

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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World Environment Day 2025: Climate Change and Natural Disasters Threaten Balochistan, Pakistan's Largest Province

Syed Ali Shah Analysis:
QUETTA: As the global community observes World Environment Day 2025, it's critical to shine a spotlight on Balochistan, Pakistan's largest and most climate-vulnerable province. Spanning nearly half of the country's landmass, Balochistan faces severe climate change impacts including heatwaves, drought, wildfires, flash floods, water scarcity, and environmental degradation.

With a scattered and marginalized population living across mountains, deserts, and arid plains, Balochistan is on the frontlines of global warming. The province is increasingly exposed to natural disasters that destroy infrastructure, devastate agriculture, and disrupt livelihoods. The situation is exacerbated by limited access to renewable energy, inefficient water management, and a lack of climate-resilient infrastructure.

This year's World Environment Day theme, "Our Land, Our Future," highlights the urgency of restoring ecosystems and adopting sustainable practices. In Balochistan, this message is not just symbolic — it is a call to action. The unchecked exploitation of



An old view of Hana Lake few years back when the lake completely dried up: Photo Muhammad Ismail

forests, rising carbon emissions, and depletion of natural water sources threaten the region's ecological balance and public health.

Pakistan is ranked among the top 10 countries most vulnerable to climate change, and Balochistan is its ground zero. Yet, investment in climate adaptation, disaster management, and sustainability solutions remains alarmingly low.

Call to Action:

We urge the government, environmental agencies, and development partners to:

Launch sustainable water management projects to address the escalating water crisis.

Promote renewable energy solutions like solar and wind to reduce dependency on fossil fuels.

Strengthen disaster preparedness and early warning systems to mitigate damage from future calamities.

Enforce strict measures against deforestation and land degradation, particularly in ecologically sensitive areas like the Ziarat juniper forests. Raise public awareness about climate change mitigation and carbon footprint reduction.

Balochistan CM Rules Out Grand Operation, Emphasizes Targeted Actions Against Terrorism

Qasem Shah:

QUETTA — Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, has ruled out the need for a grand military operation in the province, stating that targeted operations are effectively underway to eliminate terrorism and dismantle militant networks.

"There is no need for a grand operation. Focused and intelligence-based actions are already producing results," he said while speaking to media on Tuesday during the inauguration of the new block and auditorium hall at the Balochistan Assembly in Quetta.

In response to a question about the recent killing of two young men on the outskirts of Quetta, the Chief Minister acknowledged reports of extortion by banned militant outfits. "Yes, we are receiving reports of extortion, and I assure you, those responsible for this attack will be brought to justice," he added.

3 cops injured as tanker driver attempts to kidnap traffic officer in Karachi's Manghopir: police

NEWS DESK: A tanker driver attempted to kidnap a traffic police officer in Karachi's Manghopir, resulting in a clash which injured three cops, police said in a statement on Wednesday.

According to District West Police spokesperson Nabeel Ahmed Rajput, "A tanker driver attempted to kidnap a traffic officer near the Malik Chando Chowk area of Manghopir Police Station."

"Instead of stopping at the checkpoint, the tanker driver tried to kidnap the traffic policeman," he said, adding that the noise prompted a nearby police mobile to chase the tanker to stop it.

The statement also said, "An angry group of people, accompanying the driver, launched an attack, injuring three police officers by assaulting them with sticks and stones." The injured have been shifted to the hospital for immediate medical attention, the spokesperson said. He added that the police were present at the scene and the situation was under control. The city has lately witnessed a rise in traffic accidents, especially involving heavy vehicles, including dumpers and water tankers, which killed nearly 500 people and injured 4,879 in 2024, according to hospital data.

Balochistan's Rs250 Billion Federal Allocation Must Drive Inclusive, Transparent Infrastructure Development

Continued to page 2

Highlighting the improved security environment in the province, CM Bugti said, "No highways are blocked anywhere in Balochistan or across Pakistan. Roads are open, and peace is being restored. The public's confidence is returning — a clear sign of stability and progress."



and the overall development of Balochistan," he stated.

He further emphasized that youth will be a top priority in the upcoming provincial budget, with a focus on creating maximum employment opportunities. "We are committed to ensuring a brighter future for our young generation."

The Chief Minister praised the Communication and Works Department for the timely completion of the new assembly auditorium and described the new building as essential, as the previous one no longer met current needs. He said the project is being completed with federal government support and will provide all modern facilities to elected representatives.

Regarding financial planning, Bugti highlighted that over 90% of development funds were utilized within the current fiscal year, reflecting the government's performance and commitment. "The next budget will be a surplus one, reflecting strong financial discipline and better planning," he added.

He reiterated that every possible measure will be taken to strengthen the assembly and ensure good governance in the province.

PM Shehbaz invites opposition leader to consult on new chief election commissioner

NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has invited the opposition leader for consultations on appointing the next chief election commissioner (CEC), Sikandar Sultan Raja, expired on January 27 this year, adding that he was holding office in accordance with the second proviso to clause 1 of Article 215 of the Constitution (term of office of the Commissioner [and members]).

