

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Saturday, February 22, 2025

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Quetta's Alishba Khan Barech Named Finalist for 2025 Women Changing the World Awards

Qaseem Shah:

QUETTA: The selection of Alishba Khan Barech, a novelist from Quetta, as a finalist for the 2025 Women Changing the World Awards has been widely welcomed in the provincial capital.

People from various walks of life, including political and literary circles in Balochistan, have appreciated her efforts in making a difference through literature.

The Women Changing the World Awards is a global platform that honors women making a significant impact in business, sustainability, leadership, health, education, innovation, and technology.

Presented by Dr. Tererai Trent, a Zimbabwean-American humanitarian and scholar, the awards aim to empower women worldwide, encouraging them to reclaim their dreams and drive meaningful change.

Alishba Khan Barech's recognition highlights her literary influence,

inspiring readers with her storytelling and shedding light on important social themes. Her achievement has put Pakistani women, particularly from Balochistan, on the global map.



The final winners will be the awards serving as a platform committed to transformative progress worldwide.

Airfares Soar to Rs. 70,000 as Protest Blocks Quetta-Karachi Highway

Syed Ali Shah, Manan Mandokhail:

QUETTA: Airfares from Quetta to Karachi skyrocketed to Rs. 70,000 on Friday as protests blocked key highways, leaving thousands of passengers stranded. Angry demonstrators blocked the Karachi Highway in Sorab, Kalat district, demanding the recovery of a missing person. The protest caused massive disruptions, particularly for women, children, elderly passengers, and patients traveling between Quetta and Karachi. "I just bought my ticket for Rs. 62,000—it's unaffordable," said Sabir Baloch, a senior citizen forced to fly due to road closures. Similar protests erupted in Dera Murad Jamali, where truck drivers blocked the highway, further worsening travel conditions. "I've been stuck here for hours with my family. No food, no water—it's unbearable," said Ahmed Jan, a stranded passenger. Authorities later negotiated



with protesting truckers to reopen the Sindh-Balochistan highway, but repeated roadblocks have led to soaring airfare prices. "People are borrowing money just to buy tickets," said Syed Saifullah, a travel agent, highlighting the desperate situation. With protests continuing and road closures persisting, air travel remains the only option—but at an exorbitant cost for ordinary citizens.

BUIITEMS Secures a Prominent Position in QS World University Rankings: Asia 2025

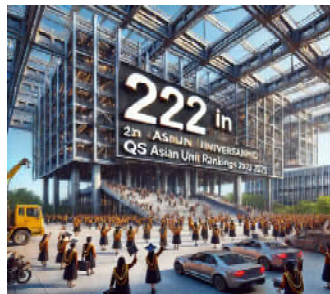
Syed Dara Shikoh Amir:

QUETTA: The Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) has once again demonstrated its commitment to academic excellence by ranking 222 in the QS Asian University Rankings—Southern Asia 2025. Additionally, the university has been placed in the 701-750 band in the overall QS Asian University Rankings 2025, further cementing its status as Balochistan's No. 1 university.

A Milestone in BUIITEMS' Academic Journey

This remarkable achievement in the QS World University Rankings: Asia 2025 reflects BUIITEMS' strong academic foundation, innovative research contributions, and growing global recognition. The ranking is based on comprehensive indicators such as academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty-to-student ratio, research output, and international collaborations.

Moreover, BUIITEMS has made significant progress in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, earning spots in both the THE Subject-wise Rankings and the THE Impact Rankings. These achievements highlight the university's commitment to sustainable development, research impact, and subject-specific excellence.



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Key Achievements of BUIITEMS in QS and THE Rankings:

- QS Asian University Rankings—Southern Asia 2025: Ranked 222
- QS Asian University Rankings 2025: Placed in the 701-750 band
- THE World University Rankings: Featured among top global universities
- THE Subject-wise Rankings: Recognized in multiple academic disciplines
- THE Impact Rankings: Acknowledged for contributions to sustainability and social impact

Significance of BUIITEMS' Recognition

BUIITEMS' inclusion in these prestigious rankings underscores its ongoing efforts to elevate higher education in both Balochistan and Pakistan. The university continues to excel in several areas:

- Academic Excellence: Offering cutting-edge programs that meet global standards.
- Research Innovation: Promoting impactful research in engineering, technology, and management sciences.
- International Collaborations: Strengthening partnerships with leading institutions worldwide.
- Sustainable Development: Addressing global challenges through responsible education and research.

By achieving these prominent positions in international rankings, BUIITEMS has solidified its reputation as the leading university in Balochistan. The university remains dedicated to further enhancing its academic and research standards, with a clear vision to climb even higher in future global assessments.

BUIITEMS—Balochistan's No. 1 University

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Six terrorists killed in Karak operation: ISPR

NEWS DESK: Six terrorists were killed after security forces carried out an intelligence-based operation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Karak district, the military's media affairs wing said on Friday.

According to a press release issued by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), security forces effectively engaged after they received information regarding the presence of terrorists in the area.

"During the conduct of operation [...] six khawarij were sent to hell," it said, referring to the term the state uses for members of the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

"A sanitisation operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area," it said, adding that the security forces were determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism.

Pakistan has recently witnessed an uptick in terror activities, especially in KP and Balochistan. Terror attacks have increased since the TTP broke a fragile ceasefire agreement with the government in 2022.

Last week, security forces killed 13 terrorists in five separate operations carried out across KP on Thursday night.

