

# QUETTA VOICE

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## Balochistan's Anti-Cheating Drive: Addressing the Root Cause or Just a Superficial Crackdown?

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: The Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BBISE) is conducting annual matriculation examinations, and after a decade, the provincial government has abruptly launched an anti-cheating campaign. Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has directed administrative secretaries and bureaucrats to visit districts to monitor the exams. While eliminating cheating is a commendable initiative, the timing and approach raise concerns about its effectiveness.

### Education Standards: The Bigger Issue

Before imposing strict measures, the government must analyze the actual quality of education in Balochistan, especially in far-flung districts. The reality is harsh—many schools lack basic facilities, trained teachers, and subject-specific instructors.

- Many schools in rural Balochistan have no laboratories, no scientific equipment, and no proper science or English teachers.
- According to the education department, over 7,000 schools in Balochistan have only one teacher per school, with some schools having a 1:100 or even 1:200 teacher-student ratio.
- In such conditions, how can students from remote districts compete with those studying in Quetta, where better educational



### Unfair Examination Policies

One of the biggest flaws in Balochistan's education system is the standardized question paper policy, where students in remote areas receive the same exam papers as students in Quetta. A government official, speaking on

condition of anonymity, revealed that in some districts, students sitting for matric exams were unable to read the questions, let alone answer them. The government must ask itself: Are students being given the right academic environment before being expected to perform? This fundamental question remains unaddressed.

### The Role of the Cheating Mafia

Cheating is not a recent issue—it has been a chronic problem for years, fueled by corrupt education officials and the exam mafia. A decade ago, during the tenure of Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch as Chief Minister and Sardar Raza Muhammad Barech as Educa-

tion Minister, an anti-cheating drive was launched with proper planning. At that time:

- Seminars were held to raise awareness.
- Rallies were organized to mobilize students and teachers.
- Civil society and the media were engaged to ensure transparency.

In contrast, the current campaign lacks public awareness and

stakeholder engagement, making it another bureaucratic exercise rather than a genuine reform effort.

### What Needs To Change?

1. Improve School Infrastructure: The government must first provide essential facilities, including qualified teachers, science labs, and proper classrooms.
2. Reform Examination Policies: The same question paper should not be imposed across the province without considering regional education disparities.
3. Sustained Anti-Cheating Reforms: Instead of one-time crackdowns, there should be a long-term strategy that includes public awareness, strict monitoring, and policy changes.
4. Eliminate the Education Mafia: The cheating mafia must be dismantled, ensuring that marks are awarded on merit, not through bribery.

### Conclusion

While the anti-cheating campaign is necessary, it cannot substitute genuine education reforms. The government must first address the deep-rooted issues in the education system before expecting students to compete fairly. Until then, Balochistan's students will continue to suffer from an unjust and failing system, leaving the province's future at risk.

## Khuzdar: Levies Force Establishes Check Post After Sindh's Failed Land Claim

From Our Correspondent:

Khuzdar: The Levies Force has set up a permanent check post in Dhadharo, Khuzdar, following a swift response by the district administration.

This move comes after Sindh's failed attempt to claim Balochistan's land, a step that was immediately countered by Deputy Commissioner Yasir Iqbal Dashti. A large number of Levies personnel has now been deployed in the area to ensure security and protect Balochistan's territorial integrity.

### Sindh's Attempt to Claim Dhadharo Rejected

Recently, the Sindh



government's Cultural Heritage Protection Department issued a notification attempting to declare Dhadharo (Kutte Ki Qabar) as part of Sindh.

However, Balochistan authorities immediately rejected the claim, taking prompt action to safeguard the province's land.

This is not the first time such a dispute has arisen. In 2018, a similar attempt was blocked by the then Deputy Commissioner of Khuzdar, Sohail Rehman Baloch.

### Deputy Commissioner Yasir Iqbal Dashti's Swift Action

As soon as the notification surfaced, Deputy Commissioner

Yasir Iqbal Dashti ordered Levies personnel to take control of the area. Upon arrival, Levies officials established a permanent check post, reinforcing security in Dhadharo and ensuring that no external claims could threaten Balochistan's land.

### Balochistan Government Reaffirms Territorial Integrity

Officials have made it clear that any future attempts to alter Balochistan's borders will be met with immediate resistance. The Levies Force will continue to guard Dhadharo, ensuring that peace and security are maintained in the area.

## Levies Checkpost Attacked in Kalat, One Martyred

Abdullah Lehrri:

KALAT: Unknown armed assailants attacked a Levies checkpost in Togh Chhapar, Kalat, early this morning, martyring one Levies official and seriously injuring two others.