"In terms of clause (2A) of Article 213 and sub-clause (b) of clause (2) of Article 218 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, three names each for the appointment of Chief Election Commissioner and Members from Sindh and Balochistan."



The 26th Amendment allowed the CEC and the members to continue till their successors come in. As per Article 215(4) of the Constitution, the appointment of the CEC and members must be completed within 45 days.

In a letter dated May 16 and addressed to Leader of the Opposition,

"the letter read.

"In view of the aforesaid, you are invited for a meeting for consultation, in terms of clause (2A) of Article 213 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, in order to finalize three names each for appointment of Chief Election Commissioner and Members from Sindh and Balochistan."

No exact date for a meeting was given, nor were any names released about prospective CECs. Separately, a hearing on the disqualification reference against Ayub was adjourned until July 1 as he was obligated to attend the upcoming federal budget session in parliament.

Last week, National Assembly Speaker Sardar Sadiq forwarded a reference seeking Ayub's disqualification to the ECP.

The reference is based on an application filed by former MNA Bahar Nawaz, who lost to Ayub in the 2024 general election in NA-18 (Haripur) by a margin of 82,000 votes. A five-member committee chaired by the CEC presided over the hearing, with Ayub stating that he had yet to appoint counsel.

The budget session will start soon and I am a member of the Finance Committee. The budget meeting will be held for two weeks," he said, requesting time to attend the budget session and appoint a leader.

Balochistan is Pakistan's lifeline, few terrorists cannot destabilize country: Atta Tarar

Continued to page 2

Senior Government Official Kidnapped in Balochistan: Assistant Commissioner Hanif Noorzai Abducted Near Tump

From Our Correspondent: TUMP (Breaking News Pakistan) — The Assistant Commissioner of Tump, Hanif Noorzai, was abducted early Wednesday morning by armed militants near Tigranabad while he was traveling with his family toward Quetta.

According to credible local sources, a group of 6 to 8 heavily armed accused intercepted the government vehicle, forcibly removing the senior civil servant and fleeing with him in the official car. His wife, official gunman, and driver were left behind at the scene, reportedly unharmed.

The abduction of a government official in Balochistan has triggered immediate response from law enforcement agencies, with security forces launching a full-scale search operation in and around the Zubaida Jalal Road.

Snap-checking and intelligence-based operations are currently underway.

So far, no group has claimed

responsibility for the kidnapping, and authorities are keeping multiple possibilities under investigation. The incident has raised concerns among administrative officials and increased pressure on the provincial government to strengthen security protocols in the Makran region.



This high-profile abduction case is expected to draw nationwide attention as Pakistan faces renewed challenges in ensuring the safety of its public servants, especially in remote and sensitive districts like Tump.

Stay tuned for latest updates on this developing story as security operations continue in Balochistan.

14 terrorists killed in North Waziristan operation: ISPR

NEWS DESK: Fourteen terrorists belonging to Fitna-ul-Khawarij were killed in an operation by security forces in North Waziristan district's Datta Khel in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the military's media wing said on Wednesday.

Despite heightened military tensions between Pakistan and India last month, militant groups were unable to significantly escalate their activities in the country, according to data released by an Islamabad-based independent think tank. The monthly security assessment issued by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) recorded 85 militant attacks in May as compared to 81 in April, resulting in

113 fatalities. These included 52 security forces personnel, 46 civilians, 11 militants, and four peace committee members.

"On June 2-3 2025, an intelligence-based operation was conducted by the Security Forces in the general area Datta Khel, North Waziristan District, on the reported presence of Khawarij belonging to Indian proxy, Fitna-ul-Khawarij," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

The statement added that during the conduct of operation, the troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location and "after an intense exchange of fire, fourteen Indian sponsored Khawarij were sent to hell."



Khushal Kakar Leads in NA-251 Recount as per Unofficial Results; JUI Expresses Serious Reservations

Continued to page 4

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Editor: Asim Khan

Balochistan's Rs250 Billion Federal Allocation Must Drive Inclusive, Transparent Infrastructure Development

Editorial:

The federal government's allocation of Rs250 billion for Balochistan in the upcoming Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) is a significant step that, if properly implemented, can transform the province's economic future. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's announcement at the Balochistan Grand Tribal Jirga in Quetta reflects a welcome shift toward prioritizing infrastructure investment, socio-economic development, and regional connectivity in a province often overlooked.

However, we emphasize that this federal funding must be utilized for high-impact, long-term infrastructure projects—not short-term political schemes or small-scale, non-transparent initiatives. Balochistan requires mega projects that foster job creation, enhance public health systems, modernize education infrastructure, and develop transportation networks to uplift the Human Development Index (HDI) of the province.

For maximum return on investment and to ensure value for taxpayer money, funds must be directed toward projects like the dualization of the Quetta-Karachi Highway, smart road infrastructure, clean drinking water systems, renewable energy integration, and digital education access. These projects not only promote regional growth but also boost national economic indicators and reduce rural-urban disparities.