In separate IBOs on Feb 15, four soldiers were martyred while 15 terrorists were killed in KP on Saturday. Separately, security forces killed 30 terrorists in an IBO in KP's South Waziristan district, ISPR said in a statement on Tuesday.

With at least 685 members of security forces losing their lives amid a total of 444 terror attacks, 2024 turned out to be the deadliest year for the civil and military security forces of Pakistan in a decade, according to a 2024 report issued by the Centre for Research and Security Studies think-tank.

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At Oxford, Bilawal defends Pakistan's N-programme

LONDON: Former foreign minister and PPP leader Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Thursday called out the hypocrisy of Western countries, questioning what makes a state entitled to nuclear weapons. During a wide-ranging speech at the Oxford Union, a pre-stigious debating society that invites world leaders to speak on key issues before students and academics, Mr Bhutto-Zardari said he was "concerned that Pakistan's ballistic missile programme is sanctioned by the US" and asked who defines the rules for a country's defence capabilities.

"I am struck by the hypocrisy... Is it that every Western or White country is allowed nuclear weapons and others aren't? Pakistan is not an aggressive nuclear weapons programme." He also made a veiled jibe at recent remarks made by US President Donald Trump, saying "We don't have an expansionist policy to take over the Panama canal or conquer Canada."

Ours [nuclear weapons] are only for self-defence."

The event was an ode to the former PPP prime minister, titled the 'Benazir Bhutto Memorial Lecture' to discuss democracy in a divided world. A portrait of the late Benazir hung in the hall, overlooking the podium where the Bhutto scion spoke.

Mr Bhutto-Zardari spoke at length about his mother, an alumna of the prestigious university and also the Union's first Asian woman president.

He hailed her sacrifices for democracy, her commitment to politics, and her position as a woman politician who was also a mother. "My mother... came to Oxford at the age of 16 to study and then went to Pakistan at the age of 25 to participate in politics," he said. "She was an extraordinary woman, with whom people would establish a personal relationship."

"My mother did not teach me to take revenge, that is why I say that democracy is the best revenge." NEWS DESK.

Reko Diq Mining Company Hosts Public Forum in Nokkundi

Riaz Baloch:

NOKKUNDI, CHAGAI: Reko Diq Mining Company (RDMC) held an open public forum at the RDMC Technical Institute, managed by The Hunar Foundation. The event brought together local stakeholders, including youth and community leaders, to discuss RDMC's development initiatives.

Key attendees included Haji Amanullah Kubdani, Maula Bakhs Alezai (National Party), Wahid Balish Sherazi, Nizam Lashari, Bahu Razzaz Sasaki, and Muhammad Anwar (BNP). RDMC officials provided updates on skills development programs with The Hunar Foundation and the Mother & Child Health Center managed by Indus Hospital.

Community Engagement Manager Ali Dost Yallanzai and other RDMC representatives addressed concerns, clarifying that employee lists cannot be publicly shared due to privacy policies.

They also highlighted that 78% of RDMC's workforce is from Balochistan, with over 50% from Chagai.

Presentations from The Hunar Foundation's Qazi Iainoor Sanjram and Indus Hospital's Sher Jan Balish emphasized local hiring, with over 95% of their workforce from Balochistan.

The community appreciated RDMC's transparency and commitment to local communities.



Two Police Officers Martyred in Violent Attack in Quetta's

Shaban Area Continued to page 4

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

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Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader criticizes Govt over pending rigging cases

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QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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

Editorial:

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 resources are available?

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 Barez as Education 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.

Birthright citizenship

By Muhammad Siddique Ali Pirzada:

In a bold and provocative move on the first day of his second term, President Donald Trump declared his intent to end birthright citizenship through an executive order. This action, however, stands in stark contradiction to the plain text of the 14th Amendment and more than a century of supreme court jurisprudence. As expected, it was met with intense legal challenges, and the prospect of it surviving judicial scrutiny despite a supreme court where the president's appointees remains slim.

Before delving into the constitutional merits, it is imperative to reflect

on the audacity of this attempt. Every president swears an oath to "preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution". Moments after taking that oath, President Trump violated it, challenging the very document he had sworn to uphold.

To comprehend the implications of this executive action, one must turn to the history and language of the 14th Amendment. Before its ratification, the US operated under a racially stratified system where enslaved people were denied basic rights. The infamous Dred Scott decision ruled that enslaved people and their descendants could never be citizens. The Civil War abolished this regime, and the 14th Amendment declared: "All persons born or naturalised in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof are citizens of the United States and of the State where they reside."

The language is unequivocal: if you are born on American soil, you are an American citizen, regardless of the status of your parents. The amendment envisions an inclusive, unexceptional citizenship that transcends racial, national, or social distinctions.

The language of the 14th Amendment is clear

and its intent is clear. It was designed to ensure that all who are born on American soil are citizens, regardless of the status of their parents. The amendment envisions an inclusive, unexceptional citizenship that transcends racial, national, or social distinctions.

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Afghanistan — the perils of cuddling India

By Inam UI Haque:

The Islamic Emirate, while governing Afghanistan, is also undergoing a journey of self-discovery. Afghan Taliban are unshooled in the art of governance and diplomacy, bedevilled with internal fissures; faced with the existential paradox of presenting a unified front to the rest of the world despite differences on critical issues like girls' education; unable and unwilling to get out of the TTP quagmire that has the potential to derail their ties with the world's most powerful superpower, the United States; and are not optimally managing a faltering economy, while the US humanitarian largesse, billed at around \$50 million per month, is coming to an end. After Trump regained power, So, it is natural for IEA to hedge/that is to look for alternatives in alliances and trade. Let's call it 'hedging diplomacy'.

