

QUETTA VOICE

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United State (US) says Russia and Ukraine agree to ensure safe navigation in Black Sea

NEWS DESK: The United States said on Tuesday it has reached separate agreements with Ukraine and Russia to ensure safe navigation in the Black Sea and to implement a ban on attacks by the two countries on each other's energy facilities.

The agreements, if implemented, would represent the clearest progress yet towards a wider ceasefire that Washington sees as a stepping stone towards peace talks to bring an end to Russia's three-year-old war in Ukraine.

Russia, however, said it could not trust Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and it could therefore only sign a Black Sea deal if Washington issued an "order" to him to respect it.

"We will need clear guarantees. And given the sad experience of agreements with just Kyiv, the guarantees can only be the result of an order from Washington to Zelensky and his team to do one thing and not the other," Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in televised comments.

It was not immediately clear whether Moscow's demand risked derailing the deal. Zelensky has previously said Russian President Vladimir Putin, who sent his army into Ukraine in February 2022, is not to be trusted over peace moves.



Zelensky said a truce covering the Black Sea and energy infrastructure was effective immediately and that he would seek more weapons and sanctions on Russia from Donald Trump if Moscow broke the deals.

"If the Russians violate this, then I have a direct question for President Trump. If they violate, here is the evidence — we ask for sanctions, we ask for weapons, etc.," Zelensky told reporters at a news conference in Kyiv.

Ukrainian Defence Minister Rustem Umerov said Kyiv had agreed to both a maritime ceasefire and a pause by Russia and Ukraine in attacks on each other's energy infrastructure.

But he said Kyiv would regard any movement of Russian military vessels outside the eastern part of the Black Sea as a violation and a threat.

In this case Ukraine would have the full right to exercise self-defence, he said. Seeking to fulfil a pledge by President Donald Trump to end the war quickly, the US originally proposed a full 30-day ceasefire — to which Ukraine agreed in principle on March 11 — as a step towards peace talks.

But the Americans held separate talks in Saudi Arabia with Russia and Ukraine this week to discuss more limited ceasefires on energy and at sea after Putin responded to the wider truce plan with a long list of conditions and questions.

BNP Announces Long March from Wadh to Quetta on March 28

News Desk: Balochistan National Party (BNP) chief Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal has announced a long march from Wadh to Quetta on March 28. The protest march is being organized against the arrests of Sumi Deen Baloch, Dr. Mahrang Baloch, and other Baloch women, as well as the alleged killing of Baloch youth.

According to BNP, the long march aims to raise awareness about the rights of the Baloch people and protest against enforced disappearances.

Party leaders have urged the public to participate in large numbers, emphasizing that the march is a crucial step in highlighting human rights violations in Balochistan and seeking justice.

During the march, gatherings and demonstrations will be held at various locations, where speakers will shed light on the current situation in Balochistan.

BNP has demanded that the government immediately end enforced disappearances, halt extrajudicial actions, and release the detained Baloch women.



BNP-M Protests Ignore Law, Action Against Anti-State Elements Will Continue: Balochistan Govt

Manan Mandokhail: QUETTA, March 25: The Balochistan government has criticized BNP-Mengal (BNP-M) for its protests, stating that no one is above the law and action against anti-state elements will continue without discrimination.

Government spokesperson Shahid Rind responded to BNP-M's strike call, emphasizing that the party has a constitutional right to protest, but must follow legal procedures.

"Section 144 is enforced on national highways, and BNP-M should seek permission from the administration before staging demonstrations," he said. He also claimed that the public's response to BNP-M's strike call reflected

their stance on the matter. State Will Not Compromise on Security

Rind warned that those using women as shields to challenge the state would be held accountable.

"Whenever action is taken against anti-state elements, certain factions attempt to revive interests under the guise of honor and dignity," he said, questioning why the use of female suicide bombers does not provoke outrage over honor.

He reaffirmed that the government will uphold its authority and will not tolerate extremism. "There will be no discrimination in taking action against those violating the law," Rind asserted.



PIA still grounded in UK as air safety ban remains in place

NEWS DESK: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) will remain banned from flying to and from the United Kingdom, the UK Department for Transport (DfT) confirmed on Tuesday, dashing hopes of an imminent return after a four-year hiatus.

