

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Sunday, August 10, 2025

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Balochistan CM Sarfaraz Bugti: 'Balochistan Is the Heart of Pakistan, No Force Can Break It'

Qasem Shah:

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti has declared that Balochistan is the "heart of Pakistan" and the country's existence is impossible without it. Speaking as the chief guest at the National Stability and Pakistan Conference in Quetta, held under the theme Fatch-e-Ma'rakah-e-Haq and in connection with Independence Day celebrations, the chief minister said that the province's true image is rarely presented, and even fewer voices speak for it.

Bugti highlighted Balochistan's historic role in the creation of Pakistan, recalling how tribal elders, under the leadership of Qasim-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, convened a jirga and made the historic decision to join Pakistan — a moment he described as being "written in golden letters" in history.

He criticised elements promoting what he termed a "so-called nationalism" to advance anti-Pakistan agendas, warning that such efforts were aimed at pushing the Baloch people into a "futile war" that brings only bloodshed, fear, and loss of innocent lives. Referring to the 1965 war, he said the world witnessed in the Ma'rakah-e-Haq how the Pakistan Army, despite being outnumbered, defeated a much larger enemy.

Addressing socio-political challenges, Bugti stressed that while Balochistan has problems, underdevelopment cannot justify picking up arms or rebelling against the state. Quoting Article



5 of the Constitution, he said it obliges every citizen to show unconditional loyalty to the state. "Those who shed innocent blood cannot call themselves Baloch. Their only identity is that of terrorists," he asserted. Bugti also praised Balochistan's exemplary religious harmony, where all sects and faiths coexist peacefully, and acknowledged the contributions of minority communities to national unity. He cited Senator Dhanesh Kumar's strong pro-Pakistan voice in the Senate as an example of this unity.

On social media, the CM

called it "the biggest fitna (trial) of the modern era," warning that false information and hate speech are being spread unchecked. He criticised the trend of sharing unverified content, saying it fuels confusion and societal division. "Recently, a month-long football tournament in Balochistan drew 30,000 fans and teams from across the country. But instead of celebrating this success, a small controversial clip was made viral to distract from the achievement," he lamented. Highlighting government efforts to connect youth with the state, Bugti said jirgas

and open courts have been organised across the province to engage directly with communities. While affirming the right to peaceful protest, he announced that prolonged road blockades have been ended, and those willing to surrender arms will find the doors to dialogue open. However, he warned that the state will stand firmly with victims against perpetrators of violence. Referring to a recent tragic incident in Musakhel, he described the plight of a grieving woman whose husband and son were brutally killed before her eyes.

Internet Suspension Till Aug 31: Users Demand Refund from Service Providers

Qasem Shah:

QUETTA: Internet services will remain suspended in Quetta and several other areas of the province until August 31, according to a senior official of the Balochistan administration. Speaking on condition of anonymity, as he was not authorised to speak to the media, the official said the decision was taken to "maintain law and order" and prevent any untoward incidents during the month.

He explained that cellular companies have suspended services at the request of the Balochistan government, citing security concerns.

Authorities believe militant groups use the internet to communicate, prompting the extended suspension.

However, millions of internet users across Balochistan have been hit hard by the blackout.

Many, including local residents like Muhammad Aslam,

Sana Baloch, and Ali Raza, expressed frustration over financial losses, saying they had already paid for monthly internet packages but have been unable to use them.

"This is the fourth consecutive day without internet," said a Quetta resident, adding that service providers should freeze packages during outages or compensate customers.

Social media users have also demanded that the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority ensure that consumers are reimbursed for the lost days of service.

The suspension has affected businesses, students, and freelancers alike, further highlighting the dependence on uninterrupted internet connectivity in today's economy.



Aimal Wali Khan Vows Legal and Parliamentary Battle Against Mines & Minerals Act, Slams MPO Arrests

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Awami National Party (ANP) leader and Senator Aimal Wali Khan announced a decisive move to oppose the controversial Mines and Minerals Act in the Balochistan Assembly, declaring it harmful to provincial interests and a direct threat to Balochistan's sovereignty over its natural resources.

Addressing a multi-party gathering in Quetta, he revealed that instructions had been issued to his party's parliamentary leader to immediately present a resolution

in the provincial assembly against the Act. He emphasised that all political forces should unite and challenge the legislation in court, describing it as contrary to the rights of the province's people.

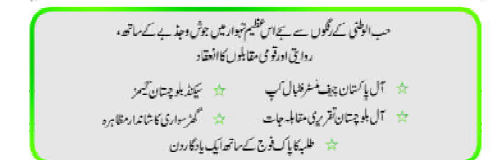
"The resources of Balochistan belong to its people, and no legislation undermining provincial autonomy or public rights will be accepted," he stated. In the same address, Aimal Wali Khan also voiced strong criticism over the detention of political workers under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) law, branding it a "black law" used to suppress dissent. He said his party would take the matter to Islamabad and raise it on every available platform, warning that the misuse of MPO to target political activists was unacceptable.

