

# QUETTA VOICE

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## Trump Shocks the World with Plan to Take Over and Rebuild Gaza

Monitoring Desk:



### Trump's Controversial Proposal

During a joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday, US President Donald Trump proposed a dramatic plan for the war-torn Gaza Strip. He suggested that the United States take control of Gaza, clear unexploded bombs, and lead its economic redevelopment.

### A New Vision for Gaza

Trump described Gaza as a demolition site and called for the resettlement of its over two million Palestinian residents to neighboring countries. He claimed that, under US management, Gaza could be transformed into a thriving economic hub, creating thousands of jobs and bringing long-term stability to the Middle East. The US will take over Gaza, clean

up the dangerous remnants of war, and turn it into a place the region can be proud of, Trump stated. I see a long-term role for the US in Gaza, ensuring stability and prosperity.

### Backlash and Policy Shift

Trump's proposal represents a major shift from decades of US policy, which has traditionally supported the idea of Gaza being part of a future Palestinian state alongside

the West Bank. The plan is expected to face strong opposition from both allies and adversaries. His announcement also raises questions about Saudi Arabia's stance on a renewed US-led effort to normalize relations with Israel. If implemented, Trump's vision would challenge international consensus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, sparking intense debate over the region's future.

## Jamaat-e-Islami Balochistan Plans Historic Protest for Rights

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Balochistan, Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch, has stated that the people of Balochistan must be given their due rights. He criticized the authorities for their policies, saying that the government's approach of exploiting Balochistan's resources while neglecting its people is no longer acceptable.

### Lack of Action on Missing Persons

He strongly condemned the continued disappearance of individuals in Balochistan, stating that commissions are repeatedly formed but fail to deliver results. For every missing person recovered, ten more disappear, he lamented, highlighting that fami-



Speaking to various delegations, journalists, and in a meeting, Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman held powerful institutions, the federal and provincial governments, and so-called rulers responsible for the province's ongoing issues, including insecurity, unemployment, and poverty.

### Mass Membership Campaign & Protest Plans

Jamaat-e-Islami's membership drive is underway in Balochistan under the Haw Do Balochistan campaign. The party plans to mobilize the public to secure their rights and end oppression. Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman announced that a massive protest sit-in of 100,000 people will be organized in Quetta with the support of citizens, traders, youth, and social activists.

lies are now receiving mutilated bodies instead of justice.

### Blame on Authorities for Economic Crisis

He asserted that the Balochistan Assembly is powerless and that influential forces are preventing the government and elected representatives from performing their duties. He said those controlling the resources and power are responsible for depriving youth of employment, traders of business, and transporters of work. Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman urged national institutions, the media, and political parties to take responsibility for addressing the suffering of the Baloch people. He reiterated his party's commitment to securing rights and justice for the people of Balochistan.

## Balochistan Anti-Corruption Arrests C&W Employee Over Multi-Million Embezzlement

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: The Balochistan Anti-Corruption Establishment has arrested a Communication and Works (C&W) Department employee, Ziaullah, for embezzling millions of rupees in a major crackdown on corruption.

The investigation revealed that funds allocated for a 100-acre park in Spin Karez during the 2021-22 fiscal year were released, but the project does not exist.

Authorities are also searching for other suspects, including



A team led by Deputy Director Investigation Kamran Bashir and Assistant Director Investigation Abdul Qayyum apprehended the accused on the orders of DG Anti-Corruption Wahid Kakar.

XCN Khair Bakshi Ansari, who remains at large. This operation underscores the Balochistan government's commitment to eliminating corruption and ensuring accountability.

## Quetta to Islamabad Bus Transporters Strike Over Security Concerns

Manan Mandokhail:

QUETTA: Bus transporters operating on the Quetta-Peshawar-Islamabad route have launched an indefinite strike, protesting against daily harassment and theft incidents at security check posts.

### Buses Parked on Airport Road

Members of the Quetta Transporter Bus Association have parked their buses on Quetta Airport Road, demanding immediate action against the alleged misconduct by security personnel. Speaking to Quetta Voice, Bus Association leader Wahood Kakar stated that passenger buses traveling from Quetta to Islamabad and Peshawar face frequent robberies, yet their calls for security go unheard.

When we ask for protection, instead of ensuring our safety, our buses are stopped unnecessarily at security check posts, and drivers are extorted.

Frustrated by this ongoing harassment, we have no choice but to protest indefinitely until our



demands are met he said.

### Buses Looted and Burned

Adding to their grievances, the owner of AK Movers condemned the burning and looting of one of their buses by terrorists following an accident.

This is a complete failure of the security forces. We demand compensation

from the government and an end to the harassment of passenger buses under the pretext of security checks, he said.

### Customs Officials Accused of Extortion

A bus driver also highlighted issues at Manikha check post, where customs officials allegedly detain buses for hours, falsely label passengers belongings as

smuggled goods, and demand bribes.

This is unacceptable. It wastes passengers' time and adds to our suffering, he stated.

The transporters have vowed to continue their protest until authorities take concrete steps to address their security concerns and end the mistreatment at check posts.