The attack occurred at approximately 5:00 AM. The martyred Levies personnel has been identified as Constable Ali Nawaz Langove, while the injured include Constable Ghulam Ali, son of Gul Muhammad, and Muhammad Ayub, son of Wahid Bakhsh, both from the Langove tribe.

The injured were initially treated at DHQ Hospital Kalat before being shifted to Quetta for advanced medical care. Levies personnel responded to the attack, forcing the assailants to flee the scene.

Following the incident, a heavy contingent of Levies force reached the site and launched a search operation to apprehend the culprits.

Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, strongly condemned the terrorist attack, expressing deep sorrow over the loss of a Levies officer. He paid tribute to the martyred official for his sacrifice and assured that those responsible would be brought to justice.



The Levies force has intensified security measures in the area as investigations continue.

## Ambitious project launched to turn Cholistan green

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Asim Munir on Saturday inaugurated an ambitious agriculture initiative to irrigate barren land in Punjab's Cholistan area.

Under the initiative, farmers would be provided with high-quality seeds, fertilisers, modern machinery and scientific support to increase the yield of their crops, says a press release issued by the provincial government. The project was inaugurated with considerable fanfare, despite serious reservations of



PPP — an ally of PML-N in the federal government — over the plan to draw new canals from the Indus River to meet the irrigation needs of Green Pakistan Initiative

Food Security & Research Rana Tanveer Hussain, federal Minister for Water Resources Dr Musaddik Malik, senior provincial minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, provincial minister for agriculture and livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani, provin-cial minister for irrigation Muhammad Kazim Pir-zada and senior officials.

The main components of the project are the Green Agri Mall and Service Company, Smart Agri Farm and Agri Research and Facilitation Centre.

The Green Agri Mall and Service Company will be a "one-stop solution" for farmers, providing them high-yield seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and fuel at subsidised rates at their doorstep, the statement added. NEWS DESK.

ہمارے ثقافتی اقدار  
ہمارا سرمایہ انخوار

وزیر اعلیٰ پنجابان میر سرفراز ہاشمی کی زیر قیادت  
جنرل و قیادت کے دہلیز کوں سے مزین

سالانہ سی میلے 2025 کا کامیاب انعقاد  
رہنما رنگ تقریبات اور عوامی تفریح کے لیے بہ قدر موانع

شاہد اہل دانش و ادبی کا مظاہرہ  
ہاوس اجلاس و نشستوں کا قیام

خوارق اعلیٰ کھانوں کا مظاہرہ  
خوارق اعلیٰ کھانوں کا مظاہرہ

تہذیب و ثقافت اور عوامی تفریح کے فروغ کے لیے کوشش  
تہذیب و ثقافت، حکومت پنجابان

Digital Lab  
Directorate General Public Relations Balochistan Quetta  
33 NO.16-02-2025

Forests: The Unsung Guardians of Climate Resilience and Economic Prosperity

Two Pakistani students in China praised for life-saving act

PPL Signs Landmark Agreement for Development in Dera Bugti: Rind

Opinion

Editor: Asim Khan

Unlocking Balochistan's Potential Through Digital Connectivity

Balochistan, Pakistan's largest yet most underserved province, stands at the crossroads of a digital revolution. With the provincial cabinet's approval of a comprehensive digital policy, a transformative opportunity emerges to bridge the province's persistent digital divide.

Leveraging internet connectivity and digital technologies could improve governance, enhance security, boost economic growth, and protect fundamental human rights.

For Balochistan, with its rugged terrain and remote settlements, adopting satellite internet can enable e-governance, foster educational opportunities, and support healthcare systems through telemedicine.

However, as global experiences demonstrate, the internet's transformative power must be deployed in the public interest.

The dominance of private corporations, like SpaceX, poses challenges to accountability and universal access. For Balochistan's digital policy to succeed, public-private partnerships are essential, ensuring that technological progress is inclusive and prioritizes citizens' welfare over profit margins.

Moreover, internet availability is critical to combating extremism and insecurity. By connecting communities and improving access to information, digital tools can empower citizens, foster peace, and progress. Similarly, enhanced connectivity can unlock economic opportunities, supporting local businesses and integrating Balochistan into global markets.

International collaborations, such as the G7's involvement in global digital initiatives, could bolster this effort, as seen in projects like CERNet and the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. A similar commitment to public-oriented technology deployment can secure Balochistan's future.

This is a pivotal moment for Balochistan. By ensuring robust implementation of its digital policy, the government can not only transform the province's socio-economic landscape but also uphold the human rights of its citizens. Digital connectivity is no longer a luxury—it is a necessity.