During past two weeks, we discussed the economic potential of

Chahbahar Port Project (CPP) for Afghan and Central Asian trade. This, yet to be exploited potential, now remains in limbo. The Taliban's exemption from the US sanctions, that previously allowed this Iran port to process humanitarian cargo for Afghanistan, has been suspended. The Taliban's strategic position and its natural resources; structured around economic collaboration, border security and CT, albeit with uncertain outcomes. Kabul's apparently shadowy, backchannel diplomacy relies on negotiations

tinged with possible ideology, operating outside the prevalent norms, sans IEA's formal recognition. It is mostly transnational and is centred around geopolitical considerations that override concerns for interim government's legitimacy. China, Russia and Iran are not encumbered by Western-dictated protocols and constraints. China is a leading party interested in extracting minerals worth \$1 trillion, including the sought-after 'rare earths'. However, Beijing remains cautious and refuses to open Kabul-Kashgahar trade route through the fabled Wakhan Corridor, given its concerns vis-à-vis ETIM and Taliban religious region.

Russia aims to extend intelligence and security cooperation with IEA to safeguard its Central Asian soft underbelly against IS-K operations, especially in Tajikistan. Moscow would like to serve its broader geopol-

By Ali Tauqueer Sheikh:

As the winter smog blankets our cities from Lahore to Delhi, and farmers from Punjab to Bihar watch shifting monsoon patterns upend centuries-old agricultural practices, we are reminded daily that climate change knows no borders.

While Pakistan ranks amongst the world's 10 most climate-vulnerable countries, this challenge extends across South Asia, home to the world's largest concentration of climate-vulnerable populations. South Asia has emerged as the global epicentre of climate vulnerability, with scientific evidence showing unprecedented changes in regional weather patterns and ecosystems.

Dawn Media Group's climate change conference last week in Islamabad was a learning hub, and a melting pot of ideas. It was attended by over 100 learned speakers. For me, the key takeaway was best distilled by the conference slogan: 'let's weather the change-together'.

This message is at

its strongest when it comes to the regional aspect of the climate crisis. Our common destiny is written in the geography we inhabit. From the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea, we share ecosystems that have shaped our civilisations. Our futures are inextricably linked through common environmental systems that transcend national boundaries.

These interconnectedness manifests itself in multiple ways. River flows, whether in abundance and causing floods or scarce and leading to droughts, affect communities across borders.

Recent cloudburst incidents in the upper catchment areas resulted in cascading losses and damage across the downstream communities of Sialkot (2020), Uttarakhand (2021), Nowshera (2022), Hunza and Himachal Pradesh (2023). They exemplify the trans-jurisdictional nature of climate extremes.

When glacial lakes burst in Nepal, the impacts ripple through Bihar and Bangladesh.

When Cyclone Yaas (2021) struck the Bay of Bengal, its effects were felt in Odisha and West Bengal. Cyclonic storm Biparjoy (2023) changed its mind at the last minute and made landfall near Jakhau Port in Gujarat, India, after particularly affecting Thatta, Badin, and Karachi with heavy rainfall and strong winds. Such persistent challenges cannot be effectively addressed through isolated national actions.

The common threats facing our region are numerous and growing.

We are witnessing dramatic changes in snowfall patterns and receding glaciers, with permafrost thaw adding new dimensions to the challenges. Mountain patterns that have historically defined our agricultural rhythms, are becoming increasingly erratic. Surface and groundwater availability has become more uncertain across the region.

The regional nature of climate impacts extends beyond immediate

environmental effects. The migration patterns of the Rohingya to Karachi or the spread of epidemics like polio from Afghanistan have cross-border implications and demonstrated how environmental challenges can rapidly transform into regional crises requiring globally coordinated responses.

Understanding the nature of these non-traditional security threats is crucial. They are neither purely domestic nor entirely interstate issues. The global climate discourse has often overshadowed our regional and domestic conversations, sometimes at the cost of local solutions and regional approaches. These challenges need not result in zero-sum outcomes but, instead, present opportunities for win-win solutions that benefit all participating nations.

This is particularly significant because the climate crisis poses non-traditional security threats that cannot be addressed through conventional security approaches. Traditional knowl-

edge often transcends our geographical borders. Farmers across the region from Chitral to Tamil Nadu still rely on shared traditional methods to predict weather patterns. The catastrophic floods of 2022 in Pakistan demonstrated this interconnectedness vividly. As the Indus river swelled beyond its banks, the ensuing disaster highlighted how changes in upstream glacial melt and rainfall patterns affect communities downstream.

Similarly, when farmers in Indian Punjab light their harvest fires, the resulting smog affects air quality, depending on wind patterns and atmospheric conditions over the distance, and spreads across the region—Lahore, Karachi, Lucknow, and parts of Bihar were all affected.

Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive approaches. It demands 'intelligence'—the engagement of all stakeholders and diverse stakeholders.

Traditional knowl-

By Khurram Husain:

WHEN a political party decides that actively causing damage to the economy will somehow advance its interests, it needs to be urged to undertake a rethink. Such a strategy is most perfectly described by the saying about burning a country down in order to 'rule over the ashes'.

The PTI has adopted this strategy. Back in August 2022, we saw them try to scuttle an IMF programme at a critical juncture. The country was precariously perched on the very edge of default in those days, with the energy supply chain nearing breaking point as the foreign exchange reserves had plummeted to a level that could not find even one month's worth of import.

A few weeks more and the beginnings of total shutdown of the country's vital functions would have commenced. A country the size of Pakistan should never allow itself to come this close to the edge of catastrophe.

But there we were. And right when all the government decisions were required in order to win a rescue package from the IMF had finally been made and the Executive Board was ready

to consider Pakistan's case, the PTI made an attempt to scuttle the whole thing by having the then finance minister of KP, Taimur Jhagra, write a letter directly to the IMF's resident representative in Pakistan announcing his province would not be abiding by a commitment to keep the provincial surplus within the limits stipulated by the Fund programme.

The next proved futile. The Fund recognised it for what it was and ignored Khan's letter. But the intention had been revealed. The party was willing to use its leverage in the negotiations with the Fund programme to advance its political aims, even if doing so meant possibly pushing the entire country into a potentially catastrophic default.

A country the size of Pakistan should never allow itself to come this close to the edge of catastrophe. The party was willing to use its leverage in the negotiations with the Fund programme to advance its political aims, even if doing so meant possibly pushing the entire country into a potentially catastrophic default.

However, that gambit produced a powerful reaction, not only from the government (which booked former federal finance minister Shaikat Tarin in a sedition case over his alleged involvement in instigating the general public as well. Nobody wanted to see the country burn, no

matter how strong the grievance prompting the actions.

The party learned a lesson from that affair and since then has withheld any required cooperation from the KP government for the purposes of the Fund programme.

But today, they are trying something else, which is even more futile, and just as craven in its purpose. They have been urging overseas Pakistanis to not send remittances to the country for a boycott of Khan's letter. But the intention had been revealed. The party was willing to use its leverage in the negotiations with the Fund programme to advance its political aims, even if doing so meant possibly pushing the entire country into a potentially catastrophic default.

In addition, officials from the party have tried to scuttle the GSP Plus status Pakistan worked so hard to get from the European Union back in 2014. And most recently, the party has written to the visiting IMF delegation evaluating the quality of the country's governance under a monitoring regime separate from the ongoing programme.

Let's start with this. The party has been right to call for a boycott of remittances. It also has every right to furnish its point of view to

visiting IMF and EU delegations that are here to conduct a careful evaluation of the state of governance and human rights in the country. These actions do not amount to a grievous lapse of judgement that the letter of August 2022 was, since they don't involve using governmental powers the party is entrusted with by the electorate to harm the state.

But here, the charitable view on the party's politics ends. In calling for a boycott of remittances, for example, the party quotes Khan as saying people should not send their money "to the regime" while human rights are being violated and questions about the veracity of the 2024 election have not been answered.

However, literally nobody sends remittances to 'the regime'. They send remittances to their families so the latter can pay their bills. This is one reason why despite repeated calls by the party and from Khan directly, remittances have only increased in the month of January (year-on-year).

Asking people to stop these is a little like telling them to not pay their utility bills, something Khan urged people to do back in the days of

the dharna. That call failed, too.

Likewise, the IMF is not here to evaluate the state of the government's legitimacy or the quantum of repression unleashed by the government. Those hoping that the Fund delegation's visit with the chief justice has something to do with the state of domestic politics are in for another disappointment, much like one that the remittance data from January brought. The Fund's own Executive Board decided back in 2018 to expand monitoring of governance frameworks of member countries, but added that this would only be to the extent of its impact on macroeconomic stability.

In assessing the state of rule of law, for example, the board said the analysis should focus on "those aspects that are critical to economic performance" and had special emphasis "the protection of property and contractual rights". In assessing the country's governance overall, the board said the focus should be on determining whether any vulnerabilities exist that are "sufficiently severe to significantly affect prospective or present balance-of-payments and domestic stability".

Beyond TTP's ominous clouds that force IEA to hedge against Pakistan, there is bright sun on either side. Central Asia's trade potential, touted through Chahbahar and potential connectivity, will remain a pipedream without Pakistan. If Iran could substitute the centuries-old transit trade route be passing through its Sistan-Baluchistan, instead of Karachi and Gwadar.

The somehow disconcerting sentiment that the strategic KP and Balochistan nowadays including many sinner voices, is considering Afghanistan endemically ungrateful. Although compassion for their suffering and the sense of generosity under Pashtunwali's sheghara, and Islam, induces Pakistan to continue extending a helping hand to Afghan refugees, especially the brethren, the goodwill is at greater risk if not engaged by the wise among the IEA.

That Sheghara (doing good) under Pashtunwali and Islamic fraternity demand Afghans not befriending the enemy of their friend, especially when the tried and tested friend is also a friend-in-need and a neighbour. Islamabad has stood by Afghans through thick and thin, and rightly expects and deserves favour in return.

India's re-insertion into Afghanistan as Islamabad's 'yed line', and this point needs to sink in well. Protecting the country's strategic dividend at all costs is existential to Pakistan. If Afghan overtures are angry reaction by IEA under its hedging diplomacy, these are sadly not steeped in rationale and realism.

Kabul also needs to realise the lingering psychological dependence of its citizenry on Pakistan.

