

# QUETTA VOICE

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An Afghan refugee girl during an exhibition organized by UNHCR and IDO: Photo Muhammad Ismail

## Election Tribunal Rejects Rigging Plea Against Zabid Ali Reki in PB-31

**Staff Reporter:**  
QUETTA: The Election Tribunal in Quetta has dismissed the plea filed against alleged rigging in the PB-31 elections. Justice Abdullah Baloch, the Tribunal Judge, delivered the reserved verdict, rejecting the allegations due to insufficient and defective evidence.



The complaint was initially filed by Majeedur Rahman Muhammad Hassani, who accused JUI Member of the Provincial Assembly, Zabid Ali Reki, of election misconduct. However, the petitioner and his lawyer failed to attend multiple hearings, weakening their case. Zabid Ali Reki was represented by Kamran Murtaza Advocate, Quzi Najeeb Advocate, and Baloch Khan Advocate. The Election Commission of Pakistan was represented by Assistant Director Shahzada Salam and Nasser Ahmed during the proceedings.

## Govt, PTI finally begin negotiations to defuse tensions

**NEWS DESK:** The long-awaited negotiations between the government and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) have commenced in Islamabad on Monday. The talks, aimed at addressing the country's ongoing political challenges, took place at the Parliament House. National Assembly (NA) Speaker Ayaz Sadiq presided over the meeting, which was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, PMS Adviser Rana Sanaulah, Senator Irfan Siddiqui, PPP leaders Raja Pevaz Ashraf, Naveed Qamar, and MQM-P leader Farooq Sattar.

On the PTI side, the delegation included former National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser, Sunm Itehad Council (SIC) Chairman Sahibzada Hamid Raza, and Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM) leader Allama Raja Nasir Abbas.

## UNHCR and IDO Organize Grand Exhibition to Empower Afghan Refugee Women in Quetta

**Manan Mandokhail:**

QUETTA: Pakistan — The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in collaboration with the Innovative Development Organization (IDO), hosted a one-day grand exhibition in Quetta on Monday to empower Afghan refugee women. The event, held at a private hotel, showcased the entrepreneurial skills and handcrafted products of Afghan women who received training under UNHCR's livelihood initiatives.

### Empowering Afghan Refugee Women

The exhibition featured vibrant stalls displaying traditional Balochistan clothing, handmade household items, woven wallets, embroidered shoes, and other crafts. Among the participants was Bakht Meena, an Afghan refugee who transformed her life through the skills training provided by UNHCR.

Before joining the training pro-

gram, Bakht struggled to support her family. "It was very difficult to earn a stable income," she said. After completing a six-month training in tailoring, design, and entrepreneurship, she gained the confidence to start her business.

### From Local Markets to Digital Platforms

Bakht's stall at the exhibition displayed her beautifully crafted traditional dresses and accessories. In addition to physical sales, she uses YouTube to market her products. "YouTube has helped me reach a wider audience, increasing my sales and income," she shared. This digital shift is empowering Afghan refugee women to expand their businesses and access global markets.

**Collective Progress and Community Impact**  
IDO's representative, praised

the initiative, saying, "This exhibition highlights the resilience and determination of Afghan women refugees. With the support of UNHCR and partners, they are turning challenges into opportunities."

The exhibition celebrated the success of capacity-building programs that equip Afghan women with skills, financial independence, and the ability to contribute to the local economy.

### A Brighter Future

The event showcased how training and digital tools have opened new doors for Afghan refugee women in Pakistan. Many participants, like Bakht Meena, are now optimistic about their future. "I dream of expanding my business and opening my own shop someday," she said.

## Bilawal assails VPN, internet restrictions amid tensions with govt

**NEWS DESK:** PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday slammed internet slowdowns and restrictions in the country, calling them "another effort to control and censor citizens" and his party's tensions with the government.

