

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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Balochistan Budget 2025 – A Promising Blueprint That Demands Transparent Implementation

Syed Ali Shah Analysis:

The Balochistan Budget 2025, worth Rs1,000.208 billion, has laid out an ambitious development roadmap focusing on education, healthcare, infrastructure, clean drinking water, climate change, and law and order. Presented by Finance Minister Mir Shooib Noshervani, the budget reflects a forward-thinking development vision. However, its true value will only be realized if there is a robust transparency mechanism in place, especially around the newly formed district coordination committees.

These coordination committees, empowered to oversee local development execution, are a positive step toward decentralized governance. However, without a strict audit and accountability framework, they risk becoming unchecked centers of influence. To ensure that development projects are completed on time and with quality, the government must implement a real-time monitoring system, regular public disclosures, and third-party performance evaluations.

One of the most promising elements of this budget is the allocation of Rs3 billion to install 1,000 water filtration plants across all union councils. This has the potential to significantly reduce waterborne diseases in underserved communities. Another highlight is the creation of the Balochistan Climate Change



Fund with Rs500 million, showing a clear commitment to environmental sustainability.

The government's restraint in avoiding unnecessary job creation is commendable and will help lower non-development expenditures, freeing up funds for more impactful programs.

Additionally, the enhanced allocation to local governments is a welcome move — if managed transparently.

But budget figures alone do not ensure change. There must be clarity: Will these funds reach the people — or be trapped in bureaucratic bottlenecks or political circles?

To truly benefit the common man, the Balochistan government must make transparency, accountability, and performance tracking the cornerstones of its fiscal strategy. The district coordination committees must operate under clear

public reporting mandates and be accountable to both provincial authorities and local communities.

In a province facing complex challenges — from poverty and underdevelopment to law and order issues — only good governance can deliver real transformation.

This budget lays the foundation; now it must be built upon with integrity, oversight, and a people-first approach.

Norwegian Envoy Meets Balochistan CM Sarfraz Bugti to Discuss Governance, Development Cooperation

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti met with Norway's Acting Ambassador, Thomas Smekop Dahl in Quetta today to discuss a range of topics including bilateral relations, development cooperation, and governance reforms.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister highlighted the Balochistan government's reform agenda and expressed Norway's interest in expanding cooperation in education, healthcare, and social welfare initiatives. He acknowledged the potential for stronger ties and affirmed Norway's willingness to support Balochistan's development goals.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with both sides agreeing to strengthen bilateral cooperation and explore new avenues of partnership for regional development and social progress.

He noted that the provincial government is actively implementing strategies to establish sustainable peace and combat extremism, stating that meaningful development is not possible without ensuring security and stability.

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DG ISPR highlights students' frontline role in information war

NEWS DESK: Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif, Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR), has underscored the critical role students play as the frontline force in Pakistan's information war during a special session at the Saylani IT programme in Karachi.

The DG ISPR praised the students for their engagement and responsiveness to the nation's security challenges on Thursday. He highlighted the recent success of Operation Buryanum Marsoos as a significant victory for peace, reaffirming Pakistan's long-standing commitment to prioritising peace over conflict.

During the session, students asked insightful questions about Pakistan's internal and external security environment.

The DG ISPR emphasised that the country's armed forces remain disciplined and professional, steadfastly fulfilling their constitutional duties and orders from the state.

The Pakistan Army spokes-

person added that Pakistan will continue to act as a net stabiliser in the region.

Students expressed their readiness to sacrifice everything for the protection of their homeland, affirming that no matter the front, they stand firmly behind the Pakistan Army, which they regard as the nation's identity and strength. The session concluded

with students appreciating the interaction and expressing hope for more such engagements in the future. Pakistan "always lives on," they declared. Yesterday, DG ISPR, addressed students at Innab University for Women in Karachi, praising their role in Operation Buryanum Marsoos during the recent conflict with India.



highlighted how the nation, particularly students, played a vital part in dismantling India's strategic assumptions.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast commitment to its territories, calling Kashmir the "jugular vein" of Pakistan and emphasising the deep religious, cultural, and traditional ties binding the people of Balochistan to the country.

