

# QUETTA VOICE

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## Duki Coal Mine Collapse Kills Three in Balochistan

**NEWS DESK:** A tragic coal mine collapse occurred on July 24, 2025, in the Duki district of Balochistan, claiming the lives of three miners. According to Chief Mines Inspector Abdul Ghani Baloch, a landslide caused a private mine to collapse, trapping four workers beneath the debris. Rescue teams managed to recover one miner alive, while the three deceased were later retrieved and taken to a local hospital for post-mortem procedures.

In response, authorities have sealed the mine and launched a court of inquiry to determine the cause of the collapse. Investigators will assess whether safety protocols were followed and if negligence played a role.

Duki, a key hub for coal mining in Pakistan, is known for hazardous conditions and poor regulatory oversight. Many mines operate without proper safety gear, training, or modern equipment, contributing to frequent fatal accidents. Despite repeated demands for reform by labor rights groups, enforcement remains inconsistent.

Preliminary findings suggest unstable terrain, possibly worsened by recent rains or unsafe excavation, may have triggered



the landslide. The injured miner is currently under medical care.

Officials have offered condolences to the victims' families and

reaffirmed their commitment to improving mine safety standards. The incident has once again highlighted the urgent need for stricter

regulation and enforcement in Balochistan's mining sector, where preventable tragedies continue to claim lives.

## PM Shehbaz lauds World Bank support for Pakistan's 'legitimate position' on Indus Waters Treaty

**NEWS DESK:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday appreciated the World Bank's (WB) support for Pakistan's position in light of India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).

In April, India held the IWT in abeyance following the attack in occupied Kashmir's Pahalgaon that killed 26 — an incident New Delhi blamed on Islamabad without evidence. Pakistan termed any attempt to suspend its water share an "act of war", noting that the IWT had no provision for unilateral suspension.

In a meeting with the WB's regional vice president for the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan (MENAAP), Ousmane Dione, the premier acknowledged the institution's principled support for Pakistan's legitimate position on India's "unilateral and unlawful actions", which undermined "important international agreements" such as the IWT.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to upholding international law, achieving prosperity, maintaining regional peace and reiterated the country's resolve to resolve all issues through dia-

logue. The prime minister further thanked the WB for its timely and generous assistance during the devastating floods of 2022, which helped Pakistan initiate immediate relief efforts and begin reconstruction and rehabilitation activities.

He especially thanked World Bank President Ajay Banga and former country director for Pakistan Najib Benhassine for their pivotal role in advancing the new country partnership framework (CPF) for Pakistan.

In January, Pakistan became

the first country to launch a longer-term CPF with the WB, after the bank's board of directors approved the 10-year programme and pledged to provide \$20 billion to Pakistan.

According to a World Bank statement, the new framework for the country aimed to "support inclusive and sustainable development through a strong focus on building human capital", in addition to fostering durable private sector growth.

PM Shehbaz appreciated the strategic role of the CPF in sup-

porting Pakistan's development priorities, particularly in the areas of energy, human capital, climate change, and governance reforms.

Dione expressed gratitude to the premier for the warm hospitality extended during his visit to Pakistan.

He reaffirmed the WB's commitment to deepening and expanding its longstanding partnership with Pakistan and enhancing collaboration in key sectors of the economy.

Dione appreciated Pakistan's ongoing macroeconomic recovery and praised the prime minister's government for steering the country toward financial stability and sustainable growth.

He particularly commended the current administration's reform agenda, noting the premier's strong leadership in advancing institutional reforms, restoring investor confidence, and promoting inclusive economic development.

PM Shehbaz and Dione expressed a shared commitment to further strengthening cooperation in the coming years, to achieve long-term development goals and build a prosperous future for the people of Pakistan.



## Dalbandin Levies Protest Merger, Allege Court Order Breach

**CHAGAI, BALOCHISTAN:** In a powerful show of dissent, hundreds of Levies personnel protested in Dalbandin against the proposed merger of Levies into the police force, accusing the government of violating court-ordered stay directives. The protest took place outside the Dalbandin Levies Station, where senior officers—including Kisaldir Major and Naib Kisaldir—voiced concerns in a press conference.

### Levies Accuse Government of Ignoring Court Stay Order

Protesters alleged that despite a clear court-issued stay order, authorities are continuing with the Levies-to-police integration, calling it "a direct violation of court orders and contempt of judiciary."

"Those who do not respect the court have no right to impose their decisions on us," one protester remarked.

### Levies: A Trusted Tribal Security Force in Balochistan

Officials emphasized that the Levies force in Balochistan is a historic, community-rooted tribal force, established during the British colonial era. They said Levies have successfully maintained peace and resolved tribal disputes across Chagai, Dalbandin, and other districts.

"Levies personnel are trusted by the local tribes and have a better understanding of the tribal



social structure than the conventional police," stated a Levies officer.

### Allegations of Secretive, Non-Transparent Merger Process

Levies officers claimed that the merger documents were signed secretly at night by a recently transferred Assistant Commissioner, raising concerns of a non-transparent and unlawful process.

### Levies Demand Cancellation of Merger Plan or Fair Compensation

The protesters demanded that the government cancel the Levies merger plan immediately. If dissolution is unavoidable, they urged the state to offer legal benefits, pension rights, and financial compensation to all Levies personnel.

### Merging Levies and Police Threatens Tribal Order

Officials warned that merging the Levies and police forces in Balochistan could destabilize

the tribal administrative structure that has ensured decades of local governance and stability. They argued that the tribal system and Levies operations cannot be replaced by a centralized police model without community backlash.

### Levies Vow Peaceful Legal Struggle for Rights

The protesting Levies personnel concluded by reaffirming their commitment to a peaceful, legal, and constitutional struggle to protect their institutional identity, jobs, and community trust.