The dual stance — opposing the Mines and Minerals Act and denouncing the use of MPO — reflects a broader political pushback against policies that opposition leaders claim undermine both democratic freedoms and provincial autonomy.



Babar Azam leads the chart with the highest ODI average against West Indies

Babar Azam holds the top spot for the highest ODI batting average against the West Indies, boasting an impressive 79.7 with 717 runs in 10 innings. His remarkable consistency, including several scores over fifty, places him ahead of renowned players such as Joe Root, Hashim Amla, and Virat Kohli.



Balochistan's Rs250 Billion Federal Allocation Must Drive Inclusive, Transparent Infrastructure Development
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Editor: Asim Khan

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

Editorial:

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

However, we emphasize that this federal funding must be utilized for high-impact, long-term infrastructure projects — not short-term political schemes or small-scale, non-viable projects. Parent 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).

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.

By Dr Shujat Ahmed:

Unseeing warning signs: choosing fatal outcomes?

Jinnah saw a macabre future for his founded refuge for some Muslims of India; not only has it come to pass, worse still lies ahead.

No words can describe the suffering dumped on Pakistan not by outsiders but by choosing of her own people under the rule of messianic mantra "country is saved, better days ahead" — authors of past failures claiming to fix it. This noble idea began in 1948, underwritten by advanced outcomes, still the same creed of authors pretending this time problem will go away.

There are no mere coincidences in this world. Predicting outcomes of choices is not rocket science; even in infants cause-and-effect reasoning emerges by age of 27 weeks (Leslie et al., 1987), yet complex forecasting demands deliberate analysis (Salcedo et al., 2008).

Human actions, once created carve their own paths of consequences (intended or unintended), and can neither be recreated because past cannot be undone, nor can it be predicted. Outcomes, however, can be immediate or delayed — always preceded by warning signs. If created reality is to be remedied, then it demands new actions that enact new outcomes. Thus, cycle continues until death ends our existence on this planet.

At individual level, we can trace our decisions' trajectories and warning signs until consequences strike. At national level, stakes multiply exponentially. Legislation and policy choices demand debate, negotiation and compromise, with consequences lasting generations for country and its citizens.

This parallel becomes profound as PakRaj nexus (British Loyalist Feudal-Military-Bureaucracy) unjustifiably captured Pakistan after Jinnah's death. Reality behind their smokescreen has been pushing country deeper into bund-gali, marked with decades of institutional and governance failures, incompetence, corruption and a very weak judiciary, unable to uphold constitution or safeguard rights.

Our devastating story can be quantified through global rankings, and these brutal metrics are purposefully and brazenly rejected — not in the exercise of logic but in aura of power.

Socio-developmental indicators signal a crisis leaning towards collapse. Bottom-tier placement, in Knowledge, Development, Sustainable Goals and Gender Gap Index. Nearly half the population lives in poverty, and multidimensional poverty grips a third. Pakistan's global brand and passport outlook is pitiful.

Ironically, our current mantra to prosperity via digital/IT sector, is through pitfalls, as we are labeled "weak performer" due to crippling gaps in education, innovation, ICT and research (Knowledge Index: 120/141). Huawei's Digitization Index (68/77) brands us a "starter". With education spending below 2% of GDP, this "better days ahead" story will crumble.

Most alarming for Pakistan is the status evaluated by Fragile States In-

dex (FSI). Since 2006, FSI has tracked stability using 12 indicators (1 = stable, 10 = unstable) across 4 dimensions. Our 2024 placement (27/179) reveals interlocking vulnerabilities.

Security Apparatus: 7.9. Precarious security, evident in daily terrorist attacks (Balochistan and KP). Factionalised Elites 9.3. Wealth concentrated in elite hands, citizens left impoverished. Group Grievance 9.0. Marginalised communities — Baloch, Saraiki, Shia, Mohajirs — fueling grievances and wearing down cohesion.

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Economic Decline 8.0. Low GDP growth rates, population expansion (2.7%), youth unemployment, investment dwindles, debt reaches Rs7.6 trillion (BTI-2024 rank 112/137, very weak country). Uneven Development 5.0. Resources are monopolised by PakRaj while public lacks basic health, education and economic opportunities. Brain Drain 5.5. Elite controls gamut employment, middle classes stagnate, masses stuck in menial jobs while skilled manpower leaves country.

State Legitimacy 8.0. Severely eroded by disputed elections, contradictory court rulings and rushed legislation. Public Services 7.6. Crumbling infrastructure, strained public services, limited social safety net. Human Rights 7.8. Marked by enforced disappearances, media suppression, judicial decay. (BTI labels Pakistan "hardline authoritarian" — Political Transformation Index at 99/137).

Demographic Pressure 7.8. Unchecked population growth (2.7%, region's highest), rapid urbanization, especially into Karachi, threatening civic breakdown. IDPs and Refugees 7.3. Refugees still burden state, while flood-affected citizens remain unsettled. External Intervention 8.4. After last year's shocking violence, it worsened this year, so far 502 strikes leaving 737 dead and 991 injured (PKSS 2025), while in June alone, there were 78 incidents — 100 killed and 189 wounded.