Journey of science

By Mohnsin Fareed:

OVER the last four centuries, the physical sciences have undergone a metamorphosis marked by breath-taking discoveries and the evolution of sophisticated theories about the nature of reality. From Isaac Newton's ground-breaking work on matter and motion, to Albert Einstein's revolutionary ideas about energy and space-time, and finally to David Bohm's hypothesis linking quantum mechanics to consciousness, each era has expanded humanity's understanding of the universe. This transition paves the way for a deeper understanding of the interface between science and spirituality.

The groundbreaking work of classical mechanics was laid by Sir Isaac Newton. His matter hypothesis postulated that the universe was composed of indivisible discrete particles called atoms, governed by invariables, such as motion and gravity. Newton's landmark work, 'Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica', integrated the motion and gravitation laws into a collective framework. He provided a predictable and perceptible understanding of natural phenomena. For example, his equations explained how stellar bodies moved in elliptical orbits. Newton's reductionist ideas formulated matter as dominant and perceiving aspects of quantum mechanics were subject only to external forces. While Newton's ideology successfully elaborated macroscopic phenomena, questions about the nature of light, electromagnetic waves,

and the behaviour of matter at exceedingly small scales remained unanswered. Advances in applied physics and the discovery of phenomena such as radioactivity exposed substantial gaps in Newtonian mechanics by the early 20th century. These challenges were consummated in the innovative work of Albert Einstein, who radically reshaped humanity's understanding of energy, matter, and space-time. Einstein's revolutionary theory of relativity introduced the famous equation, E=mc<sup>2</sup>. This equation smashed the Newtonian assumption of matter as inert and invariable, showing that matter is a condensed form of energy instead. His general theory of relativity further revisited gravity, postulating that the curvature of space-time caused by mass and energy. The boundaries between physics, spirituality, and metaphysics are fluid. Einstein's ideas replaced the deterministic universe of Newton with a relativistic model, where time and space were no longer considered absolute but rather relative to the observer. This drastic change laid the groundwork for innovations such as GPS technology and nuclear energy.

David Bohm introduced a radical outlook that sought to deconstruct the deterministic aspects of quantum mechanics, proposing that phenomena are certainly expanding their scope.

The progress of physical science reflects humanity's ongoing desire to understand the true nature of reality.

Dr. Faiz Kabhar:

Potentials of the Province Ensure the Success of SEZ

Balochistan, even as a resource-rich province, grapples with alarming rates of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and infant and maternal mortality, indicative of severe underdevelopment. The unmatched policies and irrelevant development strategies, along with poor governance, have resulted in extreme underdevelopment of the province.

Through the bleak picture of the province, noticeable to all decision-makers, as highlighted by maps depicting critical poverty levels in red, Balochistan's political and intellectual spheres remain sharply divided.

Balochistan's Political and Intellectual Spheres Divided

Amidst the current devastating scenario in the province, Balochistan's political and intellectual spheres are sharply divided.

Supporters of the latter viewpoint draw upon global examples of successful development strategies, particularly the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in various nations.

Learning from global case studies, the potential of Balochistan as a resource-rich province with vast ecological and topographic diversity, coupled with its strategic location, warrants a paradigm shift towards infrastructure development and economic growth. It is evident that uplifting the economic status of the populace will pave the way for the

provision of social services through self-help approaches. Failure to adapt to this evolving development approach over the past 70 years serves as a stark reminder of the need for change.

Potentials of the Province Ensure the Success of SEZ

Balochistan, often referred to as the "fruit basket" of Pakistan, stands out as a resource-rich province boasting the largest landscape area in the world, with a coastline spanning 770 kilometers. Despite its untapped wealth in various minerals, forests, and fisheries, the province remains underdeveloped. Its diverse ecological and topographic zones allow for the experience of different seasons simultaneously, with inhabitants enjoying both the coldest and hottest regions in the province within one division.

Deng Xiaoping was impressed by the noticeable emergence of development in Singapore quoted one of his associates, Lee Kuan and asked how I can make China as Singapore and his response was to establish the SEZs and affirmed the establishment of one thousand SEZs in China. The province's strategic location grants it access to two international borders with Iran and Afghanistan. Its rich resources, including minerals, natural gas, agriculture, livestock, forests, and fisheries, offer a solid foundation for intensifying the emphasis on Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

SEZs The Only Option

Ensuring the full operationalization of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) already identified and commenced in Balochistan stands out as the foremost priority area for intervention. The establishment of small and medium-scale industries within these zones will not only create employment opportunities but also incentivize rural-to-urban migration, thus fostering urbanization. This industrial growth at the grassroots level will facilitate the much-needed trickle-down effect, addressing the pressing needs of the populace.

The momentum for expediting the establishment of industries is being further strengthened by the concurrent development of private housing schemes announced and currently under construction by the real estate developers. These initiatives will compel the working class to seek improved living standards, thereby enhancing the overall quality of life in Balochistan.