## 'No doubt': COAS says Kashmir will become part of Pakistan one day

NEWS DESK: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Muneer on Wednesday visited Azad Jammu and Kashmir's (AJK) capital Muzaffarabad, where he paid tribute to the sacrifices of the martyrs. During the visit, General Asim Muneer affirmed that any act of aggression would be met with a strong response and reiterated the Pakistan Army's unwavering commitment to defending the nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Upon arrival at the Jammu and Kashmir Monument, he laid a floral wreath at the Martyrs' Monument, honoring the unparalleled sacrifices of the Shuhada, as stated in an ISPR press release. Photo: COAS Gen-



eral Syed Asim Muneer in Muzaffarabad AJK, on February 5, 2025/ISPR Photo:

During his visit, the COAS commended the unwavering dedication, professional excellence, and combat readiness of the officers and soldiers stationed in Kashmir. Later, the COAS engaged with prominent local leaders and veterans of Kashmir, reaffirming Pakistan's steadfast support for the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK). He condemned Indian atrocities and the rise of Hindutva extremism, stating that these actions only strengthen the Kashmiri people's resolve in their fight for self-determination. The COAS assured that Pakistan would always stand by them in their just struggle against state-sponsored

COAS General Syed Asim Muneer in Muzaffarabad AJK, on February 5, 2025/ISPR

## Deadly Collision on Quetta-Karachi Highway in Surab: 4 Killed, Several Injured

Abdullah Lehri:

SURAB: A tragic accident on the Quetta-Karachi National Highway near Nighar, Surab, claimed the lives of four people, while several others sustained injuries.

### Details of the Accident

According to reports, three vehicles collided on the highway, resulting in multiple casualties. Rescue teams quickly arrived at the scene, transferring the deceased and injured to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHQ)

### Medical Assistance and Identification

AH HQ Surab, the injured are receiving medical treatment, while authorities are working to identify the deceased. Once identified, their bodies will be sent to their respective hometowns.

The accident highlights ongoing safety concerns on the busy Quetta-Karachi highway, emphasizing the need for stricter road safety measures.

## A Century of Neglect: The Grim Reality of Coal Mining in Balochistan

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## Federal Ministers reaffirm support to Kashmiri people

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## PMDC Meeting Expected on February 11 to Discuss MDCAT 2025: Computer-Based Exam, New Format & Standardized Syllabus

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## OPINION VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

### A Century of Neglect: The Grim Reality of Coal Mining in Balochistan

#### Editorial:

The collapse of the coal mine in Sandi, near Quetta, once again exposes the glaring lack of safety measures in Balochistan's mining sector.

Despite the tragic loss of four miners and the ongoing desperate rescue operation for eight others trapped underground, this incident is not an isolated event. It reflects the systemic failure to enforce basic safety standards and the callous disregard for the lives of the workers.

#### Accountability Must Extend Beyond Mine Owners

While the coal mine owner must be held accountable for failing to provide safe working conditions, the responsibility does not end there.

Officials in the Mines and Minerals Department, tasked with ensuring miners' safety, must also face scrutiny. If found negligent, they too should be punished. Accountability should be broad and systemic, targeting all those complicit in ignoring safety protocols and risking human lives for profit.

#### The Mines Act of 1923: A Century of Neglect

The Mines Act of 1923 was enacted during British rule to safeguard miners' lives. A century later, its provisions remain largely ignored. The Act mandates strict safety standards, periodic inspections, and the establishment of safeguards against building. Yet, successive governments have failed to implement it in letter and spirit, leaving miners vulnerable to deadly accidents.

#### A Call for Immediate Reforms

The Sandi tragedy must serve as a wake-up call for comprehensive reforms in Balochistan's mining sector. Authorities should:

• Enforce the Mines Act of 1923: Conduct regular inspections and impose strict penalties for non-compliance.

• Hold Officials Accountable: Investigate Mines Department officials for negligence and prosecute if found guilty.

• Introduce Modern Safety Standards: Equip mines with advanced safety systems, including gas detectors and reinforced structures.

• Empower Workers: Establish grievance mechanisms for miners to report unsafe conditions without fear of retaliation.

#### Lip Service Must End

The repeated assurances from provincial ministers and officials mean little when no tangible action follows.

The fact that no senior official visited the Sandi mine even 48 hours after the collapse underscores the ruling class's indifference toward the working class. Coal miners, driven by poverty and unemployment, risk their lives daily in unsafe conditions, only to be forgotten in times of tragedy.

#### A Moral and Legal Imperative

Protecting coal miners is not just a legal obligation but a moral imperative. The government must prioritize the safety and dignity of those who fuel the economy at the cost of their own lives.

The Sandi disaster should not become just another statistic but a turning point in ensuring justice and reform.

The time for action is now. Nothing less than full accountability and the strict implementation of safety laws would be a betrayal of the miners and their families who continue to suffer in silence.

## ADR — Pakistan's justice revolution

By Syed Jalal Hussain:

Pakistan's justice system is groaning under the weight of a staggering backlog of over two million cases, with some legal battles spanning decades. For the average citizen, the pursuit of justice often translates into years of frustration, financial drain and emotional exhaustion.

The conventional courtroom model, designed in an era vastly different from our present, is struggling to meet the demands of a rapidly growing population and increasingly complex disputes.

Against this backdrop, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) offers a streamlined and complementary mechanism that serves as a crucial necessity for ensuring justice in Pakistan.

ADR includes mediation, arbitration and conciliation, offering a structured and cost-effective alternative to traditional litigation. Unlike the formal court process, ADR emphasises consensus-building and the swift resolution of disputes, making it particularly well-suited to the socio-economic realities of Pakistan. Its potential to revolutionise access to justice cannot be overstated, yet it remains underutilised and misunderstood in the country. A dispute that might take years in a court can

often be resolved in weeks through ADR. This is exactly the kind of agility Pakistan's overburdened legal system desperately needs.