Lieutenant General Sharif Chaudhry also assured that no external force, including a small number of militants from India, could damage Pakistan's relationship with Balochistan.

Meanwhile, in Washington, US President Donald Trump met with Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, at the White House.

The two leaders discussed expanding bilateral cooperation in trade, artificial intelligence, energy, cryptocurrency, and emerging technologies, according to a statement from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

SC Constitutional Bench dismisses pleas against transfer of IHC judges

NEWS DESK: The Supreme Court's Constitutional Bench on Thursday announced its verdict in a case pertaining to the seniority and transfer of Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges, declaring that their transfers were not unconstitutional.

The bench — headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and comprising Justices Naem Akhtar Afghani, Shahid Bilal Hassan, Salahuddin Panhwar and Shakeel Ahmed — took up petitions filed by five IHC judges, the Karachi Bar Association (KBA) and the IHC Bar Association,

among others. In February, Justice Sardar Mohammad Sarfraz Dogar from the Lahore High Court (LHC), Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro from the Sindh High Court (SHC) and Justice Muhammad Asif from the Balochistan High Court (BHC) were transferred to the IHC.

The controversy centres around the alteration of the judges' seniority list after these transfers as Justice Dogar was made the senior puisne judge, which paved the way for his appointment as the acting IHC chief justice after Justice Amer

Farooq's elevation to the SC.

Today's judgement was announced in a 3-2 majority ruling with Justices Afghani and Ahmed dissenting. In the short order, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, the SC noted that "the transfer of a judge by the president of Pakistan by means of Article 200 of the Constitution (permanently or temporarily) cannot be construed as a fresh appointment."

The order explained that exercise of powers of transfer by the president under Article 200 of the Constitution was not unregulated

or unfettered.

Rather, it was structured on a "four-tier formula which expounds that no judge shall be transferred except with his consent and after consultation by the president with the chief justice of Pakistan and the chief justices of both high courts."

The short order emphasised that before exercising the power of transfer, certain inbuilt procedures and mechanisms had to be followed and the decision was "within the sphere and realm of judicial and not within the domain of executives".

Man Kills Two Adoptive Brothers Over Property Dispute in Quetta

Ossem Shah: QUETTA: In a deeply disturbing incident, a man allegedly murdered his two adoptive brothers over a property dispute and buried their bodies within the premises of their home in Quetta's Sitka Road area.

According to police sources, the suspect, identified as Adnan, killed his two adoptive brothers six months ago. After committing the heinous crime, he secretly buried their bodies inside the house compound and later rented out the property.

The heinous crime came to light when Adnan's ex-wife informed the police. She had reportedly learned about the incident



after the divorce and chose to report it. Acting on her tip-off, the police arrested the accused, Adnan, who was adopted and raised by

the parents of the deceased brothers. Authorities have sealed the crime scene and launched further investigation into the matter. Sarab Firing Over Land Dis-

pute Leaves One Dead, Another Injured

In a separate incident, one man was killed and another injured in a firing outside the Session Court in Sarab area of Quetta. Police said the shooting was the result of a property feud between relatives. The accused, a nephew, allegedly opened fire on his uncle, killing him on the spot and injuring another person present at the scene. Police have registered a case and begun a search for the suspect, who fled after the incident. These two back-to-back cases reflect the alarming rise in property-related violence across Balochistan's urban centres.

Cambridge confirms partial leak of 3 A-Level papers for June 2025 exams

NEWS DESK: Cambridge International Education (CIE) on Thursday confirmed that question papers of three AS and A Level examinations were partially leaked across Pakistan.