A spokesperson for the department said, "Airlines must go through a rigorous procedure to have restrictions lifted," adding that the UK Civil Aviation Authority is in contact with Pakistani authorities regarding the issue.

The UK Air Safety List includes countries and airlines that are not permitted to operate commercial flights within the UK due to safety concerns.

As per the official UK government website, "All air carriers certified by the authorities with responsibility for regulatory oversight of Pakistan are banned from operating commercial air services to, from, and within the United Kingdom."

This update comes just days after reports suggested that the British Air Safety Committee had discussed lifting the ban, which had raised hopes among Pakistani authorities.

The ban was initially enforced in July 2020 by both UK and European aviation authorities after a major scandal revealed that dozens of Pakistani pilots were operating with fake licenses.

The then-aviation minister, Ghulam Sarwar Khan, admitted to

the issue following the tragic crash of a PIA Airbus A-320 in Karachi, which claimed nearly 100 lives.

The fallout from the scandal resulted in bans across the UK, European Union, and United States, costing the loss-making airline approximately Rs40 billion (\$144 million) annually in lost revenue.

Despite the ongoing ban in the UK, PIA marked a small milestone in January 2025 by resuming direct flights to Europe with a flight from Islamabad to Paris.

PIA spokesperson Abdullah Hafeez Khan shared the airline's aspirations, saying that once cleared by the DfT, London, Manchester, and Birmingham would be the most sought-after destinations.

Meanwhile, the government has decided to move forward with a fast-tracked plan to privatise PIA. Associated Press of Pakistan reported on Tuesday the issue of PIA's privatisation was discussed during a meeting chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Sena-i-Khatam Dar in Islamabad.

According to the APP, "Cabinet Committee on Privatisation (COP) on Tuesday approved a fast-tracked plan for the privatisation of Pakistan International Airlines Corporation (PIAC), including the divestment of 51-100 per cent share capital together with management control."

The then-aviation minister, Ghulam Sarwar Khan, admitted to

BHC Grants Dr. Mahrang Baloch's Family Jail Visit Amid Protests

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: The Balochistan High Court (BHC) on Tuesday allowed the family of detained rights activist Dr. Mahrang Baloch to visit her in prison, following protests and a shut-down strike in various parts of Balochistan against the arrest of Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) leaders.

A two-member BHC bench, comprising Justices Rozi Khan Barrekh and Shaukat Ali Rakhshani, heard a petition filed by Dr. Mahrang's sister, Nadia Baloch, challenging her detention.

The court accepted the petition, issued notices to the



authorities, and granted them a week to provide details of the cases against her. Dr. Mahrang was detained

under Section 3 of the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance, which her legal counsel argued violated constitutional rights. The court found the case worthy of review and approved a request for her family and lawyer to meet her at District Jail Hudda Quetta.

The decision comes after the Balochistan National Party Mengal (BNP-M) and BYC organized demonstrations and strikes across the province. BNP-M has also announced a long march from Wadh to Quetta to protest the arrests of BYC leaders. Tensions remain high in various parts of Balochistan as protests continue.

Interior ministry directs K-P gov't to submit records of Afghan students

NEWS DESK: The Federal Interior Ministry has asked Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) authorities to provide records of Afghan students enrolled in the province as part of an update to its foreign nationals' database.

The ministry's security cell sent an official letter to the provincial home secretary, instructing that details of Afghan students be submitted by March 27.

The move comes as Pakistan nears the final phase of its crackdown on undocumented foreigners, including Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders.

The government has ordered all illegal Afghan residents to leave by March 31.

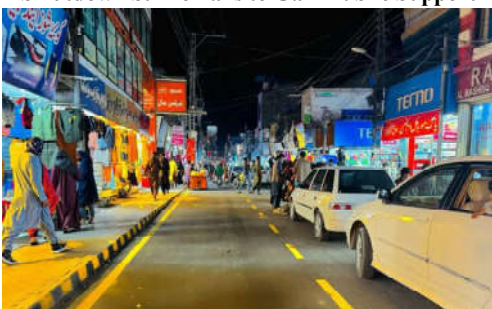
Authorities say over 876,000 Afghans have already left Pakistan since the repatriation drive began, with thousands more expected to leave in the coming days.

The government has assured that deportations will be carried out humanely.

To facilitate the process, officials have arranged food and medical assistance for those returning.