From a public finance and fiscal policy standpoint, transparency and accountability mechanisms must be enforced. We urge the government to establish an independent monitoring authority to ensure that every rupee is spent efficiently. Government transparency, financial accountability, and public-private partnerships should guide the implementation process to avoid corruption and misuse of development funds.

This is not just an economic opportunity; it is a national security imperative. Without addressing the root causes of underdevelopment—poverty, unemployment, and lack of education—extremism, insurgency, and foreign-sponsored sabotage will continue to find fertile ground. National security, economic resilience, and social cohesion directly tied to how well we invest in the country's largest and most resource-rich province.

As a platform committed to investigative journalism, public interest reporting, and development policy, we insist that there be no individual projects, no ghost schemes, and no politically motivated allocations. Only inclusive economic development, guided by data-driven planning and evidence-based policy, can deliver the sustainable growth Balochistan needs.

This is a defining moment. The Rs250 billion fund should not be another missed opportunity. It must become the foundation for a new era of economic empowerment, smart city development, and infrastructure modernization in Balochistan. This will not only enhance the province's GDP contribution, but also attract foreign direct investment (FDI), boost e-commerce logistics, and reduce the digital and physical divide that isolates communities.

We call on the federal and provincial governments to act decisively, inclusively, and transparently. This is about nation-building, not narrow interests. The people of Balochistan deserve no less.

Addressing Poverty and Inequality: A Call for Sincere Leadership and Perpetual Reforms

By Amjad Rashid:

Poverty and inequality, much like man-made disasters, afflict societies worldwide, including Pakistan. These are not natural phenomena but rather systemic issues rooted in human actions and policies. To eradicate this disease, national governments must craft comprehensive strategies aimed at safeguarding future generations from its scourge.

In Pakistan, the onus lies heavily on our political elite, spanning all parties, to recognize the gravity of the situation and redirect their efforts towards combating this man-made affliction. Without a collective awakening and a shift in approach, the cure will remain elusive. Moreover, at the international level, institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, and the UN must prioritize social and cultural rights over neoliberal agendas, especially as the global order undergoes significant decay.

The challenges of poverty alleviation, malnutrition, stunted growth, inadequate sanitation, and unemployment

are pervasive across South Asia and Africa. Collaborative efforts between these regions

bolstered by partnerships with nations like China, hold promise in addressing these issues. However, reliance on the failing neoliberal order is futile; instead, a paradigm shift towards sustainable solutions is imperative.

In Pakistan, the establishment of robust local governance structures with financial decentralization is paramount. Political elites possess a window of opportunity to empower local bodies and enact pro-poor policies. The Chinese model serves as a beacon of inspiration, demonstrating the efficacy of such strategies when implemented effectively.

Regional connectivity, underpinned by a long-term vision, emerges as a viable solution.

It necessitates moving beyond the romanticized notions of democracy and socialism towards pragmatic approaches that address

our unique challenges. Special economic zones, coupled with initiatives for youth development and the expansion of remittances, offer short-term relief while perpetuating reforms to broaden the tax base and reduce dependency on electoral politics.

South Asia, in particular, requires a concerted effort towards regional connectivity, resource exploration, harnessing youth potential, and fostering transparent governance free from corruption. The path forward does not demand extraordinary intellect but rather sincere leadership committed to implementing existing solutions.

The concept of Basic Democracy warrants reevaluation, with a focus on strengthening local bodies to eradicate poverty and pursue enduring prosperity through perpetual reforms.

It is incumbent upon all stakeholders responsible for the nation's development to prioritize this agenda and steer Pakistan towards a brighter future.

Hayat Khan Achakzai: Strengthening PPP's Presence in Balochistan

By Bashir Nichari:

The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) continues to champion democracy and public rights, with Hayat Khan Achakzai emerging as a key leader in Balochistan. His relentless commitment and strategic efforts are solidifying the party's influence in the province.

Commitment to Public Service
Since the beginning of his political career, Achakzai has prioritized addressing the pressing issues of Balochistan.

His steadfast support for the PPP and its mission has reinforced the party's grassroots connections.

Amplifying PPP's Message Through Media
In a region where political narratives often go unheard, Achakzai has played a crucial role in leveraging media to extend PPP's reach.

As a media coordinator, he has ensured that the party's ideology resonates with the public, further strengthening its position.

A Leader Shaping the Future
Looking ahead,

Achakzai is actively working to enhance the party's appeal, particularly among the youth.

His leadership is driving PPP towards a more organized and dynamic political presence in Balochistan.

A Key Pillar for PPP's Growth
Hayat Khan Achakzai's continued dedication and strategic vision are instrumental in fortifying the PPP's standing in Balochistan. His leadership ensures that the party remains a formidable force advocating for democracy and public rights in the province.

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Quetta's Traffic Chaos: Urgent Reforms Needed to Fix the Crisis

Anjeela Kaynat:

Quetta, once a city known for its peaceful ambience, now faces an escalating traffic crisis. Every day, thousands of commuters endure hours of gridlock, navigating congested roads, reckless drivers, and deteriorating infrastructure. From rickshaws and motorcycles to private cars, the overwhelming number of vehicles clogs major roads, while encroachments and illegal parking worsen the situation.