In recent months, users have experienced sluggish speeds, difficulty downloading media on WhatsApp, and intermittent connectivity issues. Digital analysts say the government has been testing a "firewall" that monitors some platforms and gives the power to block content, like photos or videos of rallies shared on WhatsApp. The government has said a "web management system" was being updated for increased cyber security. Meanwhile, the relationship between the PPP and the federal government has grown rocky, as senior party officials expressed a "lack of confidence" in the federal government in December. In parliament on December 18, PPP MNA Abdul Qadir Patel expressed strong reservations about the ongoing internet situation in the country, including the ban on X and the firewall. The next day, senior PPP leader Naveed Qamar among other PPP lawmakers walked out of a parliament session in protest of the continued "insulting" absence



of federal ministers from proceedings. Despite the party leaders' reservations, Bilawal has urged them to continue engaging with the PML-N government. However, addressing the convocation ceremony at Sindh University in Jamshoro today, Bilawal said the issue related to internet restrictions needed to be addressed urgently. "Our infrastructure used to be roads, highways, motorways," he said. "In today's age, I believe it's our bandwidth, our fibre optic cable, our wireless internet services."

"In the past, there were attempts to control and censor people as there are now," he continued. "This is proof that you are strong and that they fear you because they do not want you to exercise your rights through the

internet." The PPP chairman mentioned that the ban on student unions was "another example of how they fear you". Bilawal emphasised that the vote needed to fight for their rights and make their demands known. "We will need to fight for our rights and spread awareness," he said. "History is witness that when a people gets rights, they are taken away by the state." The PPP chairman said that there needed to be a "digital bill of rights", adding that the youth and students of this country must come together and write it. "For our time, we need to make efforts for a digital bill of rights," he said. "It must be written by the students and youth to make their rights known, not by old politicians in Islamabad."

## Jewellers Association Protests in Sibi for Recovery of Kidnapped Child

**Nashad Baloch:**

**SIBI:** Members of the Jewellers Association staged a protest rally and demonstration in front of the Sibi Press Club, demanding the recovery of a young child, Musawir Khan Kakar, who was abducted in Quetta. The protest, led by Provincial General Secretary Mohammad Naeem Ramzan and Sibi General Secretary Mohammad Ismail Qureshi, highlighted growing concerns over public safety and government inaction.

Addressing the protesters, Mohammad Naeem Ramzan urged the provincial government to take immediate and practical steps for the safe recovery of the kidnapped child. "The government must act swiftly to protect the lives and property of citizens and ensure the safety of our children," he emphasized. Protesters expressed frustration over the lack of progress in the case and called for enhanced security measures across the province. Demonstrators also criticized the government for its failure to curb abductions and demanded concrete actions to restore public trust. The Jewellers Association vowed to continue its protests until the child is safely recovered, sending a strong message to the authorities to prioritize this critical issue. The abduction has sparked widespread concern, with residents and organizations calling for justice and effective measures to address the alarming rise in such incidents.



## Blast Targets New Sariah Jurisdiction in Quetta: Two Civilians Injured, Attackers Escape

**Syed Muhammad Qaseem:**

**QUETTA:** A hand grenade attack in the New Sariah jurisdiction of Quetta has left two civilians injured. The blast occurred in the early hours of the day, causing damage to nearby properties. According to local authorities, the attackers hurled the grenade before fleeing the scene. Police personnel from the Bomb Disposal Squad (BD) were immediately deployed to assess the situation and secure the area. The injured civilians were rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment. Authorities have launched a

search operation to apprehend the attackers, who remain at large. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack yet. The attack highlights the ongoing security challenges in Quetta and Balochistan, with local officials condemning the violence. Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and senior police officers have vowed to bring the perpetrators to justice. The incident is under investigation, with authorities stepping up efforts to identify and capture those responsible.

## Islamabad's Jinnah Avenue underpass completed in 42 days

**ISLAMABAD:** The under-construction underpass at F-8 Sector, Islamabad, will be opened for traffic tomorrow, announced Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi today.

Mohsin Naqvi made the announcement during his visit to the ongoing projects at F-8 Exchange Chowk interchange and Serena Chowk interchange. He inspected the progress and construction work at these key sites, which are set to alleviate the city's traffic congestion.

The Interior Minister highlighted that the Serena Chowk Interchange, which is being built with speed and efficiency, will be inaugurated next month after being completed in just sixty days. Mohsin Naqvi instructed that both projects be completed within the stipulated timeline, emphasising that these developments will significantly ease traf-

fic flow for Islamabad's residents. He also urged the protection of green trees during the construction process to ensure the city's environmental well-being. The timely completion of these infrastructure projects is expected to provide much-needed relief to commuters and improve traffic management in Islamabad. Last week CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said the Jinnah Avenue F-8 interchange underpass would be opened for traffic on December 25. He took a detailed review of the progress of the project and also inspected the ongoing construction on the site. Consultants, designers and other relevant authorities were also present on the occasion. The chairman was given a detailed briefing by the relevant authorities on the progress of the ongoing construction work on the project.



