sherpas are paid over \$10,000 on a mountain in Pakistan, whereas the local high-altitude porter will only be paid

\$1,000 for a six-week expedition. Local porters are given poorer life and health insurance than the sherpas. For example, the life insurance for a local high-altitude porter is only \$1,500, a tenth of that for the sherpas.

The image of Western climbers hopping over the dying Hassan Shahn on the bottleneck at K2 in 2023 was tragic in many ways. It depicted the value rendered to the life of a local porter. Over 70 years ago, in 1952, Amir Mehdi was to be the first Pakistani to climb K2. In a story of treachery, he was forced to bivouac (spend the night without shelter) at 8,100m altitude on K2 in his leather shoes. This year, Ser Muhammad looted his life at the base of K2, as there was no rescue arrangement for him.

There are numerous other stories of deaths and apathy among lost porters and guides. Every year adds more stories.

Despite lacking training and opportunities, many Pakistani climbers, like Ali Sadpara, Asraf Aman, Fazal Ali, Nazir Sabir, and Rajab Shah, achieved great personal success. Many started as porters with international expeditions. Sirbaz Khan also started as a cook and porter, and it was an extraordinary journey for him to climb all the eight-thousanders.

Mountaineering is an extreme sport, and porters need technical skills to lead the climb and safely supervise clients. In Skardu, Myres Zaid Rajput, a certified trainer, manages a non-profit organisation, Khurpa Care Pakistan. This organisation advocates for the well-being of porters and provides voluntary technical training to

high-altitude porters. However, private initiatives are inadequate without government support in porters' training, certification, and skills development. The government's mountain tourism policy should address aspects related to the environment, sustainability, and safety. The government should also establish mountaineering schools in Skardu and Hunza for training in technical climbing, gear maintenance, safety, rescue, and essential language skills. Private companies should be allowed to offer mountain helicopter rescue and transport services, a requirement for the sector's growth.

Death walks with those who tread above the clouds in these majestic natural wonders. It has become easier for amateurs to venture there as the porters pay the cost, sometimes with their lives.

United State (US) removed 270,000 migrants in a year

WASHINGTON (INP): US immigration authorities removed over 270,000 people last financial year, figures showed, weeks before Donald Trump takes office threatening to deport millions of migrants. The tally of removals is the final annual report under President Joe Biden, and is higher than at any time in the last decade -- including during Trump's first term as president. The bulk of those forced to leave the United States had crossed the southern border illegally. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) said in its report. Around a third

of them had criminal convictions, or were facing criminal charges. Covering 12 months to the end of September, the period largely coincided with the presidential campaign in which Trump made clamping down on migration a key feature. He pledged to launch the largest deportation operation in US history when he takes office on January 20. The promise -- which focused heavily on the unsubstantiated claim that migrants commit more crimes than US citizens -- proved popular with voters. Trump has offered few details on how the operation would be carried out, with analysis suggesting it would be costly and impractical with current staffing levels. "Every year, our workforce faces tremendous challenges -- but every year, they meet those challenges head-on," said ICE Deputy Director Patrick Lechleitner. Illegal crossings surged after Biden took office, though declined sharply over the last year after his administration tightened rules on claiming asylum. Estimates suggest between 700,000 and 1.5 million people live in the United States illegally. Trump and his supporters insist the number is far higher. Many of those in the country without authorization work and pay taxes, often performing difficult or dangerous jobs that citizens don't want to do. Opponents of Trump's pledged crackdown say the economy could suffer if he tries to deport illegal migrants on the scale he has suggested and say it would create labor shortages in housing, agriculture and social care. Economists say any such shortage would push prices up, and undermine one of Trump's key election promises to reduce inflation.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Younis Raza Gillani Presiding over a meeting of the Board of Governors of the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS).