Cost is another critical factor. For ordinary Pakistanis, justice is often a luxury they cannot afford.

Legal fees, court costs and endless adjournments pile up, leaving marginalised communities locked out of the system entirely. ADR changes that equation. It offers a quicker, less expensive route to resolving disputes, making justice accessible to those who need it most.

Imagine a small business owner settling a contractual disagreement without draining their finances or a family recovering a property dispute without getting trapped in years of litigation. ADR turns these possibilities into reality.

The idea of alternative dispute resolution isn't alien to Pakistan. For centuries, rural communities have relied on local elders to settle conflicts. While these traditional systems are often criticised for being patriarchal or unjust, they demonstrate an ingrained cultural preference for resolving disputes outside formal courts.

Modern ADR builds on this tradition but offers something better — structures grounded in fairness,

transparency and equality. It bridges between our cultural roots and the demands of a modern justice system.

The benefits of ADR extend far beyond reducing case backlogs. For Pakistan to attract foreign investment and foster economic growth, it must ensure swift and reliable mechanisms for resolving commercial disputes.

No international investor wants to wait years for a court to rule on a business contract. Arbitration, the global standard for resolving commercial disputes, is an area where Pakistan lags far behind. Strengthening ADR frameworks signals to investors that Pakistan is serious about creating a business-friendly environment.

ADR also has the power to uplift voices often drowned out in the courtroom. Women and vulnerable groups, who face significant barriers in accessing formal justice, can find a safer and more inclusive space in ADR.

For example, family disputes — often fraught with personal and emotional complexities — are better handled through dialogue and consensus than through the adversarial process of a courtroom. ADR provides the empathy and sensitivity that traditional litigation often lacks.

For ADR to become

a cornerstone of justice in Pakistan, bold steps are needed. The legal framework must be modernised. Existing laws like the Arbitration Act of 1940 are relics of another era and need urgent reform. Dedicated ADR centres with trained professionals should be established across the country to ensure the system works efficiently and consistently. Judges, too, must see ADR not as competition but as a partner in delivering justice. By actively referring cases to ADR, the judiciary can free itself to focus on complex matters that truly require judicial oversight.

Equally important is educating the public. Most Pakistanis associate justice with courtrooms, unaware that faster and less intimidating options exist. Public awareness campaigns and community engagement can help shift this mindset. Once citizens see the tangible benefits of ADR, they will not only demand it but embrace it as their first choice for resolving disputes.

Pakistan is witnessing a growing ADR movement, with notable figures like Justice Mansoor Ali Shah of the Supreme Court and Justice Jawad Hassan actively championing the cause by encouraging mediation and referring cases for resolution out-

side traditional courtrooms. Court-annexed mediation centres have been established in Quetta and Islamabad, while private centres have emerged in Karachi and Lahore, reflecting significant progress in expanding ADR infrastructure across Pakistan. Additionally, a growing number of individuals are obtaining certification as mediators from internationally accredited institutions, further strengthening the country's capacity for effective dispute resolution.

While these efforts are promising, they need to be scaled and strengthened. Pakistan must work toward developing a complex, multi-tiered, institutionalised ADR legal framework and an enabling ecosystem that integrates ADR seamlessly into the justice system, making it a cornerstone of accessible and efficient dispute resolution.

Pakistan has a choice to make. It can either cling to an outdated system that serves only the privileged few or adopt ADR as a transformative force for justice. Courtrooms will always have their place, but they cannot be the only path to justice. The future of justice in Pakistan lies in dialogue, efficiency and equitable solutions. ADR is not just an alternative — it's the solution we've been waiting for.

## Worrying findings

By Irfan Ahmed Rind:

THE recent uproar over the abysmally low pass rates in the Higher Secondary Examinations conducted by the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Karachi has exposed deep flaws in our educational system. Students and parents argue these results unfairly compromised Karachi's youth, especially compared to higher pass rates in other provincial BISEs.

This disparity has reignited the divisive Karachi versus interior Sindh debate, which obscures the systemic issues plaguing examination boards.

Instead of addressing the operational inefficiencies of BISEs, discussions often devolve into accusations of resource encroachment and ethnic bias. Critical questions about why examination boards are failing and what reforms are needed are sidelined.

In 2016, my research group analysed a decade of exam papers from English, mathematics, and science across five provincial BISEs.

The findings were

troubling: most questions tested rote memorisation instead of higher-order thinking skills, many were repeated from previous years, and some textbook chapters were entirely ignored. The practices contradicted the national curriculum's objectives.

These findings were presented to Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, who, in 2017, commissioned a performance audit of one BISE. The audit, conducted by education experts from Sukkur IBA University, uncovered significant systemic issues. One of the key problems was underqualified staff, with many employees lacking the necessary qualifications and continuing to rely on outdated methods.

The process of paper setting was equally flawed, as senior teachers, without formal training or access to essential materials, often resorted to recycling questions from previous years.

Carachi's HSE re-

sults mirror a broken system. Adding to the inefficiencies, the research cell of BISE was found to be completely inactive.

This left the board without the ability to make data-driven decisions to enhance the system. The assessment process was also deeply compromised, as teachers were expected to check 60 scripts against an eight-hour shift, allowing a mere 36 seconds per question, which significantly impacted the accuracy and fairness of grading.

Furthermore, the grievance redressal mechanism was ineffective, offering students only the option to request a recount of their marks, with no provision for a re-evaluation of their potential marking errors.

Our recommendations included training staff, creating item banks, implementing rubrics, introducing e-assessment systems, and engaging students for quality assurance.