Unfortunately, grievances are climbing "escalation ladder" toward broader armed conflict in restive provinces by India and others. Once again, existential threat comes from within, not outside, weirdly reminiscent of East Pakistan (1971).

Why? Because State (Legislature, Government, Judiciary) is once more failing its people, particularly in troubled regions, where security operations persist. One path to empowerment of existing security apparatus, apparently, is an admission that use of force isn't working. Yet, it has been made clear that restive areas will be coerced into submission. Gaza — a grim reminder of where such policies lead.

What's needed are methodical efforts by state to remedy root causes through establishment of national commissions for healing past wounds and charting a new future for multiracial Pakistan — based on Truth, Justice, Equity and Reconciliation (as done in South Africa, Brazil, Canada, Morocco). Sadly, state remains unresponsive.

Arresting doctors

Two doctors were having a leisurely lunch on the banks of a river. While eating they noticed a body floating in the water. Both jumped in the water and dragged the person out of water and started resuscitating him. While busy saving the person, they noticed two more bodies floating in the river. They jumped again and dragged both out and started providing first aid. Again they noticed that many more bodies were coming their way. One of these doctors jumped into the water again to save them while the other, instead of jumping into water, started running upstream.

The doctor in the water shouted to his friend, "John, you don't want to save them?"

"First I need to find out why they are falling into the river," answered the second doctor.

By Dr Rana Jawad Asghar:

Global weather change

For decades now, scientists and weather experts have reached the conclusion that observable global weather changes have been caused by human activity. Science that arrived at that conclusion is simple. It focuses on the burning of fossil fuels that produce carbon dioxide which gets trapped in upper atmosphere and prevents world from becoming part of the global system.

The burning of coal, gas and oil are not the only sources of emissions of climate-altering gases. They are also produced by the burning of fuel by motor vehicles and aircrafts. The development of artificial intelligence needs a lot of energy, supplying it would add further strain on global weather system.

The United Nations system is now involved in studying and preventing global weather change. On July 22, the International Court of Justice based in The Hague issued a strongly worded opinion saying that states must protect their citizens from the "urgent and existential threat of climate change". This statement constituted a major contribution for the global environmental movement and for the countries at the greatest risk of harm.

By Shahid Javed Burki:

A question of timing

THE May 9 convictions are here. Wholesale, and after a long wait — during which time most of those who were behind bars remained behind bars and most of those who had managed to wrangle some form of freedom continued to remain outside. So far, this situation has not really changed as we wait to see if any of the well-known names who have been convicted are found and arrested. None of this is surprising — neither the judgements nor the convictions/acquittals. And not even the names of those who were able to escape being tried in the first place.

So far, in the three decisions which have come forward, among others, Yasmin Rashid and the other prisoners in Lahore have been found guilty, as have key PTI leaders in the various assemblies — from Omar Ayub in the National Assembly to Shibli Faraz in the Senate and the Punjab opposition leader Ahmed Bachche.

The judgements appear to have given a starring role to the key prosecution witnesses, who had in Aman Park, and heard the PTI's "evil planning.

By Arifa Noor:

Building peace in South Asia

SAARC was established with the goal of promoting cooperation in the economic, social, technological and cultural fields. It was hoped it would eventually provide a framework for regional peace and development.

With Afghanistan becoming a member, this hope was further enhanced. However, after Donald Trump likened the success of Asean provides a study in contrast. While it has contributed enormously to the strengthening of

peace and development in Southeast Asia, Saarc has practically ceased to exist. The reasons given include political tensions and bilateral conflicts, differing threat perceptions, institutional weaknesses, lack of political will, limited intra-regional trade, etc. The major reason, however, is that India has always been more interested in regional domination than regional cooperation.

In particular, the Indian demand that the issues of Kashmir and terrorism be resolved exclusively on the basis of its own demands has con-

veyed to the smaller countries of Saarc that if this is India's attitude towards Pakistan, what chance will they have of getting a fair deal with regard to their own issues with India. As a result, Saarc has been unable to agree on a unified political agenda for peace and development.

India is much larger than all the other member states combined in area, population and size. After its chastening experience of Operation Sindoor, one believes that India would now consider the possibilities for coopera-

tion over hegemony. The recent conflict also demonstrated that China has become a South Asian military, economic, political and strategic factor. This is a massive strategic development which seems to have stunned India into strategic paralysis. It is at a loss whether to continue the war or to cut its losses and embark on a course of regional cooperation and development, in which it could still be a leader in the region.

By Ashraf Jehangir Qazi:

Rethinking national security

PAKISTAN, which has one of the world's fastest growing economies, has emerged as a formidable military power. The military's robust response to the 1945 attack and aggression in May this year again proved its prowess.

Indeed, a strong military makes a country safer against external aggression. Yet, this is not enough to provide com-

plete security to a nation whose economy is in a perpetual state of crisis and where close to 45 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line by some estimates.

According to the latest UN report, Pakistan currently ranks 168th out of 193 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI). (The only other South Asian country even lower in the human de-

velopment category is Afghanistan.) More than 23 million children are out of school. It's a scary place for a country that has the highest population growth rate in the region. Some 80m people are believed to be added to the population each year, making it an explosive situation.