Urbanization promotion and establishment of new cities

Addressing the challenge of scattered population in Balochistan is paramount to ensure effective social and infrastruc-

ture development. The dispersed nature of the population significantly increases the unit costs of development and maintenance of services. Moreover, it contributes to the prevailing law and order issues and hampers efforts to combat political insurgencies and religious terrorism.

To address this challenge, the establishment of new cities and towns across the province is essential. However, given the budgetary constraints and the heavy investment required for establishing new cities, leveraging the existing SEZs areas as new cities presents a viable solution. The development of these SEZs into fully functional urban centers with basic facilities and job opportunities, rural populations would be incentivized to migrate from their current locations. This migration is already occurring due to climatic disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and droughts, as witnessed in areas like Ziarat, the Green Belt, Gider (Kalat), and Peshin.

Transforming SEZs into new cities not only addresses the challenge of scattered population but also provides a crucial opportunity to spur economic growth and development in Balochistan. Urbanization, enhanced access to services and infrastructure, and contributions to stability and security in the region. Therefore, prioritizing the development of these SEZs into new urban hubs can be a game-changer for Balochistan's sustainable development.

Addressing the challenge of scattered population in Balochistan is paramount to ensure effective social and infrastruc-

Appointment of heads of authorities from private sectors

The Government of Balochistan has indeed taken steps to establish authorities focusing on thematic areas such as Economic Zones and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). However, the effectiveness of these authorities is quite dwindling by the appointment of heads from junior officials who lack the influence to navigate bureaucratic hurdles or garner support from higher officials. Additionally, the prevailing bureaucratic culture poses further challenges by not providing an enabling environment for these officials.

To address these issues, it is imperative to appoint heads of these authorities from the private sector. These individuals should possess local knowledge, familiarity with public sector practices, and established connections with politicians and higher authorities within the government. This approach will ensure that the heads of these authorities have the necessary clout and influence to drive meaningful progress and overcome bureaucratic obstacles effectively.

Based on the aforementioned discussion, it is strongly believed that the effective operation of these SEZs into new urban hubs can be a game-changer for Balochistan's sustainable development.

AI at the helm: a bold roadmap for transforming universities

By Dr Asghar Zaidi/Dr Anjum Majed:

In a world rapidly shaped by artificial intelligence, Pakistan's higher education sector cannot afford to remain on the sidelines. The recent five-year economic transformation plan of Pakistan, Uraan, unveiled on 1st January 2025, emphasises AI as a driving force for growth, innovation and societal progress. Higher education institutions must rise to meet this challenge if we wish to nurture graduates who can excel in the modern times with skills to make use of generative AI models in their learning.

AI's impact on teaching and learning extends far beyond traditional textbooks and tools. At its best, AI is about personalising the academic journey, allowing students to learn at their own pace while still engaging in collaborative classroom experi-

ences. In Pakistan, however, many disciplines in higher education remain unchanged, while those that barely acknowledge the rise of these emerging technologies.

The mismatch between outdated content and the relentless advance of AI calls is being seen in a strong decline in students enrolment in these disciplines, calling for an urgent overhaul. Curricula must be dynamic, involving modules on machine learning, data ethics and computing. Institutions need to prepare students for a workforce hungry for these skills.

I was reminded of this urgency while attending a talk at University of Management and Technology (UMT) titled Minds and Machines.

The Human Factor in the AI Revolution was delivered by Stephen Brobst, an MIT-Harvard guru on AI. He quoted

opportunities in advancing our learnings at higher education institutions and pursuing entrepreneurship and skill development. His insights underscored how universities in Pakistan cannot ignore AI's transformative power if we wish to evolve as a future-oriented universities.

Many universities lack reliable high-speed internet or the computing infrastructure needed to train robust AI models. Faculty with computer science experience are also in short supply, partly due to limited professional development opportunities.

If we are serious about realising Uraan's vision, we must bridge these infrastructural and expertise gaps through targeted funding for universities and via strategic partnerships with local industries and international institutions.

Employers in Paki-

stan have long complained of a growing divide between academic qualifications and real-world demands. This gap is more evident than ever in the applications of AI, where skills in data science, natural language processing and deep learning are rapidly becoming prerequisites.

Universities should cultivate stronger links with the private sector, inviting guest speakers, launching collaborative research projects and offering students real-world case studies. UMT, for example, arranged recently a talk by Usman Asif, the Founder and CEO of DevSinc, a leading tech company in Lahore with a mission to create 80,000 jobs in Pakistan. Such initiatives not only enrich the learning beyond the classroom but also ensure graduates have marketable skills from day one.

perpetuating inequitable distribution of provinces. Consequently, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa loses approximately 34% of its due share annually, as stipulated in the 1973 Water Accord. To ensure fair distribution and resolve disputes, the Indus River System Authority (IRSA) was established as a regulatory body. If grievances remain unresolved, disputes can be escalated to the Council of Common Interests (CCI).