CIE, part of Cambridge University Press and Assessment, offers internationally recognised exams to over 10,000 schools in 160-plus countries. In Pakistan, O Levels (grades 9–10) cover a broad subject range, while A and AS Levels (grades 11–12) are more specialised and advanced, providing pathways to higher education in Pakistan and abroad. CIE exams are typically held twice a year, in June and November, with results released in August and January, respectively.

"We have written to our schools in Pakistan to tell them that, against our regulations, some content from three question papers was available before the timetable exam dates in Pakistan," the CIE said in a statement.

The examinations that were affected include: Cambridge International AS/A Level Mathematics Paper 12, where one question was shared before the exam was taken.

Cambridge International AS/A Level Mathematics Paper 42, where parts of two questions were shared before the exam was taken.

Cambridge International AS/A Level Computer Science Paper 22, where parts of one question were shared before the exam was taken.

However, it said, "In all three cases, we found no evidence that the whole paper had been shared before the exam."

CIE said it will issue a syllabus grade for all subjects on August 12, 2025, as usual, saying that the "grade" will be based on the question paper content completed.

"We have decided to take action for each of these syllabi components to maintain the integrity and fairness of the assessment for all candidates, and so that we can award an overall syllabus grade on our published results days."

"Therefore, we have disregarded some questions from each paper — we will award you full marks for these questions," it added.

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

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Aseefa Bhutto Zardari for greater investment in health, education sectors

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Punjab CM says her full focus is on providing free medical treatment to people

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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 are 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 economic 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 sup-

port 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 the party'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.

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 Strain on Quetta's Road Infrastructure
Quetta's road network, originally designed during the colonial era, was never intended to accommodate the city's rapid population growth and rising number of vehicles. Although the city was rebuilt after the 1935 earthquake, its road capacity has remained largely unchanged, struggling to support over 1.2 million residents and the thousands of vehicles added each year.

Key roads such as Jinnah Road, Sariah Road, Liaquat Bazaar, Masjid Road, and Zarghoon Road have become perpetual bottlenecks, choked by illegal encroachments, unregulated parking, and an ever-increasing number of vehicles. Without a structured urban transport model, these roads remain gridlocked, affecting daily life and economic activity.

Major Traffic Challenges in Quetta
Severe congestion on key roads, particularly in the city center, has become a daily reality. The 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 shops 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, Sarab Road,

Sahial 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.

Weak Traffic Management and Enforcement
Implementing route-based restrictions for rickshaws to prevent

floods, is now being equipped with stronger, climate-resilient infrastructure designed to withstand future disasters. Beyond rebuilding homes and infrastructure, the initiative is restoring hope—securing clean water, healthcare, education, and sustainable livelihoods for communities that were pushed into extreme vulnerability.

Local officials stress that the real success will not be measured by the number of projects completed, but by the resilience of families who will be able to rebuild their lives with dignity, security, and opportunity. "This is about making

temperatures soar across Pakistan, several districts of Balochistan are bracing for an intense heatwave.

According to the Balochistan Meteorological Department, Sibi is expected to record temperatures as high as 47°C in the coming days. Turbat may reach 46°C, Lasbela 44°C, Nokundi 43°C, and Dandani 41°C. Quetta could experience highs of up to

35°C. The Met Office has issued heatwave alerts for Sibi, Kachhi, Sohbatpur, Lehri, Naserabad, Thal Nagri, Turbat, Lasbela, Washuk, Khara, and Chaghi, warning of dry and extreme weather conditions.

The heat is not only endangering human health but also threatening agricultural productivity. Khalid Hussain Bhatti, Chairman of the Farmers' Union, empha-

sized that extreme heat severely impacts seed survival and crop growth.

He noted that wheat yields, which traditionally ranged from 50-60 maunds per acre, have dropped significantly to 20-25 maunds due to milder winters and erratic climate patterns.

That also highlighted the critical situation in canal-fed farming areas where deep-furrowed clothing has exacerbated the risks. He urged the

government to introduce heat-resistant crop varieties to prevent billions in agricultural losses and potential food shortages.