Netanyahu eyes Iran after triumphs over Hamas, Hezbollah, Syria

DUBAI (INP): 2025 will be a year of reckoning for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his country's arch foe Iran. The Israeli leader is set to cement his strategic goals: tightening his military control over Gaza, thwarting Iran's nuclear ambitions and scaling back its atomic activities and agreeing to negotiations. "Iran is very vulnerable to an Israeli attack, particularly against its nuclear programme," said Joost R. Hillemann, director of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Crisis Group. "I wouldn't be surprised if Israel did it, but that doesn't get rid of Iran." "If they (Iranians) don't back down, Trump and Netanyahu might strike, as nothing now prevents them," said Palestinian analyst Ghassan al-Khatib, referring to President-elect Donald Trump. Khatib argued

poised to zero in on Iran's nuclear ambitions and missile programme, applying an unwavering focus to dismantling and neutralising these strategic threats to Israel. Iran, Middle East observers say, faces a stark choice: Either continue its nuclear enrichment programme or scale back its atomic activities and agree to negotiations. "Iran is very vulnerable to an Israeli attack, particularly against its nuclear programme," said Joost R. Hillemann, director of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Crisis Group. "I wouldn't be surprised if Israel did it, but that doesn't get rid of Iran." "If they (Iranians) don't back down, Trump and Netanyahu might strike, as nothing now prevents them," said Palestinian analyst Ghassan al-Khatib, referring to President-elect Donald Trump. Khatib argued



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq along with Speakers of Provincial Assembly & Legislative Assemblies addressing Press Conference after closing ceremony of 18th Speakers Conference at Parliament House.

Iraq sends nearly 2,000 Syrian soldiers back home

BAGHDAD (INP): Iraq sent nearly 2,000 Syrian soldiers to their homeland after they had sought refuge in Iraq during the war. Some rebel forces fled after President Bashar al-Assad earlier this year. The Syrian military statement said the soldiers were returned at their request. The Syrian General Command led by Sharaa has appointed a caretaker government with Mohammed al-Bashir as prime minister till March. The Syrian General Command said the Syrian troops were returned after writing pledges asking to be included in an amnesty force on the Syrian side at the Al-Qaim border crossing. "The Iraqi security forces call on the current Syrian authorities to take care of the officers and soldiers who have been returned, including those who are in compliance with human rights standards and in a showing of good faith," the statement said. Senior Iraqi official said the repatriation would take place under "the supervision of international organisations". Syria's new rulers have put out a call to soldiers and police to lay down their arms and register with the authorities. Iraqi Deputy Commander of Joint Operations Lieutenant General Qais al-Mohammadi said on Wednesday that the soldiers had had their "names, equipment and weapons carefully inventoried". The deputy commander also emphasised the robust security measures in place along Iraq's borders with Syria. "Our borders are fortified and completely secure," he said, declaring that no unauthorised crossings would be permitted, re-

ported by Al Arab news. Muhammadiyah said that all border crossings with Syria are under tight control, stating "We will not allow a terrorist to enter our territory." Assad fled Syria as an offensive spearhead by the Islamist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) closed in on Damascus, more than 13 years after his crackdown on democracy protests morphed into one of the deadliest wars of the century. Taking city after city in a matter of days, rebels faced little resistance and reached Damascus on Dec 8. In the past 10 days, HTS has appointed a new interim government and urged Syrians abroad, some displaced for more than a decade, to return to their homeland. It also allowed former Syrian soldiers who served under Mr Al Assad's regime to reconcile their status with the interim government.

Israel kills 44 Palestinians in Gaza bombardment as ceasefire talks intensify

CAIRO (INP): US and Arab mediators are working to hammer out a ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas. The talks said, while in the Gaza Strip medics said Israeli strikes had killed 44 Palestinians. Mediators, at talks in Egypt and Qatar, are trying to forge a deal to pause the 14-month-old war in the Hamas-ruled enclave that would include a release of hostages seized by Israel. Mediators had managed to narrow down some gaps on previous sticking points but differences remained, the medics said at least 13 Palestinians were killed overnight in separate Israeli airstrikes, including on two houses in Gaza City and a central camp. The strikes used a rocket and an airstrike killed nine people near Beach refugee camp in Gaza City, Gaza Strip, where the army has operated since October, said forces blew up clusters of houses overnight. "The longer those talks last, the more destruction and death there will be in Gaza," Jabalia, Beit Hanoun, and Beit Lahya, medics said. Another Israeli resident of Jabalia, who is now displaced in Gaza City, Aareport published by Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) on Thursday said there were clear signs of ethnic cleansing in Israel's offensive as Palestinians were forcibly displaced and bombed.