Despite the doves on both sides, Islamabad's shift from geo-politics to geo-economics is not coming

FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN SECRETARIAT

A BRIDGE FOR JUSTICE BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND THE FEDERAL ENTITIES

SARWAR JAWAID

COMMISSIONER IRD WAFAGI MUHTASIB QUETTA



Established in 1983, the Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan serves as a crucial bridge between the public and the federal government, acting as a watchdog over federal institutions and departments. The Federal Ombudsman Pakistan plays an effective role in resolving disputes between individuals and the federal entities and departments, offering a unique advantage: no fees or lawyers are required to file or pursue a case. Citizens can easily approach the Federal Ombudsman with a simple application, or even a WhatsApp message, initiating a prompt investigation by the office staff. Cases are typically resolved within a maximum of 60 days. This accessibility and efficiency have led to increasing public trust in the Federal Ombudsman, unlike many other public institutions, and its case disposal rate is remarkably high. Since its inception, the Federal Ombudsman has provided relief to an estimated 7.3 million families. The Federal Ombudsman recently aptly described the institution as "Court for poor people" (محکمہ عدالت کے لئے), reflecting its core mission to assist the poor, needy, and marginalized.



The Federal Ombudsman's work is particularly challenging, yet vital, in Balochistan. Informal dispute resolution, often influenced by political, tribal, and social contexts, requires careful navigation. Despite these complexities, Federal Ombudsman officers in Balochistan, including those in Khuzdar, Kharan, Sibi, and Loralai, are dedicated to creating an environment where the public can easily access federal departments, agencies, and organizations through the Federal Ombudsman.

Balochistan, Pakistan's largest province, presents unique challenges due to its vast, sparsely populated terrain, socio-economic disparities, and complex administrative landscape. These factors make the Federal Ombudsman's role in ensuring good governance, transparency, and accountability within public sector organizations, especially important. The Federal Ombudsman formally known as the Wafagi Muhtasib (وفاقی محاسب), was established to address maladministration in federal government agencies, with a primary focus on marginalized segments of society. As a significant institution in South Asia, it serves as an independent and impartial body, investigating complaints of administrative excesses, abuse of power, and procedural lapses. This provides citizens a crucial avenue for redressal without resorting to lengthy and costly legal battles. Operating on principles of accessibility, fairness, and efficiency, the Federal Ombudsman aims to promote good governance and protect citizens' rights.



Increase in Complaints at the Federal Ombudsman's Office

The number of complaints at the Federal Ombudsman's office is increasing every year. During 2024, the Federal Ombudsman received 226,371 complaints and decided 223,171, which is a world record because no single Ombudsman institution worldwide has made so many decisions in a single year. The implementation rate of these decisions is more than 91 percent.

The Federal Ombudsman's office in Balochistan has undertaken several key initiatives to improve service delivery and address public grievances:



Open Katcheries

These public forums provide a platform for citizens to directly interact with Ombudsman officials and lodge complaints. Open Katcheries are particularly valuable in remote areas where access to formal complaint mechanisms is limited.

Awareness Campaigns

The office conducts awareness campaigns through various media channels to educate the public about their rights and the services offered by the Ombudsman.

Collaboration with Government Agencies

The Ombudsman's office works closely with federal government agencies in Balochistan to address systemic issues and improve service delivery. This includes conducting joint inspections and providing recommendations for administrative reforms.

Focus on Priority Areas

The office prioritizes complaints related to essential services such as education, health, and public utilities, which have a direct impact on the lives of citizens.

Use of Technology

The adoption of technology, such as online complaint portals and mobile applications, has streamlined the complaint process and made it more accessible.

Capacity Building

The office invests in training programs for its staff to enhance their skills and knowledge in handling



complaints effectively.

Special Initiatives

The Ombudsman's office may launch special initiatives to address specific issues or target vulnerable groups, such as women, minorities, and persons with disabilities.

Waseela E Taleem Program

Our special focus is on education sectors where we are successfully making a headway through "Waseela E Taleem". In collaboration with education department we are trying to reach 15,000 educational institutions of GOB, regarding registration of poor and needy students to get their scholarship through Benazir Income Support from Primary to Secondary and higher level education. This initiative will help a long way to assist poor and needy students and as a result of this initiative we can enhance literacy rate in Balochistan upto a considerable level.

Progress Review of Federal Ombudsman

Exemplary Increase in Complaints

Since its establishment in 1983, the average number of complaints at the Federal Ombudsman's office until 2012 was 20,000 annually. By 2021, this number had reached 110,405. Thanks to the new initiatives, new vision, and new policies adopted during the tenure of the current Federal Ombudsman, Mr. Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi, the number of complaints in 2024 has reached 226,371.

Establishment of Regional Offices

Regional offices have been established in remote areas of the country such as Khairpur, Khuzdar, Mirpur Khas, Sudda and Wana. New offices have also recently started operating in Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir. Thus, the number of regional offices of the Federal Ombudsman has now become 23.

Online Hearing Facility

Complainants can also participate in hearings online instead of appearing in person. 40 to 45 percent of complainants are taking advantage of this facility.

Number of Benefited Families

Increase in the Value of Disputed Matters
The total value of the complaints received by the Federal Ombudsman regarding disputed matters and the decisions made on them amounts to Rs. 8.2 billion, compared to Rs. 4.9 billion last year, which means an increase of 67.34 percent this year.