## Ikramullah Kakar of Qilla Saifullah Secures 97% and 3rd Position in Rawalpindi Board

### Education Desk

**QILLA SAIFULLAH:** Ikramullah Kakar, son of Noor Sail and a talented student from Qilla Saifullah, Balochistan, has achieved remarkable success by securing 97% marks and third position in the annual examinations of the Rawalpindi Board. This outstanding achievement is a proud moment not only for his family but also for the entire province of Balochistan.

Ikramullah Kakar is the same bright student who met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif during his visit to the flood-affected ar-

ea of Qilla Saifullah in August 2022. Impressed by his intelligence and determination, the Prime Minister announced a full scholarship for him at the prestigious Lawrence College Murree.

Ikramullah's recent academic excellence has validated that decision and proved that when given the right opportunity, the youth of Balochistan can shine on any platform and bring pride to the nation. His achievement stands as an inspiring example for students across the province and sends a strong message about the importance of investing in education.



## Sibi: Blast Near Railway Track, Bolan Mail Narrowly Escapes, Train Services Suspended

### Nasuh Baloch:

**SIBI:** Panic spread in the Dunga area near Sibi after an explosion occurred close to a railway track on Thursday.

Fortunately, the Bolan Mail Express had just passed moments before the blast, narrowly avoiding a major tragedy.

According to officials, one of the carriages, bogie number 7, sustained minor damage in the incident.

Railway authorities confirmed that security forces immediately cordoned off the area following the explosion. A technical

team from Pakistan Railways has been dispatched to the site to assess the damage and begin clearance operations.

As a precaution, the Jaffar Express traveling from Punjab to Quetta was halted at Dera Murad Jamali, while the Quetta-bound train from Punjab will be temporarily stopped at Sibi until further notice.

Railway officials added that train services will only resume once the track is cleared and declared safe for travel. In the meantime, all rail traffic in the region has been suspended.



## Opposition alliance announces two-day APC in Islamabad

**NEWS DESK:** An alliance of opposition parties, including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has announced a two-day All Parties Conference (APC) to be held in Islamabad on July 31 and August 1, Express News reported.

The announcement was made at a joint press conference by Tehreek-e-Talaf-e-Ain Pakistan (TTAP) leaders and senior opposition figures in Islamabad, including TTAP chief Mehmood Khan Achakzai. PTI leader Salman Akram Raja, Babar Awan, Barrister Saif, Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar, and others.

Achakzai stated that this was the first political alliance not formed at the behest of any institution.

"This is not a theatre for political entertainment. Our alliance will continue until the establishment of a neutral Election Com-

mission, supremacy of the Constitution, and restoration of parliamentary sovereignty," he said.

He criticised the formation of the current government, alleging that it was imposed through fear and manipulation. "The party that won the general election had its leader jailed. The May 9 verdicts handed 10-year sentences even to minors. This is not justice; this is the mockery of a democratic state," he added.

Achakzai, who is also chief of the Pashtoonkhw Milli Awami Party, vowed to campaign against the government from "street to street and town to town," extending the movement from Gilgit-Baltistan to Gwadar.

He called for a peaceful protest movement and said the upcoming APC would also invite representatives from state institutions.



**Balochistan Budget 2025: A People-Centric Vision or Just Another Promise?**

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**UK, Korean, Kazakh universities to 'establish campuses' in Punjab**

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**PM commends WB support to Pakistan's position on Indus Waters Treaty**

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## QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Balochistan Budget 2025:  
A People-Centric Vision or Just  
Another Promise?

## Editorial:

As the Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, leads a high-level parliamentary committee to prepare the FY2025 budget and Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), the province stands at a critical crossroads.

Promising a shift from the past, Bugti vows this budget will prioritize transparency, merit, and good governance, with a strong focus on public welfare.

But the key question remains—will these promises translate into real change for the people of Balochistan?

## Breaking from the Past: A Collective Effort

For the first time in years, the formation of a cross-party parliamentary committee involving leaders from PPP, PML, BAP, ANP, and PTI signals a hopeful departure from political victimization and partisan favoritism.

With experienced lawmakers like Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buladi, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Engineer Zamarak Khan Achakzai, and Noor Muhammad Dummer at the table, there is a genuine opportunity to craft a budget that reflects collective interest rather than individual gains.

## End of Individual Projects, Focus on Equal Development

Chief Minister Bugti has made it clear: "No room for corruption or nepotism." Only approved, people-centric development projects will be included—not pet schemes, no personal agendas.

This approach must ensure that neglected and far-flung areas like Awaran, Washuk, Sherani, and Dera Bugti receive their fair share. For decades, these regions have remained on the margins of development; it's time the budget acknowledged their right to progress.

## Health and Education: More Than Just Buzzwords

The CM's commitment to education and healthcare as priority sectors is commendable—but mere statements are not enough. What Balochistan needs is a real boost in primary and secondary school enrollment, teachers' training, rural health infrastructure, and medicine availability.

If the province is to improve its Human Development Index (HDI), practical steps—not policy platitudes—must lead the way.

## A Budget of Trust, Not Just Numbers

Bugti's declaration that this budget is "a roadmap to uplift every resident of Balochistan" is powerful.

But the success of this budget will be judged not by spreadsheets, but by the smiles of students in rural classrooms, the relief of patients in functional clinics, and the roads that connect remote villages to opportunity.

The people of Balochistan are watching closely. This budget must not be another missed opportunity—it must become a blueprint of hope, equity, and real development.

Quetta: Contaminated water posing  
a serious threat to human health

Abdul Razzaq Khilji:

Fresh and clean water is an essential part of human life. It stands second to the air for the existence of all human beings and it is now a commonly known fact that groundwater quality is as important as its quantity. Balochistan is becoming the fast water-scarce province of the country particularly in urban areas including the Quetta sub-city where 90% of the drinking water is utilized from groundwater. Groundwater quality has a direct impact on the health and welfare of the inhabitants therefore fresh and clean water supply need to be prioritized.