Schools in Tuffah. It said Hamas used the ceasefire to plan and execute attacks against its forces. Residents of Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip, where the army has operated since October, said forces blew up clusters of houses overnight. "The longer those talks last, the more destruction and death there will be in Gaza," Jabalia, Beit Hanoun, and Beit Lahya, medics said. Another Israeli resident of Jabalia, who is now displaced in Gaza City, Aareport published by Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) on Thursday said there were clear signs of ethnic cleansing in Israel's offensive as Palestinians were forcibly displaced and bombed.

Benazir's death anniversary: Pakistan Railways announces special train

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Railways announced to run special train from Lahore to Garhi Khuda Bakh on the occasion of 17th death anniversary of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto. The train will leave Lahore at 1:00 pm on December 26 and reach Shah Nawaz Bhutto Railway Station at 4:30 am on December 27. On its return journey, the train will depart from Shah Nawaz Bhutto Railway Station at 7:00 pm on December 27 and reach Lahore at 9:20 am the next day. Earlier on Monday the Sindh government had asked the federal government to provide a helicopter

TENDER NOTICE

The Executive Engineer (Building) CPWF/PA Department District Washuk invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 or the latest available rates.

Tender Fee Rs. 500/- and Bid Security 5% for each work.

| S.No | Name of Works | Estimate |
|------|--|---------------|
| 1 | BOARDS/WALLS OF HOSTEL WASHUK TSE-24251269553 | 2,447,491.00 |
| 2 | CONSTRUCTION AND SOLARIZATION OF ANGUS LIBRARY ROOM IN WASHUK TOWN | 15,140,730.00 |
| 3 | MAJOR REPAIR OF GOVT. PRIMARY SCHOOL, WADAILU, UDLOMAYAN WASHUK TSE-24251269549 | 5,581,169.00 |
| 4 | CONSTRUCTION OF ROOMS & BOUNDARY WASHUK TSE-24251269539 | 19,626,908.00 |
| 5 | WALL FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL SOLDAN WASHUK TSE-24251269591 | 10,162,000.00 |
| 6 | MAJOR REPAIR OF GOVT. PRIMARY SCHOOL, BAN WASHUK TSE-24251269585 | 10,162,000.00 |
| 7 | CONSTRUCTION OF ROOMS & BOUNDARY WASHUK TSE-24251269483 | 33,800,000.00 |
| 8 | INTERDISCIPLINARY DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETING HALL AT DISTRICT COMPLEX WASHUK TSE-24251269943 | 5,000,000.00 |

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules-2014. The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Bidder's Registration is required. The bidder must have completed 2 Assignment of similar nature of work. Turnover of at least 1,713,243 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial stability of the Procurement Of Procurement. Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security. The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee/Deposit at least of 5% specified above in the name of the undersigned from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the undersigned 500 PKR Insurance of Tender Documents. From the date of publication of NIT to 05 January, 2025 during office hours on working days. Last Date of bid submission: The tenders must be submitted latest by 06 January, 2025 at 12:00 PM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the undersigned at 01:00 PM. Address: Executive Engineer (Building) District Washuk.