Office of the Complaints Commissioner for Overseas Pakistanis

A separate office of the Complaints Commissioner is working in the Federal Ombudsman



Secretariat to resolve the issues of Overseas Pakistanis, which has resolved the issues of a total of 146,149 overseas Pakistanis during 2024.

Facilities at Airports

Facilities were provided to 111,149 people arriving in and departing from Pakistan through the Facilitation Centers (OWI/DSI) established at airports.

Complaints Received by Overseas Pakistani Embassies

35,876 complaints were received by Pakistan embassies abroad and addressed, which is 84.71 percent more than the previous year.



Complaints Received by the Commissioner for Overseas Pakistanis

2,121 complaints were received directly by the Commissioner for Overseas Pakistanis, which is 124.44 percent more than the previous year.

Protection of Children's Rights

The National Commissioner for Children's Office, established in 2009 within the Federal Ombudsman's office, works for the protection of children's rights and has taken numerous steps to address children's issues. In 2024, 575 complaints related to children were received, which is a 45 percent increase compared to



the 396 complaints received in the previous year.

Prison Reforms

The study report prepared on prison reforms is yielding

significant results. Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi himself visits all four provinces and holds meetings with the Chief Secretaries, Inspectors General of Prisons, and heads of other institutions. As directed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, 18 reports on the implementation of prison reforms



have been sent to the Supreme Court.

New Initiatives

To provide justice at the doorstep to complainants in remote and underdeveloped areas across the country, Federal Ombudsman officials held 126 open courts in tehsils and small towns in 2024. Inspection teams of the Federal Ombudsman conducted 79 visits to government agencies and formulated recommendations for immediate and long-term solutions, which were sent by the Federal Ombudsman to the heads of those institutions for implementation. A large number of cases were disposed of through through outreach complaint resolution.

Informal Resolution of Disputes (IRD)

In 2024, 8,669 complaints were received under the Informal Resolution of Dispute (IRD) program, while 7,219 complaints were resolved, including pending complaints from the previous period.

International Role of the Federal Ombudsman

Since the establishment of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) in 1996, the Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan has mostly been elected as the President of this organization. On September 11, 2023, the Federal Ombudsman was once again unanimously elected as the President of the AOA.



Objective Review of the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat's Performance

To conduct an evolutionary review of the performance of the Federal Ombudsman's institution, the opinions of two hundred thousand complainants, 12,000 members of the general public, 777 employees, and 150 representatives of various institutions were sought. According to the results, 96 percent of the complainants expressed satisfaction with the easy complaint handling process of the Federal Ombudsman, and 67 percent expressed satisfaction with the services provided by the Federal Ombudsman. 81 percent of the general public stated that they were aware of the services of the Federal Ombudsman.

The Federal Ombudsman's office in Balochistan plays a vital role in promoting good governance and protecting the rights of citizens. Despite facing numerous challenges, the office has made significant progress in addressing maladministration and providing relief to those who have suffered due to administrative excesses. By continuing to adapt its strategies, strengthen its capacity, and engage with local communities, the Federal Ombudsman's office can further enhance its impact and contribute to the overall development of Balochistan. The commitment to accessibility, fairness, and efficiency, coupled with a proactive approach to addressing systemic issues, will ensure that the Federal Ombudsman's office remains a vital institution for promoting accountability and serving the citizens of Balochistan for years to come. The future of the office lies in its ability to not only address individual grievances but also to serve as a catalyst for systemic improvements in public service delivery, contributing to a more just and equitable society in Balochistan.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆



Two Police Officers Martyred in Violent Attack in Quetta's Shaban Area

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: In a deadly incident on the outskirts of Quetta's Shaban area, unidentified armed assailants launched an attack that led to a fierce exchange of fire with local police and the Frontier Corps. In the ensuing gunfight, two police officers were martyred, marking a significant escalation in violence in the province.

Authorities swiftly responded by deploying additional forces to secure the area and stabilize the situation. Investigations are underway to identify the attackers and determine the motive behind the assault. Local residents have been advised to steer clear of the affected area until further notice.

This tragic event underscores growing security challenges in Quetta and has left the community in shock. Officials are urging investigation to ensure accountability.



FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, Addressing in the 5th Convocation of Government College Women University.

KP Governor emphasizes need to transform economic models for national growth

PESHAWAR (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has emphasized the need to transform economic models for national growth. He stressed the importance of promoting a transparent business environment and investment across the country for sustainable economic development.

He was addressing the semi-annual 'Revive Pakistan' held at the Governor House, organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The event was graced by the special guest, the Governor Faisal Karim Kundi. Alongside him, Rawalpindi Chamber's President, Usman Shaikat, Vice President Fahad Barlas, Chairman of Revive Pakistan, Muhammad Inan, and other prominent figures, including the President of Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Raba Bari, along with representatives from various chambers across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, participated in the seminar. Pakistani cuisine recipes Business leaders, economic experts, and chamber officials from cities like Peshawar, Nowshera, Swat, Kohat, Abbottabad, Bajaur, and other areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa presented their proposals for the country's economic development.

Usman Shaikat President of the Rawalpindi Chamber, welcomed the business community

and extended his gratitude to Governor Kundi for hosting the event. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said that the collective interest of all should be to ensure the prosperity and development of Pakistan. He further acknowledged the suggestions from the business community on boosting the national economy. Governor Kundi highlighted Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's vast natural resources, saying the immense potential for investment in the province despite the challenges faced by the business community.