## Problems with difficult solutions

By Talat Masood:

Pakistan's present circumstances are regrettably not very favourable. Politics is corrupt and democratic values are blatantly defied by the political leadership.

The operations and management of the establishment in politics is another factor that distorts constitutional obligations. The PTI, whose leader Imran Khan is undergoing a 14-year prison sentence and most of its senior leaders are either in jail or are facing charges, remains under great pressure.

The absence of PML-N top leadership from the country and Nawaz Sharif exercising control over party and government affairs regrettably is not an ideal arrangement.

The parliament, with a gagged opposition, is witnessing bitter exchanges in the political environment. But what one infers from the proceedings in the parliament and the statement of leaders is that with a few exceptions there does seem to be anything constructive or aristocratic

Promoting economic development, pursuing a mature political course and improving the adverse security situation are challenging endeavours for any government. With the exception of those who are directly affected, one does not see any strong reaction from the public or the civil sector to the prevailing conditions either.

This lack of urgency in correcting course from the government side has consequences and does not augur well for the state. It has a direct bearing on the country's influencing and shaping the regional power balance. And Pakistan has regressed — something that is signified by the state of its relations with the regional powers as well as the world.

There are other indicators as well that need to be closely watched by the political leadership. For example, is there any cultural impact during their period in office? In terms of policy and conduct that were or are being pursued? And does it not need a change from the hereditary and aristocratic

model of leadership to a middle class and meritocratic one? In all fairness there has been a change but somewhat slow but time is not on our side as several nations move forward at a faster pace.

The lingering influence in our country of privileged class in politics is to be regretted. It still persists and serious efforts to harness it are not visible.

In the country's interest and people's welfare, the political parties should fully support improvement initiatives and focus on merit. However, when one looks at the people in power all around, one is not sure if they are pursuing these goals with determination. More major countries of the world have realised that so long as the country adheres strictly to democratic norms, efficiency and credibility of the process will be evident. By now, after seventy-seven years since its independence, we should have been able to fully achieve these goals, preferably through the quality of life of their people, thus

enhancing their national power. Pakistan at present is not among favoured destinations for investment. But if there is a determined effort to improve security and economic growth, the situation would change significantly. It is also critical that the government and troubled security situation is high and perhaps there is not sufficient realisation of it.

Moreover, the suppression of PTI, a major political party, and the dominance of a single party is a challenge to established norms and pluralism which is the essence of democracy. In our country where these traditional and well-recognised norms are frequently violated, exchanges in governance, corruption and abuse of power become a common phenomenon.

In these times when our weaknesses are dragging us down it is important to recall, as prominent thinkers have pointed out,

## Spectre of authoritarianism

By Zahid Hussain:

IT will be one year this week since the controversial elections of Feb 8, 2024, that brought the current dispensation to power, were held. But the impact of a stolen mandate continues: the country is in the midst of creeping authoritarianism, a regime bereft of legitimacy trying to dismantle the edifice of a constitutional democracy. The events of the past one year have pushed the country deeper into uncertainty.

The Shehbaz Sharif government's latest move to criminalise speech under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peca) is a serious blow to democratic freedoms.

The controversial law follows the enforcement of the 26th Constitutional Amendment which has virtually demolished judicial independence.

The rot doesn't stop there; the deep state has cast its shadow across the entire spectrum of governance.

Journalists are out on the streets in the country protesting against the draconian law that affects all sections of society. Even the private exchange of messages can be liable for prosecution. Such harsh laws have not been seen even under military rule.

The government's claim that Peca is meant to prevent fake news and libellous material from being posted on social media platform has not taken.

True, fake news is a serious problem worldwide, but it is not the only reason behind the government's move to enforce cyber laws. In fact, the government brass is undoubtedly more concerned about the use of social media

as an alternative source of information in the face of restrictions on mainstream media. With traditional media's loss of credibility, people are more inclined to access digital platforms for information. What the political parties forget is that these laws can be used against them in the future. There is no denying that lots of staff appearing in social media is extremely malicious and there is a need to curb this material. But this law has little to do with fake news and more to do with criminalising free speech.

The government has set up a number of new departments under Peca and given them sweeping powers to crack down on what it sees as libellous material, which includes criticism of the political leadership, judges, and the military brass — the untouchables — even if they themselves are involved

in unlawful acts. Such harsh laws are mostly seen in authoritarian states. What's most worrisome is that the administration itself would be prosecutor, judge and jury.

Tribunal's set up under Peca can convict and jail for three years anyone alleged to have intentionally or unintentionally engaged in activities deemed malicious. This is against the conviction only in the Supreme Court.

Ironically, all those governing coalition members when in opposition have opposed these laws. But in power they have completely changed their position, supporting laws that devalue citizens' fundamental democratic rights and freedom of expression.

The PPP's role was indeed the most dubious in the matter. While vot-

ing for the law, some of their leaders took a different public position, calling for consultation among all stakeholders.

What these political parties forget is that these laws can be used against them in the future when they are in opposition. It's certainly not the darkest period of our political history.

The fallout of the 26th Amendment is now fully apparent. The latest changes at the Islamabad High Court are a brazen interference of the deep state in the judiciary and the harassment of judges.

It seems that the overt transfer of judges from other high courts to the IHC is meant to deprive those sitting judges of their seniority and to appoint a chief justice of the au-

thorities' choice. Five IHC judges, the signatories of a previous letter to the then chief justice registering their complaints against harassment, in another letter these weeks expressed their concern over the planned changes. But to no avail.