PRO No. 2443/20-12-2024

Yemen rebels say Israeli strikes kill 9, after missile attack

SANAA (INP): Yemen's Iran-backed Huthi rebels said Israeli air strikes on Thursday killed nine people, after the group fired a missile toward Israel, badly damaging a school. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu threatened further retaliation. The Huthis, who control most of Yemen's population centres, have repeatedly launched missiles at Israel since the Gaza war broke out more than a year ago. Israel has previously hit back against targets in Yemen, but Thursday's were the first against the rebel-held capital Sanaa. "The Israeli enemy targeted ports in Hodeida and power stations in Sanaa, and the

Israeli aggression resulted in the martyrdom of nine civilian martyrs," rebel leader Abdul Malik al-Huthi said in a lengthy speech broadcast by the rebels' Al-Masira TV. Al-Masira had earlier reported the rebels had "targeted two central power plants" in and around Sanaa, while in Hodeida it said "the enemy launched four aggressive raids targeting the port... and two raids targeting an oil facility." It said the strikes killed seven people at Al-Saleef port, while two more were killed and others wounded in the strike on the oil facility. Hodeida is a key enclaves for fuel and humanitarian aid to impoverished Yemen, which has been ravaged for years by its own war. The military said initial inquiries showed "it is likely that the damage was caused by the partial interception of the missile launched from Yemen and that the missile warhead was the part that exploded and damaged the school." The rebels belong to the Iran-backed "axis of resistance," along with Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, which has been weakened after a conflict with Israel and the loss of its Syrian supply line following former president Bashar al-Assad's ouster. After Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Assad regime in Syria, the Huthis are almost the last remaining arm of Iran's axis of evil," Netanyahu said.



RAWALPINDI: Barrister Danyal Chandhry, Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, greets the Oath-taking Ceremony of the Students Council as Chief Guest at Government Graduate College for Women.

Executive Engineer (Building) CPWF/PA Department District Washuk

Speakers vow to uphold parliamentary supremacy

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Speakers Conference has expressed the commitment to uphold parliamentary supremacy, fundamental rights and strengthen democracy.

The two-day conference that concluded in Islamabad on Friday adopted a unanimous declaration, calling for constructive dialogue and mutual understanding as well as respect for the difference of opinion.

It emphasized that opposition should also have some say in the legislation. The speakers should ensure their issue-based intervention to resolve people's problems.

The declaration urged the speakers to focus on the issues like the Climate Change and terrorism and play their due role in overcoming these challenges. It was resolved that

speakers will play a role of mediators or facilitators to bring harmony between the opposition and the treasury benches.

The conference suggested that there should be a charter of parliamentary ethics and decorum to run the House proceedings in a decent way.

It was decided that there should be uniform rules and procedures in all the assemblies of four provinces, Gilgit-Balistan and Azad Kashmir on the patterns of the Senate and the National Assembly.

The conference proposed to form an association of chief whips of political parties in the assemblies to formulate their role. An association of Public Accounts Committees was also proposed to make this forum more effective.

The declaration further

stated that the issues of Kashmir and Palestine will be highlighted at the provincial legislatures like in the Senate and the National Assembly.

The Speaker Azad Kashmir Assembly invited to host the next Speakers Conference in Muzaffarabad.

Among others, Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Ahmed Khan, Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Babar Saleem Swati, Speaker Sindh Assembly Syed Owais Qadir Shah, Speaker Balochistan Assembly Abdul Khaliq Achakzai, Speaker Gilgit-Balistan Assembly Nazir Ahmed, and Azad Kashmir Legislative Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, is called on by Coca-Cola CEO, Delegation led by Mr. Karim Yahi, Global CEO of Coca-Cola (CCI), at the Finance Division.

Commissioning of central control of new Gwadar airport completes

GWADAR (INP): The final testing and commissioning of the Central Control & Command Room (CCCR) of the New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA), set to be operational for the public next month has successfully been completed.

This marks the last compulsory piece of work accomplished by the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA), with CCCR's testing and commissioning meeting mandatory international SOPs practiced and enforced globally, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday.

The Central Control & Command Room (CCCR) of NGIA is the nerve center of the airport, responsible for overseeing and coordinating various activities to ensure the safe and efficient functioning of the airport.

Testing and commissioning of civil, mechanical, electrical, and communication

segments have already been completed recently with flying colors.