Meanwhile, Dr. Mahmood Ahmed warned that rising temperatures could lead to an increase in heat-related illnesses. He advised citizens to stay hydrated, avoid sun exposure between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., and wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Reducing meat consumption and eating

practical solutions to fix Quetta's traffic woes.

To address Quetta's worsening traffic crisis, a multi-faceted approach is needed, combining road expansion, better enforcement, and public transport development. Here are some key solutions:

1. Road Expansion and Maintenance
Widen key roads such as Masjid Road, Jinnah Road, and Zarghoon Road to accommodate growing traffic.

• Improve drainage systems to prevent road damage and flooding.

2. Regulating Non-Custom Paid Vehicles
Enforce strict measures to curb the influx of NCP vehicles.

• Introduce policies to register or phase out unregistered vehicles.

3. Establishing a Public Transport System
Launch a city bus service to provide an affordable alternative to private cars.

• Develop dedicated lanes to improve efficiency and reduce congestion.

4. Regulating Rickshaws and Motorcycles
Implement route-based restrictions for rickshaws to prevent

congestion in commercial hubs.

• Create designated parking areas for rickshaws and motorcycles.

5. Strengthening Traffic Law Enforcement
Deploy more traffic police officers to ensure compliance with traffic rules.

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Call to Action: A Collective Responsibility
Every day, Quetta's residents face the frustration of endless traffic jams, reckless drivers, and poorly managed roads.

Yet, the problem persists—not just because of weak governance,

but because of collective negligence. Authorities must act swiftly to expand roads, enforce traffic laws, and implement public transport reforms.

Citizens, too, have a role to play—by obeying traffic rules, avoiding illegal parking, and discouraging encroachments. Without a united effort, Quetta's traffic woes will only worsen.

Jeopardizing the city's economy, safety, and quality of life.

Quetta stands at a turning point. The time to act is now—before the crisis spirals beyond control.

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

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in skills development

programs so communities can respond faster and better to future disasters. Over 100,000 such projects are being initiated to address the diverse needs of the flood-affected population.

The ultimate goal is to break the cycle of destruction and vulnerability. Through smart investments today, Balochistan is building a safer, more prosperous tomorrow for its people.

Officials emphasize that the road to full recovery will take time, but the determination to protect lives, livelihoods, and dignity has never been stronger.

Dr. Ahmed stressed the importance of early action to prevent heatstroke, outlining symptoms such as excessive sweating, fatigue, dizziness, nausea, rapid heartbeat, and in severe cases, unconsciousness.

He urged both public awareness and government support to manage the growing threat effectively.

Dr. Mahmood Ahmed warned that rising temperatures could lead to an increase in heat-related illnesses. He advised citizens to stay hydrated, avoid sun exposure between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., and wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Reducing meat consumption and eating

practical solutions to fix Quetta's traffic woes.

To address Quetta's worsening traffic crisis, a multi-faceted approach is needed, combining road expansion, better enforcement, and public transport development. Here are some key solutions:

1. Road Expansion and Maintenance
Widen key roads such as Masjid Road, Jinnah Road, and Zarghoon Road to accommodate growing traffic.

• Improve drainage systems to prevent road damage and flooding.

2. Regulating Non-Custom Paid Vehicles
Enforce strict measures to curb the influx of NCP vehicles.

• Introduce policies to register or phase out unregistered vehicles.

3. Establishing a Public Transport System
Launch a city bus service to provide an affordable alternative to private cars.

• Develop dedicated lanes to improve efficiency and reduce congestion.

4. Regulating Rickshaws and Motorcycles
Implement route-based restrictions for rickshaws to prevent

Figure 1

US President Donald Trump Hosts Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir at White House, Praises Role in Regional Stability

Monitoring Desk: WASHINGTON DC: In a high-profile diplomatic engagement, US President Donald Trump hosted Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Asim Munir, at a luncheon held in his honour at the White House, marking a rare and significant meeting between the head of Pakistan's military and a US president.