The city's transport system is on the brink of collapse, demanding immediate intervention from both authorities and residents. This article explores the root causes of Quetta's traffic woes, identifies the most affected areas, and outlines urgent solutions to restore order to the roads.

The Surge of Non-Custom Paid (NCP) and Unregistered Vehicles

The unchecked influx of non-custom paid (NCP) and unregistered vehicles has compounded the traffic crisis.

A 2010 report estimated over 50,000 NCP vehicles on Balochistan's roads, causing an annual revenue loss of Rs 15 billion to the national exchequer.

By 2024, this number has surged to nearly 80,000, with a significant concentration in Quetta (Excise and Taxation Department, 2024).

Despite periodic crackdowns, including the 2023 seizure of 115 NCP vehicles worth Rs 982 million (ARY News, 2023), enforcement efforts have failed to stem the tide. Quetta's traffic police estimate that 40% of vehicles in the city are either unregistered or NCP (Think Transportation, 2023), worsening congestion and lawlessness on the roads.

Lack of a Proper Public Transport System

Unlike other major cities in Pakistan, Quetta lacks an organized public transport system. With no buses or mass transit options, residents rely on rickshaws,

motorcycles, and private cars, further clogging the roads. Over 50,000 rickshaws operate within the city, creating congestion in already packed areas like Masjid Road and Liaquat Bazaar (Traffic Survey: Quetta Smart and Safe City, 2023).

Although the government has revisited the Quetta Mass Transit Train project, financial constraints have delayed its execution, leaving residents without an efficient alternative to private transport.

Encroachments and Illegal Parking Worsen Congestion

Unauthorized stalls and illegal parking occupy nearly 30% of road space in busy commercial zones such as Prince Road and Jinnah Road (Think Transportation, 2023). Street vendors set up shop on sidewalks, forcing pedestrians onto the roads, while shopkeepers extend their businesses onto public spaces, further restricting traffic flow.

Deteriorating Road Conditions

Over 60% of Quetta's roads are in disrepair, riddled with potholes, cracks, and poor drainage systems (INRIX, 2024). Roads such as Joint Road, Sarhab Road,

Sahab Road, and Nawa Kili are among the worst affected. During rainfall, flooding exacerbates the problem, making navigation nearly impossible.

A tragic reminder of Balochistan's road infrastructure crisis occurred in 2024, when a bus plunged into a ravine in Washuk district due to poor road conditions.

Despite promises of road improvements, delays in infrastructure projects continue to endanger commuters.

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Balochistan is Pakistan's lifeline, few terrorists cannot destabilize country: Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said that Balochistan is Pakistan's lifeline and a few terrorists cannot destabilize the country.

He asserted that Indian proxies operating in the region would be defeated, just as India faced defeat in recent conflicts.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Tarar revealed that Balochistan had faced 32 attacks during Operation Bunyan un Marsos, yet the Pakistani forces have remained resilient.

"Peace will return to Balochistan," he stated, emphasizing the nation's resolve

against foreign-sponsored terrorism.

Tarar accused India of using terrorism as a tool of foreign policy, citing the killing of a Sikh leader in Canada as an example. He further alleged that Indian intelligence operatives are behind unrest in Balochistan, referencing Kulbhushan Jadhav—a serving Indian Navy officer caught in Pakistan—who posed as a businessman while facilitating acts of terrorism.

He criticised Indian leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for frequently mentioning Balochistan in their speeches, suggesting it reflects their strategic interest in fueling instability in the province.

"Our forces are effectively countering this Indian-sponsored chaos, referred to as Fitna-e-Hindustan," Tarar said.

The minister also highlighted the role of Indian media in spreading misinformation and glorifying terrorism. He pointed out that footage of the recent Jaffar Express attack surfaced on Indian media before Pakistani authorities had access, raising suspicions about India's involvement.

More to read: Security forces kill 14 Indian-sponsored terrorists in North Waziristan IBO

"They celebrated the attack," he claimed, accusing Indian outlets of promoting fake news and

giving excessive coverage to separatist elements.

Tarar condemned the glorification of terrorists like Noor Wali on social media and criticized Indian media for treating such individuals as celebrities.

During the press briefing, he also presented a video compilation showcasing evidence of Indian involvement in Balochistan, including statements from Indian politicians and media reports.

Reiterating the government's stance, Tarar concluded by affirming that just as India failed in its direct confrontations, its proxies in Balochistan will also be defeated, ensuring a return to peace in the province.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, Asghar Khan Jarce and Member of Provincial Assembly Mir Ali Madad Jatak are discussing during the meeting.

Pakistan effectively presented its stance at United Nations

NEW YORK (INP): Pakistan effectively presented its stance at the United Nations, says Foreign Office.

According to a statement issued by the Foreign Office spokesperson, a high-level parliamentary delegation, led by Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, completed a two-day visit to the United Nations headquarters in New York.