Weather can significantly impact airport operations. NGIA's CCCR is capable of continuously monitoring weather conditions and forecasting potential hazards such as thunderstorms, dust storms, and other atmospheric conditions.

"One of the primary functions of CCCR is air traffic management. CCCR is designed to closely monitor the movement of aircraft on the ground and in the airspace surrounding the airport."

It collaborates with air traffic control towers and regional air traffic control centers to ensure the safe and orderly flow of air traffic, efficient runway usage, and timely arrivals and departures," a CAA official told Gwadar Pro.

The CAA official added that CCCR is responsible for

effectively allocating essential airport resources. This includes managing airport gates, aircraft parking stands, and available runway capacity.

By optimizing resource allocation, CCCR helps minimize delays, reduce congestion, and enhance overall airport efficiency.

In response to a query, a PCAA engineering department official said that real-time decision-making is a cornerstone of CCCR operations.

"It will operate 24/7, and its team of professionals, including air traffic controllers, operational supervisors, and support staff, is well-trained to respond promptly to changing circumstances."

With flights arriving and departing constantly, it has the capability to make quick and informed decisions to ensure seamless airport operations and minimize disruptions," the official elaborated.

Suffering humanity in IIOJK needs world's immediate attention: APHC-AJK

ISLAMABAD (INP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter has said that the suffering humanity in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir requires immediate attention of the international community.

The APHC-AJK chapter convener, Ghulam Muhammad Safi, General Secretary Parvez Ahmed, Information Secretary Mushtaq Ahmed Butt and senior leaders Muhammad Farooq Rahmani, Mahmood Ahmed Saghar and Shamim Shawl in their statements issued in Islamabad, said that today, when the International Human Solidarity Day is being

celebrated in the world, the international community, Islamic countries and people who love humanity should pay attention to the plight of the oppressed people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir and express their solidarity with them.

They said India is occupying Jammu and Kashmir unconstitutionally and illegally and has deprived the Kashmiri people of all basic human rights. It is trying to suppress the voice of Kashmiris by force, occupy their lands and houses, and is trying to snatch their identity, they added.

The APHC-AJK leaders said the Modi government is pursuing a nefarious agenda of

erasing the Muslim identity of occupied Jammu and Kashmir and turning it into a Hindu majority territory.

They said in such a situation, it is the responsibility of the international community to take notice of the nefarious Indian efforts to erase the identity of the Kashmiris and make them foreigners in their own homeland. They said that the United Nations should also take notice of the ongoing genocide of the Kashmiris by India and put pressure on the Indian leadership to resolve the lingering Kashmir dispute according to the United Nations resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.



ISLAMABAD: Country Representative on UN Women, Janshed Kazim meets Minister of State of Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunications Shaza Fatima Khawaja.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on actions against illegal human trafficking.

K-P apex committee decides to eliminate all bunkers in Kurram

NEWS DESK: A special meeting of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's Apex Committee, chaired by Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, was held to discuss the security situation in the province's Kurram district, Express News reported.

The meeting was attended by the Federal Minister for Interior Mobsin Naqvi, Corps Commander Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa IGP, chief secretary, and other senior civil and military officials. The current situation in Kurram District was reviewed in detail.

According to the apex committee, challenges will remain until the bunkers are removed and weapons are collected, but the situation will improve thereafter.

Both the federal and provincial governments agreed on joint actions and collaboration. Dialogue with both parties will be conducted through tribal elders. As the situation improves, roads and routes will be opened, and the supply of medicines and other essential goods to Kurram will continue. The federal and provincial governments will jointly make decisions to improve the situation.

Earlier, Chief Minister Gandapur had reiterated that the



provincial government was committed to ensuring permanent peace in Kurram, as per the cabinet's directive.

The decision to eliminate bunkers and weapons was seen as a necessary step toward achieving this goal.