Addressing the media following the meeting on Thursday, Trump expressed his appreciation for General Munir's efforts in preventing further escalation between Pakistan and India, two nuclear-armed neighbours that recently faced heightened tensions.

"It was a true honour to meet Asim Munir," Trump stated. "I invited him here to personally thank him for playing a key role in avoiding a war. His efforts toward securing a ceasefire deserve global recognition."

The meeting comes amid renewed diplomatic backchannel efforts to ease friction in South Asia. Trump emphasized the critical importance of restraint and dialogue between Islamabad and New Delhi, both of which possess nuclear capabilities. He also highlighted the possibility of a future trade agreement with Pakistan, adding that diplomatic ties between the countries remain significant.

"I stopped a war," Trump told



reporters. "I admire Pakistan and its leadership. I also spoke to Prime Minister Modi recently—he's a great leader. We're working toward a trade deal with India, and Pakistan is also part of the broader peace efforts."

Trump credited both General Munir and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for contributing to de-escalation during the recent standoff. "Both sides were ready for conflict," Trump said. "It was through leadership like Munir's on the Pakistan side and Modi's in India that we managed to halt it. It could have been catastrophic."

In what is being seen as a notable diplomatic development, the meeting focused not just on

South Asia but also on broader geopolitical issues. Trump revealed that Iran was also discussed, with General Munir aligning with U.S. concerns on Tehran's regional activities.

"Pakistan understands the situation in Iran better than most," Trump remarked. "And they're not pleased with what's happening there either."

The luncheon and one-on-one dialogue underscore the strategic relevance of Pakistan's military leadership in regional security affairs, and signal a renewed interest from Washington in strengthening security and trade relations with Pakistan, independent of formal state visits involving civilian leaders.

Pakistan urges UN to immediately stop aggression against Israel, hold aggressor accountable for its actions

ISLAMABAD (INP): Strongly condemning the unjustified and illegitimate aggression by Israel against Iran, Pakistan on Thursday urged the international community and the United Nations to bear the responsibility to uphold international law, stop this aggression immediately, and hold the aggressor accountable for its actions. "The Israeli military strikes violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran and clearly contravene the UN Charter and fundamental principles of international law. Iran has a right to self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter. Foreign Office spokesperson Shafiq Ali Khan said in his weekly press briefing.

He said Pakistan stood in resolute solidarity with the people of Iran and unequivocally denounced these blatant provocations, which constituted a grave danger and a serious threat to the peace, security, and stability of the entire region and beyond, with serious implications.

The FO spokesperson highlighted that in light of the rapidly evolving regional developments and the unprecedented escalation

of tensions in the Middle East, particularly owing to the ongoing military aggression of Israel against Iran, the foreign ministers of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, the Kingdom of Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, the Republic of Chad, the Union of the Comoros, the Republic of Djibouti, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Iraq, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the State of Kuwait, the State of Libya, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Republic of Sudan, the Republic of Turkey, the Sultanate of Oman, and the United Arab Emirates categorically rejected and condemned Israel's recent attacks on Iran since June 13, 2025, while emphasizing the necessity of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states, adhering to principles of good neighbourliness, and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

He said that Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar

held telephonic conversations with the foreign ministers of Iran, Sayyid Abbas Araghchi; Turkey, Hakan Fidan; Egypt, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the UAE, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan; and UK Foreign Secretary, David Lammy.

The leaders expressed deep concern over the deteriorating regional situation. They reaffirmed their commitment to work closely for maintaining peace and stability in the region and beyond. The deputy PM highlighted the serious threats to peace and stability in the region stemming from Israel's unjustified attacks on Iran. Leaders stressed the need to defuse tensions and prevent further escalation.

Meanwhile, Shafiq Ali Khan informed that Foreign Secretary Ambassador Anna Baloch inaugurated the second phase of medicines for cancer, hepatitis, and cardiac patients are now being delivered directly to their homes. These mobile clinics will now be available across all districts and urban areas of Punjab.