As Justice Mohsin Kayani, who was the senior-most judge at the IHC before the reset, quipped, it was all about a letter. It is improbable that he will be elevated to the top.

Such high fatality numbers among the security forces are extremely alarming. At least 18 soldiers were martyred in clashes on the last day of January alone in Balochistan's Kalat district, indicating the insurgents' growing capacity to launch daring attacks.

The low-intensity conflict, which has plagued Balochistan for

almost a quarter of a century, is fast turning into a full-blown insurgency as the local people get increasingly alienated from the state. The situation seems to have worsened with the virtual collapse of the provincial administration, allegedly installed through manipulation in elections.

Just a couple of days before the Kalat incident, four security personnel, including a major, were martyred in clashes with the militants in KP, the hub of militancy.

The ongoing confrontation between the provincial government and the federal government widened the trust gap between the local population and the state, making it harder for the security forces to operate in the restive region.

This growing authoritarianism is also threatening national security.

### Federal Ministers reaffirm support to Kashmiri people

ISLAMABAD (INP): Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif has reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support for the Kashmiri people's legitimate struggle for the right to self-determination.

In his televised message on Kashmir Solidarity Day, he highlighted that the implementation on UN Security Council resolutions has been delayed due to Indian intransigence.

He called on the international community to honour its commitments to the Kashmiri people. He emphasized that the

Kashmir dispute remains close to the hearts of the Pakistani people, and Pakistan will continue to stand by its Kashmiri brothers and sisters until they achieve their right to self-determination.

In his televised message, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar strongly condemned the atrocities committed by India in the illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, emphasizing that the sacrifices of the Kashmiri people will not be in vain.

Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal paid trib-

ute to the sacrifices of the Kashmiri people, expressing his belief that the day is not far when their dream will be realized.

He said Pakistan will never backtrack from its principled position on Kashmir dispute.

Minister for Kashmir Affairs Amir Muqam said the aim of observing Kashmir Solidarity Day is to send a message that Jammu and Kashmir is a disputed territory and to highlight Indian atrocities in the illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Minister for Power Awaiz Leghari

said Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir is the most militarized zone in the world where humanity is being murdered. He said Pakistan will continue to observe Kashmir Solidarity Day until the Kashmiri people get the right to self-determination.

Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sana Ullah Khan said the world community should raise voice for the oppressed people of Indian illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He said India should be compelled to accept the right of self-determination of Kashmiri people.



ISLAMABAD: Additional Secretary of Ministry of National Food Security and Research Amir Mohyuddin chairs working group meeting with Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Turkey for designing an action plan for future collaborations.

### US military plane deporting Indian immigrants lands in India

NEWS DESK: A US military plane carrying illegal Indian immigrants landed in India's northern city of Amritsar on Wednesday, a Reuters witness said, deporting an unspecified number of people as part of President Donald Trump's immigration agenda.

Some local media reported that the flight was bringing 205 people back, while others put the number at 104, and that they were mainly from the northern state of Punjab, where Amritsar is located, and the western state of Gujarat.

The Trump administration has increasingly turned to the military to help carry out its immigration agenda, using military aircraft to deport migrants and opening military bases to house them.

Although illegal Indian immigrants have been deported home by previous US administrations, it is the first time Washington has used a military aircraft for the purpose. It is also the first destination so far for such flights using a military aircraft.

Reuters reported on Tuesday that the C-17 aircraft with migrants on board had departed for India but would not arrive for at least 24 hours. The flight did not show up on public flight track-

ers but local news TV channels showed the aircraft taxing after it landed in Amritsar.

Migration has been among the key issues discussed by India and the US since Trump took charge last month, and is also expected to come up during Trump's meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, likely to take place in Washington next week.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio also "emphasised" the Trump administration's desire to work with India to address "concerns related to irregular migration" when he met Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyan Jaishankar last month.

New Delhi has since said it will take back such illegal immigrants after verifying their details.

The US is India's largest trading partner and the two countries are forging deeper strategic ties as they look to counter China.

India is also keen to work with the US to make it easier for its citizens to get skilled workers visas.

The Pentagon has said it plans to deport more than 5,000 migrants held by US authorities, and Reuters reported last week that a flight to Guatemala used for the purpose likely cost at least \$4.675 per migrant.

Then, Conway was dismissed for a five-ball duck in a 50-over game, two days after recording his first red-ball double-century. The disappointment and delight aside, Conway also had to deal with the emotions of making the biggest decision of his life: he was going to move abroad and start again.

Even though he was 26 at the time and knew he would be 29 by the time he was eligible to represent his adopted country, New Zealand, he took the chance. It paid off and he has since gone on to become the fastest batter to 1,000 Test runs for New Zealand and an established member of their white-ball squads, but has not played a game in South Africa. So it stands to reason that his first taste of his old home was not as sweet as he would have wanted it to be and a little too similar to his



BELLING: President Asif Ali Zardari being welcomed by the Chairman of the Standing Committee of National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, Zhao Leji.

### President, PM urge world to pressurize India for allowing Kashmiris to determine future

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif have urged upon the international community to put pressure on India to allow the Kashmiri people to freely determine their own future for lasting peace in South Asia.

Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Day being observed on Wednesday, President Asif Ali Zardari said this day reminds the international com-

munity of its responsibility towards the oppressed Kashmiri people.

He said the United Nations should honor the promises made to the Kashmiris 78 years ago and support their struggle for their right to self-determination.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in his message, said the right to self-determination is a fundamental principle of international law but the Kashmiri people have not been able to exercise this right even

after the passage of last seventy-eight years.