During the visit, the delegation met the UN Secretary-General, the presidents of the General Assembly and Security Council, representatives of both permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council, ambassadors of the OIC group, media representa-

tives, civil society members, think tanks, and the Pakistani community.

According to the Foreign Office, this visit was part of Pakistan's international diplomatic campaign aimed at presenting escalating regional tensions and threats to international peace and security.

The spokesperson stated that the root causes of threats to global peace and security lie in India's irresponsible behaviour, unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, and provocative statements, and unilateral suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, an agreement considered vital to the lives of over 240 million Pakistanis.

The delegation

conveyed Pakistan's core message, "Peace with Responsibility."

The Foreign Office further said Pakistan rejected India's terrorism allegations. The diplomatic delegation presented evidence of India-sponsored terrorism to the international community.

They also declared India's unilateral stance on the Indus Waters Treaty as unacceptable, and Pakistan urged the global community to ensure adherence to international agreements.

The delegation reiterated that sustainable peace in South Asia depends on a just and peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute

in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

The Pakistani mission emphasised that India's so-called "new normal" was a threat to regional peace.

The resolution of the Kashmir issue is the only guarantee of peace in South Asia. Pakistan is not negligent in its defence; it desires peace but will not compromise on sovereignty.

The parliamentary delegation also included Dr Musadik Malik, Senator Sherry Rehman, Hina Rabbani Khar, Engineer Khuram Dasgiri Khan, Senator Syed Faisal Ali Subzwari, Senator Bushra Anjum Butt, Jilal Abbas Jilani, and Tehmina Janjua.

930 children martyred, 107,982 orphaned since Jan 1989 in IIOJK

SRINAGAR (INP): Indian forces' personnel have martyred 930 children in their unabated acts of state terrorism over the past 37 years in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

A report released by the Research Section of Kashmir Media Service on the occasion of the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression revealed that 930 children were among 96,449 Kashmiris martyred by Indian forces' personnel from

January, 1989, till date. The only meaningful way to mark the day is to protect Kashmiri children from political injustice, occupation and state violence.

The report stated that the killing of civilians by Indian forces' personnel rendered 107,982 children orphaned in the international day of innocent children victims of aggression during the period.

The report further said that thousands of people, including school boys and girls, were also

injured by the use of brute forces, pellets, bullets, and teargas shells fired by Indian troops and paramilitary forces, including teenagers, have lost eyesight in one or both eyes due to the firing of pellet, PAVA and teargas shells since 2010 in the territory.

The report said Indian military and police violence under black laws has left deep, lifelong scars on the mental and physical health of Kashmiri children. The

children in IIOJK grow up watching atrocities, house raids, curfew and search operations and detentions of their loved ones. The report added that hundreds of boys and girls aged below 19 have been martyred during cordon and search operations and fake encounters and custody, while a large number of boys including students under the age of 19 are facing illegal detentions under black laws in different jails of IIOJK and India.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, attending Islamabad Guest House Association ceremony. Islamabad Guest House Association members Zahoor Ahmed, Altaf Hussain Shah and others are present.



QUETTA: Former Chairman Senate, Member Provincial Assembly Muhammad Sadiq Khan Sanjrami, Standing Committee on the Interior Department, presenting the draft law on Counter-Terrorism (Balochistan Amendment) in the Assembly House.

'Punjab govt taking sustained measures to rehabilitate children affected by aggression'

LAHORE, June 04 (INP): Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB) Chairman and MPA Sara Ahmad has said that the Punjab government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, is taking

measures to ensure the safety, rehabilitation, and well-being of children affected by aggression and exploitation.

In her message on International Day of In-

nocent Children Victims of Aggression, she said the government is committed to protecting vulnerable children from all forms of violence. She said that this day is observed globally to express solidarity with children who have suffered from physical, mental, or emotional abuse.

She emphasized that meaningful and sustained measures are being implemented to ensure the safety, protection, and rehabilitation of

children affected by aggression and exploitation. "Children are our most precious asset and the foundation of our future. Ensuring their protection is our collective and foremost responsibility," she added.

The CPWB Chairman said that all possible measures are being implemented to shield children from physical and psychological abuse. The Child Protection Bureau remains fully

active in its mission to rescue, protect, and rehabilitate children who are victims of violence, exploitation, or neglect.

Sara Ahmad urged citizens to remain vigilant and to report any incidents of abuse or exploitation involving children by calling the Child Helpline at 1121. "It is our moral and social duty to protect every child from harm and ensure a safe, nurturing environment for their growth and well-being," she remarked.

Modi has adopted Israeli-style policies in IIOJK: Bilawal

UNITED NATIONS (INP): The PPP Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, has said that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has adopted Israeli-style policies in occupied Jammu and Kashmir and is undermining regional peace.

Bilawal in a strongly worded press conference at the United Nations, said, "Narendra Modi is essentially a 'Temu' copy of the Israeli Prime Minister," Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said, drawing parallels between India's actions in Kash-

mir and Israel's settler model in Palestine.