He expressed his pleasure over the Rawalpindi Chamber's initiative to organize such an important seminar in Peshawar. He also mentioned the necessity of providing business opportunities and facilities for the youth, as well as empowering educated women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who cannot access formal employment by encouraging them to pursue personal businesses.

Governor Kundi reiterated his commitment to enhancing the soft image of the province worldwide and encouraging the organization of more seminars and events at the Governor House, aiming to inspire diverse sectors to contribute to the economic advancement of the region. Pakistani cuisine recipes

During the ceremony, the Governor also presented awards

to members of the business community on behalf of the Rawalpindi Chamber. Meanwhile, students from the City School Cantt Branch Peshawar visited the Governor House on a study trip where they were warmly welcomed by the Governor Faisal Karim Kundi.

During the visit, the students had the opportunity to engage in a study session with the Governor, asked questions about opportunities for growth in various fields.

Governor Kundi informed the students about the historical significance of the Governor House and elaborated on the constitutional duties of the Governor. The Governor shared his vision for introducing educational trips for students to the Governor House, saying that it was important for students to gain knowledge about significant institutions in the province, including the Governor House.

Governor Kundi explained that the purpose of these visits is to enhance students' self-confidence while familiarizing them with state institutions. He emphasized the need for children to understand the importance of such institutions in shaping their future. "Our children should be well aware of major institutions in the province, including the Governor House," he said.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader criticizes Govt over pending rigging cases

FAISALABAD (INP): Senator Barrister Ali Zafar of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has expressed his concerns about the government's actions, stating that the delay in the pending rigging cases could result in the downfall of the current administration if evidence comes to light.

He revealed that over 80 petitions filed by PTI are still pending, and if even 50 percent of these petitions succeed, PTI would have a majority in Parliament. He accused the government of enacting legislation to delay the cases and protect its position.

Speaking to a private TV channel, Zafar also addressed PTI's plans to hold a rally at Minar-e-Pakistan, emphasizing that the party

wants to ensure the event does not coincide with the Champions Trophy match.

He pointed out that PTI's rallies are meant to be peaceful, but the government has created disturbances to hinder them, which he believes exacerbates the situation.

Highlighting the success of PTI's recent rally in Swabi, Zafar warned that if the government refrains from creating obstacles or making arrests, the upcoming rally will be even larger.

He criticized the government for preventing PTI from holding rallies in Punjab, stating that the government itself can hold rallies, but PTI is being denied the same opportunity.

Zafar further criticized the

government for delaying the judicial process, pointing out that Yasmin Rashid remains in jail and her trial has yet to begin.

He also noted that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had expressed dissatisfaction with the current judges and was pushing for the appointment of retired judges of its choice, despite many election tribunals being vacant.

The PTI leader concluded that the government's actions, including the delay in rigging case hearings and the manipulation of the judicial process, are part of a strategy to preserve its power. He emphasized that after Eid, PTI supporters will take to the streets, demanding justice and accountability.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Chairs Sugar Advisory Board Meeting.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Pakistan Retail Business Council led by its Chairman Ziad Bashir called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Shehbaz assures to resolve issues faced by retail businesses

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the formation of a committee to resolve the issues faced by retail businesses and assured the government's all-out support for the purpose.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of the Pakistan Retail Business Council headed by Chairman Ziad Bashir, said that the retailers already under the tax net would not be burdened further rather efforts were being made to bring more retailers into the tax net, according to a PM Office press release.

He told the delegation members that the steps were being taken to curb smuggling in the guise of used goods.

The prime minister urged the

local industry to adopt innovation and modern technology to enhance exports and compete in the international market.

He said that besides introducing reforms in the Federal Board of Revenue, the government was also taking measures to promote a cashless economy.

The members of the delegation lauded the efforts by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his team for economic stability. They viewed that the significant reduction in inflation and policy rate was leading to an increased consumption and production of goods.

The delegation members expressed the hope that the measures being taken by the government would further reduce the

inflation rate and that the operational industry was beginning new employment opportunities.

They said that the government's reformative measures would have far-reaching positive impacts on the economy and bringing more retailers into the tax net would increase revenue.

They also acknowledged the government's efforts to resolve the issues faced by the retailers already in the tax net.

Besides CEO of Service Sales Corporation and CEO of Bechtel Shahryar Baksh, the federal cabinet members Ahsan Iqbal, Jam Kamal Khan, Alad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Arangzeb, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Ali Pervaiz Malik and relevant senior officials attended the meeting.

Peaceful protest basic right of every citizen: Azam Nazeer Tarar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, on Friday said peaceful protest was a fundamental right of every citizen but it must take place within the parameters set by the law.

In response to concerns raised by Senator Sherry Rehman, the minister reaffirmed that peaceful protest was a core right but must adhere to the legal frameworks that clearly define acceptable guidelines and limitations.

Tarar expressed his concerns about the disruptions caused by protesters at the Pakistan Secretariat, a crucial institution that serves citizens

from all regions of the country, including the remote areas of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, and Punjab. He stressed that such disturbances impede the delivery of public services and that the Secretariat should not be held hostage by these actions.

The minister also mentioned that the prime minister had instructed that proper engagement be undertaken with the protesters to address their concerns and find resolutions.

The finance minister was actively involved in negotiations with the protesting employees, and the government was committed to meeting their legitimate demands.

Tarar further noted that the Prime Minister has assured that any employees offered early retirement or placed in the surplus pool will have their rights fully protected.