Drinking water  
must be free from  
pathogenic  
organisms

Water from any source must suit the purpose for which it is intended whereas drinking water must be free from pathogenic organisms and its chemical and physical qualities must also be suitable for human consumption. Accordingly, groundwater contamination is approximately constantly the consequence of human activities.

Accordingly, the current analysis of water quality discloses that water in most of the areas of the Quetta is exclusively microbiologically contaminated. Contaminations include, Nitrate, Turbidity, Arsenic, hardness, TDS, and other ions have been analyzed wherein, the Nitrate concentrations have been found higher than the prescribed WHO standards.

Moreover, the change in water quality pattern in Quetta follows biological pattern of children, the elderly, and people with weak immune systems are at a higher risk of the harmful effects.

Contaminated  
water in Quetta  
affecting human  
health

On the basis of analyzed water quality data the areas of Mariabadd, Shaldara Kasi Road, Pashoonabad, Gawalmandi, Sirki Road satellite town, Takhtani Bypass, airport road, Western bypass, Barwary road, Mosa Colony, Spini road, Joint Road, Raisani Road, Sariab road DG WAPDA office, Gahi Khan Chowk, Sariab Railway Station where the water quality is declared unsafe due to high concentration of Coliform and E. coli as such the analyzed values are high than the permissible limits of the WHO.

The drinking water in these areas is found objectionable and unsafe for drinking purposes on the basis of bacteriological contamination. Accordingly, the current analysis of water quality discloses that water in most of the areas of the Quetta is exclusively microbiologically contaminated. Contaminations include, Nitrate, Turbidity, Arsenic, hardness, TDS, and other ions have been analyzed wherein, the Nitrate concentrations have been found higher than the prescribed WHO standards.

Water quality  
contamination  
is an extensive  
phenomenon

Moreover, the change in water quality pattern in Quetta follows biological pattern of children, the elderly, and people with weak immune systems are at a higher risk of the harmful effects.

It is of great concern that the average concentrations of contaminations have been observed mostly in thickly populated areas of the Quetta.

The situation follows the growing rate of contaminations over the Quetta whereas the extension in the water supply system has increased in the last two decades and the density of population is also increasing with time.

The report points out that due to lack of proper water supply pipeline designing the cross-contamination is not in control and the flow of pollutants into the main supply line is a major cause of contaminations.

The study further reports that the old age leaking pipes in the main water supply system are also the main cause of external contamination in the main supply lines.

The inhabitants of Quetta may be at risk of drinking contaminated water and may suffer from various water-borne diseases. The report also specifies the high rate of Nitrate concentrations in water in some areas which may cause Blue Baby Syndrome diseases in Children. Bioavailability of regular water quality monitoring of the critical areas and issues cannot be identified.

The author is serving as an officer in the Balochistan Irrigation Department

Ajmal khan:

Poverty is not a static  
or fixed phenomenon. It is  
a multi-dimensional idea  
that encompasses quality  
in almost every  
sphere of life, ranging  
from caloric intake, life  
expectancy, living stan-  
dards, literacy, and access  
to modern energy  
services.

This type of poverty is always expressed from an income perspective. Sticking with the non-income dimensions of poverty, such as health, education and living standards, are as important as employment.

The two energy indicators of non-income dimensions of poverty (no access to electricity) and cooking fuels (wood, dung and charcoal), constitute poverty.

Goal no. 7 of SDGs contains universal access to modern energy services, increasing energy efficiency, and increasing renewable energy share.

As we know, energy plays a vital role in the development process of a country, but increase of electricity (no access to electricity) and cooking fuels (wood, dung and charcoal), constitute poverty.

When we talk about Balochistan, it is the direct and major victim of energy crisis, and has slowed down the growth of the province.

Balochistan is the largest province in Pakistan, having an area of 347,190 km square and a population of 12,344,408 people. The major portion of the population live in rural areas, constituting 72.45%.

## Multivariate Aspects of Climate Change in Pakistan

Syed Mansoor Ahmed:

Climate change presents unbreakable challenges in the future. According to the World Bank report, Pakistan stands 6th in affect of climate change. The awful and deadly floods of 2010, and 2011, extremely increased in a rainy season, and fluctuation in actual climate pattern is alarming and despairing signs among all the dwellers of the town.

Climate Change and Agriculture in Pakistan

In addition, Pakistan is a semi-arid country. The focal and dependent source of water is from the snow-covered Himalayan and the Karakoram in the Northern Areas. Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, and the Sutlej rivers flow through this area. Within the water table, the country's entire agriculture is dependant on water flow from the Indus

river. Glacial flood outburst also poses a serious threat to the country's climate in the Karakoram range. The sole aim was reaching and understanding the possible nodes of surge-type glaciers, which are characterized by unsteady movements and frequent frontal advances of glaciers. As result, it causes natural hazards by obstructing river channels, forming ice-dammed lakes, which will ultimately cause GLOFs and pose threats downstream of the water. After meaningful analysis, it revealed that a surge between 1998 and 2002 generated 6 GLOFs.

Damages by  
Climate Change:

Meanwhile, rigorous critical exploration of the Attatad Lake of Hunza Valley in Gilgit-Baltistan is the distinctive event to justify the future threats of climate change in the center of

hancing the level of physical comfort and peace of mind. The Book of Genesis states that Cain killed Abel out to satiate his vengeance.

Ever since vengeance, confrontation and belligerence have remained more pervasive than cooperation and amiability in human relations.

The perception of life as a zero-sum game breeds selfishness and consequent animosity between individuals, groups, or states. Instincts of survival and procreation are reflexive thus natural for all living organisms including us humans.