"Narendra Modi was the Butcher of Gujarat, then of Kashmir, and now he seeks to trample the ancient Sindh civilization."

He criticised New Delhi's unilateral changes in Kashmir, saying they were inspired by Israel's occupation tactics. "India is unfortunately learning from the worst examples," he added. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari asserted that co-operation between intelligence agencies of both countries could yield sig-

nificant results in reducing terrorism.

He also reminded the international community of India's past admission. "During the Sharm el-Sheikh summit, the Indian government acknowledged its involvement in terrorist activities in Pakistan."

Referring to Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav, Bilawal confirmed, "He has been in our custody since 2017."

The PPP chairman

maintained that Pakistan had fulfilled its responsibilities by taking decisive action against all

militant groups, but India had failed to respond meaningfully to Pakistan's concerns.

"To this day, India has not taken any serious step to address our reservations regarding cross-border terrorism."

He emphasized Pakistan's willingness to engage in dialogue. "We are ready to discuss all issues. All our cards are on the table," he said.

"It is India that continues to evade international obligations. Today, only one country is running from the UN Charter—and that's India."

International child exploitation gang dismantled in Muzaffargarh

MUZAFFARGARH (INP): The National Cyber Crimes Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has dismantled an international child exploitation ring operating as a gaming and sports club in Muzaffargarh.

The Punjab, officials said.

In a press confer-

ence in Islamabad, Minister of State for Interior

Talal Chaudhry, stated that the NCCIA had arrested two suspects, identified as Junaid, was operating around the clock.

The club specifically targeted children between the ages of 6 and 10 from poor families, Talal Chaudhry

noted.

At least 50 children were victims of exploitation by the gang, with 10 of them recovered from the club during the operation, he said.

Talal Chaudhry said that children were enticed with games, physical training, and small monetary incentives.



PESHAWAR: Activists of Pakistan Islamic Medical Association holds protest against Israel Government outside Peshawar Press Club (PPC).

Morocco offers 10 fully-funded scholarships to Pakistani students

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Kingdom of Morocco has offered 10 fully funded scholarships to Pakistani students for the academic year 2025-26.

According to an announcement by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, these scholarships are open to Pakistani and AJK nationals in fields such as Medical Sciences, Engineering, Management Sciences, Veterinary Sciences, and Architecture. Students can apply for undergraduate, master's, or PhD programs, subject to eligibility criteria including academic qualifications and age limits.

The deadline to

register online is Thursday 12 June 2025 at 4:00 PM Pakistan Standard Time.

Applicants must be

Pakistani or AJK nationals and should not hold dual nationality. Candidates applying for undergraduate programs

must have completed a minimum of 12 years of education (FSc or A-level) and be no older than 23 years.

اطلاع برائے اعلیٰ تعلیمی بورڈ ضلع خضدار

محرم الحرام 1446ھ مطابق 2025ء میں پاکستان کے مختلف شعبوں میں کام کرنے والے اور تعلیم کے شعبہ میں دلچسپی رکھنے والے طلباء کو اس موقع پر مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ ان کے لیے 10 مکمل طور پر فنڈ شدہ اسکالرشپیں پیشکش کی گئی ہیں۔

اسکالرشپ کے لیے درخواست دہندگان کو درج ذیل شرائط پوری کرنا ہونی چاہیے:

- 1. پاکستانی یا آزاد کشمیر کے باشندے ہونے چاہیے۔
- 2. اسکالرشپ کے لیے درخواست دہندگان کو درج ذیل شعبوں میں دلچسپی رکھنی چاہیے: طبی، مینجمنٹ سائنس، انجینئرنگ، وٹیرینری سائنس، اور آرکیٹیکچر۔
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Khushal Kakar Leads in NA-251 Recount as per Unofficial Results; JUI Expresses Serious Reservations

Ali Khan Mandokhai,
News Desk

ZHOB, QUETTA: Pashunkhwa National Awami Party (PNAP) Chairman Khushal Khan Kakar has emerged in the lead following the recount of votes in NA-251, according to unofficial results. The recount was conducted in 22 polling stations as per the directive of the Election Tribunal. However, the official confirmation is expected after the Returning Officer submits the report to the tribunal on June 4.

The development marks a significant turn in the NA-251 contest, where the recount appears to favor PNAP. However, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) Balochistan has strongly rejected the process, terming it politically motivated and unconstitutional.

JUI leader Maulana Abdul Wasay alleged that the recount was carried out without notifying



the party or ensuring the presence of its polling agents. "This is not a technical lapse—it is an intentional effort to rig the outcome. The Returning Officer's conduct has been completely biased and lacks constitutional validity," he said.

The JUI has accused reinstatement of acting on behalf of certain forces, undermining elec-

toral transparency and democratic norms. Despite Khushal Kakar's apparent lead, JUI has vowed to contest the legitimacy of the recount.

As the political temperature rises in the province, the final decision now rests with the Election Tribunal, which is expected to review the Returning Officer's report on June 4.



QUETTA: Balochistan Finance Secretary Imran Zarkoon meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (ret'd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.