The government remains steadfast in its commitment to safeguarding employees' rights, while simultaneously working towards reducing non-developmental expenditures, such as salaries and pensions.

This strategy aims to free up resources that will foster industrial and economic growth, ultimately generating private sector job opportunities. He concluded by stating that this approach aligns with global economic strategies for sustainable progress.

COAS visits Warminster, Larkhill Garrisons in UK

RAWALPINDI (INP): Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir, who is on a visit to the United Kingdom, visited Warminster and Larkhill Garrisons. The Army Chief was briefed on the modernization plan of British Army and Deep Reece Strike Brigade.

Niche technologies including AI and uncrowed systems were also showcased by the British Army during the visit.

The Army Chief had a field visit to Warminster and Larkhill Garrisons at the invitation of General Roland Walker, Chief of General Staff of UK Army. "Niche technologies including AI and uncrowed systems were also showcased by the British Army during the visit," the ISPR statement said.

General Syed Asim Munir was in the UK to participate

in the 7th Regional Stabilization Conference at the esteemed Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, where he will deliver the keynote address on "The Emerging World Order and Pakistan's Future Outlook."

The Stabilization Conference serves as the premier platform for Army-to-Army dialogue between Pakistan and the United Kingdom, held annually to foster collaboration.

Pakistan cannot afford another martial law: Bilawal Bhutto

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has stated that Pakistan cannot afford another martial law.

He emphasized that his mother, Benazir Bhutto, taught him the values of democracy rather than revenge, which is why he firmly believes that "Democracy is the best revenge."

Speaking at the Benazir Bhutto Memorial Lecture organized by the Union, Bilawal highlighted the significance of democratic values, human rights, and the role of women in Pakistan. He praised his mother for fearlessly participating in politics despite facing immense challenges and restrictions against women in leadership roles. He further stated that Benazir Bhutto paved the way for women in leadership, and today, Punjab also has a female chief minister. He reiterated that her life was dedicated to securing a better future for Pakistan, despite multiple assassination attempts against her.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Project Director Cadet Colleges Balochistan intends to purchase following work:

S.No.	Description	Estimate
1.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Jinnah Town, Quetta. TSE-242502648363	26,390,859
2.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Quarry Road, Quetta. TSE-242502645123	16,860,184
3.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Brewery Road, Quetta. TSE-242502645143	16,573,814
4.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Sarab Malik, Quetta. TSE-242502645193	12,871,654
5.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Sarab Malik, Quetta. TSE-242502645113	25,585,115
6.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in Govt Science College M. A. Jinnah Road Quetta	25,885,090
7.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Feroz, TSE-242502645243	13,508,381
8.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Ziarat. TSE-242502645263	27,636,733
9.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Loralai. TSE-242502645293	35,580,211
10.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Dera Murad Jamali. TSE-242502645303	43,791,674
11.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in Cadet College No.1, TSE-242502645323	29,310,080
12.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in Cadet College Killa Saifullah. TSE-242502645343	27,225,151
13.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in Cadet College Jafferabad. TSE-242502645353	11,404,577
14.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in BRCL, Loralai. TSE-242502645373	15,599,529
15.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Quetta Cantt. (E-Bidding). TSE-242502645403	150,444,692
16.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Sibi. (E-Bidding). TSE-242502645433	57,200,592
17.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Kohat. (E-Bidding). TSE-242502645453	37,298,852
18.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Khuzdar. (E-Bidding). TSE-242502645463	68,534,329
19.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in GGDC, Loralai. (E-Bidding). TSE-242502645483	71,122,077
20.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in Cadet College Killa Saifullah. (E-Bidding). TSE-242502645493	52,506,455
21.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in Cadet College Mastung. (E-Bidding). TSE-242502645533	53,723,063
22.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in BRCL, Uthal. (E-Bidding). TSE-242502645553	270,616,598
23.	Recovering/Missing Facilities in BRCL, Zhob. (E-Bidding). TSE-242502645583	67,413,291

The tender process would be carried out under B-PPRA rule 2014. The earnest money is 4% OF ESTIMATED COST in shape of call deposit/bank guarantee from schedule bank in favour of Project Director, Cadet Colleges Balochistan should accompany the bids. ELIGIBILITY: All mandatory requirements are mentioned in bidding documents for qualifying the eligibility criteria. The entire tender document must be signed and stamped by the bidder. Power of attorney must be submitted prior to submission of bid on Rs.108 Stamp Paper Attested by Notary public for manual tenders (MANDATORY). PROVIDE ONLY THE INFORMATION REQUIRED AS PER THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA. SUBMISSION OF BROCHURES OR IRRELEVANT DOCUMENTS WILL RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION. METHOD OF PROCUREMENT: Single Stage One Envelope Evaluation (MANDATORY). Least and cost-based selection method. TENDER DOCUMENTS: The Documents can be downloaded from BPPRA website. TENDER FEE: Rs.1000/- non-refundable payment duly deposited through Green Chitral in NBI under head 022018 against each view. SUBMISSION & OPENING OF TENDER: The tenders will be received / submitted on 06.03.2025 at 10:00 am and will be opened on the same day at 11:00 am in presence of participating bidders and procurement committee members. ADDRESS: House No.101/2024-B, Jinnah Town, Quetta Cantt. Ph:081-2870264, Email: cadetcollegesbalochistan@gmail.com.

AS No.79520-02-2025

PROJECT DIRECTOR, Cadet Colleges Balochistan