However, authorities warn that strict legal action will be taken against those who stay beyond the deadline.

Earlier, the K-P government had decided to abide by the federal government decision on the repatriation of Afghan refugees. However, it has been made clear that refugees would not be forcibly expatriated from K-P but would be given the opportunity to return to their homeland voluntarily.



QUETTA (ONLINE): The shutdown strike call given by the Balochistan National Party (BNP) has been completely rejected by the people.

Business activities continued uninterrupted in various districts of the province, and people went about their daily routines as usual.

People's circles strongly criticized the nationalist parties, saying that when these parties are in power, they do not care about the plight of the Baloch people. They alleged that these parties have never taken practical steps for public welfare while being in government.

Now, as they try to re-enter the political arena, they are using the "Baloch card" for their own purposes.

People's circles further said that shutting down roads, going on strike, and closing markets only harass the public and create problems for them. Such actions make life difficult for the people and hinder their daily activities, while ignoring their real issues.

The public says that they are now aware and will not allow empty slogans or political interests to succeed. They firmly believe that instead of deceiving the public in the name of politics, practical steps should be taken for their welfare. In the provincial capital Quetta and throughout the province, all markets remained open, and traffic on the roads continued uninterrupted. This shows that the people of Balochistan are now fed up with political slogans and expect practical steps for real development and welfare.

centers, and a large number of women and children were present in markets for Eid shopping.

Business activities also continued in other districts of the province. In Sibi, Hamar, Khuzdar, Kachi, Duki, Barkhan, Mastung, Kalat, Surab, Qilla Saifullah, and other areas, all markets remained open, and citizens went about their daily routines. Similarly, in Chaghi, Kohlu, Khuzdar, Nushki, Barkhan, Musakhail, Qilla Abdullah, Chaman, Zhub, Muslim Bagh, Turbat, Panjgur, Basima, Washuk, Gwadar, Pasni, Jiwani, Hub, Lasbela, and Wadh, business activities continued uninterrupted. This shows that the people of Balochistan are now fed up with political slogans and expect practical steps for real development and welfare.

Quetta Safe City Project: Watchful Dawn Breaks Over City Scarred by Tragedy

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Pakistan urges UN Security Council to implement Kashmir resolutions

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Prime Minister (PM) inaugurates Seed Potato Production Complex

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A Pakistani researcher's journey in new energy industry in China: Report

BEIJING (INP): A Pakistani researcher is actively engaged with a leading battery manufacturer, seeking advanced skill in new energy industry in China.

"Good!" That was the first word that came to his mind when reflecting on his experience working with battery manufacturing industry in China.

Hafiz Muhammad Umair Arshad, a Pakistani PhD student from Nankai University, currently employed with Chilwee Group, a battery manufacturer located in Huzhou, Zhejiang Province. Hafiz is part of the Advanced Technology

Research Division at Chilwee's Central Research Institute, which is a crucial initiative for the company's future industrial development.

The research institute is primarily composed of highly skilled professionals.

Currently, Hafiz is engaged in two projects. One project focuses on anode and cathode prelithiation technology, in which he has optimized the prelithiation process to enhance battery capacity and cycling stability.

"These improvements increase the energy density and lifespan of LFP batteries, making

them more reliable," he explained according to a report carried by Global Pro on Tuesday.

The second project focuses on anode-free solid-state batteries, a challenge that Hafiz takes great pride in.

"This project is particularly difficult because achieving commercial viability for anode-free solid-state batteries remains a significant global challenge for researchers," he noted.

To create a comfortable and convenient living environment for talents, Zhejiang government offers rental apartments to eligible professionals. "I was able to

secure a unit at the Changing Talent Apartment.

Recently, Hafiz brought his wife from Pakistan to Huzhou to live with him. "Chilwee has state-of-the-art equipment, and my colleagues are very friendly.

I hope to make significant progress in my research and contribute meaningful and practical advancements to this field," he said, looking forward to the future.



ISLAMABAD: Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins called on Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanaullah.

Pakistan urges UN Security Council to implement Kashmir resolutions

NEW YORK, March 25 (INP): Pakistan has called on the United Nations Security Council to implement its own resolutions promising the Kashmiri people the right to self-determination through a UN-supervised plebiscite aimed at resolving the decades-old Kashmir dispute.