Naqvi, Gandapur Meet to Discuss Kurram Peace

Prior to the Apex Committee meeting, Federal Interior Minister Mobsin Naqvi and K-P Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur held a meeting to address the ongoing law and order crisis in Kurram district, which has seen over 130

deaths from clashes in recent weeks. During the meeting, Naqvi offered full cooperation to the K-P government and emphasized enhancing law enforcement capabilities. Both leaders honored security personnel martyred in the fight against terrorism.

The apex committee meeting, attended by civil and military officials, is expected to focus on restoring peace, providing essential goods and addressing the long-term stability of the region.

CM Gandapur also announced subsidised wheat for Kurram residents.

Eight former bar presidents challenge 26th Amendment in SC

ISLAMABAD (INP): Eight former presidents of the Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan (SCBAP) have filed a petition against the 26th Constitutional Amendment, seeking to have it annulled.

The petition urges the court to declare the amendment null and void and suspend all actions taken under it until a final decision is reached.

The petition claims that the 26th Amendment conflicts with the independence of the judiciary and violates the principle of the separation of powers.

The former presidents of the SCBA further argued in their petition that the 26th Amendment could not have been enacted without a decision on reserved seats in the parliament.

As per the channel report, the petition was filed through senior lawyers of the Supreme Court, Sardar Latif Khan Khosa and Barrister Saahuddin.

On December 6, 2024, during the Judicial Commission of Pakistan meeting under the chair of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Yahya

Afridi, the Justice of Justice Mansoor Ali Shah was also discussed.

Justice Mansoor had suggested the formation of a full court on petitions against the constitutional amendments.

Chief Justice Yahya Afridi opposed the proposal of the full court. Justice Yahya Afridi said that the Constitutional Committee will decide when and how to decide the petitions against the 26th constitutional amendment.

Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi's opinion was supported by the majority of members.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain presenting souvenir to Australian High Commissioner H.E. Neil Hawkins.

Winter snowfall attracts tourists to northern Pakistan

NARAN (INP): A huge number of tourists flock to northern Pakistan as the areas have been transformed into a winter wonderland after snowfall.

The snow-covered mountains and landscapes in Murree, Nainital, Ayubia, Swat, Kaghan, Naran and adjacent areas offer perfect opportunities for families and adventure snow sports enthusiasts to enjoy moderate to heavy snowfall during winter months.

Upstream from these areas, stand tall Hindu Kush, Karakoram, and Himalayan mountains ranges, blessed with stunning natural beauty and known for their snow covered peaks, picturesque landscapes and thrilling winter sports.

Swat, often referred to as "Switzerland of Pakistan," has become an increasingly popular winter sports destination, especially for skiing. The valley's Malam Jabba is a

snow-covered snowfall paradise, known for its mesmerizing beauty with an average snowfall of around 10 feet annually. Malam Jabba is also considered one of Pakistan's premier skiing destinations for skiing lovers.

"Skiing history of Malam Jabba dates back to 1962 when the first skiing competition was held there," informed Tashfeen Haider, Director General (DG), KP Culture and Tourism Authority.

"The area has earned international recognition as a leading skiing destination in South Asia, especially after the establishment of a skiing resort in 1988. Today, it offers world-class skiing and snowboarding facilities, making it a must-visit for snow sports lovers."

Beyond skiing, Swat's natural attractions like ancient Gandhara civilization and pristine snow covered mountain-

ous landscapes, contribute to its appeal. The valley is also home to a range of adventure sports including river rafting and fishing, with the famous trout fish of Swat offering a unique taste.

Malam Jabba skiing resort and adjacent Kalam, Mankial and Flaksair offer breathtaking backdrops for winter sports. The skiing season here typically lasts from December to March, attracting thousands of visitors.

The resort's chairlift, one of the longest in Pakistan, provides sweeping views of the surrounding snow-blanketed mountains.

As winter comes to full swing, northern Pakistan once again offers captivating scenic beauty and thrills for nature lovers with its snowy landscapes, adventure sports and rich cultural heritage, making it a must-visit place.