He said Pakistan will continue to offer its unwavering moral, diplomatic and political support to the Kashmiri people till the realization of their right to self-determination.

Meanwhile, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, the Service Chiefs, and the Pakistan Armed Forces have reaffirmed their unwavering support for

the resilient people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir in their just struggle for self-determination.

In a statement, the ISPR said armed forces of Pakistan strongly condemn the ongoing grave violations of human rights in IIOJK.

These transgressions stand as a stark indictment of India's blatant disregard for international law, humanitarian principles, and fundamental human rights.

### Life comes full circle for Wanderers' own Devon Conway

CAPE TOWN (INP): Eight years after selling everything he owned and leaving South Africa to pursue a cricket career in New Zealand, Conway is back, not just in the country but the city and the stadium where his sporting journey began.

The Wanderers. The place where he thought he was closing a door that has recently reopened.

"I've come full circle," Conway told ESPNcricinfo from his new team Joburg Super Kings' headquarters.

"It's been a great opportunity for me to catch up with old mates and find my old seat in the change room and it's been quite fun just being back at the Wanderers again."

That's an entirely different feeling from the one he had in 2017, the last time he was at

the Bullring.

Then, Conway was dismissed for a five-ball duck in a 50-over game, two days after recording his first red-ball double-century. The disappointment and delight aside, Conway also had to deal with the emotions of making the biggest decision of his life: he was going to move abroad and start again.

Even though he was 26 at the time and knew he would be 29 by the time he was eligible to represent his adopted country, New Zealand, he took the chance. It paid off and he has since gone on to become the fastest batter to 1,000 Test runs for New Zealand and an established member of their white-ball squads, but has not played a game in South Africa. So it stands to reason that his first taste of his old home was not as sweet as he would have wanted it to be and a little too similar to his

new one.

In JSK's tournament opener against MICT, a Trent Boult outswinger found Conway's outside edge and he was dismissed for 9. His second outing was a washout so he had to wait for a third bite of the cherry to tuck in. Against defending champions Sunrisers Eastern Cape, Conway struck a 56-ball 76 as JSK chased down 119 and earned a bonus point over the team they will play again in the eliminator on the Highveld. In that innings, Conway punctured the off side with shot after shot through and over backward point, the covers, mid-off and long-off in a display of complete dominance.

His next two trips brought scores of 20 and 21 but he'll be hoping to save the best for last if JSK get to the final

which will also be played at the Wanderers, where conditions are not quite what Conway remembers.

"The wicket has changed a little bit and it's starting to turn a little bit more than what I used to," he said.

Slower, lower surfaces have been the trend throughout this season of the SA20 but happily the venues were only a small part of what Conway was looking forward to. The people were the main drawcard, especially when it worked out that Conway would be reunited with one of his oldest friends in the game, Trazaiz Shamsi.

The pair grew up together, playing for rival schools and then the Gauteng provincial side.

When they couldn't crack the top tier of domestic cricket on the Highveld, they moved to Durban together to see if their careers would kick off on the coast.

### UNHCR, IOM concerned about plan to move Afghan refugees out of capital

NEWS DESK: The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on Wednesday expressed concern over the government's "devised plan" to move registered Afghan refugees out of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, seeking clarity from the government over the "modality and timeframe" of relocation.

The government has devised a plan to move registered Afghan refugees out of Islamabad and Rawalpindi and gradually repatriate them back to their country, sources with knowledge of the plan told Dawn.

Authorities have also been directed to implement the plan without making any public announcement in this regard.

Under phase I of the relocation plan, Afghan nationals having the Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) will be "immediately" moved out of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. They will then be sent back to Afghan-is-tan alongside illegal and undocumented refugees.

According to a joint statement issued in Islamabad today, both organisations recognised that the state choice to limit freedom of movement for foreigners, including refugees, however, they urged the government to "implement a relocation measures with due consideration for human rights standards, including due process, and the legal status of their documentation (POR) and Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders, who have resided in

Pakistan for an extended period".

UNHCR and IOM said that the uncertain timeframe to plan for a dignified move is compounding a stressful situation, not to mention the immediate impact of such a move on livelihoods and the education of children, per the statement.

Pakistan has a proud tradition of hosting refugees, saving millions of lives. This generosity is greatly appreciated," the statement quoted UNHCR Representative Philippa Candler as saying. "Forced return to Afghanistan could place some people at increased risk. We urge Pakistan to continue to provide safety to Afghans at risk, irrespective of their documentation status."

It said that the organisations understood the challenges the government was facing, in particular those related to security. However, it added that refugees — like all others — are obligated to abide by the laws. "The overwhelming majority of Afghan nationals in Pakistan are law-abiding individuals, whose situation needs to be seen through a humanitarian lens," it said.

IOM Chief of Mission Mio Sato said they were committed to working with the government and UNHCR to develop a mechanism to "register, manage and screen Afghan nationals". "This will open the door to tailored solutions including international protection to those in need and pathways for Afghan nationals, with long-standing socioeconomic and family ties in the country," she said.



PESHAWAR: Activists of Ichkek e Jawan e Pakistan chanting anti Indian slogans during a protest to mark Kashmir Solidarity Day outside Peshawar Press Club.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Rabeeda Hameed Khan Durraani addressing a seminar on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day

### Commissioner Marathon Race" to be held on February, 9

MIRPUR KHAS (INP): Commissioner, Faisal Ahmed Ugaili said on Wednesday that the purpose of organizing the marathon race was to promote the atmosphere of peace in the division and to encourage the youth by providing them healthysports activities so that they could shine the name of the country by showing their skills.

The marathon race is being organized in collaboration with Municipal Corporation, Police, Health, education, Sports, Rescue 1122 and other related departments. On this oc-

casional, Deputy Commissioner Mirpur Khas Dr. Rashed Masood Khan, giving the details of the second commissioner marathon race, said that four categories had been set in the marathon race, including a 500-meter senior citizen's walk, a 1-kilometer vehicle race for special people, a 5-kilometer race for students (from Suzuki Motor Ratanabad to Gama Stadium), in which 1500 students from the three districts were expected to participate, as well as one-and-a-half-kilometer women's race.

Race (from Black and Brown Bakery to Gama Stadium) in which 500 to 600 girls students from the three districts were expected to participate, he added.

At the end of the marathon race, the prize distribution ceremony will be held at Gama Stadium while stalls for women's handicrafts and other items will also be set up.

He further said that the purpose of organizing the marathon race is to promote sports as well as empower women and promote healthysports activities.

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### PMDC Meeting Expected on February 11 to Discuss MDCAT 2025: Computer-Based Exam, New Format & Standardized Syllabus

Syed Muhammad Yaseen:

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) is expected to hold a crucial meeting on February 11, 2025, to discuss major changes for the MDCAT 2025.

This year's Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) is expected to undergo significant reforms, including a computer-based format, an extended testing window, and a unified syllabus across Pakistan.

#### Major Changes in MDCAT 2025

##### 1. MDCAT Goes Digital: Computer-Based Testing (CBT)

PMDC plans to replace the traditional paper-based MDCAT with a fully digital exam, conducted on computers and tablets in designated testing centers. This shift aims to improve exam security, efficiency, and fairness.

##### 2. 15-30 Day Testing Window Instead of a Single Exam Day

Unlike previous years, where MDCAT was conducted on a single day, MDCAT 2025 will be held over 15 to 30 days. This change will reduce overcrowding, minimize technical dif-



iculties, and provide students with flexible scheduling options.

##### 3. Standardized MDCAT Syllabus Across Pakistan

To ensure a fair and uniform testing experience, PMDC is introducing a nationally standardized syllabus. This means that students from all provinces and educational boards will follow the same MDCAT curriculum, eliminating regional disparities.

##### 4. High-Quality MCQs with a Secure Question Bank

PMDC is working on a syllabus-compliant, error-free MCQ bank to maintain question quality and fairness. A secure online question bank portal is also being developed to prevent leaks

and question repetition.

##### 5. E-Assessment System for Faster Results

PMDC is considering an electronic assessment system to streamline exam evaluation, minimize human errors, and provide faster, more accurate results.

##### 6. Comprehensive MDCAT 2025 Policy Document

A detailed MDCAT 2025 policy is being drafted, outlining exam structure, syllabus guidelines, registration procedures, and result processing. This will ensure transparency and clarity for all candidates.

##### What This Means for MDCAT Aspirants

The MDCAT 2025 reforms are designed to make the exam more efficient, transparent, and standardized. Students should prepare for a computer-based test (CBT) and stay updated on official PMDC announcements.

The author is MBBS student at Jinnah Medical and Dental College and founder of Students Nexus by SMV, an online educational and career counseling platform.



BEIJING: Federal Minister for Interior Molsin Naqvi shaking hands with his Chinese counterpart Qi Yanjun in Beijing.

### Pakistan, China agree to strengthen intelligence sharing

NEWS DESK: Pakistan and China have agreed to enhance intelligence sharing and security cooperation, following a high-level meeting between Pakistan's Interior Minister Molsin Naqvi and his Chinese counterpart, Qiu Yanjun, in Beijing.

During the meeting, discussions focused on securing borders for paramilitary forces and enhancing cooperation in this regard. Both sides also deliberated on the use of advanced technol-

ogy for police and paramilitary forces.

The two officials held detailed discussions on acquiring modern equipment and technology from China to strengthen Pakistan's law enforcement agencies. Molsin Naqvi emphasized that Pakistan would procure cutting-edge technology and equipment to enhance policing capabilities.

Additionally, both countries agreed to strengthen collabora-

tion between the National Police Academy and enhance cooperation between Beijing and Islamabad police forces.

The leaders expressed satisfaction with the progress made in the January meeting of the Joint Working Group.

The high-level discussion between the two ministers lasted for two hours. On this occasion, Molsin Naqvi extended an official invitation to his Chinese counterpart to visit Pakistan.

### NAB restrained from arresting Qaim Ali Shah, Sharjeel in Bahria Town Karachi land grab case

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court on Tuesday restrained the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) from arresting two Pakistan Peoples Party leaders, former chief minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah and senior Sindh minister Sharjeel Memon, in the Bahria Town Karachi land grab reference.

Mr Shah and Mr Memon filed petitions before the SFC and challenged the jurisdiction and summons issued by an accountability court after NAB filed the graft reference.

A two-judge constitutional bench comprising Justice Mohammad Karim Khan Agha and Justice Adnan-Ul-Karim Memon also suspended the summons issued

by the accountability court and asked the petitioners to furnish solvent surety of Rs100,000 each. Petitioners' counsel Barrister Zamir Ghumro and Raj Ali Waid Khan argued that no reference can be made against their clients and NAB should not have added their names in the reference following certain amendments to the Na-



whether the accountability court has jurisdiction to take up the matter in respect of the petitioners."