War, being one of the forms of human relations, received due attention. However, what distinguishes Homo sapiens from other living entities is the quest for controlling the forces of nature like wind, water, fire, and Sunlight for en-

## Energy shortage in Balochistan

Only 36 Percent  
of Balochistan  
has access to  
energy:

Balochistan is facing an acute energy shortage that has stopped the development not only in the economic and agriculture sector, but also in every walk of life. According to a document submitted to the National Assembly of Pakistan, only 36% of Balochistan is electrified, while the remaining 64% of Balochistan still doesn't have access to energy. Due to the scattered population living in rural areas, it is impossible to electrify them. In 2018, the total demand of Balochistan was 1650 MW, but supply was limited to 600 MW, and in 2019 the demand has been raised to 2500 MW.

Energy Projects  
in CPEC:

Energy is the prominent element of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Almost 70% of the CPEC projects are related to the energy sector, which comprises thermal, hydel, coal and wind. Unfortunately, Balochistan is being left out of these projects. Out of 13 mega projects related to energy, six projects are being located in Punjab, six in Sindh and one in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Once again, the energy-starved and downtrodden province has been neglected and not given due share to fulfill its energy demands. The energy generated by these projects will not give any

relief to the consumers in Balochistan.

The already installed transmission lines are inadequate, and the province does not have the capability and capacity to absorb energy beyond 500 MW. The two transmission lines worth \$4 billion will run from Matiani to Faisalabad and Lahore, respectively. These transmission lines are providing 4000 MW to Punjab. Looking at this picture, the overall situation in rural Balochistan is worse, where 85% of the population lives and some areas in Balochistan are not even linked with the national grid systems. This is an alarming situation where a major portion of the population still doesn't have access to electricity, and it will further deteriorate the growth of the province.

Energy  
Production in  
Balochistan:

Balochistan is producing about 2422 MW of electricity using gas-based thermal. Almost all the power generated in the province is being transmitted to other provinces. Electricity has been purchased by QESCO from two autonomous power producers include the Uch power plant and Habibullah Coastal Power plant. The province also receives electricity from Iran and provides it to the area along the border. The federal government initiative to reduce load-shedding will not positively impact the province because the existing transmission lines are not that much capable of

supplying any load beyond 600 MW. There is not a single 500 kV grid station in the province.

No doubt, it is impossible to provide and extend transmission lines to the far-flung areas because it will cost too much. The electricity demand in rural areas is very low and the houses in rural areas need only lighting for roomed houses built of mud. Furthermore, investors feel hesitant to invest in the province due to lack of infrastructure, revenue generation and security.

Considering all these factors, solar energy remains the best source because Balochistan receives the highest solar radiance in its area. According to a World Bank assessment, Balochistan receives the highest average sunlight in the world, which makes it rich in solar energy. Keeping in view these factors and in spite of extending the transmission lines to the far-flung and remote areas, the government should provide a solar panel to each house that is more economical and cost efficient. It will empower the socio-economic conditions of the population living in rural areas.

The Wind Corridor  
of Balochistan and  
Government's  
efforts:

Besides solar energy, the wind energy is another essential source and Balochistan has been blessed with a high rate of wind speeds. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), in

their shared data, suggested that the wind speed in the coastal area of the province is enough to generate electricity. In this line, Pakistan Council of Renewable Energy Technologies (PCRET) has electrified 1600 villages along the coastal side of Sindh and Balochistan. A study suggested that the coastal belt of Pakistan can produce 50,000 MW through wind resources. To minimize the cost of these projects, the government should encourage local manufacturers of wind turbines. In this regard, to overcome the energy poverty in Balochistan, the federal government can play a vital role in alleviating energy poverty by using renewable energy resources in electrifying the rural areas of Balochistan keeping in view the solar radiance and wind speed, there is a huge potential for renewable energy in the province. They should not electrify the far-flung areas with conventional grid-based methods because they will maximize their cost as the traditional modes of energy are expensive, and in the long run, it cannot meet the energy demand for sustainable development.

The government should provide the due share in CPEC related energy projects to the province. Suppose the issues related to energy poverty are not taken seriously, the dream of achieving SDGs will never be achieved, and the already poverty-stricken province will observe more difficulties in the coming days.

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## Multivariate Aspects of Climate Change in Pakistan

the running rivers due to frontal advance, near to the densely populated areas of the Karakoram region.

By constant observation of the prevailing climate change, it is airing the endless future threats only due to the GLOFs.

For instance, the Indus River System (IRS) is the jugular vein of irrigation in Pakistan. It is providing water for almost 90% of the food product in Pakistan.

The ice-dam formation due to the GLOFs will slow down the water flowing pace downstream. And could raise a deep impasse among the units for water distribution formula. In the end, it will ultimately surface the challenge of food insecurity in Pakistan.

The Karakoram Range, more importantly, is the home of the antiquated One Belt One Road Initiative (OBOR) by giving with a potent

## The Dilemma of Artificial Intelligence (AI) weapons

Measures ECCM. When the lethality of weapons created a situation of mutually assured destruction (MAD) the situation became unacceptable. Various treaties like Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), and many more were signed to avert the unacceptable destruction.

Exercising restraint was never so important. Exercising restraint was never so important before the development of autonomous weapons; chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear.

The Perils and Promises of Artificial Intelligence

Harassing the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in warfare brought a paradigm shift in the modus operandi of warfare. It eliminated the requirement of direct human involvement in selecting and engaging targets. Even the smart-

est of the weapons were hitherto launched and guided by humans. This development has given rise to the debate of ethics and morality all over

again. António Guterres, the UN Secretary-General, joined the skeptics on Twitter where he wrote in March 2019, "Autonomous machines with the power and discretion to select targets and take lives without human involvement are politically unacceptable, morally repugnant and should be prohibited by international law."

Word count (592)

Group captain Masoor ul Hassan served as Fighter Pilot in the PAF.

He holds an M.Sc. degree in Defence & Strategic Studies (DSS) from

QAU and another M.Sc. in Strategic Studies from KU.

## Germany approves Eurofighter jet delivery to Turkey

ANKARA (INP): Germany, which has approved the delivery of Eurofighter jets to Turkey, clearing the way for a deal that had been delayed by tensions between the two countries. Turkey had been in talks for several years on buying 40 of the aircraft, which are constructed by a consortium from Germany, Britain, Italy and Spain.

The Typhoon jets are to be built in Britain and London is leading the negotiations. But all members of the consortium must sign off on the sale and

Germany, which has clashed with Turkey over Israel's war on Gaza, had objected.

However, the defence ministry had now "sent a written confirmation to the Turkish government confirming the approval of the export", government spokesman Stefan Kornelius told journalists in Berlin.

News outlet Der Spiegel reported that Chancellor Friedrich Merz had bowed to pressure from British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, as the project is expected to support about 20,000 jobs in Britain. After Ger-

many gave the green light to the sale, the Turkish and British defence ministers signed a preliminary agreement in Istanbul on Wednesday for the delivery of the jets.

The sale "will strengthen the decades-long friendship between key NATO allies and will be an important step towards enhancing Turkey's advanced air combat capabilities", Turkey's defence ministry said. British Defence Secretary John Healey said the deal would "strengthen NATO's collective defence, and

boost both our countries' industrial bases by securing thousands of skilled jobs across the UK for years to come".

Turkey's request for the planes was submitted to the German government more than two years ago, but the two countries have since clashed over the war in Gaza.

Ankara has vocally criticised Israel's offensive in the Palestinian territory while Berlin has been a staunch supporter of Israel, although it has voiced some criticism over the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza.



QUETTA: Provincial Adviser on Women Development Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi in a group photo with the participants of an event held at BUTEMS on the theme of Youth Protection and Mental Health.

## Columbia University to pay over \$200 million to resolve Trump probes

WASHINGTON (INP): Columbia University said it will pay over \$200 million to the US government in a settlement with President Donald Trump's administration to resolve federal probes and have most of its suspended federal funding restored. Trump has targeted several universities since returning to office in January over the pro-Palestinian student protest movement that rolled college campuses last year. He welcomed the agreement between his administration and Columbia in a post on social media.

In March, the Trump administration said it was penalizing Columbia over how it handled last year's protests by canceling \$400 million in federal funding. It contended that Columbia's response to alleged antisemitism and harassment of Jewish and Israeli members of the university community was insufficient.

"Under today's agreement, a vast majority of the federal grants which were terminated or paused in March 2025 will be reinstated and Columbia's access to billions of dollars in current and future grants will be restored," the university said in a statement.

Columbia said it also agreed to settle investigations brought by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for \$21 million and that its deal with the Trump administration preserved its "autonomy and authority over faculty hiring, admissions, and academic decision-making".

After the government canceled funding, the school acquiesced later in March to a series of demands that included scrutiny of departments, offering courses on the Middle East and other concessions that were widely condemned by US academics.

Last week, Columbia adopted a controversial definition of antisemitism that equates it with opposition to Zionism. The school said it would no longer engage with pro-Palestinian group Columbia University Apartheid Divest.

"Imagine selling your students out just so you can pay Trump \$221 million and keep funding genocide," the pro-Palestinian group said on Wednesday, calling the settlement a bribe.

Israel denies genocide accusations in Gaza and casts its military action as "self-defense" after a deadly October 2023 attack by Palestinian Hamas militants.

Campus protesters demanded an end to US support for Israel's devastating military assault on Gaza and a commitment that the university will cease investing any of its \$14.8 billion endowment in weapons makers and companies that support Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories.

Education Secretary Linda McMahon said Columbia agreed to discipline student offenders for severe diversity of campus operations, make structural changes to their Faculty Senate, bring viewpoint diversity to their Middle Eastern studies programs, eliminate race preferences from their hiring and admissions practices, and end DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) programs.

The government has labeled pro-Palestinian protesters as antisemitic. Protesters, including some Jewish groups, say the government has wrongly conflated their criticism of Israel's actions with antisemitism and their advocacy for Palestinian rights with support for extremism.

## Iran says it will not halt nuclear enrichment ahead of European talks

TEHRAN (INP): Iran has no plans to abandon its nuclear programme, including uranium enrichment, despite the "severe" damage caused by US strikes to its facilities, the country's foreign minister said ahead of renewed talks with European powers.

Iran is scheduled to meet the United Kingdom, France and Germany in Istanbul on Friday to discuss its nuclear programme, with

Tehran accusing European powers of scuppering a landmark 2015 nuclear deal. The meeting will be the first since Iran's 12-day war with Israel last month, during which the United States carried out strikes against Tehran's nuclear facilities. For now, enrichment "is stopped because, yes, damages are serious and severe," Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told Fox

News on Monday. The 2015 agreement, reached between Iran and UN Security Council permanent members the UK, France, Russia and the United States, plus Germany, imposed curbs on Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief.

However, Iran unveiled in 2018 when the US, during Trump's first term, unilaterally withdrew and reimposed sweeping

sanctions. Although Europe pledged continued support, a mechanism intended to offset US sanctions never effectively materialised, forcing many Western firms to exit Iran, deepening its economic crisis. "Iran holds the European parties responsible for negligence in implementing the agreement," said foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei ahead of Friday's talks in Istanbul.



QUETTA: BNP (A) deputy secretary Noor Ahmed Bloch addressing a press conference.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Jiang Zidong, presents a birthday message from President Xi Jinping to President Asif Ali Zardari, conveying warm wishes on his upcoming birthday, at Atrium-e-Sade.

## UK, Korean, Kazakh universities to 'establish campuses' in Punjab

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz chaired a special high-level meeting on Thursday, where a comprehensive roadmap was unveiled to improve academic standards, promote institutional autonomy, and encourage international collaborations.

During the meeting, the Higher Education Department briefed the chief minister on a wide range of reform proposals, which included the transformation of key public universities, partnerships with foreign institutions, and digital modernization of campuses across the province. The meeting was informed that several prestigious universities from the United Kingdom, South Korea, and Kazakhstan have expressed interest in es-

tablishing campuses in Punjab. Notable names include the University of London, University of Brunel, University of Gloucestershire, and University of Leicester.

UET, GC University, Women's University to become model institutions. CM Nawaz approved the designation of the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Government College University (GC), and Government College for Women University as model institutions under the provincial government's higher education vision.

To improve accountability and performance, the chief minister approved the establishment of an Education Vigilance Squad that will conduct surprise inspections in colleges and universities, checking on attendance, cleanliness, academic quality, and institutional discipline. Reports from the squad will be submitted directly to the education minister for immediate action.

Furthermore, a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) system will be implemented in all public universities to monitor and evaluate the performance of vice chancellors and other key staff.

The meeting also reviewed updates on the CM Punjab Honahar Scholarship and Laptop Scheme, which has attracted over 19,000 applicants from Punjab and other provinces. CM Maryam Nawaz directed relevant departments to expedite the review and disbursement processes.

Inactive colleges and upcoming conference.

## ACC President Mohsin Naqvi calls for bold reforms in cricket

DHAKA (INP): President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) and Bangladesh need to function as a unified front. Prior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has emphasised that Pakistan and Bangladesh must work as one team to uplift the standard of cricket in the region. During his visit to Bangladesh, a dinner was hosted in Naqvi's honour by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) in Dhaka. Speaking at the event, ACC President Mohsin Naqvi stated, "The ACC plays a vital role in the promotion of cricket,

and for the game's progress, Pakistan and Bangladesh need to function as a unified front." Naqvi called for concrete and effective decisions to improve cricket across the region. He highlighted that collaboration between both countries is crucial for improving development, women's cricket programmes, and the overall cricketing ecosystem. Earlier in the day, Naqvi held a bilateral meeting with Bangladesh's Sports Minister Asif Mahmood and both sides agreed to

enhance sports cooperation across multiple fronts. The meeting also focused on launching a joint umpire development programme, promoting women's cricket initiatives, and signing a formal MoU to promote sports exchange, educational collaborations, including scholarship and exchange programmes between Pakistan and Bangladesh. Inno-

ventions in solar energy and technological partnerships were also discussed, along with security documentation reforms. During the interaction, Naqvi briefed the Bangladesh delegation on Pakistan's NADRA digital security system, offering technical insight into its robust framework. Bangladesh's Minister Asif Mahmood expressed deep interest in the NADRA model.

Naqvi extended an invitation to Bangladeshis umpires for training sessions in Pakistan.



QUETTA: Jannat-e-Islami Balochistan, MPA Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman addressing a press conference.

## An-24 aircraft crashes in Russia's Amur region, all 49 feared dead

MOSCOW (INP): A Russian passenger aircraft carrying 49 people, including five children, crashed in the country's far eastern Amur region on Thursday, with all on board feared dead, according to preliminary reports from local authorities and state media. The An-24 twin-engine turboprop, operated by Angara Airlines — a Siberia-based carrier — had been en route from the border city of Blagoveshchensk to the remote town of Tynda when it vanished from radar during its final approach.

Russia's Ministry of Emergency Situations confirmed that the aircraft's debris was located by a search helicopter near the mountainous area bordering China. A large fire had engulfed the fuselage, with no immediate signs of survivors. "According to preliminary data, there were 43 passengers aboard, including five children, along with six crew members," said Vasily Orlov, the regional governor of Amur. "Unfortunately, all aboard are presumed dead."

Initial findings suggest that poor visibility and a potential error in landing procedure may have contributed to the crash, Russian state news agency IASS reported. Weather conditions in the region were said to be unfavourable at the time, though investigations are ongoing.

The An-24 model, once a staple of Soviet-era aviation, has seen

multiple incidents in recent years due to ageing airframes and inconsistent maintenance, particularly among regional carriers operating in remote and challenging terrain.

Emergency services were promptly deployed, but adverse weather hampered initial efforts to reach the crash site. A full-scale investigation has been launched by Russia's Federal Air Transport Agency and the Interstate Aviation Committee.

Footage shared by local media showed a smouldering wreckage strewn across the forested crash site, with blackened debris indicating the intensity of the impact. The airline and federal authorities have yet to release a complete list of passengers, pending notification of families. Crisis centres have been set up at airports in both Blagoveshchensk and Tynda to provide support to relatives.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has been briefed on the incident and has ordered a transparent investigation. "All necessary support will be provided to the families of the victims," the Kremlin said in a brief statement.

This incident is one of the deadliest in Russia's aviation sector in recent years, raising renewed concerns over older regional aircraft in use across the country's vast and often isolated territories.

## Khaqan Abbasi rejects May 9 verdict, calls for inclusive political dialogue

MURREE (INP): Awam Pakistan Party (INP) and former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said that the verdict related to the May 9 incidents will not be accepted by the nation two years from now, adding that such decisions have historically failed to gain legitimacy from politicians or the legal fraternity.

Speaking in various television talk shows, Abbasi termed the May 9 episode significant but insisted that the manner in which justice is being delivered raises serious concerns. "If the Chief Justice of the country is unable to even hear a constitutional petition, then what justice can one expect? A country without law cannot function history has taught us this," he said. Criticizing the

state of governance, Abbasi said, "Yes, take all the powers, make the 27th Amendment after the 26th, but without capacity, you cannot run the country. This government is failing. No matter how long it lasts, it cannot lead Pakistan forward." He warned that the challenges facing Pakistan today are unprecedented.

We must focus on development, not just survival. The country is stagnating.

A national political dialogue is essential one that includes not only political parties but also the military and judiciary," Abbasi urged.

The former premier also lamented rampant corruption and lack of governance, saying that all provinces, including Punjab,

suffer equally. "Recommendation culture may have ended, but corruption has reached its peak. Roads in Islamabad are costlier than those in Dubai but last only a few months — where is all the money going?"

Abbasi further stated that every system in Pakistan — from justice and police to development and administration — now operates on financial influence. "Even justice is bought. In the past, Rs. 600 billion in gas development surcharges were imposed and the government lost. The carbon levy is another such burden. Stock market performance and macroeconomic indicators are measured less when they don't translate into food on the poor man's table," he stressed.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti is chairing a meeting on establishing peace on the Sibi-Nasirabad National Highway.

## Body of child found three days after Babusar flash flood tragedy

GILGIT (INP): The body of a young child who went missing during a flash flood near Babusar Top was recovered three days after the devastating incident that claimed multiple lives and left dozens stranded in the region.

Three-year-old Abdul Hadi, son of Dr Mashal Fatima, was swept away by floodwaters on Sunday when a family returning from Skardu was caught in a sudden deluge near Babusar Top in Diamer district.

His body was recovered late Wednesday evening near Dassar, several kilometers from the site of the incident, after being spotted by locals who immediately alerted authorities.

Gilgit-Balistan Scouts, acting on the information, retrieved the child's body from a nearby drain and shifted it to a hospital in Chilas. Family members had returned to Chilas to collect the body after search efforts continued for several days.

Dr Mashal Fatima, a resident of Lodhran and affiliated with Shahida Islam Medical College, and her brother-in-law, Fahad Islam, lost their lives in the same

incident.

According to a family member, Fahad had jumped into the floodwaters in an attempt to save his aunt and Abdul Hadi but was unable to survive.

The bodies of Dr Mashal and Fahad Islam were flown to Lodhran from Islamabad.

The flash flood, triggered by heavy monsoon rains, has caused widespread devastation in Gilgit-Balistan. According to rescue officials, at least six bodies have been recovered so far, and the search operation for 18 more missing tourists is ongoing.

A rescue team operating in the Babusar Valley confirmed that inclement weather and recurring landslides continue to hamper efforts. The region remains under emergency, with several key routes, including the Karakoram Highway and Gilgit-Skardu Road, blocked at multiple locations due to landslides and collapsed infrastructure.

A planned deployment of a C-130 aircraft to assist in the search and evacuation operation could not be carried out due to adverse weather conditions.

Meanwhile, thousands of tourists remain stranded, with long queues of vehicles reported on blocked roads.

During his visit to Babusar Valley, Gilgit-Balistan Chief Minister stated that the ongoing search and rescue operations would continue without pause and that road access would be restored within three to four days.

He acknowledged that the scale of destruction was significant and that immediate relief and recovery efforts were underway.

In Astore and Thor valleys, at least three more individuals, including a woman, lost their lives due to related weather events. Heavy rains and flash floods have damaged bridges, roads, and farmlands, altering the landscape of several tourist spots. In Thor and Enger areas, two mosques were damaged, and two children were reportedly swept away while on their way to a mosque. More than 50 houses have been wiped out in various parts of Diamer Valley, prompting authorities to declare several areas, including parts of the Babusar Highway, as disaster-hit zones.

## Several homes, shops destroyed as cloudburst strikes Skardu again

SKARDU (INP): A devastating flash flood caused by a cloudburst in the Khandus area of Skardu has wreaked large-scale destruction, leaving several people, including tourists, stranded.

According to local sources, the flood swept away and completely destroyed 49 houses, 20 shops, and two mosques. The region's communication infrastructure has collapsed, and a connecting bridge was washed away, cutting off ground access to the area.

In Subdivision Daghoni, heavy rainfall caused the roof of a house to collapse, resulting in the death of a young girl who was buried under the debris. Rescue operations are underway in the affected areas; however, challenging terrain and broken communication links are hampering relief efforts.

This disaster occurred just two days after similar cloudbursts triggered floods and landslides in the Diamer district, where a doctor from Lodhran,

along with his brother-in-law and father-in-law, lost their lives, while his son remains missing.

Rescue teams quickly responded and successfully evacuated over 200 stranded tourists, relocating them to Chilas. In Diamer, an 8-kilometer-long connecting road was also destroyed due to landslides.

Meanwhile, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has released its latest report stating that the total death toll from recent rains across the country has reached 252. Among the deceased are 121 children, 85 men, and 46 women.

In the past 24 hours alone, 10 more fatalities and 13 injuries have been reported. The highest number of deaths occurred in Punjab (139), followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (60), Sindh (24), and Balochistan (16).

Thousands of individuals, including international tourists, have been left stranded at various points in Gilgit-Balistan due

to road blockages caused by landslides, including on the Karakoram Highway (KKH). Communication lines were also affected as fiber optic cables sustained damage in multiple areas, disrupting mobile and internet services throughout the region.

According to Gilgit-Balistan government spokesperson Faizullah Faraq, the KKH remains blocked at Achar Nallah in Kohistan district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He stated that although traffic has resumed on parts of the KKH within Gilgit-Balistan, repair work continues in Kohistan. Meanwhile, Babusar Pass Road is obstructed at several spots.

Mr. Faraq confirmed that all tourists stuck along the Babusar route have been safely rescued, and search operations are ongoing for any missing persons. Those evacuated from Babusar have been relocated to Chilas, where local hotel owners and government officials have provided free lodging arrangements.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Mr. Rana Ishaq Hussain, addressing the Interactive Session on Economic Integration between Pakistan and the ASEAN Region as Chief Guest - organized by FPCCI on July 24, 2025, at FPCCI President Secretariat.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Arizona State University led by Chairman of Cititana Education Doug Becker met Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## PM commends WB support to Pakistan's position on Indus Waters Treaty

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday met with Regional Vice-President of the World Bank for the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (MENAAP) Ousmane Dione, where they expressed a shared commitment to further strengthening cooperation in the coming years to achieve long-term development goals and build a prosperous future for the people of Pakistan.