## Balochistan in the Eye of Climate Change Storm: Calls for Resilient Climate Policies Surface

Continued to page 2

## Quetta's Air Quality: A Beacon of Hope in Pakistan's Pollution Crisis

Continued to page 2

## Verdict against Imran, Bushra in £190m Al-Qadir Trust case postponed

Continued to page 4

## GREEN VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

### Quetta's Air Quality: A Beacon of Hope in Pakistan's Pollution Crisis

Editorial:

QUETTA: Quetta has earned recognition as the city with the best air quality in Pakistan, with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 31, marking it as "good" and healthy, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Amid worsening air pollution and dense smog in urban centers like Lahore and Karachi, Quetta's clean air serves as a shining example of environmental resilience.

While Quetta's clear skies owe much to its geographical location, lower population density, and fewer industrial emissions, sustaining this air quality presents a significant challenge. Environmentalists emphasize that the focus must shift from temporary measures to sustainable strategies to preserve Quetta's atmosphere and mitigate the impacts of global warming.

**Green Initiatives Must Be Long-Term.**  
The Forest Department and local NGOs have launched tree plantation drives to beautify Quetta and improve its air quality. However, most of the saplings planted along roads have dried up within weeks due to inadequate care. This highlights the need for a sustainable approach where plants are nurtured consistently, rather than short-lived initiatives centered around photo sessions.

To truly maintain Quetta's air quality, authorities must prioritize sustainable afforestation. Citizens ensure saplings are planted in suitable areas and looked after until maturity.

**Vehicular emission controls:** Introduce stricter policies to reduce pollution from vehicles.

**Community involvement:** Engage citizens in green initiatives to create awareness and responsibility.

**A Call to Action**  
Quetta's achievement is a reminder that clean air is possible, even in challenging conditions. However, to maintain this success, a committed and focused approach. Policymakers, environmentalists, and citizens must work together to implement effective green initiatives that go beyond temporary fixes. As Pakistan battles the adverse effects of climate change, Quetta's example underscores the importance of sustainable practices to ensure a healthier future for all.

### Pakistan's missile programme threat to US?

By Kamran Yousaf:

The year was 1985. It was the height of the Cold War. Pakistan was a frontline state in the US-led campaign to defeat the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. But the same year Senator Larry Pressler introduced a bill in the Congress that sought to regulate aid to Pakistan.

The bill was approved by Congress and later known as the Pressler Amendment. The main aim of the legislation was to ensure Pakistan did not build a nuclear bomb. Under the amendment, the US President had to annually certify to the Congress that Pakistan was not developing a nuclear programme. For 5 years, the US President owned Nations used to issue certification to the Congress. But when Soviet troops were defeated and left Afghanistan in 1989, the US also withdrew from the region.

A year later, President Bush Senior refused to certify that Pakistan was not building a bomb, leading to abrupt cutting of all security and other assistance to Pakistan.

The US withheld security assistance and promised delivery of F-16 fighter jets, and that left a big scar on the US-Pakistan relationship. Washington's move to sanctions Pakistan after its objective was achieved in Afghanistan left many people, including decision-makers, to wonder whether the US

could be a trustworthy ally. But despite those grievances, Pakistan once again joined hands with the US after the 9/11 attacks. Pakistan again became a frontline state in the US-led campaign against terrorism. Security and civilian aid started pouring in while Pakistan's foreign debt was also rescheduled. The US repeatedly assured Pakistan that it would not commit the mistake of the past and would stand by it even after withdrawal from Afghanistan. But development opponents of the past few years, particularly this year, indicate otherwise.

Last week, the Biden administration imposed sanctions on four Pakistani entities, a senior Biden administration official made a stunning claim. Deputy National Security Adviser Jon Finer claimed that Pakistan was developing long-range ballistic missile capabilities that eventually could allow it to strike targets well beyond South Asia.

So, candidly, it's hard for us to see Pakistan's actions as anything other than an emerging threat to the United States," Finer said.

Pakistani officials termed the claim "absurd". The current maximum range of Pakistan's missile is 2,750 km and there is no evidence to show Pakistan is developing any missile that goes beyond India. The major US worry is Pakistan's space programme.