"For the time being, summons against respondent Nos 5 & 6 are suspended and they shall not be arrested until the next date of hearing subject to them each providing solvent surety in the amount of Rs100,000 to the satisfaction of the nazar of this court."



DUBAI: Pakistan's Ambassador to UAE Faisal Niaz Tirmizi visiting Pakistan Pavilion at AI Everything Global.



MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif receives guard of honor upon his arrival at AJK Legislative Assembly, in Muzaffarabad.

### Shehbaz asks India to hold meaningful and result-oriented talks on Kashmir

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has again called on India to hold meaningful and result-oriented talks for the resolution of Kashmir issue.

PM Shehbaz Sharif reiterated Pakistan's moral, diplomatic and political support to Kashmiri brethren while addressing the AJK Legislative Assembly in Muzaffarabad on Wednesday, on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day.

Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan will continue its unwavering moral, diplomatic, and political support for the Kashmiri people until they get their right to self-determination, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

During a meeting with the leaders of All Parties Hurriyat Conference in Muzaffarabad, he said Jammu and Kashmir dispute is a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy and will remain so.

Shehbaz Sharif urged the

international community to take action against India's aggression and human rights violations in illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He said the sacrifices of Kashmiris who laid down their lives in the struggle for the right to self-determination will not go in vain.

He asked Federal Minister Engineer Amir Muqam to formulate a strategy to address the concerns and issues of refugees in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The APHC leaders praised the Prime Minister and the Government of Pakistan for expressing solidarity with the Kashmiris and commended the unwavering support for the Kashmir freedom movement.

They also praised the Prime Minister for highlighting the Kashmir dispute at the platform of the United Nations.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured government's full cooperation in efforts for the welfare of the Kashmiri people. He was talk-

ing to a delegation of PML-N Azad Kashmir led by Shah Gulham Qadir in Muzaffarabad on Wednesday.

The Prime Minister asked the delegation to play an active role in addressing the issues of the Kashmiri people and take special measures for the development of the youth of Azad Kashmir.

The delegation expressed their appreciation to the Prime Minister for the initiatives taken by the Government for the welfare of the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif landed in Muzaffarabad on a day-long visit to Azad Kashmir during which he will address the at AJK Legislative Assembly, reported 24NewsHD TV channel.

PM Shehbaz Sharif was presented a guard of honour at the AJK Assembly. He will also meet with the leaders of All Parties Hurriyat Conference.

### Youth to receive loans to buy laptops under new scheme

NEWS DESK: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) revealed that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has expanded the scope of the youth business and agricultural loan scheme.

This includes loans for purchasing laptops and for individuals seeking employment abroad.

According to the SBP's statement, a four-year loan will be available for laptops at the KIBOR plus 3% rate, with eligible students aged 18 to 30 from HEC-approved institutions.

Loans will range from PKR 150,000 to PKR 450,000, and repayments will be aligned with university fee payments.

Furthermore, loans of up to

PKR 1 million will be provided to individuals going abroad for work, covering training, visa, and travel costs.

These loans will have a five-year term with a KIBOR plus 3% bank rate, available for individuals aged between 21 and 45.

Under the newly introduced "Tier 4" of the Prime Minister's Youth Loan Scheme, soft loans will be made available for the purchase of laptops.

This initiative targets students from Higher Education Commission (HEC) recognised institutions, as well as freelancers and young entrepreneurs. Eligible applicants must be

Pakistani citizens aged between 18 and 30 years, currently enrolled in HEC-recognized educational institutions.

The scheme aims to provide students with easy access to laptops to enhance their learning and productivity.

To implement this, an agreement will be signed between universities and banks that will offer laptop financing. Under the arrangement, universities will refer eligible students to participating banks via the PMYP portal.

In return, banks will provide laptops to these students, with universities ensuring that the students fulfill the required terms.



JEDDAH: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan addressing the Kashmir Solidarity Day event in Jeddah.

### Successor of Prince Karim Aga Khan 'will be announced soon'

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Aga Khan, imam of the Ismaili Muslims and head of a major development aid foundation, died Tuesday in Lisbon at the age of 88, his foundation announced, saying the declaration of his designated successor will follow.

He was the founder and president of the Aga Khan Development Network, which employs 96,000 people and finances development programmes particularly in Asia and Africa.

"His Highness Prince Karim Al-Hussaini, Aga Khan IV, 49th hereditary Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims and direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), passed away peacefully in Lisbon on 4 February 2025, aged 88, surrounded by his

family," the foundation said on social media.

"The announcement of his designated successor will follow," it added, regarding who could become the fifth person to hold the post since the 19th century.

Present in multiple countries, notably in central and southern Asia, Africa and the Middle East,

the Ismaili community numbers 12 to 15 million, according to its website. United Nations chief Antonio Guterres described the Aga Khan as "a symbol of peace, tolerance and compassion in our troubled world" following the religious leader's death.

Malala Yousafzai, Nobel Peace laureate and education campaigner, said his legacy will "live on through the incred-

ible work he led for education, health and development around the world."

Born in Geneva, the Aga Khan spent his childhood in Kenya and was appointed in Tanzania to succeed his grandfather in 1957.

His father was passed over in the line of succession after a tumultuous marriage to American actor Rita Hayworth.

A billionaire owner of yachts and jets, the Aga Khan was a regular on the racetrack and continued the family tradition of breeding thoroughbreds.

He also ploughed a large amount of his inherited wealth into philanthropic projects and was awarded honorary Canadian citizenship for his work on development and "tolerance around the world".