Growing inequalities between rich and poor, and among regions, have weakened

the country, presenting the biggest challenge to national security — more than any external threat. As said by economists Acemoglu and Robinson in their seminal book Why Nations Fail, "extractive institutions", intended to benefit a small elite, result in stagnation and perhaps even state failure.

By Zahid Hussain:

Hiroshima horrors

THERE were several sources of angst in Japan back in June, when Donald Trump likened the massive US attack on Iranian nuclear facilities to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. "That hit ended the war," he declared.

The mayor of Nagasaki politely de-

scribed the US president's statement as "regrettable". Mimaki Toshiyuki, a survivor of the 1945 attack and co-chair of Nihon Hidankyo, the advocacy group that was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize last year, called the comments "unacceptable". Various members of the group expressed their anger at a demonstration in

Hiroshima led by others who experienced the catastrophe as children called on Trump to retract his remarks. "Far chance. Trump, like all too many Americans, was brought up to believe that the nation ended World War II with its nuclear thrashing of Japan. They are seldom taught their Asian adversary was prepared

to surrender. Japanese military leaders wanted the US to only to concede that the emperor would remain in place. The US insisted on an unconditional surrender. Once it was achieved in mid-August, Hirohito, a suspected war criminal, remained in the imperial palace.

By Mahir Ali:

Tunnel vision?

IDEAS, good and bad, have a strange way of persisting and penetrating all sorts of barriers — geographical, cultural, linguistic, and above all, time. The edicts of a man who died, imprisoned in a mud cell in the citadel of Damascus in the 14th century, continue to impact us in 2025, the era of AI and virtual reality. I am referring to Al-Din Ibn Taymiyya.

However, today, let us explore the influence of a set of Deobandi interpretations, which are simpler compared to the jurisprudential of the Levant's polymath, yet still equally, if not more, controversial. Bahihsiti Zewar, the original Urdu title, has been translated into English and titled Heavenly Ornaments. Compiled as a toolkit to

help Muslim women entering marriage, it was first published in 1909. Bani Mushiq, who won the 2025 International Booker Prize for her short stories translated into English by Deepa Bhattacharya, the author of a recent interview in the citadel of Damascus in the 14th century, continue to impact us in 2025, the era of AI and virtual reality. I am referring to Al-Din Ibn Taymiyya.

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The regulatory force — a bureaucratic mirage

T he Government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa has recently unveiled a proposal to establish a new "Regulatory Force", a move that at first glance appears bold and assertive.

Arrives wrapped in the language of reform, with promises to crack down on regulatory violations and enforce long-ignored laws. However, beneath the surface, this initiative is far less about reform and far more about repeating the past, clothed in new terminology.

According to the draft bill, the Regulatory Force will investigate and prosecute regulatory offences, headed by a Director General and Chief Minister.

At the district level, the Force will be supported by Deputy Commissioners, career bureaucrats who, under the proposed Regulatory Officer, both in provincial and federal law. Section 13 of the Act even allows the formation of special units for complex and technical crimes, including those involving white-collar or regulatory violations.

What the bill quietly ignores is that the legal machinery to address these offences already exists and has for years. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Act of 2017 explicitly empowers the police to investigate all offences under provincial and federal law. Section 13 of the Act even allows the formation of special units for complex and technical crimes, including those involving white-collar or regulatory violations.

Additionally, the colonial-era Police Rules of 1934 require officers to be conversant with a range of regulatory frameworks from excise and narcotics to food safety and environment-

By Syed Saad Ali Shah:

Trump reaffirms Indian fighter jets were shot down during India-Pakistan standoff

WASHINGTON (INP): U.S. President Donald Trump has once again confirmed the downing of Indian fighter jets during the recent Pakistan-India tensions.

Speaking to the media during the Azerbaijan-Armenia peace agreement event, Trump said that 5 or 6 fighter jets were shot down during the Pakistan-India conflict. He added that the dispute between the two countries was serious, and both Pakistan and India were on the brink of a potential nuclear war.

Donald Trump stated, "I don't want

wars; I want peace and trade. I even stopped a war between Pakistan and India." He also mentioned that a deal with Russia is in its final stage and that he will soon meet with President Putin and President Zelensky, as both Russia and Ukraine now seek peace.

Referring to the Pakistan-India ceasefire, the U.S. President said both countries were heading toward a major war, and he advised them to choose trade over conflict. He praised the leaders of Pakistan and India for showing wisdom.

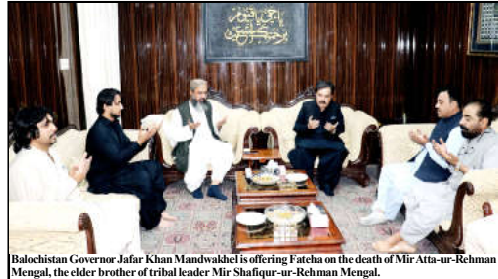
On the other hand,

India, frustrated by the recent U.S. tariff measures, has decided to strengthen its ties with Russia and China. In this regard, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to visit China for the first time in seven years and has also invited Russian President Putin to visit India. Additionally, India has halted the purchase of weapons and aircraft from the United States, a move that global analysts are calling a serious step.