In this regard, Syed Tariq Fatemi, Special Assistant to Prime Minister/Minister of State (Foreign Affairs), said that Pakistan is host to the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) that was established in 1949 to monitor the ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in the disputed Kashmir region.

Fatemi was speaking in a high-level Council debate on Maintenance of International Peace and Security. Advancing Adaptability in UN Peace Operations - Responding to New Realities at United Nations in New York on Monday.

Fatemi reminded the Security members that the Kashmir dispute awaits a just and final settlement in accordance with the relevant resolutions that promised the Kashmiri people the right to self-determination through a UN-supervised plebiscite. "It is the responsibility of this Council to ensure the realization of that right for the Kashmiri people, and promote a just and lasting settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute by taking measures to implement its own resolutions," the foreign affairs state minister said.

"As others have stated, it is important to address the root causes of the conflicts to establish durable peace," Pakistan, he said, has a long association with UN peacekeeping operations, as one of the longest serving and leading troop contributors and a founding member of the UN Peacebuilding Commission. Pakistan has, over the years, deployed 235,000 peacekeepers

in 48 Missions across the globe, Fatemi told the 15-member Council. One hundred and eighty one Pakistani peacekeepers have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the service of international peace and security.

More than 3,267 Pakistani men and women are proudly serving in blue helmets in 7 Missions today, he said. In his comments, Fatemi the following proposals to deal with the challenges confronting UN peacekeeping operations, urging the Security Council to:

— Provide unified and consistent support to all UN Peace Operations in their mandates;

— Tailor the mandates of missions according to the realities on the ground— clear, focused, realistic and achievable; — Deploy peacekeeping operations in support of clearly identified political objectives, with the primacy of political solutions for the resolu-

tion of conflicts;

— Ensure that commensurate resources are placed at the disposal of peacekeepers to perform their mandates, as increasingly, the missions are asked to do more with less;

— Ensure appropriate training to peacekeepers with modern equipment to deal with the threat posed by weaponization of technologies; and

— Make Peace Operations part of a peace continuum approach, with proactive and systematic engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission. Pakistan, Fatemi said, also remains closely engaged at the policy and conceptual level in responding to the evolution of UN Peacekeeping.

In this regard, he said, Pakistan is hosting the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial preparatory meeting in Islamabad next month from 15-16 April, whose outcomes would feed into the ongoing deliberations on the future of UN Peace Operations.

Trump's visa policy not Pakistan-specific, clarifies US diplomat

WASHINGTON (INP): The Trump administration's visa review policy was not aimed at Pakistan, rather it's a global measure, a senior US diplomat has clarified amid concerns over potential travel restrictions.

Margaret MacLeod, a US State Department official based in London, stated that President Donald Trump has ordered a comprehen-

sive review of visa policies across all countries, emphasizing that the policy is meant to protect US national security and is not aimed at Pakistan alone. "Several unverified reports have surfaced, but the fact is that only a review is taking place," she said and added "President Trump signed a Presidential Order for the US Order for the United States to review all visa categories."

She also highlighted Trump's acknowledgment of Pakistan in his State of the Union address, particularly after a wanted man was extradited to the US.

Full visa suspension against countries like Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, Cuba, and North Korea.

Partial suspension affecting tourist, student, and immigrant visas for five countries. Conditional re-

view for 26 countries, including Pakistan, Belarus, and Turkmenistan, with a 60-day compliance window.

MacLeod advised visa applicants to follow US laws, warning against misrepresentation or illegal entry attempts. US Homeland Security has also stressed that the rule of law comes first, offering opportunities only to those who comply with regulations.



QUETTA: Provincial President ANP Asghar Khan Achakzai addressing a press conference.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani in a meeting with Ethiopia Ambassador to Pakistan, Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula at his Residence.

Pakistan highly values its relations with Ethiopia, desires to further expand ties in diverse sectors: Gilani

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has highly valued its relations with Ethiopia and desires to further expand bilateral ties in diverse sectors.

The Chairman Senate expressed these views in a meeting with Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador of Ethiopia in Islamabad. Mr. Gilani appreciated that Pakistan and Ethiopia have a long history of working together on multilateral forums in support of international peace and stability.

He termed trade and economic relations crucial for bringing the two countries closer. He said that trade and business cooperation in diverse sectors can help in building lasting relations between Islamabad and Addis Ababa. He said that a Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to bring all stakeholders on a single platform, SIFC promises a win-win paradigm for friendly

countries through symbiotic projects.

He welcomed the direct flights between Karachi and Addis Ababa. He informed that NADRA has successfully launched projects in Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya and Somalia relating to digitalization of Passports and National Identity documents and Ethiopia can also avail the services. He further thanked the Ethiopian Government for extending online visa facility to Pakistani nationals to promote people to people exchanges.

The volume of bilateral trade, however he said, does not reflect the true potential of our two countries. Both sides need to work together to make progress in economic and trade links. Pakistan is firmly committed to broaden cooperation with African countries in diverse fields especially in trade, investment, and economic spheres, he observed.

Gilani remarked that Pakistan has been expert in medical and surgical equipment, pharmaceutical

products, and medicines to Ethiopia which can be further enhanced. He said that Pakistan is known for producing high-quality footballs that are frequently used in global soccer tournaments. Pakistan offers scholarships to Ethiopian students in various disciplines.

He further informed that that Ethiopian diplomats have been receiving training at Foreign Service Academy and we are ready to offer training courses to more Ethiopian diplomats. He also commended the Defense Cooperation important as both countries are faced with identical challenges of terrorism and extremism. He said that such a cooperation would further boost our defenses. He said that terrorism is a great threat. Pakistan has been a victim of terrorism, saying that we lost Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was also victim of terrorism.

The Chairman Senate also extended invita-

tion to his counterpart in the Ethiopian parliament to visit Pakistan as both the countries have a history of high level exchanges. Mr. Gilani said that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Shaheed was the architect of Pakistan-Ethiopian bilateral relations as he first visited Ethiopia in 1972.

He said that parliamentary exchanges play a pivotal role in promoting people to people contacts. He emphasized that parliamentary friendship groups in the respective parliaments can be highly beneficial in this regard.

The Ambassador of Ethiopia thanked the chairman Senate for his remarks. He said that Pakistan is an important country and we also desire to further deepen ties. He said that both countries have a shared history of cooperation at different levels.

"Our countries are cooperating at international levels and there is huge scope for further boosting cooperation in different sectors", the Ambassador observed.

Protesters hit Istanbul streets again over Erdogan rival's arrest

ISTANBUL (INP): Vast crowds of students surged onto Istanbul's streets Monday over the arrest and jailing of Istanbul's opposition mayor that has sparked Turkey's worst unrest in years. The demonstrations began after Ekrem Imamoglu's March 19 arrest and have since spread to at least 55 of Turkey's 81 provinces, sparking clashes with riot police and drawing international condemnation. Police have arrested more than 1,130 people over the past six days, including 45 on Monday night, the interior minister said.

Among them are journalists, including an AFP photographer.

Imamoglu, 53, of the opposition CHP, is widely seen as the only politician capable of defeating Turkey's longtime leader Erdogan at the ballot box.

In just four days he went from being the mayor of Istanbul—a post that launched Erdogan's political rise decades earlier—to being arrested, interrogated, jailed and stripped of the mayorship as a result of a graft and terror probe.

On Monday, students in both Istanbul and the capital Ankara began gathering in the early afternoon after announcing they were boycotting classes at the main universities in both cities. In Istanbul, as crowds of chanting, flag-waving students headed through the streets to Besiktas, a port on the Bosphorus, residents appeared to have organized a hunger and banner saucapans in a show of support, AFP correspondents said. After rallying by the port, the students began marching along the coast towards the historic peninsula to join the nightly protest outside

City Hall, an correspondent said.

"This is not a meeting, this is an act of defiance against fascism!" CHP leader Ozgur Ozcel told the

vast crowd, which held up a sea of banners including one aimed at Erdogan that read "Pal-

aces are yours, the streets are ours."

Ozcel also called for a boycott of pro-government TV channels that have not been broadcasting images of the protests as well as other businesses known to be close to the government, including a chain of cafes.

Road accidents claim lives of six people in country

KHAIRPUR (INP): Six persons have died in four road accidents reported from different parts of the country. A man and his nephew were killed when a truck rammed into the motorcycle on a tractor trolley on City Road.

In the second incident, a man died while another was seriously wounded in a collision between two speeding motorcycles on Burewala Road.

Rescue 1122 shifted the dead as well as the injured to a local hospital.

Likewise in Renala Khurd, a man and his wife, travelling on a motorcycle, were killed when they were over-run by a speeding bus, belonging to a private company, on the National Highway.

However, the bus driver managed to escape following the incident.

The dead were identified as 45-year-old Hidayatullah and his wife, residents of Shaukatabad.

TENDER NOTICE

The Directorate General Population Welfare Department Quetta invites bids for supply of following items: TSE-242503648611. Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered As Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB.

Tender Fee Not required

S.No.	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Medical Equipment and Accessories	200,000 PKR
(Total Items) Count: 2		

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Submittion of Similar Natures and Complete 4,000,000 in Previous 3 Years Turn over of at least 20,000,000 PKR in 3 Subsequent Previous Years. Presence in Active Tax Payer List Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. JV is not permissible. Submission of the required Bid Security in case Bid Security is not found as required during financial evaluation the bidding firm shall be declared as ineligible and non-responsive. Separate Envelope Containing Technical & Financial Bid must be submitted for each Manufactured Authorization from the Manufacturer in favor of the bidder. Two fresh samples will be produced upon the completion of eligibility criteria if required. Separate Bid Security for each Bidder CDR of PK Rs. 200,000/- Registration with Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan as drug manufacturer, importer and seller A- Non-Declaration of substandard, spurious, adulterated, mis-branded or any other section of the Drug Act 1978 imposed or declared absconder by any Drug Court in Pakistan OR Regulatory body of any quality issues within last two years. E-Samples must be made at most reasonable price for bulk order which must be below the Trade price of that products. C- Bidder must agree to waive the Contract within 60 days from the date of Supply Order. D- Shelf-life must be 70% & (From the date of expiry of Medicine (Contractive) E- The bidding firm must not be black listed by any procuring agency during last two Fiscal years. F- Must unconditionally agree with all the restrictions, terms & conditions specified in the bidding documents & contract agreement. G- All the items which will be supplied after being successful in Tender process must be laser stamped with health and welfare (Quetta) with the Nomenclature: "Population Welfare" Department Government of Balochistan. "Not for Sale" Registration with DRAP "Where Applicable" Procedure Of Procurement- Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure. Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of amount 200,000 PKR specified above in the name of the under-awardee from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The Bidding Documents can be obtained electronically from: www.zppra.gov.pk Issuance of tender Documents: Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at: www.zppra.gov.pk Last Date of bid submission: Bid can only be submitted electronically till 10 April, 2025 11:30 AM through supplier dashboard. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at 12:00 PM on EPPS System Address: Directorate General Population Welfare Department Quetta. Phone no: 0818213238 Fax no: 0819213238 Email: ghulammustafa20213753@gmail.com

Director General
Directorate General Population
Welfare Department Quetta

FRQ No. 3777/25-3/2025
G.O. No. 3777/25-3/2025

PMDC Likely to Conduct Computer-Based MDCAT 2025 in July After FSc Exams

Syed Muhammad Yaseen

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) is expected to conduct the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) 2025 in July, following the completion of FSc exams.

There are indications that the exam may be computer-based and conducted over 15 to 30 days, though an official announcement is still awaited.

If implemented, this shift to a paperless exam would aim to enhance transparency, reduce logistical challenges, and streamline the admission process for medical and dental colleges in Pakistan. However, the final schedule and testing centers have yet to be confirmed.

Many students have mixed reactions to the possibility of a computer-based test. Ayesha Khan, an aspiring medical student, shared her thoughts: "If the MDCAT goes digital, it will be a big change."

I hope PMDC provides practice tests so students can adapt to the new format."



Experts believe that a transition to a computer-based exam would align Pakistan's medical admission process with international standards.

PMDC is expected to release detailed guidelines if the change is officially approved, ensuring students have ample time to prepare.

The Author is MBBS student and Founder of Students Nexus by SMY, an educational and career counseling platform.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid called on the Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Security Syed Inam Ahmed Shah at his office.

PPP stage Sindh-wide protest rallies against canals project

HYDERABAD (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) on Tuesday staged protest rallies in several cities across Sindh against construction of new canals.

In Larkana, a protest demonstration was held. Later a rally was taken out from Zulfiqar Bagh to Jinnah Bagh Chowk which was led by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhattu Zardari's Political Secretary MPA Jameel Ahmed Soomro.

Large number of men and women and other office-bearers of district level participated in the rally. Another rally was held from PPP Secretariat to Press Club in Jacobabad which was led by PPP Secretary Information Ali Arman Khoso. Large number of people from all walks of life and members of PPP Youth Federation, SAPF, Hari Committee and Lawyers Forum also attended the rally.

The participants of the rally displayed banners and party flags during the march. The participants said that construction of six new canals from River Indus is anti-people of Sindh.

The protesters said that various measures were being adopted

to turn Cholistan into greenland and Sindh into barren. The protesters said that Sindh is getting water as per IRSA act.

A protest rally was also held in Shikarpur against the construction of new canals by Punjab government from Indus River.

The rally was led by Provincial Advisor on Horticulture and Wildlife Mir Babal Khan Bbio. The rally was started from Bho House and ended at Press Club.

The participants of the rally demanded relevant authorities to protect water rights of Sindh people. Prominent among those who attended the rally include speaker of Sindh Assembly, Agha Siraj Durani, MNA Sheharyar Khan Jakhri while MNA Mir Shabbir Ali Khan Bajrani and General Secretary Mir Altaf Ahmad Khoso participated. Addressing

a protest rally was held in Kandhkot which was led by PPP District President Gul Muhammad Khan Jakhri while MNA Mir Shabbir Ali Khan Bajrani and General Secretary Mir Altaf Ahmad Khoso participated. Addressing

the protesters, Shabbir Ali Khan Bajrani said that President Zardari always protected rights of people of Sindh. He never signs any document allowing construction of canals from River Indus.

A protest demonstration was held in Umerkot which was attended by large number of people and workers of Pakistan People's Party. Workers of Pakistan People's Party held a demonstration under the leadership of Dr. Nafeesa Shah in Khairpur against construction of new canals from River Indus. Similar kind of rallies

people and workers attended the demonstration. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Nafeesa Shah said that President Asif Ali Zardari while addressing joint session of parliament clearly said that he won't allow construction of new canals in Sindh. Similar kind of rallies were also held in Dharki, Ghotki, Tharparkar, Qambar and Umerkot in which protesters strongly rejected construction of six new canals from River Indus.

They demanded the relevant authorities to stop construction of new canals in Sindh.

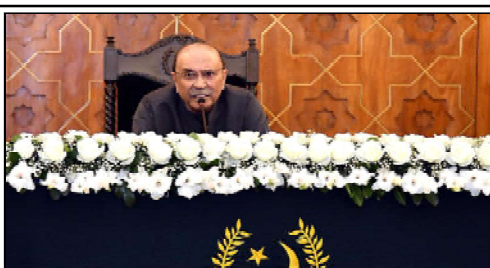
CEC and two ECP members has turned into a mere letter-writing exercise instead of a decisive action. The Speaker of the National Assembly forwarded the opposition leader's letter to the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, which then sought guidance from the Prime Minister's Office.

However, the government has decided on the nomination of candidates first and then the formation of a parliamentary committee, the sources said.

The opposition leader will have to approach the prime minister on the nomination issue because the current chief ministers have constitutional protection until the appointment process is completed.



ISLAMABAD: An Important Meeting Under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar Held Regarding the Legal Framework of Danish.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari addressing an Iftar Dinner ceremony hosted by him for the orphaned children under the care of Pakistan Orphan Care Forum, at Aiwan-e-Sadar.

Prime Minister (PM) inaugurates Seed Potato Production Complex

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has inaugurated the Seed Potato Production and Processing Complex for the production of potato seed through modern method of aeroponics.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony at the National Agricultural Research Centre, Islamabad, he expressed the confidence that this initiative will help produce high-quality potato seed. He said this will further contribute in saving foreign exchange reserves being spent on the import of the potato seed.

The Prime Minister said agriculture is the backbone of country's economy as sixty-five per cent population is dependent linked with farming. He said Pakistan's farmer is very hard working and energetic and he can do miracles if he is provided with the quality seed, fertilizer and genuine pesticides at affordable prices.

Shehbaz Sharif stressed the need to manufacture combine harvesters and other farm-machinery in the country instead of relying on imported equipment. He further stressed to enhance yield in other

lateral ties. Both sides agreed to enhance high-level engagement and dialogue to strengthen bilateral cooperation.

The two sides also reinforced the commitment to a mutually beneficial bilateral relationship, with a view to achieving lasting regional peace and stability.

The Special Representative also met with Acting Commerce Minister of Afghanistan Nooruddin Azizi. The two sides discussed bilateral trade and economic relations, as well as cooperation in the areas of transit and connectivity.

Mohammad Sadiq Khan reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to reinforcing mutually beneficial ties with Afghanistan. The two sides agreed to harness full potential of regional trade and connectivity for the mutual benefit of both countries.

Ishaq Dar expressed satisfaction at the discussions held with the Afghan side and issued directions to further consolidate bilateral ties, including through high-level engagement and enhancement of trade and transit cooperation.

PMD issues drought alert for Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab

RAWALPINDI (INP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) issued a drought alert for three province Sindh, Balochistan, and Punjab due to below average rainfall.

The PMD states that drought conditions are expected to persist in Sindh, southern Balochistan, and the lower eastern plains of Punjab. This comes despite recent rain spells which have alleviated drought conditions in the central and northern parts of the country.

The PMD reported that the average temperature in the lower half of the country was 2-3 degrees Celsius above normal during the current month. Some areas in the southern region have experienced consecutive dry days exceeding 200, which has further intensified the drought.

The current weather and seasonal outlook are expected to worsen the drought situation in the affected areas, the weather pundits warned.

In Sindh, moderate drought conditions are expected in Padidan, Shaheed Benazirabad

Dadu, Tharparkar, Umerkot, Khairpur, Hyderabad, Thatta, Badin, and Karachi, while mild drought conditions are predicted for Ghotki, Jacobabad, Larkana, Sukkur, Khairpur, and Sanghar.

In Balochistan, moderate drought conditions are anticipated in Gwadar, Kech, Lasbela, Panjgur, and Awaran, with mild conditions expected in Chagai, Jaffarabad, Jhal Magsi, Sibbi, Nushki, and Washuk.

The PMD's National Drought Monitoring & Early Warning Centre (NDMC) is closely monitoring the situation. Flash droughts, which develop rapidly due to changes in temperature, precipitation, wind, and radiation, are also expected in the coming months due to the rainfall deficit and rising temperatures.

Given the current weather conditions and seasonal out-

look, the drought situation is likely to worsen in Sindh, Balochistan, and Punjab.

The overall rainfall from September 1, 2024, to March 21, 2025, was 40% below normal.

The rainfall deficits across the country are as follows: Sindh (-62%), Balochistan (-52%), Punjab (-38%), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (-35%), Azad Jammu and Kashmir (-29%), and Gilgit-Baltistan (-2%).

According to the PMD, there is a severe water shortage in Tarbela and Mangla dams, with water levels in both reservoirs at critical lows — 1,402 feet in Tarbela and 1,061.75 feet in Mangla, both at dead-level capacity.

A recent report from the NDMC noted that the average temperature from March 15 to 21 was 1.7 degrees above normal, which could lead to lower soil moisture levels. This temperature increase is expected to raise water demand, negatively affecting crops and further stressing already limited water resources.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan chaired a briefing at the Ministry of Commerce, reviewing the National Compliance Centre (NCC) progress and discussing the World Bank Mission visit with Dr. Nabeel Amin, Head of NCC and the NCC team.

KP gov launches financial assistance programs for widows & orphans

ABBOTTABAD (INP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has introduced two major welfare programs aimed at providing financial assistance to widowed women and orphaned children.

Under the Roshan Mustaqbil Card initiative, orphaned children aged 5 to 16 years will receive PKR 10,000 per month in financial aid, benefiting approximately 9,000 children across the province.

Meanwhile, the Sahara Card program has been

launched to support widowed women aged 45 years and above, providing them with a monthly stipend of PKR 10,000.

This initiative is expected to assist 15,000 widowed women in need.

Welcoming the initiative, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Divisional Labour Wing Zakir Rehman termed it a significant

He stated that such programs reflect the government's commitment to

social justice and economic uplift of vulnerable communities. "Providing financial support to widows and orphaned children is a crucial responsibility, and this initiative will help improve their standard of living," the spokesperson added.

These programs are part of the government's broader efforts to improve the welfare and living conditions of marginalized communities, reaffirming its dedication to social support and economic relief for those in need.