During the meeting held in Islamabad, the prime minister especially thanked World Bank President Ajay Banga and former Country Director for Pakistan Najib Benhassine for their pivotal role in advancing the new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Pakistan.

He appreciated the strategic role of the CPF in supporting Pakistan's development pri-

orities, particularly in the areas of energy, human capital, climate change, and governance reforms.

He also acknowledged the World Bank's principled support for Pakistan's legitimate position in light of India's unilateral and unlawful actions undermining important international agreements such as the Indus Waters Treaty.

The prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to upholding international law, achieving prosperity, and maintaining regional peace, and reiterated the country's resolve to resolve all issues through dialogue.

The prime minister thanked the World Bank for its timely and generous assistance during the devastating floods of 2022, which helped Pakistan initiate immediate relief efforts and begin reconstruction and rehabilitation ac-

tivities. Ousmane Dione expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for the warm hospitality extended during his visit to Pakistan.

He reaffirmed the World Bank's commitment to deepening and expanding its longstanding partnership with Pakistan and enhancing collaboration in key sectors of the economy.

Mr Dione appreciated Pakistan's ongoing macroeconomic recovery and praised the prime minister's government for steering the country toward financial stability and sustainable growth.

He particularly commended the current administration's reform agenda, noting PM Shehbaz Sharif's strong leadership in advancing institutional reforms, restoring investor confidence, and promoting inclusive economic development.

## Pakistan ready for talks with India on all outstanding issues: FO

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan is ready to engage in dialogue with India on all pending issues, but the decision now lies with New Delhi.

This was stated by Foreign Office Spokesperson Shafiq Ali Khan during the weekly press briefing on Thursday.

Speaking about the upcoming diplomatic engagements, he mentioned that Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar is currently on an official visit to the United States. His meeting with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio will cover regional and global matters, including Iran and ceasefire efforts.

He clarified that the Iranian President's visit to Pakistan has not been canceled; dates are being finalized.

Shafiq Ali Khan reaffirmed that Pakistan-Iran relations remain strong, and important issues will be discussed during the Iranian President's visit. However, he said it is prema-

ture to confirm whether the Pak-Iran gas pipeline will be on the agenda.

Regarding Pakistan's stance at the United Nations, Ishaq Dar reiterated the country's commitment to sustainable development, economic reforms, and climate action. He also held a detailed discussion with the UN Secretary-General on regional and global challenges, including the Indus Waters Treaty, the Jammu and Kashmir issue, and the need for multilateral solutions.

Khan noted that under Pakistan's presidency, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 2788 aimed at promoting the peaceful resolution of global conflicts.

On Palestine, the Foreign Minister called for an immediate ceasefire, an end to attacks on hospitals and schools, and the protection of civilians during his UN address. Pakistan also strongly condemned Israel's strikes on Syria, term-

ing them a blatant violation of international law.

He reiterated Pakistan's commitment to sending humanitarian aid to Gaza as soon as access routes are open.

Commenting on recent clashes between Thailand and Cambodia, the spokesperson said Pakistan is monitoring the situation and supports a peaceful resolution of all disputes.

On the Afghan visa fraud issue, Khan said investigations are ongoing. Referring to Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's recent visit to Afghanistan, he said ties between the two countries have improved, though the presence of terrorist safe havens remains a major concern under discussion.

Plans are also underway for a future visit by the Afghan Foreign Minister to Pakistan, and bilateral trade is increasing. Responding to a question about BRICS membership, Khan said Pakistan is making serious efforts to join the organization.



ISLAMABAD: Managing Director PBM Senator Capt. Shaheen Khalid Butt and Managing Director OPF Muhammad Afzal Bhatti signing a MoU that outlines a shared vision to implement sustainable projects focused on social protection, in a ceremony held at PBM Head Office.

## Pakistan intensifies diplomatic outreach to expose Indian oppression in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, standing resolutely with the people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, has intensified diplomatic outreach to expose Indian state oppression in the occupied territory.

Pakistan always supports dialogue and diplomacy and it has again offered dialogue for resolution of disputes. This is reflected in Pakistan's sponsored UN resolution "Promoting International Peace and Security through Multilateralism and the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes."

At the recent OIC Contact Group meeting held in Banjul, Pakistan presented a comprehensive dossier documenting India's grave human rights violations, arbitrary detentions, and demographic engineering in the occu-

piated territory.

Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva addressed the 56th session of the UN Human Rights Council in June 2025, highlighting the Modi regime's brutal persecution of Jammu and Kashmiri leaders, media curbs, and denial of basic freedoms in Kashmir. He urged the global community to break its silence and hold India accountable for its war crimes and systemic repression.

Earlier this year, Pakistan also organized a special seminar on Kashmir at the European Parliament in Brussels, where lawmakers, scholars, and rights activists demanded urgent international intervention to end the occupation and restore Kashmiris' inalienable rights.

The Pakistani nation has also demonstrated solidarity through symbolic acts—observ-

ing the 56th anniversary of the 1947-48 war and planning widespread August 5 events to mark six years since India's illegal abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A.

The Foreign Office issued a strong condemnation of the ongoing persecution of Jammu and Kashmiri leaders and political activists, calling their prolonged detentions and denial of medical care a blatant violation of international humanitarian law.

"Standing with Kashmiris against Indian occupation is not just a political position—it is a moral imperative," said Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar. "Every voice raised for Kashmir lends strength to a people silenced under occupation."

Pakistan continues to urge the UN, OIC, and global civil society to act now. Silence, it warns, is complicity in the suffering of millions living under the shadow of military occupation.