It is worth noting that, according to American magazine Bloomberg, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi de-

clined a dinner invitation from President Trump on June 17, fearing that Trump might arrange a meeting with Pakistan's Field Marshal Asim Munir during the event.

According to Bloomberg, a 35-minute phone call took place between President Trump and Narendra Modi on June 17, which marked a turning point in U.S.-India relations. The tense phone conversation was followed by a cooling in diplomatic ties, with President Trump later describing the Indian economy as "dead" and imposing a 50% tariff on Indian goods.



Balochistan Governor Jafar Khan Mandwakhel is offering Fataha on the death of Mir Atta-ur-Rehman Mengal, the elder brother of tribal leader Mir Shafiq-ur-Rehman Mengal.

Germany suspends arms exports to Israel for use in Gaza

BERLIN (INP): Germany will halt the export of military equipment to Israel that could be used in the Gaza Strip, Chancellor Friedrich Merz said Friday, sparking an angry response from Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Berlin's move, in response to a reaction to an Israeli plan to take control of Gaza City, marks a drastic change of course for Germany, long one of Israel's staunchest international allies. Merz expressed "deep concern" at the suffering of Gaza's civilians.

It was "increasingly unclear," he said, how the latest Israeli military plan would help achieve the aims of disarming Hamas and freeing the remaining Israeli hostages.

Under these circumstances, the German government will not authorise any exports of military equipment that could be used in the Gaza Strip until further notice," he said in a statement.

Netanyahu spoke to Merz later Friday to express his "disappointment," said a statement

from the prime minister's office. "Instead of supporting Israel's just war against Hamas, which carried out the most horrific attack against the Jewish people since the Holocaust, Germany is rewarding Hamas terrorism by embarguing arms to Israel," it said.

Germany's Central Council of Jews also called Merz's decision "disappointing," saying the government should "correct course" and increase pressure on Hamas instead.

Israel has until recently enjoyed broad support across the political spectrum in Germany, a country still seeking to atone for the World War II murder of more than six million Jews. Between the Hamas attack of October 7, 2023 that started the Gaza war and May this year, Germany approved defence exports worth 485 million euros (\$565 million) to Israel.

The deliveries included firearms, ammunition, weapons parts, electronic equipment and armoured vehicles, the government said in June.

Merz reiterated that "Israel has the right to defend itself against Hamas' terror" and that "the release of the hostages and negotiations on a ceasefire are our top priorities."

"The disarmament of Hamas is imperative. Hamas must not play a role in Gaza in future," he said. But "the new military push agreed by the Israeli security cabinet makes it increasingly unclear how these goals are to be achieved," he added.

Merz's decision is a dramatic step for Germany, where the chancellor's tone towards Israel had been sharpening in recent months as the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza deteriorated.

Vice Chancellor Lars Klingbeil of the Social Democrats welcomed the "just decision," saying "the humanitarian suffering in Gaza is unbearable."

A poll published this week by public broadcaster ARD found that 66 percent of Germans expected the government to exert greater

influence over Israel to change its actions in Gaza.

However, while often voicing concern, Germany had so far avoided major concrete steps.

It refrained from following France, Britain and Canada, which have announced plans to recognise a Palestinian state in September, arguing recognition must come at the end of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

Berlin has also opposed the suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, which had been under review by the bloc.

Global alarm has been growing over the suffering in Gaza, where a UN-backed assessment has warned that famine is unfolding. German air force planes have joined others with humanitarian aid airdrops over the war-torn coastal territory.

Merz said that "with the planned offensive, the Israeli government bears even greater responsibility for providing aid to Gaza and again urged "comprehensive access" for UN agencies and aid groups.

Pakistan envoy visits Gansu to boost cooperation in agriculture sector

BEIJING (INP): Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi, held a productive visit to Gansu Province aimed at deepening bilateral co-operation in agriculture, education, and cultural exchange, China Economic Net reported on Saturday.

During his three-day tour, the Ambassador met with senior provincial leaders, including Hu Changheng, CPC Secretary of Gansu, to discuss

strengthening government-to-government, business-to-business, and people-to-people ties.

"Agriculture remains a top priority particularly in irrigation techniques, rain-fed farming, and livestock development," the ambassador emphasised.

He toured the Lanzhou New Area and Jinchuan Science Park, where he observed cutting-edge advancements in industrial innovation

and sustainable technology, expressing interest in aligning such expertise with Pakistan's development goals under CPEC.

In the education sector, the ambassador praised the scale and quality of Gansu Vocational Education Park and visited Lanzhou University, where over 200 Pakistani students are currently enrolled. He welcomed the university's plans to expand research collabora-

tion, particularly in areas that could benefit small-holder farmers in Pakistan. Ambassador Hashmi also highlighted the cultural significance of Lanzhou's famous hand-pulled beef noodles, calling them a symbol of China's vibrant Halal food market. "The visit offered valuable opportunities to strengthen ties across multiple sectors and to build enduring partnerships between Pakistan and Gansu," he said.



QUETTA: Former Minister Khalil George led the Jashan-e-Azadi rally in connection with Independence Day celebration at Zarqoon road.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Muhammad Khur Dac, chaired a meeting to review MoA initiatives introduced in 2024 under his guidance to reform via processes at Pakistan Missions abroad.

Security forces kill another 14 Indian sponsored terrorists along Pakistan-Afghanistan Border

RAWALPINDI (INP): Security forces have killed another 14 Indian sponsored terrorists during sanitisation operation in surrounding areas of Sambaza along Pakistan-Afghanistan Border.

The Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the operation was conducted on night be-

tween August 8 and 9 following the successful engagements by security forces in area of Sambaza, Zhob District, Balochistan on August 7-8.

Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the killed terrorists. The number of khwarij killed in two days has risen to forty seven.

The security forces remain committed to secure the nation's frontiers and thwart attempts at sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Pakistan, the military's media wing said.

33 terrorists killed in night operation near Afghanistan border: ISPR

Earlier, 33 Indian

sponsored terrorists were killed when they were trying to infiltrate through Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Sambaza area of Zhob District in Balochistan.

According to ISPR, own troops effectively engaged and thwarted their attempt to infiltrate. A large cache of weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered.

Kashmir book ban reveals authorities' insecurity, contradicts claims of progress: Indian Express

MUMBAI (INP): The recent ban on 25 books in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) reveals a deepening insecurity within the territory's administration and contradicts claims of progress under the Modi government, a critical editorial by Indian Express has said.

The banned books, authored by Indian and international writers, including A.G. Noorani, Arundhati Roy, Victoria Schofield, Christopher Snedden, Moulana Moudadi, and Ather Zia, explore Kashmir's complex and often tragic history of conflict, an issue the Indian government seems eager to suppress.

The Indian English daily editorial wrote that the ban, ordered by Lieutenant

Governor Manoj Sinha and enforced through widespread police seizures, came less than five months after Indian Home Minister Amit Shah declared that "separatism is breathing its last" in Kashmir.

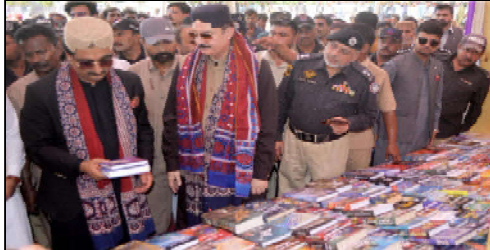
"What changed between March and August that an establishment which was congratulating itself for the progress made in Kashmir should display suppression. Globally, book bans have rarely contributed to reconciliation or stability, it said.

Highlighting the importance of democracy and people's participation, the editorial said, "That history cannot be wished away. Indeed, for peace to endure, it must be engaged with, and different perspectives must converse and even collide in an open

space. Across the world, in societies moving towards a resolution of tangled histories, repressive acts like book bans have rarely contributed to lasting accommodation, or assimilation.

By all accounts, the most effective tool to bring stability and combat disenchantment remains a deepening of democracy and institutionalisation of people's participation in decision-making."

Reaffirming the fundamental principle of freedom of expression, the editorial emphasised that while literary tastes vary, the right to write and read must remain unshaken. It concluded that genuine progress in Kashmir demands inclusive dialogue and respect for individual liberties, not draconian censorship.



HYDERABAD: Governor KPK Faisal Karim Kundi visiting stall during at shrine of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai on the first day of 282th urs celebrations.

Jailed APHC leader Bilal Siddiqui condemns book ban in IIOJK as assault on free speech Banning books can't erase history, Says Agha Hasan

SRINAGAR (INP): Incarcerated leader of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) and Chairman of T e h r e c k - e - Muzahamat, Bilal Siddiqui has strongly and unequivocally condemned the Indian illegally occupied Jammu & Kashmir administration's recent decision to ban 25 books authored by re-

spected Kashmiri, Indian and international scholars, journalists, and thinkers. According to Kashmir Media Service, the IIOJK administration, led by New Delhi-appointed Lieutenant Governor

Manoj Sinha, ordered the confiscation of these 25 books, alleging they threaten India's integrity. Among the banned authors are Victoria Schofield, Alastair Lamb, Christopher Snedden, A.G. Noorani, Arundhati Roy, Mohammad Yusuf Saraf, Basharat Peer, and Dr. Hafsa Kanjwal.

In a statement from Srinagar Central Jail, Bilal Siddiqui described the sweeping ban as a brutal and authoritarian assault on freedom of speech, academic integrity, and intellectual discourse.

He said, "The

banned books—many of which critically document the political, historical, and human rights realities of Kashmir—are being arbitrarily labeled as "seditious" or "terror-glorifying" without any transparent evidence or legal justification. This is a deliberate move to criminalize truth and silence memory."

Bilal Siddiqui further said, "The banning of these books reflects a deepening intolerance for the truth. The regime's fear is not of violence but of knowledge, history, and resistance preserved through

words. They seek to burn pages because they cannot erase facts. The censorship targets not only authors but every thinking, reading, resisting soul in Kashmir."

Meanwhile, senior APHC leader and President of Anjuman Shari Shian, Agha Syed Hasan Al-Moosavi Al-Safavi, also condemned the ban while addressing a gathering in Badgam, calling it an act of strangling intellectual freedom. He said, "Such actions can neither erase historical facts nor obliterate the living memory of the people of Kashmir."

Historic Breakthrough in the South Caucasus



In a landmark moment for regional peace, Armenia and Azerbaijan have jointly acknowledged the significant diplomatic role of US President Donald Trump in helping broker a long-awaited peace accord.

Leaders from both nations have expressed their appreciation and suggested his name for consideration for the Nobel Peace Prize, citing his contribution to

fostering stability in the region.

The agreement outlines a roadmap for diplomatic engagement, economic collaboration, and regional growth, signalling a fresh chapter in Armenia-Azerbaijan relations. Future initiatives include energy projects, trade expansion, and AI-driven partnerships, aiming to build a prosperous and secure South Caucasus. This milestone reflects

the power of dialogue, cooperation, and shared vision for a peaceful future.

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Reko Diq Mining Company Launches Youth & Women Mentorship Program in Chaghi



Riaz Baloch
CHAGHI: Reko Diq Mining Company (RDMC) has rolled out its Community Mentorship Training Program to equip young men and women from villages near the Reko Diq site with essential skills for employment and career growth. The initiative is part of RDMC's broader mission to empower local communities, promote women's participation, and drive inclusive socio-economic development in Balochistan.

The program addresses the gap between vocational education and real-world workplace demands by providing training in CV writing, interview preparation, communication skills, and professional etiquette. These sessions aim to give participants the confidence and practical knowledge

needed to secure formal employment opportunities.

Led by RDMC's Human Resources Department, the mentorship sessions specifically target educated and skilled youth from surrounding villages, including Humai, Durbin Chah, Tang Kachao, and other nearby settlements. To date, more than 114 young men and women have completed the training in their local communities.

Highlighting the company's commitment to women's empowerment, RDMC has conducted dedicated workshops for educated women, preparing them to take on future roles within the company and the broader mining sector.

"At RDMC, we believe that the value of our operations goes

beyond mining—we are here to create meaningful, long-term opportunities for the people of Balochistan," said Inayatullah, Human Resources Lead at RDMC and a native of Nokkundi. "By investing in the skills and potential of local youth and women, we're building both community resilience and the sustainable future of our business."

This mentorship program is one of several community development initiatives run by RDMC, which also supports education, healthcare, and local employment. The company remains committed to ensuring that the people of Balochistan are not just beneficiaries of development projects, but active participants and future leaders in the province's mining industry.

Balochistan Lawmaker Submits Motion Against Mobile Internet Shutdown

Staff Reporter:
QUETTA: Balochistan Assembly's Deputy Parliamentary Leader, Mir Rahmat Saleh Baloch, has tabled an adjournment motion condemning the ongoing suspension of mobile internet services across the province.

In his motion, Baloch highlighted that on August 6, the provincial authorities ordered the shutdown of 4G and 5G services until August 31, paralyzing daily life and business operations.

He said educational institutions, including universities, colleges, and English-medium schools, have been forced to halt classes, leaving thousands of students unable to attend online lectures.

He further stressed that the shutdown has disrupted online businesses, hindered the work of law-enforcement agencies, and even affected routine traffic policing. "This is a blatant violation of fundamental



human rights, and the people are living in a state of frustration and uncertainty," Baloch stated.

He urged the Assembly to

suspend its regular agenda to discuss the issue and called for the immediate restoration of mobile internet services to ease public hardship.



FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi visits Faisalabad Railway Station.



ISLAMABAD: President National Party Dr Abdul Malik Baloch calls on Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif.

Pakistan welcomes historic Azerbaijan-Armenia peace agreement: PM

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif has said that Pakistan has welcomed the historic peace agreement signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia at the White House Summit under the auspices of US President Donald Trump.

In a post uploaded on his X account on Saturday morning, PM Shabbaz Sharif wrote: "This landmark development marks the dawn of a new era of peace, stability, and cooperation in the South Caucasus, a region that has endured decades of conflict and human suffering."

We congratulate President Ilham Aliyev and the people of Azerbaijan on this historic agreement, that reflects wisdom, foresight and sagacity in charting a course for a peaceful future for their region."

The prime minister further said that Pakistan has always stood by the brotherly nation of

Azerbaijan, and stood with them at this proud moment of their history. "We also appreciate the facilitation role of the United States, under President Donald Trump, in bringing the two sides together and securing an agreement that opens new avenues for trade, connectivity, and regional integration. It is our hope that this spirit of dialogue will serve as an example for other regions facing protracted conflicts," he added.

Armenia and Azerbaijan have committed to a lasting peace after decades of conflict, US President Donald Trump said Friday as he hosted the leaders of the South Caucasus rivals at a White House signing event.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijan's longtime President Ilham Aliyev said Trump's mediation should earn him a Nobel Peace Prize — an award the US leader has been vocal about seeking.

The two former Soviet re-

publics "are committing to stop all fighting forever, open up commerce, travel and diplomatic relations and respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity," Trump said at the event.

However the fine print and binding nature of the deal between the long-time foes remained unclear.

The two leaders would have a "great relationship," Trump said. "But if there's conflict... they're going to call me and we're going to get it straightened out," he added. Christian-majority Armenia and Muslim-majority Azerbaijan have feuded for decades over their border and the status of ethnic enclaves within each other's territories.

The nations went to war twice over the disputed Karabakh region, which Azerbaijan recaptured from Armenian forces in a lightning 2023 offensive, sparking the exodus of more than 100,000 ethnic Armenians.

Medical and Dental Colleges Admission Test (MDCAT) exam will be conducted on October 5

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council on Saturday has announced that the year 2025 Medical and Dental Colleges Admission Test (MDCAT) will be conducted on October 5, 2025.

According to PMDC spokesperson, the MDCAT exam is going to be conducted by universities nominated by the federal and provincial authorities, not by PMDC.

However, PMDC as a regulator has developed a uniform syllabus for the MDCAT in consultation with all stakeholders, including federal and provincial authorities, he added.

He clarified that there is no 80 percent increase in MDCAT examination fee as only Rs 1000 has been added to the previous year's fee which was Rs 8000. This year fee is Rs 9000, which is an increment of 12.5 percent, not 80 percent as circulated in the social media.

He said that PMDC has also invested heavily in developing a question bank based on a common syllabus agreed upon by the provinces. He said that the council decided to revise the fee

on request of the examination-conducting universities due to rising costs of paper printing, enhanced security protocols and logistical arrangements, payments for examiners, invigilators, and administrative staff and ensuring adequate seating and facilities for candidates nationwide and international venues.

Despite significant inflation and increasing operational costs, PMDC remains steadfast to affordability and fairness, he added.

He said that the council has taken a balanced approach to ensure that the exam remains accessible to all candidates while maintaining quality and integrity in the testing process.

"PMDC reaffirms transparent, responsible, and merit-based admissions, ensuring equal opportunities for all aspiring medical and dental students."

The MDCAT will be conducted through the admiral cost test conducting universities including University of Health Sciences, Lahore (for Punjab Province), Sukkur IBA University, Sukkur (for Sindh Province),

Khyber Medical University,

Peshawar (for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province), Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences Quetta (for Balochistan Province), Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University, Islamabad (for Islamabad Capital Territory, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and for international Riyadh, Saudi Arabia).

The schedule for MDCAT-2025 online registration for both local and international candidates began on August 25, 2025 and will close on August 25, 2025. After this date, registration will only be accepted with late fee, which will remain open until September 1st, 2025. He said that the candidates must carefully select one city and centre for the MDCAT and fill out the application with all necessary requirements otherwise, the online system will reject the application.

The test will be a paper-based, multiple-choice exam to be conducted in English, comprising 180 MCQs with no negative marking, besides Biology (81), Chemistry (45), Physics (36), English (9), and Logical Reasoning (9).

He said that the curriculum syllabus is available at www.pmdc.pk.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Khalid Hussain Magi, held an important meeting with the Ambassador of Romania to Pakistan, Dan Stoicescu, to discuss expanding bilateral cooperation in the fields of science, technology, innovation, and education.

Aleema Khan has virtually taken control of PTI within a year: Marwat

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Sher Afzal Marwat on Saturday alleged that Aleema Khan, sister of PTI founder Imran Khan, has virtually taken control of the party within a year.

Speaking to a private TV channel, MNA Sher Afzal Marwat made serious accusations against Aleema Khan, saying that especially after the arrest of Imran Khan's wife, Bushra Bibi, Aleema has been controlling all party affairs.

"She decides who will visit Adiala Jail to meet Imran Khan and when. She decides when meetings will be held at KP House and how protests will be organised. All key decisions are

made by Aleema Khan," he claimed.

Marwat further alleged that PTI MNA Junaid Akbar had disclosed in a parliamentary meeting that Aleema Khan had threatened to create rifts between him and party workers.

"Today, the parliamentary meeting supported me and sent a message in my favour," Marwat said.

"I, along with the entire PTI, believe that Imran Khan never wanted Aleema Khan to assume the role she has taken on now," he added.

According to Marwat, Aleema Khan replaces people in party positions and uses harsh language against mem-

bers. "My popularity is unpalatable to some people in the party. I am the first member to be expelled from PTI three times, yet the only one for whom workers still stand up," he said.

"Bushra Bibi never appeared to have any intention of controlling the party, but Aleema Khan is clearly trying to do so," he remarked.

Marwat further stated that individuals like Shahbaz Gill are also part of Aleema Khan's group and that she even controls the party's social media. "If PTI wants to deliver and secure the release of its founder, it must first rid itself of Aleema Khan's influence," he concluded.