"My dream of delivering people's rights to their doorstep is becoming a reality," she added. Commending Health Minister Imran Nazir, the Health Secretary, and the Primary Health Department, Maryam Nawaz stated that this success would not have been possible without their dedicated team. A few months ago, there were 245 Clinic on Wheels ve-

hicles, and that number has since increased. These vehicles can easily reach into streets and neighborhoods.

The CM further shared that these mobile clinics are fully air-conditioned and serve as moving mini-operating theatres. Over the past year alone, these clinics have treated 10 million patients benefiting daily. She also noted that Mayo Hospital now offers excellent treatment facilities.

She said that significant work in the healthcare sector was carried out during the tenures of Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif. However, there came a time when even basic healthcare was out of reach for the public. Over the past four years, the people suffered greatly, and no one listened to their plight. She emphasized her commitment to taking every possible step for public welfare.

She added that all government hospitals will now provide free medicines, for which the government has allocated a fund of Rs. 100 billion. Gradually, conditions in public hospitals are improving. The Clinics on Wheels initiative will also be further expanded to ensure every citizen has access to healthcare at their doorstep.

Addressing the ceremony, Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that her primary focus is to ensure free healthcare access to the public. Medicines for cancer, hepatitis, and cardiac patients are now being delivered directly to their homes. These mobile clinics will now be available across all districts and urban areas of Punjab.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on Jinnah Medical Complex and Research Centre.

PM Shehbaz directs to finalize industrial policy at the earliest

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed to finalize the industrial policy at the earliest to increase production and provide sustainable solutions to the challenges faced by industries.

He also issued directions to the relevant authorities that the industrial policy be finalized in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

Describing the industrial sector as the backbone of the country's exports, the Prime Minister stressed that the development of industries is essential to achieving export-led

economic growth.

Chairing a meeting on the promotion of the Industrial sector, the prime minister underscored that equipping local industries with a skilled workforce and modern technology to international standards was the government's top priority.

"Investment in the country will be promoted through tariff rationalization," the prime minister said, adding that "Uncertain industrial policies have hindered industrial growth. Through an effective policy, we will take industrial development to new heights".

The recent economic policies, he said, were formulated keeping in view the development of the country's industrial sector.

During the meeting, recommendations for the development of national industries were presented to the Prime Minister.

He was informed that the manufacturing sector of the country will be revived through an effective industrial policy. The meeting was attended by Minister for Economic Affairs Ahsan Khan Cheema, Special Assistant Haroon Akhtar and other relevant high officials.

Punjab CM says her full focus is on providing free medical treatment to people

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that improvements are underway in the healthcare sector and that her full focus is on providing free medical treatment to the people. The Clinics on Wheels are now ready to serve all districts and urban areas of the province.

The Punjab government has achieved another milestone in the health sector. CM Maryam Sharif inaugurated the second phase of the Clinics on Wheels project. She inspected the mobile clinics and handed over keys of new vehicles to doctors.

Addressing the ceremony, Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that her primary focus is to ensure free healthcare access to the public. Medicines for cancer, hepatitis, and cardiac patients are now being delivered directly to their homes. These mobile clinics will now be available across all districts and urban areas of Punjab.

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Saif asks federal govt to release Rs267bn for merged tribal districts

PESHAWAR (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Adviser on Information, Barrister Dr. Saif has urged the federal government to immediately release the remaining Rs. 267 billion out of the Rs. 350 billion allocated under the National Finance Commission (NFC) award for the merged tribal districts.

He accused the federal government of deliberately delaying the disbursement, which he said is severely hampering the development of the former tribal areas. Saif stated that for the fiscal year 2024-25, the federal government had allocated Rs. 350 billion for the merged districts, but only Rs. 83 billion have been released in the past 10 months, leaving Rs. 267 billion still pending.