The US fears that Pakistan is developing a Space Launch Vehicle, which can be used for satellite launch and for Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile. Some observers think the US fears that Pakistan's ballistic missile can be a threat to Israel.

over time, the expansion of the programme to include more than building roads, railways and energy pipelines to include energy projects meant borrowing often on onerous terms.

As has happened on a number of occasions, Pakistan's troubled economic history, Pakistan has gone to the IMF for help under the conditions of its lending programmes. These come with difficult conditions that include increasing the burden carried by citizens. For instance, the latest programme envisages increasing the GST to 18%. This undoubtedly will result in increasing cost payments imposed by the government.

China started out as a major lender to Pakistan. Most of what Pakistan owes to Beijing has come in as loans made during the CPEC lending programme. CPEC was originally planned as a programme based on grants from Beijing to Islamabad. However,

over time, the expansion of the programme to include more than building roads, railways and energy pipelines to include energy projects meant borrowing often on onerous terms.

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Chandni Kakkar:

In the global battle against climate change, Balochistan, Pakistan, serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for climate resilience. The province is experiencing increasingly severe weather events, a consequence of human-induced climate change. However, many residents mistake these extreme weather occurrences for regular fluctuations, hindering recognition of the escalating climate crisis.

**Balochistan becoming unbearably hot**

Balochistan is becoming unbearably hot, with rising temperatures transforming heatwaves into a year-round threat. These heatwaves pose severe health risks, including heat stress, dehydration, and even fatalities. In

2017, Turbat recorded a scorching 53.5°C (128.3°F), setting a record for Pakistan. Unfortunately, forecasts suggest that temperatures will continue to rise.

However, the climate challenges in Balochistan extend beyond relentless heat waves. The province grapples with devastating droughts and floods, both of which wreak havoc on homes and infrastructure. The floods of 2010 and 2022 left nearly 4 million people displaced, disrupting lives and triggering food shortages and price spikes due to their impact on the agriculture sector.

**The 2022 flood in Balochistan underscores the looming climate change threat**

The 2022 flood underscored the looming threat of climate

change over Balochistan. Driven by intensified and increasingly frequent monsoon rains, the full extent of the damage is yet to be comprehended. However, it exposed the province's vulnerabilities and highlighted the urgent need for effective management strategies.

Balochistan's annual rainfall of just 200 mm barely meets the needs of its parched population. This water scarcity adversely affects food production, access to drinking water, and livestock numbers, exacerbated by climate change. The severe droughts of 1997-2003 and 2014-2017 forced migrations to water-rich areas.

**CC affects economy**

Climate change also decimated the region's economy

report, globally, the Blue Economy generates around \$2.3 trillion annually, contributing to food security, poverty eradication and climate change mitigation. According to FAO, marine ecosystems are integral to global well-being. Oceans provide sustenance to over three billion people, with fish accounting for 16% of the global protein supply. Livelihoods for 660/820 million people rely on fisheries and aquaculture, with women playing a critical role, particularly in fish processing, where they hold up to 90% of the workforce. Furthermore, the World Bank report states that oceans absorb 25% of anthropogenic CO2 emissions, with "blue carbon" sinks such as mangroves and seagrasses proving five times more effective than tropical forests at sequestering carbon.

In Pakistan, the Blue Economy is an untapped frontier. With a 1,046 km coastline and a vast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) by the Arabian Sea, Pakistan's maritime potential remains largely underutilised. The maritime sector contributes only 2.4% of GDP, as per the Pakistan Economic Survey 2023/2024, with fisheries exports at just \$450 million annually. In contrast, regional peers like Bangladesh derive 10% of their GDP from marine resources. Estimates suggest Pakistan could generate over \$100 billion

annually from its Blue Economy with the right strategies (World Bank Group report). However, Pakistan's marine economy faces several challenges: Overfishing, habitat degradation, pollution and unregulated coastal development by climate change. Rising sea levels, coastal erosion and ocean acidification, further threatens livelihoods and ecosystems. Fragmented governance structures and inadequate infrastructure add to these issues.

Despite these hurdles, opportunities abound for Pakistan to harness its marine potential. Examples from Morocco, Indonesia and Oman highlight the impact of governance reforms and targeted investments. Morocco, backed by the World Bank, developed its aquaculture sector, creating rural jobs, especially for women. Indonesia employs mobile technologies to monitor fisheries, improving biodiversity conservation. Oman's fisheries revenue can be benchmark for balancing ecological and economic growth.

To realise its Blue Economy potential, Pakistan must implement a comprehensive approach. Reforms like Zone Management (ICZM) and marine spatial planning can align conservation with economic activity. Clear policies and tenure rights can empower communities to adopt sustainable practices.

Digital tools for maritime mapping and data-driven monitoring can improve decision-making and resource management. Public-private partnerships in fisheries, renewable energy and marine biotechnology can foster innovation and economic diversification while attracting needed capital. Pakistan's scenic beaches, such as Gwadar and Kandoom, have immense potential for eco-tourism. Investments in infrastructure, protecting mangroves and coastal ecosystems are crucial for carbon sequestration and climate resilience.

Declining mangrove cover threatens biodiversity and causes economic losses exceeding \$4 billion annually, as seen in Belize. Restoring these habitats can deliver ecological and economic benefits.

The oceans are Pakistan's gateway to sustainable development. Investing in marine resources can create jobs and embrace the Blue Economy, Pakistan can transform its marine resources into a foundation for economic growth and environmental stewardship.

Indejit Gill, the

equally crucial. **Tree plantations could mitigate sweltering temperatures**

In a province where tree planting could mitigate sweltering temperatures and climate change impacts, government initiatives should engage younger generations in green initiatives. Achieving a resilient future necessitates a collaborative effort involving government, local communities, civil society, and the commercial sector. Balochistan's path towards resilience begins with a symphony of collective action.

By addressing these critical issues, Balochistan can better adapt to the challenges posed by climate change, ensuring a more secure and sustainable future for its residents.

### Localisation of SDG 14: opportunities for blue economy

By Dr Shahid Hussain Kambojo:

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### Developing countries need debt relief

By Shahid Javed Burki:

No matter which way you look at the numbers, they tell the same story: in the Global South—the name now given to the developing world—Pakistan is one of the most heavily indebted countries. Let me start by looking at some numbers for Pakistan.

As of June 2023, Pakistan's total public debt and liabilities was estimated to be \$224 billion, which is close to 75% of the country's GDP. About \$87.2 billion is the debt overhang of the government and \$6 billion is owed by the public sector enterprises such as Pakistan International Airlines, the PIA.

China started out as a major lender to Pakistan. Most of what Pakistan owes to Beijing has come in as loans made during the CPEC lending programme. CPEC was originally planned as a programme based on grants from Beijing to Islamabad. However,

process has been slow and painstaking. China, the world's largest creditor, has been reluctant to alter the terms of its loans as it attempts to deal with its own economic and financial crises.

The departing Biden administration has been critical of China's lending practices. Janet Yellen, the US Treasury Secretary, described China's handling of the debt problem as "opaque" in an interview in which she called for accelerating debt relief. She also suggested that the IMF's debt restructuring programme aimed at helping nations find new sources of borrowing by creating packages for "high ambition countries" that want to invest in clean energy by using the sun, wind or ocean waves for generating electricity. "It's a substantial burden and can't be the only investment in things that will promote sustainable dealing

with pandemics or climate change," she said. Although Trump approved funding increases from the World Bank during his previous term in office, he could decide to revisit America's foreign aid priorities. His "America alone" approach predilect with the world outside the country's borders suggests that once he returns to the White House, he is not likely to be supportive of international organisations. He has already indicated that he would not support WTO.

Pakistan's huge debt burden can be attributed to political instability. Frequent changes in leadership have resulted in the country not developing a viable approach to raising resources for servicing government programmes. The tax-to-GDP ratio is one of the lowest in the world, the result of the rich being able to avoid the tax man.

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Govt, PTI committees agree to continue dialogue process

ISLAMABAD (INP) - The government and the PTI negotiation committees have agreed to continue the dialogue process...

Both the committees expressed good wishes for each other and declared today's meeting as a positive move...



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Shoaib Noshervani is meeting Governor Balochistan Sheikh Zafar Khan Mandukhel.

Joe Root returns for England's Champions Trophy campaign

LONDON (INP) - Joe Root has been recalled to England's ODI squad for February's ICC Champions Trophy...

The resolution of the India-Pakistan Champions Trophy standoff was a win? Not by a long shot...

Rain in Punjab cities, including Lahore, brings prolonged dry spell to end

LAHORE (INP) - Along spell of dry weather was finally over with different parts of central Punjab, including Lahore, received rain on Monday...

list of the world's most polluted cities, with an AQI of 224. The AQI over Phase 8, DHA was recorded at 418.

Diaspora's impressive discussion on Kashmir held in Washington

WASHINGTON (INP) - A significant gathering of Americans of Kashmir heritage took place at the residence of Sardar Zafar Khan in Springfield, Virginia...

According to Kashmir Media Service, the event was notable for the attendance of key figures such as Sardar Sawar Khan, former Advisor to the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir...

The gathering brought together participants from Saudi Arabia, Canada, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the Washington metropolitan area. The hosts expressed gratitude for the support and camaraderie displayed by the Kashmir diaspora.

India's peace organizations expose India's peace mantra in HOJK

SRINAGAR (INP) - Hurriyat leaders and organizations in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir have strongly condemned the Indian government's efforts to portray a false image of peace in the territory...

The statement emphasized that the Modi regime cannot ignore the reality of the Kashmir situation through its propaganda machinery.

"India is misleading the world with false claims of peace and progress in HOJK," the leaders declared, adding that the truth of the region's condition remains unchanged...

The Modi regime's actions on August 5, 2019, were not only illegal but have worsened an already volatile situation in South Asia...

VACANCY CONSOLIDATED ADVERTISEMENT NO. 1/2024. Applications are invited for initial recruitment to the following posts in the Various Departments of Government of Balochistan. Don't wait for the last date, apply online today!

ISLAMABAD: Governor Siddiq Kamran Khan Tessori addressing a press conference regarding supplies of medicines in Kurram Agency, Hamed Hussain MNA, Farooq Sattar, Zaffar Abbas Jaffri and others also present at Sindh House on Monday.

Pakistan confiscates over 1064 tonnes of narcotics since Sept 2023

ISLAMABAD (INP): In a nationwide operation, the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) along with other security forces of Pakistan seized over 1062.894 metric tons of narcotics across the country since September 2023. According to official statistics, law enforcement agencies have arrested 2,350 drug peddlers and smugglers nationwide during the period. The operation is part of the government's efforts to combat the illegal drug trade and make Pakistan a drug-free nation.

In the past week alone, the authorities concerned seized over 326 kilograms (kg) of nar-

cotics and apprehended 12 drug peddlers. Significant seizures were made in various provinces, including Gilgit-Baltistan, Punjab, and Sindh. "The government's anti-narcotics efforts are ongoing, with security forces and law enforcement agencies working to disrupt and dismantle drug trafficking networks across the country."

Earlier, the Customs authorities successfully foiled an attempt to smuggle drugs into Pakistan via the International Mail Office (IMO) at Jinnah International Airport Karachi.

Acting on credible intelligence, the Customs team, led

by Collector Adeem Khan and supported by ADC Muhammad Fayal Khan and AC Sharjeel Abbas Wasan, detained a suspicious EMS parcel labeled as 'Fresh Galangal (Thai Ginger)' originating from Bangkok, Thailand.

The parcel was subjected to examination and a lab test which revealed that the package contained 500 grams of Marijuana (Cannabis), valued at approximately Rs 2.25 million.

The parcel was sent to Muhammad Usama Mahmood, a resident of Gulistan-e-Johar, Karachi.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan meets Kenyan High Commissioner to discuss trade and regional cooperation.

Election tribunal upholds amiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) MPA's win

QUETTA (INP): The Election Tribunal on Monday dismissed a plea filed by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) candidate challenging the victory of

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl's (JUI-F) Zabid Ali Raki from PB-31 Washuk. Justice Abdullah Baloch, the judge of the Election Tribunal, announced the reserved verdict, declaring the appeal as "dismissed due to insufficient evidence".

The tribunal ruled that the petitioner, Mujeebur Rehman Muhammad Hassani, failed to provide adequate proof to support his claims of rigging.

Zabid Ali Raki's lawyers,

Kamran Murtaza, Qazi Najeeb, and Baloch Khan, appeared before the tribunal, while the petitioner and his counsel were absent during the hearings.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was represented by Assistant Directors Shahzad Aslam and Naseer Ahmed.

It is pertinent to mention here that Zabid Ali Raki of the JUI-F was declared winner from PB-31 in the general election as he bagged 17058 votes. PML-N's Mujeebur Rehman Muhammad Hassani who secured 16008 votes had challenged the victory.

Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lost another seat won in the February 8 general elections after a vote recount. PTI's Sarbuland Khan lost to Asif

Moosea of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) from Sindh Assembly constituency PS-112 after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) held a vote recount.

After a notification issued by the ECP, PPP's Asif Moosea took oath as a member of the Sindh Assembly after the revised results. PPP's Asif Moosea secured the seat with 11,724 followed by PTI's Sarbuland Khan who bagged 9,943 votes.

Speakers emphasize importance of youth-led initiatives, representation in advancing the Kashmir cause.

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Friends of Kashmir (FOK) on Sunday organized a webinar titled "The Role of Youth in Advancing the Kashmir Cause."

The event brought together prominent speakers, including Ghazala Habib (Chairperson, FOK), Abdul Hameed Lone (Vice Chairperson, FOK), Farzana Yaqoob, former minister AJK, Dr Khalid Aftab Sulhari (President IHRO), Naila Altaf (Anchorperson), Nazreen Gillani (Chairperson, NUML Council), Dr Mujahid Gillani (Kashmiri Leader), Waseem Younas (Chairman, NUML Council), Asim Zaib (Advocate), Shahzad Khan (Youth Council of Pakistan), Fareeha Arees (Anchorperson), Shaista Safi (Youth Forum for Kashmir), and Waqar Hassan, said a press release.

The session was moderated by Tayyaba Khurshid (Research Officer, CISSAJK) and Saadia Sattar (Youth Activist). The discussion emphasized the critical role of youth

in advocating for the Kashmir cause through activism, social media platforms, educational reforms, and cultural preservation.

It also highlighted the necessity for informed engagement and strategic actions by young individuals to amplify the Kashmiri narrative.

Speakers emphasized the importance of youth-led initiatives and representation in advancing the Kashmir cause.

Nazreen Gillani stressed the potential of young leaders in driving the narrative and building global awareness.

The establishment of youth councils and collaboration with international human rights organizations was proposed to strengthen advocacy efforts.

Fareeha Arees, Former Minister AJK, emphasized the importance of naming and shaming Indian leaders and perpetrators involved in committing war crimes in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Highlighting the systematic human rights violations,

she underscored the plight of innocent civilians, including the use of pellet guns, illegal detentions, and the denial of fundamental freedoms. She also urged the youth to actively raise awareness on international platforms, amplifying the voices of the oppressed and advocating for justice and accountability.

Naila Altaf and Fareeha Arees highlighted the transformative power of social media in countering misinformation and amplifying the Kashmiri perspective.

It was suggested that young individuals use platforms like X, Instagram, and YouTube to create impactful campaigns and raise global awareness.

Dr. Khalid Aftab emphasized the importance of introducing Kashmir Studies at schools, colleges, and universities to educate youth about the region's history, culture, and political struggles.

Academic institutions were encouraged to establish dedicated research centers for Kashmir-related studies.



QUETTA: Supporters' eating sweet to Senator Kamran Murtaza after high court decision.



QUETTA: Behalf of Wards Pakistan Organization by Muhammad Alzi is presenting the Shield with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Member (R) Abdul Khalique Achakzai.

Nations can only progress when their youth are skilled, trained to meet market demands

ISLAMABAD (INP): Nations can only progress when their youth are skilled and trained to meet market demands, said Professor Muhammad Ramzan, Director of Developmental Programs at the International Islamic Charity Organisation (IICO), Kuwait.

He was addressing a special ceremony, wherein certificates were awarded to 400 students from the Gujrat and Barani Institute of Sciences, who successfully completed a three-month training program in Graphic Design, E-commerce, and Game Development.

He said that it is essential for educational institutions to equip students with skills that enable them to be self-reliant rather than a burden on society.

The ceremony was attended by Muhammad Ozkay, Director of IICO Pakistan; Hashmat Khalifa, representative of Islamic Help (UK); Syed Ejaz Hamdani, Head of the Organi-

zation in Pakistan; Member of the National Assembly Malik Qasim Nadeem; Mian Muhammad Sajid, CEO of the Barani Institute of Sciences, along with industrial lead trainers, teachers, and a large number of students.

Professor Ramzan emphasized that the IICO provides services to deserving communities in over 80 countries, enabling them to acquire professional training to secure respectable jobs and contribute to the development of their nations.

Mian Muhammad Sajid, CEO of the Barani Institute of Sciences, explained that over 900 students applied for the program, of whom 400 were selected for hands-on training in these three high-demand fields.

He proudly highlighted that 40% of these trainees have already secured employment. He stressed that youth are the guarantors of a bright future and equipping them with skills is the institute's primary goal.

He expressed gratitude for the support and guidance provided by the IICO, Kuwait.

National Assembly Member Malik Qasim Nadeem remarked that engaging youth in productive activities is a significant challenge today, and both institutions have set an exemplary precedent by offering practical training.

Three students — Aneesa Habiba (E-commerce), Tahir Anjad (Graphic Design), and Aymaan Shahid (Game Development) — shared their experiences of securing jobs during their training.

Before the ceremony, Professor Muhammad Ramzan reviewed various projects completed by students, showcasing their acquired skills.

He praised the intelligence of the students and commended the efforts of Mian Muhammad Sajid and his team at the Barani Institute of Sciences for organizing an excellent training program.

Rana Sanaullah confident in dialogue with PTI, stresses for practical steps

ISLAMABAD (INP): Member of the government's negotiation committee, Rana Sanaullah, expressed confidence in the ongoing dialogue process, stating that successful negotiations require open-minded participation from all parties.

He emphasized that the discussions so far have been positive, but practical implementation of agreed points is essential.

"There are no guarantees in negotiations, but I am 100% confident in their success," said Rana Sanaullah, highlighting the importance of sincerity and mutual understanding in the dialogue.

During his remarks, Rana Sanaullah stated that no preconditions were set during the talks. He added that the Pakistani Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) would present its stance, after which the government would respond to find a middle ground.

"Political dialogue involves sitting down, listening to each other, and finding compromises—it is not about accepting every demand outright," he explained.

Rana Sanaullah acknowledged the history of tensions between the parties but emphasized the need for reconciliation. "The issues being dis-

cussed are not new. Both sides have called each other names in the past.

However, if the parliamentary democratic system is to move forward, it cannot happen without political dialogue," he stated. Referencing past agreements like the Charter of Democracy with the Pakistan Peoples Party, he stressed the need for a similar initiative focused on the economy. "We talked about a Charter of Economy before and are reiterating it today. Just as the Charter of Democracy helped in the past, a Charter of Economy is the need of the hour," he said.



ISLAMABAD: Two-member delegation led by Technical lead for Green Tech Hub at NUST, Dr. Salman Alif calls on PM's Coordinator for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam.

Verdict against Imran, Bushra in £190m Al-Qadir Trust case postponed

ISLAMABAD (INP): An accountability court on Monday postponed the verdict reserved earlier in the £190 million Al-Qadir Trust corruption reference against former prime minister Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi.

The court had reserved the verdict on December 18, saying that it would be announced on December 23.

However, while presiding over the hearing on Monday, Accountability Judge Nasir Javed Rana said, "The verdict will not be announced today; vacations are coming and there is also a course at the high court."

He stated that the new date for the verdict's pronouncement would be issued soon.

Imran and Bushra were indicted in the case on February 27, shortly after the gen-

eral elections.

The case alleges that Imran and Bushra Bibi obtained billions of rupees and land worth hundreds of kanals from Bahria Town Ltd for legalising Rs50 billion that was identified and returned to the country by the UK during the previous PTI government.

In December, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had filed a corruption reference against Imran and seven others, including his wife, in connection with the Al-Qadir University.

The reference filed by NAB alleged that Imran, who is currently in jail, played a "pivotal role in the illicit transfer of funds meant for the state of Pakistan into an account designated for the payment of land by Bahria Town, Karachi."

It also claimed that despite

being given multiple opportunities to justify and provide information, the accused deliberated, with mala fide intention, refused to give information on one pretext or another.

Property tycoon Malik Riaz Hussain and his son Ahmed Ali Riaz,

Mirza Shehzad Akbar, and Zulfi Buk-hari are also among the suspects in this reference, but instead of joining the investigation and subsequent court proceedings, they absconded and were subsequently declared proclaimed offenders (PO).

Fariat Shahzadi, a close friend of Imran's spouse, and Ziaul Mustafa Nasim, a legal expert for the PTI government's Assets Recovery Unit, were also declared POs. Subsequently, the properties of all six accused had been frozen.