The Constitution of Pakistan, under Article 155, addresses complaints regarding inter-provincial issues. It provides a mechanism for resolving disputes concerning hydro or thermal power stations.

obligated to implement the Council's decision faithfully. The constitutional framework and the 1991 Accord emphasise that contentious issues like water disputes must be resolved through mutual deliberation. Federalism provides mechanisms for the equitable collection and distribution of natural resources. Any deviation from these principles could encourage centrifugal tendencies, undermining national unity.

In this context, no province should unilaterally decide on the use of the River Indus's waters. Adhering to the Constitution and respecting federal arrangements is crucial for maintaining harmony among Pakistan's federating units. Let us uphold the principles of federalism that bind our federation together.

By Dr Syed Akhtar Ali Shah:

Punjab's allocation of an estimated budget of Rs211 billion for the construction of canals to channel water from the River Indus to the Cholistan region in South Punjab has sparked controversy. This project has raised alarm in Sindh, where residents fear catastrophic consequences for the province's 60 million inhabitants, who are already grappling with water shortages. Beyond irrigation concerns, the construction could harm local flora and fauna and exacerbate soil salinity. The plan has also triggered apprehension in Punjab, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

Before discussing the rights of provinces over historic water usage, it's pertinent to note that the River Indus originates from the mountain springs northeast of Mount Kailash in Western Tibet. Flowing northwest through Gilgit-Baltistan, the river passes through Hazara Division and District Swabi in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. The Kabul River joins it at Kharabad, Nowshera (Khyber), and then flows northward into Punjab. The Panjnad River (Khyber, Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh) merges with the Indus at Mithankot. The conflict over the Indus River's waters dates back to the post-World War I era involving disputes between Punjab, Sindh, Bahawalpur and Bikaner states. The British government initially acted as arbitrators to manage these disputes. However, subsequent arrangements for Indus Basin water. Its key features include: a)

and Pakistan but also among Pakistan's federating units.

Although the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) of 1960, brokered by the World Bank, resolved disputes between India and Pakistan, it sparked new controversies within Pakistan. Under the treaty, Pakistan forfeited its rights to the Sutlej, Beas and Ravi rivers, upstream of their confluence with water demand and supply. This loss created persistent tensions between provinces, straining the federal structure.

The Constitution of Pakistan temporarily addressed provincial disputes over water through the Water Apportionment Accord of 1991. Signed by all four provinces, the Accord established allocations and a distribution mechanism for Indus Basin water. Its key features include: a)

Protection of existing canal water usage in each province; and b) Apportionment of surplus river supplies (including floodwaters and future storages) among provinces.

The Accord allowed for minimum water flows into the sea and stipulated that surpluses or shortages would be shared among provinces above river stations. Punjab 69.03 km<sup>3</sup> (3.87 MAF); Sindh 60.17 km<sup>3</sup> (48.76 MAF); Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 9.73 km<sup>3</sup> (5.78 MAF); plus 3.00 MAF from ungauged supplies (total 139.99 MAF); and Balochistan 4.78 km<sup>3</sup> (3.87 MAF).

The remaining river supplies (in the form of floodwaters and future storages) were to be distributed as follows: Punjab and Sindh (37% each); Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (14%) and

Balochistan (12%). Total allocations under the Accord amount to 141.11 km<sup>3</sup> (114.35 MAF), plus an additional 3.00 MAF above rim stations. Despite the Khayber-Pakhtunkhwa remains unable to fully utilise its share, the province allocated 8.78 MAF annually but uses only 5.97 MAF, leaving an unused surplus of 2.81 MAF due to insufficient infrastructure. This issue was highlighted in the National Water Policy of 2018. The federal government had committed to approving the CRBC Lift-Can-Gravity Project for Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, but the project never materialised. Furthermore, the federal government has failed to provide funds for its share of the Indus Basin development Program (PSDP)-financed project,

the interests of a) the provinces, b) the Federal Capital, or the Federally Administered Tribal Ar-



Rubio arrives in Israel on first trip to Middle East as US secretary of state

CAIRO (NP) US Secretary of State Marco Rubio arrived in Israel late on Saturday on his first trip to the Middle East, after a widely condemned proposal by President Donald Trump to displace Palestinians in Gaza.

US ally Israel's military assault on Gaza, now paused by a fragile ceasefire, has killed more than 47,000 Palestinians in the last 16 months, the Gaza health ministry says, and provoked accusations of genocide and war crimes that Israel denies.



QUETTA: A group photo of the participants of training workshop organized by RBWR in collaboration with EU with DG Water Treatment Qasim Khan and Team Leader Jallat Bicam.

Death toll in stampede at New Delhi railway station rises to 18

NEW DELHI, Feb 16 (NP): Death toll in a stampede at the main railway station in India's capital New Delhi rose to 18 with dozens injured, local media said.

to take a dip in sacred river waters on the most auspicious day of a six-week festival. Delhi's lieutenant-governor VK Saxena, one of the capital territory's top officials, also visited the hospital to meet those injured in Saturday's incident, local media showed.

West Indies announces exciting 2025 schedule for senior men team

BARBADOS (NP): Cricket West Indies (CWI) unveiled an action-packed schedule for the senior men's and women's teams from May to December 2025.

and concluding in Jamaica (July 12-16). A five-match T20I series against Australia follows, with the first two games at Sabina Park (July 20, 22) and the remaining three at Warner Park, St. Kitts (July 25, 26, 28).



QUETTA: People warm themselves due to cold weather in the city.



QUETTA: Supreme Court Judge Justice Hashim Khan Kakar being welcomed at the ceremony organized by Balochistan High Court Bar Association.

Two Pakistani students in China praised for life-saving act

SHANGHAI (NP): Two Pakistani students at Gannan Medical University in China, Yousaf Khan and Muhammad Rafeullah Jawaad, have been lauded for their heroic act of saving the life of an elderly man who suffered a sudden medical emergency at a Shanghai railway station.

remained by his side, ensuring his stability until an ambulance arrived to transport him to the hospital for further medical care. Their swift and professional response earned them widespread admiration from onlookers, police officers, and medical personnel at the scene.

IOJK Congress chief calls for resumption of Cross-LoC trade

JAMMU (NP): Congress IOJK President Hameed Karra has pitched for the resumption of the cross-LoC trade, which was suspended by the BJP-led Indian government in 2019.

"deceitful tactics to befoul the people". The patience of the people here is running out and the residents of Jammu and Kashmir will not tolerate such tactics of the BJP," he said.

Indian Cricket Team arrives in Dubai for ICC Champions Trophy 2025

DUBAI (NP): The Indian cricket team has landed in Dubai to participate in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025. The squad arrived from Mumbai at Dubai International Airport, where a large crowd of cricket fans gathered to welcome them.

with wicketkeepers Rishabh Pant and KL Rahul. Other key players include Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakravarthy, Shreyas Iyer, and pacers Arshdeep Singh and Harshit Rana.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER. The CHIEF OFFICER MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE KHARAN invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. Includes details of items, quantities, and contact information for the Municipal Committee Kharan.

## PPL Signs Landmark Agreement for Development in Dera Bugti: Rind

Manan Mandokhail:

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan and Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) have signed a historic agreement aimed at enhancing infrastructure, education, and employment opportunities in Dera Bugti.

According to Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Rind, PPL will ensure the provision of basic facilities in the region, including scholarships for 50 students annually at Lawrence College and Cadet College Hasan Abdal. Additionally, 14 diploma holders and seven engineers will be recruited each year, and 50 young individuals will receive specialized training for overseas employment.

Under the agreement, Sui Model City will receive 10 million gallons of clean water daily, while efforts to reduce environmental pollution include relocating the gas flaring site 10 kilometers away. PPL will also renovate government buildings in Dera Bugti and provide modern amenities. All recruitments will be conducted purely on merit, with no political influence.

Furthermore, PPL has committed to clearing outstanding dues of Rs. 60 billion. This agreement marks a significant step to-



wards economic development and prosperity for the people of Sui and Balochistan.

### Government's Stance on Security and Education

During a press conference, Shahid Rind condemned the recent attack on coal miners in Shahrug, stating that the Balochistan government took immediate action to ensure the safe transfer of martyrs' bodies and medical treatment for the injured. He dismissed claims of imbalance fundraising as baseless.

On education reforms, he highlighted strict monitoring to

climate cheating in matriculation exams, including CCTV surveillance and deployment of officials at examination centers. The government is committed to providing students with a fair and transparent academic environment.

### Modern Waste Management in Quetta

Rind also announced the introduction of an advanced waste management system in Quetta under a public-private partnership. He revealed that 2,500 tons of garbage were collected in a single day, significantly improving waste disposal efficiency.

## Secretary Irrigation Hafiz Majid Visits Examination Centers in Dalbandin

Riaz Baloch:

DALBANDIN: Secretary Irrigation Balochistan, Hafiz Abdul Majid, visited various examination centers in Dalbandin to inspect the ongoing matriculation exams. He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Chagai Atta-ul-Muneem and Assistant Commissioner Dalbandin Barrister Arsalan Chaudhry.

During his visit to the Government High School Shaheed Farhan Jan examination center, he reviewed the exam arrangements, where Superintendent Jahanzeb Rind.

Deputy Superintendent Manzoor Razi Baloch, Additional Superintendent Ali Gohar Baloch, Additional Superintendent Kifayatullah, GTA President Attaullah Siyahpad, and invigilator Riaz Hussain Baloch were present.

**Transparent Examinations Ensure a Bright Future**  
Speaking on the occasion,



Secretary Irrigation Balochistan, Hafiz Abdul Majid Hasani appreciated the efforts of the examination staff in maintaining discipline and ensuring a fair examination process.

The examination staff is performing their duties responsibly, and students are taking their exams in a peaceful environment, which is a positive sign, he said.

He emphasized that students are the future of the nation, and fair exams without cheating will help them build a successful future. Cheating is a serious

problem, and students must avoid it.

In today's digital era, students have better access to knowledge and can prepare more effectively, he added.

### Appreciation for Examination Staff

At the end of his visit, Secretary Irrigation Balochistan Hafiz Abdul Majeed Hasani recorded his remarks in the inspection register and praised the efforts of the examination staff for their dedication and commitment.

## Wheel-Jam Strike Observed in Shahrug Harnai Against Coal Miners Killing

Hanif Tareen, Sardar Muhammad Khondai:

HARNAI: A complete wheel-jam strike was observed at Shahrug Phatak in protest against the attack on coal miners in Shahrug Takti on February 14.

Protesters blocked the Harnai-Quetta Road, halting all types of traffic. They strongly condemned the attack and demanded immediate action against those responsible.

On Friday morning, a vehicle transporting coal miners was targeted with an improvised explosive device (IED) in the Shahrug area of Harnai, leaving 11 miners dead and six injured.

Local protest leaders, including Mohammad Khan and Niamatullah, criticized the government for its failure to protect coal miners.

This is not the first time coal miners have been targeted in the area. The government has completely failed to provide



security. Mohammad Khan said, "Following the attack, security has been tightened in the region."

The tragic incident has once again highlighted the growing security concerns for coal miners in Balochistan.

## Harnai Blast: Bodies of 10 Martyred Coal Miners Shifted from Zhob to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Ali Khan Mandokhail:

ZHOB: The bodies of 10 coal miners martyred in a roadside bomb blast in Shahrug, Harnai, were transferred from Civil Hospital Zhob to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Assistant Commissioner

Zhob, Muhammad Naveed Alam, and Assistant Commissioner Qila Saifulah, Saad Kaleem, along with Levies personnel, received the bodies at the hospital. After completing formalities, the remains were sent to Swat

and other areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The deadly attack targeted coal miners in the conflict-hit province of Balochistan, raising security concerns for laborers working in the area.



HYDERABAD: Lawyers celebrate after the wining in District Bar Council Election.



RIYADH: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb with MF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, Chairman of the Ahla Conference for Emerging Market Economies jointly organized by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Saudi Ministry of Finance.

## Emergency declared in Rawalpindi amid severe water crisis

RAWALPINDI (INP): The Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) has declared emergency in Rawalpindi due to a severe water crisis triggered by drought.

According to MD WASA, Muhammad Saleem Ashraf, the city's water shortage has worsened, with daily demand standing at 68 million gallons against a mere 51 million gallons available.

He stated that the situation will become even more dire if February and March pass without any rainfall. The Meteorological Department has also predicted scarce rainfall, exacerbating the crisis.

The constant increase in population and commercial activities has led to a depletion of water resources. WASA has launched an awareness campaign to encourage water conservation

and has warned of stern action against those found wasting water.

The drought has severely impacted dams and groundwater levels, which have dropped to alarming levels, with the water table plummeting to 700 feet below ground.

To address the shortage, WASA is relying on water from the Rawal Dam, Khanpur Dam, and tubewells.

In light of the crisis, WASA has cautioned citizens against unnecessary water usage and has already issued challans to two residents found wasting water. The agency has appealed to citizens to conserve and reduce their water consumption.

Additionally, the cleaning of Khanpur Dam will result in a temporary suspension of water supply until February 22.

Earlier, LHC slapped fine for wasting water during car wash inside homes. The orders were passed by LHC Justice Shahid Karim while hearing petitions related to smog and environmental pollution.

During the proceedings, the court ordered a fine of Rs10,000 for individuals found wasting water by washing vehicles at home.

Additionally, the Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) was directed to submit a comprehensive report on traffic-related pollution.

The LHC also instructed authorities to ensure public awareness regarding the upcoming cricket event, emphasizing the need for proper traffic management and environmental precautions.

## Preparations for colorful spring festival in full swing in Capital

ISLAMABAD (INP): The district administration is all set to host a colorful spring festival, with preparations in full swing in the Federal Capital.

The district administration, led by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, is ensuring that the event will be a memorable experience for all attendees, said the spokesman of ICT administration here.

The festival, scheduled for February 25, 26, and 27, aims to showcase Pakistan's rich culture and provide entertainment for citizens and visitors alike.

In a recent review meeting chaired by DC Irfan Memon, the district administration discussed the final preparations for the Spring Festival.

The meeting saw participation from representatives of all relevant departments, including Additional Deputy Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners.

The agenda focused on ensuring that every aspect of the event is meticulously planned and executed. One of the key highlights of the meeting was the briefing on the arrangements for the main event. The officials confirmed that all details regarding food stalls have been finalized, ensuring a variety of culinary delights for attendees.

Additionally, the festival will feature participation from CEOs of international companies and members of the diplomatic community, adding a global touch to the celebrations.

DC Irfan Memon emphasized that the primary goal of the festival is to provide entertainment

and recreational opportunities for the citizens.

He stated that the three-day event will be packed with activities designed to engage and delight attendees of all ages. The festival will also serve as a platform to highlight Pakistan's cultural heritage, with various performances and exhibitions planned to showcase the country's traditions and arts.

The Spring Festival is expected to draw large crowds, and the district administration is working tirelessly to ensure that all logistical and security arrangements are in place. The event promises to be a unique blend of cultural celebration and community engagement, offering something for everyone.

## Massive reforestation drive launched in Lahore to combat air pollution

LAHORE (INP): Punjab government has launched an ambitious reforestation campaign, aiming to plant a natural forest on 978 acres along the banks of the Ravi River.

The initiative is designed to serve as a natural air filter for the city and mitigate the rising levels of air pollution.

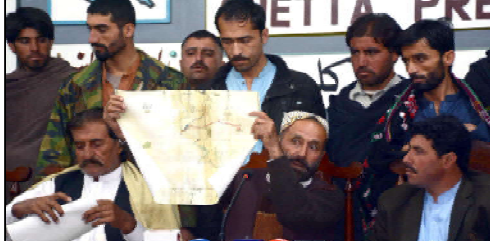
According to officials, 144 acres have already been planted with 105,000 trees, with further afforestation in progress. The campaign sets an ambitious target of 634,000 trees to create a green wall around Lahore, transforming it into an "oxygen hub."

Senior Punjab Minister Maryam Aurangzeb emphasized the significance of the initiative to shift smog-filled city into an oxygen hub and afforestation is essential to tackling air pollution and rising temperatures.

The 978-acre green belt will provide clean air and a healthier environment for Lahore's citizens. Every citizen should plant at least

one tree as part of this movement.

Calling on citizens to contribute to the effort, Aurangzeb stressed that making Lahore smog-free is a collective responsibility. She encouraged everyone to play their part in ensuring the success of the tree-planting campaign. Authorities believe that the 978-acre forest will serve as a milestone for Lahore's environmental future, offering a natural solution to pollution and climate-related challenges.



QUETTA: Leader of Tikko Bazai Tribe Malik Jan Kakar Bazai addressing a press conference at Quetta Press Club (QPC).

## Extremists won't be allowed to impose their ideology: COAS

RAWALPINDI (INP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir said Khawarij or extremists would not be allowed to impose their outdated ideology on the country.

The army chief stated this during an interactive session with students of various universities. He said, "We take pride in our religion, culture, and traditions."

Gen Asim Munir emphasized the strong bond between the Pakistani people, especially the youth, and the Pakistan Army. He said that the attempts by hostile elements to create a rift between the military and the people have always failed and will continue to fail.

As long as the nation, particularly the youth, stands together, the Pakistan Army will never be defeated, he said. "We fight like comrades and that our most important identity is Pakistan," he said.

Hitting out at extremists, he said, "What kind of Sharia or religion are these Khawarij talking about? We will never let them impose their outdated ideology on our country."

He also stated that the brave people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan stand like an iron wall against terrorists. He highlighted that armed forces are still fighting against terrorists on a daily basis.

Islam was the first religion to honour women whether they are mothers, wives, or sisters, he questioned: "Who gave the Khawarij authority to take away their (women) rights?"

"No one can take that away. We will never allow such misguided groups to impose their values on our country," he asserted.

The Army Chief said armed forces are fighting the chaos instigated by the Khawarij, who are misinterpreting Islam and violating its teachings.

"Islam's directives regarding such elements are very clear, and those who surrender to the state can expect mercy," he remarked.