He emphasized that the development and integration of the merged districts into the national mainstream is a shared responsibility, but the federal government's lack of seriousness is putting this sensitive national issue at risk. He warned that withholding funds for the merged areas is tantamount to fueling terrorism. "Unless development projects are initiated in these regions, the dream of eliminating terrorism cannot be realised," he added. Saif strongly urged the federal government to immediately transfer all NFC-allocated funds to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar chairing a high-level meeting to discuss challenges facing the power sector.

Seminar in Muzaffarabad explores Asia's evolving security landscape post-Pahalgam

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): Speakers at a seminar in Muzaffarabad examined Asia's shifting security dynamics in the aftermath of the Pahalgam incident, calling for greater regional cooperation and sustained academic-policy dialogue to address emerging security challenges in South Asia.

The seminar titled "Post-Pahalgam: Where Asia's Security Debate is Headed Next" was organized by the Asian Resource Forum Kashmir (ARFK), in collaboration with the Scholars Foundation, and held at KIMS, Muzaffarabad. The people on the occasion thanked the minister for issuing directives for the resolution of their issues.

The seminar brought together prominent figures from academia, civil society media, and policy think tanks to assess how the Pahalgam incident has shaped the regional security discourse and diplomatic priorities across Asia.

The event commenced with opening remarks by Syed Ifthikhar Hussain Kazmi, Chairman of the Scholars Foundation, followed by Dr. Abida Rafique, Chairperson ARFK, who highlighted the significance of inclusive regional engagement in shaping security narratives.

In his address, Zaheer Ahmed Qureshi emphasized the importance of bridging the gap between academia and policymaking to formulate in-

formed regional strategies in response to new and evolving challenges.

APHC-AJK leader Shamim Shawl delivered the keynote address, underlining the critical role of women's grassroots leadership and their resilience in Kashmir's ongoing resistance movement.

Dr. Asma Shakir Khawaja, Chairperson of CISS AJK, provided a comprehensive analysis of how the Pahalgam incident triggered geopolitical recalibrations spanning South, Central, and East Asia.

Naila Altaf Kiani, a media expert, discussed the influence of media framing and disinformation on public perception in the post-Pahalgam environment.

Privatization Commission (PC) decides to extend deadline for PIA bids

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Privatization Commission of Pakistan has decided not to extend the deadline for submitting bids for the privatization of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA).

The commission has decided to keep final date set for June 19, 2025, according to an official statement. The Privatization Commission of Pakistan has received Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from

eight companies for PIA's privatization. As of now, applications from five companies have been submitted, the statement added. This development follows the government's renewed push to privatize the national flag carrier. The privatization (PIA) is likely to complete by November 2025. According to sources, the government of Pakistan is planning to sell fifty percent shares of

the national airline. Sources further revealed that domestic and international groups have shown interest in buying PIA shares.

Read more: Govt moves ahead with PIA privatization, issues official advertisement

It is important to mention here that the value of Class B shares of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) Holding Company witnessed an extraordinary increase.

Abbasi holds Khuli Kacheri, issued directives for immediate resolution of public issues

RAWALPINDI (INP): Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi on Thursday held a Khuli Kacheri (open court) here at the Muslim League House on Iqbal Road, and issued directives for immediate resolution of public issues.

The residents of union councils 15 to 20, along with the UC chairmen, participated in the open court and raised problems mostly about gas, water, electricity, sanitation and sewage. The public specifically

demanding that the narrow and dilapidated streets should be paved. Hanif Abbasi listened to the public issues and issued instructions to the relevant institutions for their resolution.

He directed that old and worn-out electric wires should be replaced immediately. Similarly, he instructed that narrow streets should be cemented, besides repairing of dilapidated roads.

He also ordered urgent measures for improving the

sewerage system.

The minister said the public had given him the mandate to serve them and directed the officers concerned to resolve the public problems within the stipulated time and submit reports to him in that regard.

He said serving the people was the top priority of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz. The people on the occasion thanked the minister for issuing directives for the resolution of their issues.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan, Alisher Tukhtayev, called on Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry.