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Balochistan Faces Severe Drought: Communities on the Brink as Green Lands Turn to Dust

Syed Ali Shah, News Desk:

1. Two Years Without Rainfall

Balochistan is grappling with a catastrophic drought-like situation as the province enters its second consecutive year without meaningful rainfall. What was once a region known for its seasonal greenery and natural water channels has now turned into an expanding belt of dry, cracked

earth. The prolonged absence of rain has pushed several districts into a state of near-emergency.

2. Green Valleys Becoming Deserts

Areas traditionally known for orchards, grazing fields, and natural springs are rapidly losing their vegetation cover.

Lands that once sustained livelihoods are now barren, raising fears that Balochistan may be moving towards irre-

versible desertification if immediate action is not taken.

3. Water Levels Plummeting Across Districts

Groundwater levels have dropped to unprecedented depths. Many tube wells have dried up completely, and traditional karezes are no longer functional.

Residents say that even after drilling several hundred feet, water remains out of reach.

4. People Forced to Migrate for Survival

The worsening water crisis has forced hundreds of families to leave their homes. Villagers describe the situation as "life-or-death,"

as they pack their belongings and migrate to nearby towns in search of drinking water.

Many report being misled with false promises of government support, leaving them

even more vulnerable.

5. Drinking Water Scarcity Reaches Critical Stage

Residents across multiple districts now face a severe shortage of potable water. Water tankers—once an occasional necessity—have become the only source of survival for many communities. Prices have skyrocketed, creating a burden on low-income households.

6. Agriculture on the Verge of Collapse

Agriculture, which sustains a large portion of rural Balochistan's economy, is collapsing under extreme conditions.

Fruit orchards are drying up, livestock is perishing, and cultivable land is turning fallow. Farmers say that without water, there is "nothing left to protect."

7. Livestock Loss Threatens Food Security

Shepherds in drought-hit areas report losing herds at an alarming rate.

Water sources have vanished, and grazing fields have shrunk to dust.

The decline in livestock directly threatens food supply chains and the rural economy.

8. Experts Warn of Worsening Climate Impact

Climate experts caution that Balochistan may be entering a long-term dry cycle intensified by global climate change. Without immediate measures to recharge groundwater and conserve existing resources, the region could face permanent ecological damage.

9. Public Anger Grows Over Lack of Action

Communities across the province express frustration over what they call a slow and inadequate government response.

Residents argue that no meaningful steps have been taken to build small dams, regulate tube wells, or implement drought-management policies.

Many accuse authorities of "waiting for disaster instead of preventing it."

10. A Call for Urgent, Sustainable Solutions

The situation demands an urgent and coordinated response—construction of small reservoirs, revival of karezes, investment in rainwater harvesting, and introduction of drought-resistant crops. Without sustainable planning,



Children carrying water in the outskirts of Quetta: Photo Muhammad Ismail

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Balochistan's Climate Fund – A Lifeline Against Growing Disasters



Editorial: Balochistan has taken a historic and timely step by establishing its first-ever Climate Fund, a move that signals the province's recognition of the existential threat posed by global warming and climate change. In his recent meeting with British High Commissioner Jane Marriott, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti rightly underscored the urgency of mobilizing resources to safeguard communities from natural calamities that are growing in frequency and intensity.

Floods In Bunair

The tragic flash floods in the Bunair area of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa this month, which claimed precious human lives, are a grim reminder of Pakistan's extreme vulnerability. The province sits on a fragile ecological and seismic zone — prone not only to floods but also to recurring droughts, earthquakes, and the looming threat of desertification. Each disaster further strains an already fragile infrastructure, displaces

communities, and deepens poverty.

Stop Deforestation

The Climate Fund, if implemented transparently and effectively, has the potential to become a lifeline for millions. It can provide the financial base for disaster preparedness, early warning systems, reforestation, water management, and community resilience projects. Equally important, it can build trust between the government and people by showing that saved resources — like the Rs. 14 billion curtailed from non-developmental expenditures — are being invested in protecting lives and livelihoods.

The Battle Cannot Be Fought Alone

However, climate change is not a battle that Balochistan can fight alone. Partnerships with international allies, such as the United Kingdom, are essential in bringing technical expertise, innovative solutions, and funding support. Training local institutions, particularly in areas like disaster management and environmental governance, should be a top priority.

The provincial government's commitment to reforms in governance, education, and healthcare is commendable, but the climate emergency must remain at the center of its development agenda.

Without climate resilience, all other reforms risk being washed away by the next flood or crippled by the next drought. Balochistan has shown leadership by creating this Climate Fund. The next step is to ensure that it does not become another underutilized policy initiative. Effective monitoring, independent oversight, and community involvement will be key to making it a success.

In the face of global warming, every day carries a cost in human lives and economic stability. The Chief Minister must now take all possible steps to translate the promise of the Climate Fund into tangible protections for the people of Balochistan.

Advocate Babar Azam
The Reality Check After Law School

The journey of young lawyers in Pakistan begins long before they ever argue a case — it starts in law school, filled with excitement, ambition, and dreams of serving justice. Students immerse themselves in theory, case studies, moot courts, and research projects, often inspired by seminars and court visits where senior lawyers present the profession as a noble and rewarding path. This idealism fuels their passion to defend rights and uphold the law. However, the real world often tells a different story. The gap between classroom learning and courtroom realities becomes obvious when fresh graduates — particularly first-generation lawyers — enter practice. Without structured guidance, many struggle to figure out how to join a chamber, select a legal specialization, or decide between pursuing an LLM, Bar-at-Law, or directly entering litigation. While a fortunate few find genuine mentors who involve them in case preparation and court appearances, many are left to navigate the profession with little to no support.

Challenges Faced by Junior Advocates

Once they begin practicing, junior advocates in Pakistan encounter multiple challenges that hinder their growth. In some chambers, instead of being taught drafting skills, legal research, and court procedure, juniors are tasked with clerical work — copying files, making photocopies, or rushing between courtrooms to seek adjournments. They might prepare one case but be sent at the last moment to argue

individuals to leave the profession altogether, which is a significant loss for Pakistan's legal system.

The Role of Mentorship and Supportive Seniors

Despite these

struggles, there are exemplary seniors and judges who actively support the professional growth of young lawyers. Good mentors involve juniors in real legal work, allow them to argue simple applications, and offer patient guidance when mistakes are made. They share fees, provide stipends, and help their juniors build courtroom confidence step by step. Some judges also encourage young advocates by explaining procedures and giving them space to argue, fostering an environment of learning and respect. To expand such support, Bar

Councils should organize career guidance seminars in universities, where senior lawyers can advise students on chamber selection, career paths, and skill development. Law schools should also offer internships in litigation, corporate, and judicial fields to help students identify their areas of interest early. Financial support — such as stipends, books, and uniforms — could be funded through court cost awards under Section 35 of the Civil Procedure Code. These measures would ease the financial and professional burden on junior lawyers, allowing them to focus on building their careers.

Building a Respectful and Sustainable Legal Culture

Confidence-building is essential for a sustainable legal culture. Judges should encourage young advocates by explaining procedures and giving them space to argue, fostering an environment of learning and respect. To expand such support, Bar

For the legal profession in Pakistan to thrive, respect and dignity must be restored for junior lawyers.

Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees the dignity of every citizen, yet many juniors face disrespect within their own chambers. This culture must shift — seniors should treat juniors

as future colleagues rather than assistants, while juniors must remain patient, diligent, and committed to continuous learning. Giving young lawyers opportunities to argue even simple matters can greatly enhance their skills and confidence, preparing them for more complex cases in the future.

Mutual respect and collaboration between seniors and juniors can close the gap between theory and practice, creating a legal community that values mentorship and professional development.

The future of justice in Pakistan depends on how well we support today's young lawyers. By bridging the gap from classroom to courtroom, we can shape a generation of confident, competent advocates who carry forward the values and integrity of the profession.

Author's Bio:

Advocate Babar Azam Umrani is a young practicing lawyer in Balochistan, committed to advocating for the professional development, mentorship, and rights of junior lawyers.
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From Classroom to Courtroom: Navigating the Journey of Young Lawyers in Pakistan



Israel and Iran Conflict and Its Impact on Middle East Stability

Syed Muhammad Waseem:

Israel and Iran are exchanging deadly attacks. Israeli strikes have hit homes, hospitals, and aid workers in Tehran. Iran responded with missile and drone attacks on cities like Tel Aviv and Haifa. Many civilians have been killed or injured on both sides.

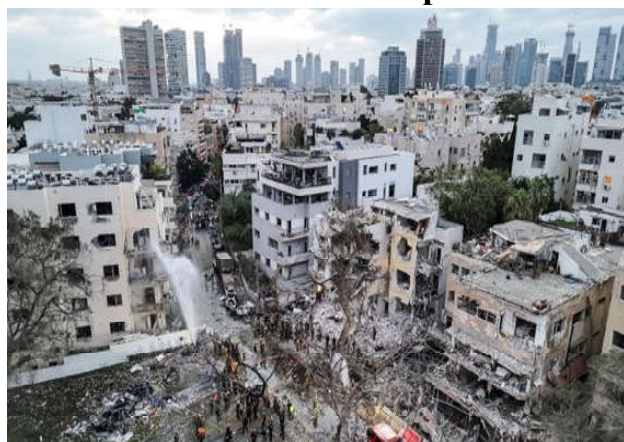
The conflict is drawing global attention. President Trump left the G7 early due to the crisis. UK leaders warn against military action without approval. Tensions are rising, and the risk of a wider war is growing. Global powers are urging both sides to de-escalate.

The violence is shaking the region's stability. Political alliances are shifting, economies are under pressure, and millions fear what comes next. Behind the strikes and statements lies a deeper struggle for military power, especially between Iran and Israel. From the origins of their rivalry to current military actions, regional fallout, and global reactions, this article breaks down what you need to know.

Historical Background

The Iran-Israel conflict history began intensifying after the 1979 Iranian Revolution, which transformed Iran from a close ally of Israel into one of its fiercest opponents. Iran's support for armed groups like Hezbollah and Hamas, along with Israel's targeted assassinations and airstrikes, deepened the divide. The October 7 Hamas attack and Israel's retaliation marked a sharp escalation, pushing the conflict into more direct and dangerous territory.

Over the years, the tensions have played out through a timeline of provocative events. Iran's controversial nuclear program has drawn repeated warn-



ings and attacks from Israel. Both nations have launched cyberattacks against each other, with incidents like the Stuxnet virus and strikes on nuclear sites. Proxy wars have continued across Lebanon, Syria, and Gaza, keeping the region in a constant state of unrest.

External powers have also shaped the conflict's course. The U.S. strongly supports Israel with military aid and intelligence, while Iran receives political backing from Russia and economic support from China. These global ties have made the situation more complex, raising the stakes and limiting diplomatic solutions.

Current State of the Conflict

The conflict between Israel and Iran is intensifying with Israel intercepting 30 drones and multiple ballistic missiles from Iran.

Israel's airstrikes targeted missile storage and launch sites, while also killing Iranian chief of staff Ali Shadmani.

Iran retaliated with missile strikes on Israel, causing damage in places like Herzliya, though no injuries were reported. The conflict has led to at least 224 Iranian and 24 Israeli casualties, with countries like India and Pakistan evacuating their citizens from Tehran.

Israel's attacks have disrupted Iranian energy infrastructure, including the South Pars gas field. The violence has strained support for Iran's hardliners, with global concerns rising over the ongoing conflict.

Impact on Middle East Stability

The Israel-Iran conflict is deeply affecting nearby nations. Syria's

new Sunni-led government has moved away from Iran. It sees Israel's strikes as helpful in reducing Iranian influence. Iraq is under pressure as Iran-backed militias grow more aggressive. Lebanon's Hezbollah has lost strength and is avoiding direct involvement, though tensions remain high.

Jordan and Egypt are walking a careful line. Jordan fears instability and has warned against any attacks from its territory.

Egypt is worried about its energy supply and trade routes like the Suez Canal. Disruptions could hurt its economy, which depends heavily on imports and stable fuel access. Both nations aim to avoid being drawn into the conflict.

As the drags on, regional alliances are shifting. Syria is moving closer to the West. Iraq struggles to balance relations with Iran and the

U.S. Egypt and Jordan are working to protect their own security. This conflict is not just about two nations — it's changing the political map of the Middle East.

Security and Military Impact

The Israel-Iran conflict has triggered a regional arms race. Countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Egypt are increasing their defense spending.

They want to upgrade weapons, air defenses, and missile systems. This rise in military buildup reflects growing fears of future attacks.

The chances of a wider war are also rising. Iran's support for militias and Israel's direct strikes have already pulled Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon into tension.

Any miscalculation or surprise attack could quickly expand the conflict.

Economic Consequences

The conflict has sent shockwaves through oil markets. Brent crude spiked by nearly 7%, reaching \$74.60 per barrel. Investors fear Iran could close the Strait of Hormuz, a vital route for global oil.

Any disruption here could push oil prices above \$100, hurting both producers and consumers.

Trade routes and airlines are also affected.

Several carriers suspended flights to Iran, Iraq, and nearby nations. Jordan, Iraq, and Iran closed their airspace, halting traffic on some of the world's busiest air corridors. These changes hurt tourism and slow cargo movement across continents.

Conflict-hit countries like Iran face added economic pressure. Sanctions, rising inflation, and oil infrastructure damage are worsening Tehran's financial crisis. Iraq and Lebanon may also suffer due to economic ties with Iran and ongoing instability.

Global inflation may rise if this war continues.

Humanitarian and Social Consequences

The human toll is rising fast. Over 220 Iranians, including women and children, have been killed.

Israeli casualties are also growing. Missiles and airstrikes are displacing families, destroying homes, and leaving civilians trapped in unsafe areas.

Anger is spreading across the region. Anti-Israel protests have erupted in Iraq, Lebanon, and Egypt.

At the same time, anti-Iran sentiment is growing in countries like Jordan and Syria. The conflict is deepening political divides and fueling mistrust among neighboring populations.

This rising hostility is damaging regional unity. People are taking sides based on political or religious beliefs. Online hate speech and propaganda are also increasing. If the conflict continues, the social fabric of many Middle Eastern countries could unravel even further.

International Reactions and Mediation Efforts

Civilian lives have been lost, and public anger is growing. Global powers are taking sides, but some are also pushing for peace.

This conflict is not just about two nations, it affects the whole region and beyond. With rising deaths and economic damage, urgent diplomacy is needed. Only strong regional cooperation and global mediation can stop the violence and bring long-term peace.

The United States strongly backs Israel and warns Iran of tougher retaliation. President Trump stated that future strikes could be even more brutal if Tehran doesn't step back. Meanwhile, the EU and United Nations have urged both sides to show restraint and return to dialogue to avoid a wider war.

Russia and China have taken a different stance.

Both nations criticized Israel's actions and may also suffer due to economic ties with Iran and ongoing instability.

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Punjab's Motor Vehicle Ordinance proposes strict fines, jail terms Pakistan's population challenge deepens as growth slows but numbers keep rising: report

NEWS DESK: Pakistan's population has crossed an estimated 257 million at mid-year, placing it among the world's most populous nations even as its fertility and growth rates continue to decline, according to a report released by the US Census Bureau on Tuesday. Demographic databases, including projections by the US Census Bureau and the United Nations, show Pakistan's population density at 333 persons per square kilometre, underscoring the primary pressure on land and public services.

The data depict a country facing one of the most complex population transitions in South Asia — caught between rapid numerical expansion and slow human-development gains.

Despite decades of policy debate, Pakistan still adds millions of people each year. Its annual population growth rate stands at 1.82 per cent, lower than in previous decades but high enough to keep total numbers rising steeply for at least another generation, the report said. It added that the total fertility rate (TFR) — the average number of births per woman — has fallen to 3.25, yet remains well above the replacement level of 2.1, ensuring continued expansion through what demographers describe as population momentum.

At the same time, social indicators remain weak. Life expectancy at birth is estimated at 60.5 years, among the lowest in the region, while the under-five mortality rate stands at nearly 65 deaths per 1,000 live births, reflecting persistent shortcomings in maternal health, child nutrition, disease prevention, family planning and primary healthcare access, per the report.

Together, these figures underline the uneven nature of Pakistan's demographic transition, in which family size is shrinking faster than improvements in health and longevity. A regional comparison highlights the scale of Pakistan's challenge. India, now the world's most populous country with about 1.46 billion people, has already crossed below replacement fertility, with a TFR around 1.9. While India's absolute numbers will continue to rise for several decades due to its large youth cohort, its growth rate is slowing rapidly, and attention is shifting to the quality of its population.

The application also pleaded that the petitioners filed a criminal revision before the IHC to question the trial proceedings in view of violations of due process as prescribed under CrPC, particularly the recording of evidence in the absence of the petitioners.

Headed by Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar, a three-judge SC bench also consisting of Justices Salahuddin Panwar and Ishaque Ibrahim will hear the plea.

A meeting chaired by the Sindh Minister Sharjeel Memon has announced the launch of phase two of the electric scooter (EV scooter) distribution scheme, marking a significant step forward.

This initiative is part of the Sindh government's broader plan to enhance eco-friendly mobility options and empower women through better transportation access.

A meeting chaired by the Sindh Minister Sharjeel Memon was attended by Secretary Transport Asad Zaman, Managing Director Sindh Mass Transit Authority (SMTA) Anwarul Nizam Bhutto, and other relevant officials. It focused on the ongoing and upcoming transport projects in the province, including discussions on improving mobility infrastructure in Karachi and other cities.

The first wave of distribution reportedly gave about 200 free pink electric scooters to women, while the plan, as approved by the cabinet, envisioned distributing up to 1,000 scooters to women.

On November 4, 2025, the government announced the launch of the second phase, signalling that new registrations will open soon. The second phase was made a large number of women with modern, environmentally friendly transport options within the month.

The scooters have been designed to offer a safer and more accessible alternative to traditional transportation, especially in a city where traffic congestion and limited public transport options often hinder women's mobility.

This initiative also contributes to the city's green transport movement.

In addition to the Pink Scooters, Memon also announced that new electric buses have arrived in Karachi and will soon be deployed on various routes across the city. These buses are expected to ease the transportation burden on the city's residents and help reduce pollution.

The government has completed surveys for new bus routes in Khairpur, Shikarpur and Hyderabad, with plans to make these routes functional within the month.

He further added that the government plans to introduce more double-decker buses on the city's main highways to alleviate traffic congestion.

Along with these planned improvements, Memon emphasised that the new initiatives such as EV buses, EV scooters, and EV taxi services, will usher in a new era of urban mobility.

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First Pink Bus Service Launched For Women In Balochistan, Bugti Inaugurates

Syed Muhammad Qaseem:

QUETTA: In a landmark initiative aimed at empowering women and modernizing urban transport, the first Pink Bus service dedicated exclusively for women has been launched in Quetta. The inauguration, carried out by Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, marks a major step towards providing safe, comfortable, and dignified public transport for female commuters across the city.

Speaking at the ceremony, Chief Minister Bugti said the Pink Bus service is a practical realization of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto's vision for women's empowerment.

"Following the success of women-focused initiatives such as Pink Scooters, the Pink Bus service now offers women a reliable and secure commuting option," he stated.

The Pink Bus service complements the ongoing Green Bus network expansion, which now connects Quetta to districts like Pishin, Mastung, and

Turbat, enhancing mobility for all citizens.

Chief Minister Bugti emphasized that the government is committed to delivering modern, high-quality, and inclusive transport solutions while addressing environmental challenges through the future introduction of electric buses.

Highlighting the broader vision, Bugti said, "Women's empowerment is the foundation of social progress. Initiatives such as the Pink Bus service, scholarship programs, and developmental strategies are practical steps towards creating opportunities for women and ensuring their safety and dignity in public spaces."

The Chief Minister also warned extremist elements mislead women, saying, "We are opening doors to education, development, and progress, providing clear alternatives to those who spread fear and violence."

Authorities expect that the Pink Bus service will significantly improve commuting for women, reduce traffic congestion, and promote sustainable urban transport in Quetta. Citizens have welcomed the launch, calling it a historic and timely step in modernizing the city's transport system and promoting women's mobility.

With the Pink Bus initiative, Quetta becomes one of the first cities in Balochistan to introduce a women-only bus service, reflecting the provincial government's commitment to inclusive infrastructure, safety,

the launch, calling it a historic and timely step in modernizing the city's transport system and promoting women's mobility.

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PTI announces 'national conference' on Dec 20-21 as war of words with ruling PML-N and its allies continues

NEWS DESK: As various parties have rallied behind the armed forces since chalking the PTI. Yesterday, the Punjab Assembly also adopted a resolution calling for a ban on Imran and his party, terming them "anti-state".

Earlier today, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Information for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Affairs Ikhitar Wali Khan said that "things have reached a point of no return".

Addressing a press conference, Wali assailed the PTI for its recent actions, warning the party, "We have tolerated you with much grace and for the sake of democracy. However, things have now reached a point of no return, no mercy and no tolerance."

He went on to say that anyone supporting the incarcerated PTI founder "stood for the desecration of Pakistan's sovereignty, honour, and development."

"We did not want to label anyone a traitor or ban a political party," he continued. However, he stressed that "given the current state of affairs, I ask the people what [else] can be done."

Wali alleged that "PTI, in its four years in power, had done nothing," challenging the party to "show at least one university, hospital or dam" they built. "It was a blessing from God that the Centre, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan have remained safe from the PTI's dirty politics," he remarked, warning that

the government "will now set KP free as well." Later, leaders from the opposition alliance Tehreek-i-Tahafuz Ayeen-i-Pakistan (TTAP), which also includes the PTI, addressed a press conference outside Parliament.

Among them, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar reiterated his party's allegations that their "mandate had been stolen" in the last general elections. "We did not stage a sit-in back then [...]. We sat in Parliament, believing that our voices will be heard, and a solution to our and the people's difficulties will be found," he said, adding that there had been multiple confrontations during the last two years.

But, he continued, "at some point, common sense should prevail". Seemingly referring to the bar on meetings with incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan, he added: "If you keep parents in jail [...], how can the children sit together with you?"

PTI announced a "national conference" on December 20-21, a move that has intensified the political standoff. The ruling PML-N and its allies have expressed concern over the PTI's actions, warning of a potential split in the coalition government.

The PTI's move to hold a national conference has been seen as a challenge to the government's authority. The government has responded by warning of legal consequences for any party that attempts to undermine the state's stability.

The political situation in Pakistan remains tense as the PTI continues to demand the release of its leader and the government insists on maintaining law and order. The upcoming national conference is expected to be a major event in the country's political calendar.

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Controversial social media posts case: SC to hear Imaan's plea on IHC's denial of relief tomorrow

NEWS DESK: The Supreme Court (SC) will take up on Thursday (December 11) the application of lawyer Imaan Zainab Mazari-Hazir, seeking an early hearing of her plea for a stay in the trial of the controversial social media post case.

On December 4, Mazari and her husband, Hadi Ali Chatha, were facing trial before the additional sessions judge and Peca (Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016) special judge in

the controversial tweets case. On December 1, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) denied the couple ad-interim relief of staying the trial. They appealed the IHC order before the SC through their counsel, Faisal Siddiqi.

In their subsequent application from December 4, the petitioners pleaded that the criminal trial against them was at its concluding stage and therefore, extreme urgency in the matter was required.

The application also pleaded that the petitioners filed a criminal revision before the IHC to question the trial proceedings in view of violations of due process as prescribed under CrPC, particularly the recording of evidence in the absence of the petitioners.

Headed by Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar, a three-judge SC bench also consisting of Justices Salahuddin Panwar and Ishaque Ibrahim will hear the plea.

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This initiative also contributes to the city's green transport movement.

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Second Phase of Pink Scooter distribution in Karachi announced

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This initiative also contributes to the city's green transport movement.

TENDER NOTICE

Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPIRA GOB. The EXECUTIVE ENGINEER BUILDING DEPTA BUGTI invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2026 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates

S.No.	Name of Work	ECR
1.	Construction of Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali Shahhead Multipurpose Auditorium at Military College, Sui Dera Bugti (TSE-25281292503)	262,779,000/-
2.	Construction of Lieutenant Abdul Moazzam Shahhead Gymnasium at Military College, Sui Dera Bugti. (TSE-25261292523)	74,256,200/-

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required. The bidder must have completed 2 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn-over of at least 204,943,230/- & 5,919,641/- PKR Amount not subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm. Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) CA & CS and above (Link200 & 500 million) In Relevant Category and Specialist Code is (251041) General Civil Engineering Work. Bid Security 2% of the Estimated Cost Tender Document Fee Rs 2000 in account of C-102116. The Bidder must not have any pending litigation or court cases related to contractual disputes, fraud, corruption, or other serious offenses. The Bidder must not have been involved in any contract breach or termination. Procedure Of Procurement-Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure. Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee. Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the undersigned from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppira.gov.pk Issuance of Tender Documents: Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppira.gov.pk Last date of bid submission: Bid can only be submitted electronically, latest by 30 December, 2025 at 12:00 PM through supply dashboard.

Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at 01:00 PM on PPPS System Address: Main Road, Dera Bugti. Phone nos: 03541101522 Fax nos: 0354110362 Email: Ajashah@biddersinfo@biddersinfo.gov.pk

Excutive Engineer (Building) CRPCC District Dera Bugti

PRQ No. 2749/16-12-2025

CRPCC District Dera Bugti

CRPCC District Dera Bugti

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Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) intensifies crackdown against tax evaders

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Chairman, Rashid Langrial, has stated that a vigorous nationwide crackdown against tax evaders is

underway daily. Speaking informally to the media in Islamabad, he discussed in detail the ongoing operations against tax evasion and smuggling across

the country. He revealed that 30 individuals who had been under-reporting their income have already received notices. Complete data has also been obtained

for those who failed to file their tax returns or filed incorrect ones. The FBR chairman said a Chief Commissioner for Enforcement has been appointed, under whom

all operations will be conducted. Daily reports are now being compiled on actions taken against tax evaders.

Rashid Langrial added that the sugar

industry alone has contributed an additional Rs 40 billion in sales tax this year. Previously, taxed and untaxed sugar were being sold at different prices in the market.

He said strict action will now be taken across the country against anyone holding stocks of untaxed sugar. The prime minister, he noted, has zero

tolerance for tax evaders.

The FBR chairman further stated that firm measures are also under way to curb the movement of smuggled goods.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman NAB Lt Gen (R) Nazir Ahmed, giving shield to Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq during awareness walk with participants during an event marking International Anti-Corruption Day, organized by the NAB Islamabad-Rawalpindi at the Sports Complex.

India violating UDHR, 96,480 Kashmiris killed in IIOJK since Jan 1989

ISLAMABAD (INP): Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir continues to reel under violent and brutal occupation and political injustice as the world observes Human Rights Day today. A report released by the Research Section of Kashmir Media Service on this occasion stated that while the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of December 10, 1948, was a milestone, Kashmiri human rights continue to be violated with impunity.

Despite India's formal commitments to international human rights instruments, every fundamental right guaranteed under the UDHR—including life, liberty, dignity, movement, expression, property, and fair trial—continues to be denied to millions of

Kashmiris. An alarming record of state violence since 1989 shows that 96,480 Kashmiris were killed, including more than 7,400 custodial deaths. Over 110,000 homes were destroyed, 179,759 people arrested, 22,991 women widowed, and 11,269 women molested or disgraced.

These abuses have intensified since India's 2019 revocation of Articles 370 and 35A, which dismantled Kashmir's limited autonomy and facilitated widespread demographic engineering. Since then, 1,047 Kashmiris have been killed, 32,816 arrested, and 1,168 structures destroyed.

The report also highlights the increasing use of lethal weapons, including pellet shotguns, which have

caused mass blindness and permanent disabilities. Testimonies from victims and findings by international organizations underscore the brutality of these tactics.

Economic repression is a core component of India's strategy. Industrial collapse, destruction of homes, seizure of 192 properties in 2025 alone, mass termination of Muslim government employees, and the shutdown of cross-LoC trade have deepened economic desperation.

Youth unemployment, among the highest in India, has reached crisis levels, with joblessness among young men estimated at nearly 50%.

Recent crackdowns—including arbitrary arrests, home demolitions, torture, and communication black-

outs—have been condemned by UN Special Rapporteurs, who warn that India's actions violate multiple international laws, including the UDHR, ICCPR, and Geneva Conventions. Experts emphasize that counter-terrorism is being used as a pretext for collective punishment, profiling, demographic alteration, and suppression of political dissent.

The report situates current abuses within a historical pattern of constitutional manipulation, beginning with Sheikh Abdullah's dismissal in 1953 and culminating in the 2019 revocation of autonomy.

India's refusal to allow a UN-mandated plebiscite, combined with insistence on bilateralism, has created a permanent state of denial for Kashmiri self-determination.

Speakers call for global pressure on India to end atrocities in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (INP): On International Human Rights Day, senior leaders and activists convened at a seminar in Islamabad to highlight ongoing human rights violations in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir and to rally international support for the Kashmiris' struggle for freedom.

Speakers at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) saluted jailed Kashmiri leaders, including APHC chairman Masarrat Aalam Butt and Muhammad Yasin Malik, and described the situation in Kashmir since August 5, 2019, as a complete militarization, likening the territory to a cantonment.

The speakers highlighted the courage and sacrifices of Kashmiri youth, noting that children in the occupied valley continue to remember Pakistan's national anthem despite facing violence for expressing their sentiments. "The people of the valley are

fighting bravely, Kashmir is part of our faith and belief," they said.

Drawing parallels with Palestine, the seminar recalled that over 500,000 Kashmiris have been martyred while atrocities continue unabated. Speakers urged that the Kashmir issue must be resolved in accordance with United Nations resolutions, guaranteeing the right to self-determination for Kashmiris.

The seminar concluded with a unified call for youth engagement, sustained international pressure, and global solidarity to ensure justice for the people of Kashmir, reaffirming their struggle as a sacred and legitimate cause.

Speakers included Farhatullah Babar, Rana Qasim Noon, Sardar Usman Atiq, Muhammad Farooq Rahmani, Sardar Masood Khan, Sheikh Abdul Matin, Abdul Hameed Lone, and Mahmood Shahzad Khan.

Path to Pakistan's progress lies in complete protection, promotion of human rights: Hanif Abbasi

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi Wednesday emphasized that the path to Pakistan's progress lies in the complete protection and promotion of human rights.

In his message on International Human Rights Day, the minister said the day reminds society to create ease for one another and adopt attitudes rooted in justice and compassion.

"The development of any nation is linked with the dignity of its people, adherence to law, and commitment to public service," he added. Highlighting the government's initiatives for social welfare, Hanif Abbasi said that the current government is undertaking various programmes aimed at improving the socio-economic well-being of citizens. He said these include welfare schemes,

financial support initiatives, and expanded employment opportunities. The minister reiterated that women, persons with disabilities, and the labour community remain top priorities for the government, as part of its broader commitment to inclusive development.

Hanif Abbasi said that the principles of human rights are being promoted across all national institutions, including Pakistan Railways. "Empowering youth and providing them with education and employment opportunities is a vital component of advancing human rights in the country," he added.

The minister reaffirmed the government's resolve to build a just, respectful, and people-centric Pakistan where every citizen enjoys equal rights and opportunities.

Altaf Wani urges world to stop India from its blatant HR violations in IIOK

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Chairman of the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), Altaf Hussain Wani, has reiterated his call to the world community, urging it to stop India from its blatant violations of human rights in India-Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

In his statement issued on the occasion of Human Rights Day, being observed on December 10, Wednesday, the KIIR chief said that India's relentless repression of Kashmiris' fundamental political and human rights constitutes a grave violation of the UDHR.

He said that as a sig-

natory to key international human rights treaties, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), India is legally and morally bound to respect, protect, and fulfill the fundamental rights of the people under its occupation.

By failing to uphold these commitments and continuing its repressive policies in Occupied Kashmir, India is not only violating the rights of Kashmiris but also breaching its international obligations. Wani stressed that the international community must remind India of these binding commitments and ensure accountabil-

ity for its persistent non-compliance.

Urging the world to fulfill its responsibility to uphold the sanctity of law and human rights, he said that it was high time for the United Nations (UN) and other global bodies to play an active role in stopping the atrocities being inflicted upon Kashmiris by the Indian occupation forces.

Referring to widespread human rights violations in Kashmir, Wani said that in the past 78 years the Indian military has killed hundreds of thousands of innocent people, thousands of women have been raped, and children

continue to be deprived of education and orphaned.

On the other hand, he pointed out that the Kashmiri people's fundamental rights and freedoms, including their rights to freedom of expression and opinion, the right to protest, and peaceful assembly, remain severely curtailed.

He said that the Indian government was following the Israeli model in Kashmir to turn its Muslim majority into a minority. Wani called upon the world community to hold the Indian government accountable for the war crimes being committed by its forces in Kashmir.

China awards scholarship grant to KIU University

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan has awarded a grant of Rs 4 million to Karakoram International University (KIU) under the Ambassadorial Merit-cum-Need Scholarship initiative, further strengthening educational cooperation between the two countries.

Gwadar Pro-Quoting a statement issued by KIU, officials from the Chinese Embassy handed over the grant, which will be used to support deserving and talented students at the university's main campus and three sub-campuses.

"The scholarship aims to empower financially challenged yet academically strong students in pursuing higher education," reads the statement.

Every year, more than 100 students from KIU Gilgit and its affiliated campuses receive scholarships under the Chinese ambassador's initiative.

KIU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Attullah Shah expressed gratitude to the Chinese ambassador and the embassy team, calling the support a significant step toward empowering youth in Gilgit-Baltistan.

"This scholarship will help produce highly educated and skilled graduates who will contribute positively to society," he said.

This gesture is highly valuable for the students, the university and the region."

On Nov. 25, 2025, KIU awarded scholarships to 95 PhD, MS and BS students under the China-Pakistan Friendship Merit-cum-Need Scholarship Programme.

Since 2022, more than 500 KIU students have benefited from the Chinese ambassador's scholarships, while the latest assistance will allow additional deserving and meritorious students to benefit in the coming cycle.

Pakistan, China strengthen Rescue Partnership

ISLAMABAD (INP): The 9th Pakistan International Volunteer Challenge 2025 concluded at the Emergency Services Academy in Lahore, marking a step forward in international humanitarian cooperation.

The event featured an outstanding performance by China's Blue Sky Rescue Foundation, whose 18-member team showcased exceptional skills while contributing to a broader dialogue and partnership between the two nations.

Gwadar Pro-Quoting the Emergency Services Academy and Mr. Zhang Yong, Founder and Chief Commander of the Blue Sky Rescue, agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation through continued training programs. A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed to lay the foundation for continued humanitarian collaboration.

Held to coincide with the 40th International Volunteer Day, this year's event carried the theme "Every Contribution Matters," reflecting the spirit of volunteerism and international solidarity.

The competition was designed around high-fidelity disaster simulations to test the integrated response capabilities of community emergency teams while creating a platform for mutual learning and exchange of expertise.

Dr. Rizwan Naseer, Founder and Director General of the Emergency Services Academy and Mr. Zhang Yong, Founder and Chief Commander of the Blue Sky Rescue, agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation through continued training programs. A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed to lay the foundation for continued humanitarian collaboration.



HYDERABAD: DIG Faraj Razzak Dharejo speaking at a press conference E-Tracs system in Hyderabad range at police facilitation centre on Autobahn Road.

China sends 1,000 winter blankets to flood-hit families in Narowal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Dec 10 (INP), Professor Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, distributed 1,000 winter blankets donated by China among flood-affected villagers in Narowal, saying the support reflects the "enduring bond between Pakistan and China".

Speaking to a large gathering of women and men seated in the court-yard, Ahsan Iqbal said the donation was arranged especially for families whose belongings were lost during this year's floods, according to Gwadar Pro.

"These blankets that we are distrib-

uted amongst you today are a gift from the people of China for those whose blankets and other belongings were damaged in the flood, so they can protect themselves from the cold," he told villagers.

Iqbal thanked China for its continued assistance. "Whenever some tough time comes on Pakistan, Chinese people always consider the grief of Pakistan their own," he said. "We are proud of our friendship with China." Alongside winter relief, Iqbal said his team has provided canola seeds for farmers in areas where crops were

damaged, adding that the seeds were procured through private organisations and individual donors rather than government funds.

"This is not from the government," he underlined, saying many farmers lacked resources to sow wheat this season.

At the event, women wrapped in winter shawls queued to receive the "We Care" branded blankets, while officials and community members assisted the distribution.

Some families said the aid would help them cope with harsh nights as some of their homes remain partially repaired. Pakistan suf-

fered severe monsoon flooding in 2023, with the National Disaster Management Authority reporting heavy losses across Punjab, including Narowal, where agricultural land, homes and livestock were inundated.

The disaster affected millions nationwide, leaving thousands of families struggling to rebuild livelihoods months after the waters receded.

Iqbal said that while reconstruction will take time, targeted winter support and agricultural assistance are steps toward helping families recover and resume farming activities in the coming season.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain meets Canadian High Commissioner Tarik Ali Khan to discuss enhanced agricultural cooperation.

Chaman: CTD Recovers Six Anti-Tank Mines in Intelligence-Based Operation



Sardar Muhammad Khondai: CHAMAN: The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on

Tuesday recovered six anti-tank mines and a quantity of explosives during an intelligence-based operation near the Pak-Afghan border in the area of Chaman. According to a CTD spokesperson, a terrorist

group was attempting to smuggle the explosives into interior regions to carry out terrorist attacks. Acting

on credible intelligence, CTD teams launched a swift operation and successfully foiled a major ter-

ror plot. Officials said the suspects had hidden the explosives in a remote location. No arrests were made

during the raid, while the recovered items have been secured for further forensic analysis. CTD, along with

other law-enforcement agencies, has initiated a detailed investigation to identify and track down.

ECP Rejects Bugti's Plea, Quetta LG Polls to Proceed on Dec 28

EWS DESK: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has officially rejected Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti's plea seeking the postponement of local government elections in Quetta. The commission confirmed that the Quetta LG polls will take place on December 28, maintaining the previously announced schedule.

CM Bugti had requested a delay citing Quetta's law and order concerns, the suspension of internet services, and the need for improved administrative readiness. He argued that the elections should be held only when security, weather, voter rolls and constituency demarcations were fully stabilized.

ECP Declares Petition "Devoid of Force"

In its written order, the ECP dismissed the petition, stating that the grounds presented carried no legal strength. The commission noted



that all stages of delimitation, including publication of preliminary lists, handling of objections, and finalization of constituencies, had been completed in line with legal requirements.

The six-member commission issued a majority decision in favour of proceeding with elections. Only one member, Shah Muhammad Jatoti, dissented, citing severe winter conditions that may restrict voter mobility

and the ongoing security challenges in Balochistan.

Strict Security Measures Ordered

The ECP directed the Balochistan government to provide full support, ensure foolproof security arrangements, and safeguard voters, candidates,

polling staff, and the general public. It also highlighted that

ballot paper printing had already begun, making any postponement impractical.

According to the ECP:

Members of municipal corporations and committees who took oath on February 9, 2023 will complete their four-year term in February 2027.

District council members sworn in on July 6, 2023 will complete their tenure in July 2027.

The ECP emphasized that the chief minister's interpretation of tenure expiry was incorrect.

172 Union Councils, 641 Wards, 2,710 Candidates

The Quetta local government elections were repeatedly delayed due to litigation, constituency disputes and political disagreements. With all legal hurdles cleared, the commission said it is now bound to conduct the polls on time.

The upcoming polls will take place across 172 union councils and 641 wards, with 2,710 candidates competing.

These elections come after years of delays since the previous local bodies completed their tenure in early 2019.

With the decision now final, the Quetta LG elections on December 28 mark a major development in local governance, paving the way for long-overdue municipal representation in the provincial capital.

Good Officers Are National Asset, Governor Balochistan Tells BCSA Trainees



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan, Jafar Khan Mandokhail, emphasized the crucial role of good officers in ensuring good governance and provincial development.

He stated that pre-service training is key to shaping officers' skills, knowledge, and leadership.

Addressing BCSA trainees, Mandokhail said that as future public servants, they have a responsibility to serve the people of Balochistan with honesty and dedication.

He highlighted the importance of providing necessary facilities and resources to officers

and departments to ensure good governance.

The Governor expressed confidence that with the officers' dedication and commitment to public service,

Balochistan can overcome challenges and achieve greatness.

Balochistan Board of Revenue Modernization Moves Ahead Amid Challenges

Abdullah Khan: Quetta: The Board of Revenue Act 2015 marked a major step toward modernizing land administration in Balochistan, a province where handwritten records and outdated maps have long guided land ownership and dispute resolution. The Act empowered the Board of Revenue to digitize land records, restructure district revenue offices, and implement uniform land administration procedures similar to those in Punjab and Sindh. The goal was clear: transparency. A properly implemented digital system can reduce double allotments, prevent tampering, and provide faster access for citizens seeking mutations, ownership verification, or land-related services.

However, modernization faces serious hurdles. Many areas were never properly surveyed, and revenue maps in districts like Panjgur and Kharan remain outdated, forcing officials to rely on rough sketches. Without updated surveys, digitization risks transferring flawed records into new software, a prob-



lem highlighted by Gwadar's Beijing Road disputes, where multiple re-surveys were needed to correct digital entries. Logistical constraints add to the challenge. Balochistan's vast terrain, limited staff, and low public awareness make field verification difficult. Successful digitization requires ground teams, updated satellite imagery, and coordination with the Survey of Pakistan. Without these, digital

modernization risks being only superficial. Cultural factors also complicate implementation. Landholding in many areas relies on communal grazing rights, tribal arrangements, and unwritten local agreements. A system recognizing only formal titles could exclude communities whose land rights exist only in practice, creating digital displacement instead of inclusive modernization.

Despite these

challenges, the Board of Revenue Act is a vital step toward creating a modern and transparent land administration system in Balochistan. By combining updated surveys, community consultation, and recognition of customary land rights, the province can build a system that improves governance, strengthens public trust, and ensures fair land management, laying a foundation for sustainable administrative reform.

Balochistan High Court Transfers Judicial Officers

QUETTA: The Balochistan High Court has issued a notification transferring several judicial officers with immediate effect.

Transfers: - Nasir Khan Yusufzai, District & Sessions Judge Kachlak,

appointed Registrar (B-22) Balochistan High Court.

Abdul Qayyum Lahri, Registrar Balochistan High Court, appointed District & Sessions Judge Barkhan.

Zafarullah Bazai, District & Sessions Judge Kharan, appointed District & Sessions Judge Sibi.

Inayatullah Kakar, District & Sessions Judge Sibi, appointed District & Sessions Judge Sibi.

Muhammad Ali Kakar, District & Sessions Judge Sibi, appointed District & Sessions Judge Sibi.

Zahur Ahmad Lango, Acting District & Sessions Judge Uthal, appointed Additional District & Sessions Judge Uthal.

District & Sessions Judge Uthal. Additional charge of District & Sessions Judge Kachlak handed over to District & Sessions Judge Quetta.



اساتذہ کرام کے نام اور پتوں کی فہرست			
ردیف	اساتذہ کرام کے نام	پتہ	تلفون نمبر
01	محمد علی	410	01
02	محمد علی	850	851
03	محمد علی	1250	851
04	محمد علی	1650	1251
05	محمد علی	2050	1001
06	محمد علی	2450	2051
07	محمد علی	2850	2451
08	محمد علی	3250	2851
09	محمد علی	3650	3251
10	محمد علی	4050	3651
11	محمد علی	4450	4051
12	محمد علی	4850	4451
13	محمد علی	5250	4851
14	محمد علی	5650	5251
15	محمد علی	6050	5651
16	محمد علی	6450	6051
17	محمد علی	6850	6451
18	محمد علی	7250	6851
19	محمد علی	7650	7251
20	محمد علی	8050	7651
21	محمد علی	8450	8051
22	محمد علی	8850	8451
23	محمد علی	9250	8851
24	محمد علی	9650	9251
25	محمد علی	10050	9651
26	محمد علی	10450	10051
27	محمد علی	10850	10451
28	محمد علی	11250	10851
29	محمد علی	11650	11251
30	محمد علی	12050	11651
31	محمد علی	12450	12051
32	محمد علی	12850	12451
33	محمد علی	13250	12851
34	محمد علی	13650	13251
35	محمد علی	14050	13651
36	محمد علی	14450	14051
37	محمد علی	14850	14451
38	محمد علی	15250	14851
39	محمد علی	15650	15251
40	محمد علی	16050	15651
41	محمد علی	16450	16051
42	محمد علی	16850	16451
43	محمد علی	17250	16851
44	محمد علی	17650	17251
45	محمد علی	18050	17651
46	محمد علی	18450	18051
47	محمد علی	18850	18451
48	محمد علی	19250	18851
49	محمد علی	19650	19251
50	محمد علی	20050	19651
51	محمد علی	20450	20051
52	محمد علی	20850	20451
53	محمد علی	21250	20851
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55	محمد علی	22050	21651
56	محمد علی	22450	22051
57	محمد علی	22850	22451
58	محمد علی	23250	22851
59	محمد علی	23650	23251
60	محمد علی	24050	23651
61	محمد علی	24450	24051
62	محمد علی	24850	24451
63	محمد علی	25250	24851
64	محمد علی	25650	25251
65	محمد علی	26050	25651
66	محمد علی	26450	26051
67	محمد علی	26850	26451
68	محمد علی	27250	26851
69	محمد علی	27650	27251
70	محمد علی	28050	27651
71	محمد علی	28450	28051
72	محمد علی	28850	28451
73	محمد علی	29250	28851
74	محمد علی	29650	29251
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79	محمد علی	31650	31251
80	محمد علی	32050	31651
81	محمد علی	32450	32051
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83	محمد علی	33250	32851
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88	محمد علی	35250	34851
89	محمد علی	35650	35251
90	محمد علی	36050	35651
91	محمد علی	36450	36051
92	محمد علی	36850	36451
93	محمد علی	37250	36851
94	محمد علی	37650	37251
95	محمد علی	38050	37651
96	محمد علی	38450	38051
97	محمد علی	38850	38451
98	محمد علی	39250	38851
99	محمد علی	39650	39251
100	محمد علی	40050	39651

ECC hikes petrol, diesel margins for oil marketing companies, dealers

NEWS DESK: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet has approved an additional Rs2.56 per litre margin for petrol and diesel to boost the profitability of oil marketing companies (OMCs) and their dealers.

A meeting of the ECC, presided over by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, also tightened rules for second-hand vehicle imports and restricted the import of chloroform solely to drug companies certified by the regulator.

A senior government official told Dawn that the ECC approved a Rs1.22 per litre increase in profit margins for OMCs and Rs1.34 per litre for petroleum dealers, to be implemented in two equal instalments. The first increase — 61 paise per litre for OMCs and 67 paise per litre for dealers — will take effect with the upcoming fortnightly price revision. This will immediately raise the OMCs' margin to Rs8.48 per litre and that of dealers to Rs9.31 per litre.



The second equivalent increase will come into force on June 1, 2026, subject to digitalisation of sales and stock networks and their live connectivity with government bodies, including the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority, Federal Board of Revenue and Petroleum Division.

After this increase, OMCs will charge Rs9.10 per litre while dealers will receive about Rs9.98 per litre, compared to the current Rs7.87 and Rs8.64, respectively.

An official statement said the ECC had approved revised margins for OMCs and petroleum dealers on petrol and high-speed diesel in line with the National CPI for 2023-24 and 2024-25, with increases capped between 5pc and 10pc. It added that half of the margin increase would be paid immediately while the remaining half would depend on progress in digitalisation, with the Petroleum Division to report back by June 1, 2026. Vehicle import procedure

The ECC also approved amendments to the vehicle import procedure, retaining the Transfer of Residence and Gift Schemes, as proposed by the commerce ministry in consultation with other ministries. The Personal Baggage, Transfer of Residence and Gift Schemes under the Import Policy Order (IPO) 2022 — originally intended for genuine overseas Pakistanis — and pressure from local assemblers facing quality competition and foreign exchange concerns. The decision includes a one-year non-transferability condition for imported vehicles, though enforcement of such rules has historically been weak.

The ECC also approved restrictions on chloroform imports due to its toxic and carcinogenic nature, deciding that Trichloromethane (chloroform) will only be imported by pharmaceutical companies with a no-objection certificate from the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (Drac). The move follows demands from the Pakistan Footwear Manufacturers Association (PFMA) and the Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers Association (PCMA) for a complete ban, arguing that chloroform was being used as an adhesive in the footwear industry and posed serious health and environmental risks.

The ministries of industries and production, climate change, national health services regulations and coordination and FBR supported a complete ban, but Drac argued that chloroform was essential as a laboratory reagent and for quality control testing in pharmaceutical industries.

The ECC also rejected a concessionary gas/RLNG tariff claim by M/s Ghani Glass, saying that such subsidies were no longer permissible and that broader export-support initiatives were already underway.

The meeting approved a Rs1.28bn supplementary grant for the Pakistan Digital Authority to support digital transformation and technological innovation across government departments, and another Rs5bn supplementary grant for the Ministry of Housing and Works.

It also approved, in principle, the release of budgetary allocations for PIA Holding Company Ltd to meet pension and medical expenses of PIA's employees.

Chinese group eyes setting up solar panel plant in Pakistan

NEWS DESK: China's Hebei Juhang Energy Technology Group has expressed keen interest in establishing a large-scale solar panel manufacturing plant in Pakistan to cater to both domestic demand and export markets.

A Chinese delegation headed by the Group's Chairman, Wang Jianbin, accompanied by representatives of China-Pakistan Business Forum, met Minister for the Board of Investment (BoI) Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, on Tuesday. The delegation conveyed its intention to invest billions of dollars in Pakistan's solar energy and other high-tech sectors.

Welcoming the proposal, Mr Sheikh said it was "a great time and a golden opportunity for investment in Pakistan". He highlighted the government's commitment to improving the business environment, citing recent reforms

launched by the prime minister to ease of doing business, including the new single-window Business Facilitation Centre (BFC) process for business facilitation. As part of its facilitation package, the BoI informed the delegation that the government is prepared to allocate 6,000 acres of land for investment.

The minister also briefed the visitors on Special Economic Zones (SEZs), which offer various incentives, including zero income tax for the first 10 years.

Chairman Wang Jianbin meets BoI Minister Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh; proposes multi-billion-dollar investment in solar and high-tech sectors.

He reiterated that sectors such as agriculture, solar energy, information technology, chemicals and manufacturing offer significant growth and export potential for foreign investors. The meeting also reviewed outcomes of the second edition of the Pakistan-China B2B Investment Conference held in Beijing in September this year, which resulted in agreements and joint ventures worth \$8.5 billion across multiple priority sectors.

The minister reaffirmed the BoI's commitment to supporting Chinese investors and called for expediting feasibility studies and joint-venture agreements.

He emphasised that Pakistan remains a strategic partner for China and welcomes high-quality, green-tech investments that will generate jobs and promote sustainable economic growth.

Tariff raised by 33 paise amid rising inefficiencies

NEWS DESK: With a damning additional note on the cost of institutional mismanagement, the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Neptra) on Tuesday approved 33 paise per unit increase in the national uniform tariff for three months (December-February) and allowed Power Division to implement discounted incremental rates to industrial and agricultural consumers at Rs23 per unit — against Rs24 base rate.

In a determination, Neptra said the 33 paise per unit higher charges would be applied to all consumers across the country, including K-Electric under the quarterly adjustment (QTA) for IQFY26. The authority has allowed the positive quarterly adjustments of Rs6.067 billion to be applicable to all consumer categories, except lifetime consumers and prepaid consumers, in three months starting December, it said.

regulator also allowed the Power Division to notify its incremental consumption package that would be applied to agricultural electricity consumers of ex-Wapda Distribution Companies (Disco) and K-Electric. Under the package, the reduced rate of Rs22.98 per unit — the marginal cost of power supply — would be applicable to industrial and private agricultural consumers, including both Time-of-Use and Non-ToU categories on their peak and off-peak consumption over the corresponding reference period.

A Power Division spokesperson welcomed the decision and added that under the new tariff structure, the price of additional units for agriculture and industry had been reduced to Rs22.98 per unit from their existing rates of Rs38 and Rs34 per unit, respectively.

The package will remain applicable for three years on a monthly basis and the reference months for determining incremental consumption shall be from December 2023 to November 2024. The incremental

package is subsidy-neutral for both but will be subject to positive Fuel Cost-Adjustments (FCAs). Further Quarterly Tariff Adjustments (QTAs), Debt Service Surcharge (DSS) and negative FCAs shall not be applicable on incremental consumption for eligible consumers.

Neptra also released an additional note of its technical member, Rafique A Shaikh, exposing the deep-rooted inefficiencies, theft and mismanagement of power plants, including inadequate utilisation of cheaper plants and greater capacity payments.

Mr Shaikh, who completed his two terms at the regulator, in his departing note said such unnecessary costs arising from inefficiencies should not be passed on to consumers. "Transferring such costs to consumers may lead to an industrial slowdown, reduced GDP growth, increased unemployment, pressure on the current account, and an overall deterioration in the quality of life across the country," he said and demanded that the concerned companies and organisations should bear these inefficiencies themselves.

He pointed out that QTAs primarily reflected variations in the Power Purchase Price (PPP), including the impact of T&D losses. The data clearly showed lower plant factors for thermal power plants operating under 'Take-or-Pay' capacity contracts.



Remittances rise 9.4pc in November

NEWS DESK: Remittances from overseas Pakistanis, the country's most reliable source of foreign exchange, remained strong in November, raising hopes the government will be able to manage a widening current account deficit.

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported on Monday that remittances grew 9.4 per cent year-on-year to \$3.2 billion in November, a trend that has remained intact since the beginning of the current fiscal year.

"Cumulatively with an inflow of \$16.1bn, workers' remittances increased by 9.3pc during Jul-Nov FY26 compared to \$14.8bn received during the same period last year," it added.

In the wake of declining exports, the importance of remittances has further increased. The government is seeking to send more workers abroad, particularly to the Middle East, in the hope of securing higher inflows in the coming months and years.

However, hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis have left the country due to rising poverty and to seek jobs



abroad, a trend experts criticise as a "brain drain". At the same time, at least nine multinational companies have exited Pakistan, reflecting growing unease among foreign investors.

Experts say the government is chasing remittances rather than pursuing a durable strategy to keep trade and current account balances under control. Most of the remittances, which the government expects to reach about \$40bn this fiscal year, are

likely to be used to narrow the trade deficit and current account gap.

Remittances also provide dollars to the State Bank, which is a regular buyer from the market for partial payments of external debt servicing. The bulk of the external debt is typically rolled over. Saudi Arabia recently rolled over \$3bn for another year.

The SBP data shows that the highest remittances came from Saudi Arabia, with inflows rising 6.8pc to \$3.902bn during July-November. During the same period last year, the growth from the kingdom had exceeded 36pc.

The second-highest inflows came from the UAE, totalling \$3.363bn, a growth of 14pc compared to 55pc in the same period of last year.

Other major corridors included the UK (\$2.385bn), the US (\$2.118bn), and other GCC states (\$1.544bn). Higher remittance inflows have helped

keep the exchange rate broadly stable for more than a year, providing some comfort to both importers and exporters.

Some exporters argue that the rupee is overvalued against the US dollar, citing the greenback's recent weakness against major international currencies and stressing that there is room for a controlled depreciation to encourage exports.

However, the SBP has so far shown little inclination to move in that direction.

ECC bans baggage car imports, approves circular debt management plan

NEWS DESK: The government on Tuesday banned the import of used cars under the baggage scheme and tightened restrictions for other two schemes, including a minimum three-year stay abroad, restricting competition for foreign firms in breach of commitments made to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet, which tightened the conditions for car imports, also allowed the Power Division to add Rs522 billion to the flow of circular debt under the newly approved Circular Debt Management Plan 2025-26.

The Rs522 billion addition in the flow will be offset using taxpayers' money to keep the overall circular debt under last year's level. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the ECC meeting.

According to another approval by the ECC, Rs2.5 billion of taxpayers' money will be used to pay pensions and medical bills of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) employees. The Rs2.5 billion is over and above the Rs31.7 billion that the government has already budgeted to pay interest on PIA's legacy loans.

These decisions reflect that the country's power sector and national airline continue to bleed despite repeated official claims of improvement.

Power The ECC approved a new Circular Debt Management Plan for this fiscal year, which offsets the impact of an increase in the flow of circular debt through budgetary subsidies. The plan allows the addition of Rs522 billion in the flow to be compensated through fiscal support.

The base-case circular debt flow for FY2025-26 is expected to be Rs734 billion, which is planned to be mitigated to zero through timely tariff increases, improvement in losses and fiscal support," according to the plan submitted to the ECC.

Even after increased power tariffs and some improvement in recoveries, Rs522 billion will still be added to the flow of circular debt. This amount will then be offset through budgetary injections. As a result, the net level of circular debt is projected to remain unchanged at Rs1.614 trillion.

The finance ministry said that the ECC directed the Power Division, in coordination with the Finance Division, to develop a medium-term plan for the gradual reduction of fiscal support.

It also asked the Power Division to establish a follow-up mechanism with the distribution companies (DISCOs) to ensure delivery of targets. Under the plan, the Power Division has shown only Rs18 billion worth of improvement through a reduction in line losses of the power distribution companies.

The positive impact of improved recoveries has been shown at Rs121 billion.

Record-breaking Faryal Farooq sets alight National Games

NEWS DESK: The sun burned with a fierce, summer-like intensity on the winter morning but it couldn't temper the spirit of the competitors gunning for glory at the National Games on Tuesday.

The open field at the athletics venue hummed with simultaneous action — discuss flying in one sector, hurdlers pacing in another. On the track, athletes bobbed and stretched, their shadows short under the midday blaze. In the stands, a scattered crowd fanned themselves, eyes darting between events.

The pool offered some respite from the blazing sun as swimming began at the Games on a day headlined by Commonwealth Games gold medalist Iram Butt extending his remarkable legacy by clinching his 15th national title — the most by any wrestler — and a national record for discus thrower Faryal.

Faryal's feat was the culmination of a four-year effort; those long days of lonely training meeting minutes of razor-edged opportunity. Through her first four throws, she was nowhere near the mark. The record, it seemed, would elude her once more.

Then, before her final attempt, her coach Ashraf Ali leaned in and told her he would be proud if she breaks the record.

Those words lit up the fire. Faryal spun, released, and the discus sailed — a silent arc against the blue clear sky. Every eye followed it until it thudded into the earth, well beyond the previous best. The official announced 38.21 meters — a new national record.

The crowd erupted. For Faryal, from Azad Jammu and Kashmir, it was ecstasy, the triumphant end of a quest. "After hearing my



coach's words, I put everything into the final throw," she told Dawn, breathless. "We get few opportunities to compete throughout the year, so I train all year for one event and try to leave my heart out in the field."

While Faryal's moment shone brightest, other stories unfolded across the scorched field, each adding a different hue to the day's tapestry. In the women's 400m hurdles, Musarat Shaheen of Wapda, hail-

ing from Mianwali in Punjab, powered through the last 100 meters to claim gold.

Her smile afterwards was bright, but her words were sobering. "It's a killer sport," she said while talking to Dawn, referring to the

constant risk of injury. Her hurdles weren't just on the track. "Where I am from, there is that backward thinking that girls should stay in the house. Thankfully my family is supportive."

For Qasim Fayyaz of the Army, from Chinot, the 20km walk race was a battle against the clock and the elements. He finished seven minutes behind of his personal best, due to the extreme weather.

His routine reveals the brutal behind-the-scenes sacrifice: 90km of road running per week, twice-daily gym sessions in winter. "The body gets fatigued... We get very little time to rest. Focus on diet, which is very integral, is also not much."

The drama of endurance played out differently in the men's 400m hurdles, where Abd Razzak staged a late surge to snatch gold.

For most of the race, his Army teammate Tajammul Hussain (silver) was on his neck, but Razzak hung on the shoulder. As the second-placed athlete faded in the final metres, Razzak pounced, edging ahead at the line.

"I practiced more than my team-mate — I

guess those hours in training paid off today," Razzak, who participated in the 2019 Asian Games, told Dawn. "This was my sixth national medal and hopefully there are more to come."

Then there was the pure class of Olympian Faiza Riaz. After winning the 100m the day before, she edged out HEC's Khoulia Umer Khan by a mere tenth of a second in the 200m, finishing in 25.10 seconds.

So intense was the effort that she collapsed onto the track afterwards, a world-class athlete laid low by the fight on home soil.

Earlier in the day, Wapda's Iram Shehzadi had dominated the women's 800m, while in the field, Amul Rehman of HEC leapt to gold in the triple jump.

If the athletics arena was a stage for personal struggle, the swimming pool nearby was a display of sheer systemic dominance.

Sydney Sixers unveil unique jersey number for Babar Azam

NEWS DESK: The Sydney Sixers have revealed a distinctive twist on Babar Azam's iconic jersey number, adding an extra layer of excitement ahead of the 15th edition of the Big Bash League (BBL).

The franchise announced the move on Tuesday through its social media platforms, showcasing the star Pakistan batter at the historic Sydney Cricket Ground.

While Babar is widely associated with the number 56, the Sixers introduced a creative variation — the 30-year-old will sport 056 this season. Australian pacer Mitchell Starc, meanwhile, will continue wearing the classic 56. The franchise framed the decision as a lighthearted and stylish way to distinguish the two high-profile players who share the same preferred number. The announcement coincided with Babar's arrival in



Sydney for what is expected to be one of the most closely watched international stints of the upcoming BBL. The Sixers welcomed him with a short video clip showing the prolific right-hander walking into the dressing room, accompanied by the caption: "He's ar-

rived." The teaser quickly went viral among fans eager to see the Pakistan captain in action on Australian soil.

BBL 15 will run from December 14, 2025, to January 25, 2026, featuring 44 matches primarily during prime-time evening slots. With a revamped schedule and

increased international participation, the league anticipates strong global viewership this season.

Pakistan will have a significant presence across multiple franchises. In addition to Babar and fellow superstar Shaheen Shah Afridi, the country's representation include

Pakistan U19 departs for Dubai to feature in ACC Asia Cup

NEWS DESK: Pakistan U19 departed from Karachi to Dubai to take part in the eight-team ACC U19 Asia Cup, scheduled from 12 to 21 December. Pakistan, placed in Group 'A', will play their opening match against Malaysia at the Sevens Stadium in Dubai on Friday, 12 December.

Pakistan's second match in the tournament will be against India at the ICC Academy Ground on Sunday, 14 December, while their third fixture will be against the UAE on Tuesday, 16 December, also at the ICC Academy Ground.

Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka are part of Group 'B'.

As per the tournament format, the top two sides from each group will compete in the semi-finals scheduled for 19 December, while the final will take place at the ICC Academy Ground on Sunday, 21 December. The tournament, which will be played in the 50-over format, will begin at 9am local time.

Before team's departure to Dubai, the Pakistan U19 squad underwent a seven-day camp at the Hanif Mohammad High Performance Centre in Karachi, where players featured in practice

matches in addition to taking part in training sessions.

Talking to PCB Digital before team's departure to Dubai, Sarfaraz Ahmed (manager/mentor) said: "We have done our best and reminded the players that they are the finest young cricketers in Pakistan. Their strong performances earned them a place in the side and we have given them complete backing and confidence."

"We are hopeful they will deliver strong performances for Pakistan. Over the past seven days, the players have worked extremely hard and trained intensively."

"We will have a practice session before the Asia Cup and we hope the team settles in quickly and performs well in the tournament. To be the best team in the competition, you have to perform consistently in all three matches."

Squad: Farhan Yousaf (captain), Usman Khan (vice-captain), Abdul Subhan, Ahmed Hussain, Ali Hassan Baloch, Ali Raza, Daniyal Ali Khan, Hamza Zahoor (wk), Huzairi Ahsan, Momin Qamar, Mohammad Huzafa, Mohammad Sayam, Mohammad Shayan (wk), Nigal Sharif and Sameer Minhas

Faryal Farooq finally conquers a four-year goal with discus gold at National Games



NEWS DESK: For four years, Faryal Farooq carried the weight of an unbroken record.

Every training session, every competition, the mark stood just out of reach — a ghost she chased on dusty fields from her hometown in Azad Jammu and Kashmir to the national camp with the Pakistan Army.

On day two of the National Games athletics event, under a blazing December sun, that ghost finally met its match.

In the discus circle, the Army athlete had already taken four throws. None had come close.

The national record of 38.21 meters, set years earlier, seemed destined to remain untouched. Doubt, that familiar visitor, began to creep in. Another year, another near miss.

Then, before her sixth and final attempt, her coach Ashraf Ali walked over. He didn't give a technical cue or a tactical reminder.

He leaned in and said, softly but firmly in Urdu, "Maan jao ga tmain agar record tod diya" (I will be proud of you if you break the record).

Those words lit a fire in me, Faryal told Dawn later, her voice still charged with the moment.

She stepped back into the circle, the discus cool in her palm. The open field, humming with other events, seemed to fall quiet.

With a powerful spin and release, she launched it into the sky. All eyes tracked the discus as it flew, hung, and finally thudded into the sector — well beyond the previous best.

The technical officials confirmed it: 38.21 meters. A new national record.

The crowd erupted. For Faryal, it was a rush of pure ecstasy — the end of a long, lonely pursuit. "After hearing my coach's words, I put ev-

erything into the final throw," she said, breathless. "We get few opportunities to compete throughout the year, so I train all year for one event and try to leave my heart out in the field."

But in the glow of their golden moment, her words quickly turned to the reality so many Pakistani athletes face.

"There's a lack of confidence in our athletes," she confessed. "I am a champion, but I still feel this way."

Her victory, she insisted, should be a beginning, not an endpoint. She appealed for more competitions — at least three a year — to help athletes overcome the fear that grips them on international stages.

"When we see the training standards and technique of athletes from other countries, we get demotivated. We can't even perform at the level we are capable of." Her plea was also one of equity. She

pointed to the nation's javelin star, Arshad Nadeem, whose Olympic success highlighted what support can achieve.

"Arshad is our star," Faryal said. "So if facilities can be provided for him, then why not to us?"

Born in a town without proper grounds or spaces to train, Faryal's journey has been one of borrowed facilities and department camps.

"The only way I can train properly is when I attend camps with my department," she said. "If I had facilities in my local area, that would be great."

On Tuesday, none of that mattered in the circle. For a soaring throw, Faryal was untouchable — a champion who rose above the bar she had set for herself four years earlier, and in doing so, raised her voice for every athlete still waiting for their chance to fly.



Third-quarter meltdown sees Pakistan go down to Dutch on Pro League debut

NEWS DESK: On their FIH Pro League debut, Pakistan had shown grit and resilience to stay on level terms with the Netherlands halfway through their match at the Santiago del Estero Hockey Club in Argentina, only for a meltdown in the third quarter seeing the Dutch power to a 5-2 victory on Tuesday.

In the opener of the mini-tournament which will see Pakistan face the Dutch and host Argentina twice, the Greenshirts struck first when Hannan Shahid sliced through the Dutch defence from the left, driving into the circle and blasting his shot past the outstretched foot of Mauritz Visser.

The Dutch equalised before the end of the opening quarter, sparked by a tempo-setting tackle

from Thierry Brinkman that launched a right-side attack. Koen Bijen did well to lead into open space and fire the hosts level, before Timo Boers put them 2-1 up with a penalty corner conversion just ahead of the first break.

Pakistan hit back early in the second quarter, Sufyan Khan flicking home from a penalty corner to

make it 2-2 at half-time. But the match ultimately turned on set pieces. The Dutch capitalised twice more in the third quarter, with Tijmen Reyenga and Boers each converting penalty corners.

Dutch Telgenkamp added a clever baseline finish for the Netherlands' fourth of the period, setting up a final 15

minutes they controlled comfortably. "I think we needed time to come in to the game and we did well improving throughout," Reyenga said. "We had a great second half. We didn't know how (Pakistan) would play against us so I think we did well and anticipated well."

We got the three points and can move on."

Trump slams 'weak', 'decaying' Europe as rift deepens

NEWS DESK: US President Donald Trump deepened his rift with Europe in an interview with Politico published on Tuesday, calling the continent "weak" and "decaying" over immigration and Ukraine.

Trump doubled down on his extraordinary recent criticisms of a region that Washington has long counted as a key ally, recycling far-right tropes about civilizational decline in Europe.

"Most European nations, they're decaying. They're decaying," Trump told Politico in the interview, conducted on Monday.

The 79-year-old billionaire, whose political rise to power was built on inflammatory language about migration, echoed far-right talking points as he said that Europe's policies were a "disaster." "They're coming in from all parts of the

world," Trump said. "But they want to be politically correct, and they don't want to send them back to where they came from." Trump's broadside comes days after his administration's new national security strategy sparked alarm by calling for the cultivation of "resistance" in the EU against liberal migration policies.

Zelensky prepares revised plan to end Ukraine war. Asked if European countries would not remain US allies if they failed to embrace his administration's policies on the issue, Trump replied that "it depends."

"I think they're weak, but they also want to be so politically correct," Trump said.

He listed countries including Britain, France, Germany, Poland, and Sweden that he said were being "destroyed" by migration and launched a new at-



tack on the "horrible, vicious, disgusting" Sadiq Khan, London's first Muslim mayor. Trump also brushed off the fact that the Kremlin had hailed the new US na-

tional security strategy as being in line with its own views.

"I think he (Putin) would like to see a weak Europe, and to be honest with you, he's getting

that. That has nothing to do with me," he said.

Trump also criticized Europe's role in resolving the war between Russia and Ukraine, saying, "They talk, but they don't pro-

duce. And the war just keeps going on and on."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Tuesday prepared to send the United States revised

proposals to end the war started by Russia's February 2022 invasion, as he met with

Pope Leo XIV in Italy. Zelensky on Monday held talks with European leaders in Lon-

don and Brussels as US President Donald Trump keeps up pressure on Kyiv for a settlement.

Trump has accused Zelensky of not even reading his administration's proposals. An initial version was judged by Ukraine's allies to be overly favourable to Russia.

Zelensky said that Washington's earlier 28-point plan had been reduced to 20 points after US-Ukraine talks over the weekend.

Ukrainian and European officials are going to work on these 20 points," Zelensky told an online press conference on Monday.

"We do not like everything that our partners came back with. Although this issue is not so much with the Americans as with the Russians."

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Israel to reopen Jordan crossing for Gaza aid today

NEWS DESK: Israel will reopen the crossing on the Israeli-controlled border between Jordan and the occupied West Bank to humanitarian aid trucks destined for Gaza for the first time since late September, an Israeli official said on Tuesday.

"Following the understandings and a directive of the political echelon, starting tomorrow (Wednesday) the transfer of goods and aid from Jordan to the area of Judea and Samaria and to the Gaza Strip will be permitted through the Allenby Crossing," an Israeli official said in a statement, using the Israeli Biblical term for the West Bank.

"All aid trucks destined for the Gaza Strip will proceed under escort and security, following a thorough security inspection," the official added.

Israel closed the crossing, also known as the King Hussein Bridge, in September. The crossing in the Jordan Valley reopened to travellers a few days later, but not to humanitarian aid destined for the Gaza Strip, devastated by more than two years of war.

Since the closure at Allenby, Jordan said it had been able to send some aid to Gaza via the Sheikh Hussein crossing, north of the occupied West Bank.

Hamas says Gaza ceasefire plan cannot proceed to its second phase as long as Israeli violations persist.

The Allenby crossing is the only interna-

tional gateway for Palestinians from the occupied West Bank that does not require entering Israel, which has occupied the territory since 1967.

Israeli continues ceasefire violations. In a latest development, Hamas said on Tuesday that the Gaza ceasefire plan cannot proceed to its second phase as long as Israel's "violations" persist and called on mediators to pressure Israel to respect the agreement.

The US-sponsored ceasefire, in effect since October 10, halted the Israel-Hamas war, but it remains fragile as Israel

tors, who include Egypt, Qatar and the US, to pressure Israel "to complete the implementation of the first phase of the ceasefire agreement."

Under the terms of the deal, Palestinians committed to releasing the remaining 48 living and dead Israeli prisoners held in the territory. All of the prisoners have so far been released except for one body. In exchange, Israel has released nearly 2,000 Palestinians in its custody and returned the bodies of hundreds of Palestinians.

The first phase of the truce also stipulates that the demarcation line was the "new border line," Badran slammed the comments. "The statements... clearly reveal the criminal occupation's lack of commitment to the ceasefire agreement," he said.

The second stage of the truce plan concerns dismantling Hamas, the further withdrawal of Israeli forces as a transitional authority is established, and the deployment of an international stabilisation force.

Meanwhile, a spokeswoman for the Israeli premier's office said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will meet President Donald Trump in the United States on December 29.

It will be Netanyahu's fifth visit to meet Trump in the US since the start of the year. Hamas political bureau member Hossam Badran accused Israel of failing to respect the Gaza ceasefire deal, noting that under its terms, Israel should have reopened the Rafah crossing with Egypt and increased the volume of aid entering the territory.

He urged the media to significantly more aid enter Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he expects the second phase of the deal to begin soon but Badran said it could not start "as long as the occupation (Israel) continues its violations."

Under the initial steps of the ceasefire plan, Israeli troops withdrew to positions behind a so-called "Yellow



and Hamas accuse each other almost daily of breaches.

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Elon Musk says DOGE 'somewhat successful' but would not do it again

NEWS DESK: US President Donald Trump's Department of Government Efficiency was only "a little bit successful," Tesla CEO Elon Musk said on a podcast on Tuesday, adding that he would not lead the project again. The billionaire, who is founder of electric car company Tesla, was a major donor to Trump's presidential election campaign and became a close ally and adviser to his administration. Musk led the DOGE team in seeking to slash the federal government's budget and workforce in its first five months of Trump's second term.

But the role and his political rhetoric sparked a backlash against him and Tesla, including vandalism of Tesla cars. "I think instead of doing DOGE, I would have ba-



sically worked on my companies. And they wouldn't have been burning the cars," Musk said on the podcast with former Trump administration official Katie Miller. "We were a little bit successful. We were somewhat successful. We stopped a lot of funding that really just made no sense, that was

entirely wasteful," Musk said. Asked if he would go back and lead DOGE again, Musk said, "No, I don't think so." Musk's work for DOGE also sparked concerns among investors that he was not paying enough attention to Tesla as it faced slowing sales. Musk and Trump had a bitter public fall-

Russian bombers join Chinese air patrol near Japan as Tokyo-Beijing tie strains

NEWS DESK: Japan has scrambled jets to monitor Russian and Chinese air forces conducting joint patrols around the country, the Japanese defence ministry said late Tuesday, amid rising tensions between Tokyo and Beijing.

Two Russian Tu-95 nuclear-capable strategic bombers flew from the Sea of Japan toward the East China Sea to rendezvous with two Chinese H-6 bombers, and performed a "long distance joint flight" in the Pacific, the ministry said.

Four Chinese J-16 fighter jets joined the bombers as they made a round-trip flight between Japan's Okinawa and Miyako islands, it added. The Miyako Strait between the two islands is classified as international waters.



Japan also detected simultaneous Russian air force activity in the Sea of Japan, consisting of one early-warning aircraft A-50 and two Su-30 fighters, the ministry said.

Japanese Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi said in a post on X on Wednesday that the Russian and Chinese joint operations were "clearly intended as a show of force against our nation,

which is a serious concern for our national security."

Japan's fighter jets "strictly implemented air defence identification measures," Koizumi added.

Russian news agencies reported that the Russian-Chinese joint flight near Japan lasted for eight hours, citing Moscow's defence ministry.

South Korea's military also said on Tues-

day that seven Russian planes and two Chinese planes had entered its air defence zone.

Japan said on Sunday that Chinese carrier-launched fighter jets aimed radar at Japanese military aircraft a day earlier, an claim Beijing disputed.

Beijing's rising military actions near Japan follow Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's comment last month that Tokyo could respond to any Chinese military action against Taiwan that also threatened Japan's security.

China and Russia have been ramping up military cooperation in recent years elsewhere, conducting joint operations such as an anti-missile training on Russian territory and live-fire naval exercises in the South China Sea.