Speakers emphasize importance of national resilience, countering negative propaganda

RAWALPINDI (NP): Prominent scholars and academia emphasized the importance of national resilience, social harmony, and countering negative propaganda during a seminar titled "Silence is Complicity: Role of Academia and Youth in Confronting Terror and Promoting National Unity" held at Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU).

Chief Guest Wajihah Qamar, Minister of State, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, delivered a keynote address highlighting Pakistan's strategic response to regional threats. She highlighted character, ownership, and countering negative narratives as the important elements for a resilient nation.

"When our eastern neighbor attempted aggression, Pakistan demonstrated firmness in its calculated response," she said. She further said that India created an environment of fear and hysteria among their population, but the Pakistani nation

remained calm and confident, which, she said, is the difference between a responsible nuclear state and one driven by aggression.

The Minister particularly underlined the need for national ownership.

"The enemy attacking us is not just across the border—he is within our own homes, spreading narratives to weaken Pakistan's foundations," said the minister. She also called out critics of the defence budget.

"While nations worldwide strengthen their defence, some among us question our own security needs, these are the fault lines we must address," he said. The minister called the students to play their important role in combating the war of narratives.

Dr. Zia, Director General Islamic Research Institute, provided a psychological perspective, warning about the dangers of cognitive 'echo chambers'. "When we repeatedly hear certain narratives, they create mental frameworks that be-

come hard to break," he said. Dr. Zia urged the students to critically examine whether their thinking contains biases against national institutions.

Prof. Dr. Shahid Afridi of NDU and President Jamia Muhammadiyah Sharif, Sahibzada Muhammad Qamar-ul-Haq, in their addresses presented practical measures for social cohesion. Fatima Jinnah Women University Vice Chancellor Dr. Bushra Mirza proposed concrete educational reforms. She stressed for integration between madrassas and universities to create balance education system.

The Vice Chancellor highlighted that Islam is a religion of peace which teaches the harmony among religions, sects and other groups.

Dr. Bushra reiterated the commitment that FJWU would continue holding such important seminars to play important role at its part. The seminar was attended by faculty members and a large number of students.

Ceasefire holding, political rhetoric from Indian leadership continues: Ishaq Dar

ISLAMABAD (NP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday said that while military-to-military understanding between India and Pakistan remains intact and the ceasefire is holding, political rhetoric from the Indian leadership continues to stir tensions, potentially due to domestic considerations, including upcoming elections in Bihar.

"Another round of conflict seems remote, but we must remain vigilant," the deputy prime minister said while speaking at a press conference here.

He emphasized that the "timely goalposts" agreed upon between the two sides had been implemented that showed the sincerity of the purpose or seriousness. However, he warned that "political rhetoric was still on," and could have internal reasons, pointing to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's and Defence

Minister's recent statements, including one referring to recent hostilities as "just a trailer."

"I wish sense prevails. We have told the world that we are peace lovers and focused on economic revival," the deputy PM stressed. But he said, "Dignity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity come first—and any conflict can escalate unpredictably."

DPM Dar reiterated that Pakistan was open to dialogue—especially on counter-terrorism, but criticized India's rigid stance, particularly Indian Foreign Minister Jaishankar's claim that India would only engage in discussions centered on terrorism. "We have already exposed Indian agencies' involvement in our territory," Dar said, adding that the independent movements within its borders were not under the Pakistan's control. He also highlighted his recent diplomatic engagements, particularly the informal bilateral visit

to China on May 19, which included discussions around a trilateral meeting involving Afghanistan. He also noted a broader regional outreach, citing engagements with Turkey, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan. "Our visit to Iran was especially positive," Dar said, adding that both countries agreed to boost bilateral trade to \$10 billion and maintain peace in the region. The Pakistani delegation also met with Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who expressed support for Pakistan's regional stability and Kashmir resolution efforts.

Dar revealed that Azerbaijan had reiterated its stance on undertaking a \$2 billion investment in Pakistan, while discussions on multilateral cooperation, territorial integrity, and regional connectivity projects, including the Trans-Afghan railway and Peshawar-Kabul highway, are progressing.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Ministry of Economic Affairs Dr. Kazim Niaz and Emma Fan Country Director Asian Development Bank signing "Improved Resources and Utilization Reforms" between Pakistan and ADB.



ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister of Belarus Lieutenant General Victor Khrenin calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Pakistan desires to strengthen economic partnership with Belarus: PM

ISLAMABAD (NP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that Pakistan desired to strengthen economic partnership with Belarus and benefit from the country's expertise in agricultural machinery manufacturing.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a seven-member delegation led by Belarusian Defense Minister Lieutenant General Victor Khrenin, which called on him here, said that Pakistan and Belarus enjoyed excellent bilateral ties which were strengthening over time.

The delegation included Belarusian Ambassador to Pakistan Andrei Metelitsa, Commander of the Belarusian Air Force and Air Defense Major General Andrei Yulianovich Lukyanovich and officials from the Belarusian defense ministry.

The prime minister said that

cooperation with Belarus in information technology and defense sectors would be further strengthened. He recalled that during his visit to Belarus this year, several memorandums of understanding and agreements were signed, which would contribute to further expand bilateral relations.

Apprising the delegation of Pakistan's stance regarding the recent tension in South Asia, he said that Pakistan offered India an impartial investigation into the Peshawar incident, but instead of responding positively India demonstrated aggression by attacking Pakistan and targeting civilian populations, resulting in the martyrdom of innocent civilians.

The prime minister said that on May 10, Pakistan responded befitfully to Indian aggression in self-defense.

Conveying President Lukashenko's good wishes to the prime minister, the Belarusian defense minister said that they desired peace and stability in South Asia.

He said that the delegation's visit was aimed at further advancing the progress on MoUs and agreements between the two countries.

The minister appreciated Prime Minister Shehbaz's personal interest in strengthening bilateral relations and also thanked him for the warm welcome and hospitality.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Federal Minister for Defense Production Reza Hayat Haraj, and relevant senior government officials.

PBF urges GST exemption on local cotton and yarn in federal budget to save textile sector

LAHORE (NP): The Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) has called on the federal government to exempt local cotton, cotton seed, and yarn from the 18% General Sales Tax (GST) in the upcoming Federal Budget 2025-26, warning that the failure to do so could push the country's textile industry toward total collapse. PBF Chairman South Punjab, Malik Talat Suhail while talking to media emphasized that the Export Finance Scheme (EFS), introduced to phase out subsidies and promote exports, has instead proven detrimental to the textile sector. Under EFS, imported raw materials are exempted from both sales tax and customs duty, while local inputs continue to be taxed at 18%. Though this tax is technically refundable, in practice, only 60-70% of refunds are released. The refund process is plagued by delays, manual processing, and high costs—issues that disproportionately harm small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

This imbalance has led many exporters to favor imported inputs, causing serious damage to local suppliers. As a result, Pakistan's import of cotton, yarn, and greige fabric surged by \$1.5 billion in FY 2025, climbing from \$2.19 billion to \$3.64 billion. In contrast, textile exports rose by only \$1.4 billion, and net textile exports are projected to decline from \$14.0 billion to \$13.6 billion.

Over 120 spinning mills and more than 800 spinning factories have shut down, while protests from loom workers in Faisalabad are growing. SMEs are particularly vulnerable, as they face multiple tax payments at every stage of production and have limited access to cheaper imported alternatives, unlike larger firms.

The current situation has placed severe pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserves, especially as the number of commercial import licenses has tripled—from 800 to 2,400. Meanwhile, local cotton production has fallen to a historic low of just 5 million bales, with further declines anticipated. Due to a lack of gov-

ernment support and declining demand, many farmers are abandoning cotton cultivation in favor of more water-intensive crops, placing further stress on national water resources.

PBF also warned that the collapse of the cotton economy is stripping rural areas of \$2-3 billion in income, with women cotton-pickers among the hardest hit. "Pakistan is currently the only country imposing an 18% sales tax on cottonseed and cotton feed, driving farmer income below the cost of production and hitting the poorest segments of society the hardest". Rising unemployment and declining rural earnings are further exacerbating the economic crisis.

The Forum stressed that if current policies are not revised, Pakistan could lose \$4-6 billion in potential foreign exchange earnings. Instead, the country continues to rely on expensive foreign loans to cover rising import costs, worsening the trade deficit, unemployment, and tax collection shortfalls. International partners have also taken notice.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan chairs a meeting with delegation of FPMA.

'Concrete measures to be taken for resolving people's issues' in the area

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (NP): The newly appointed Deputy Commissioner South Waziristan Upper, Fazli Wadood has said that concrete measures would be taken for resolving issues facing people in the area.

He expressed these views during a meeting with a Mehsud Press Club's (Registered) delegation that called on him to discuss ongoing journalistic and public issues in the region.

The delegation included the press club's General Secretary Sikandar Hayat and member Aslam Mehsud.

During the meeting, the delegation discussed with him the plight of Operation Rah-e-Nijat affectees and issues pertaining to compensation

amount. They also underlined the need for fully operationalizing government offices in the Ladhra headquarters to provide smooth public services. The delegation also highlighted that the lack of internet access in the area was severely affecting students' education, as well as hindering progress in other sectors.

Deputy Commissioner Fazli Wadood Safi assured the delegation that the administration was fully aware of these challenges and had prioritized their resolution.

He stated that all government offices in the Ladhra headquarters would be made fully operational soon to ensure public access to essential services.

He added that a comprehensive report regarding compensation for damaged homes is being submitted to the provincial government to ensure timely implementation.

The Deputy Commissioner also indicated that immediate steps will be taken to restore internet services in the area.

He emphasized that administrative officers were actively present in the field, directly assessing public concerns.

He urged residents to approach relevant officials at the headquarters with their issues to ensure swift resolution.

The Deputy Commissioner also expressed appreciation for the positive role of journalists in the region, assuring the delegation that their services were valued and respected by the administration.