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QUETTA VOICE



Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti express compassion and affection for the son of Shaheed Major Anwar Kakar during their visit to the martyr's family in Quetta.: Photo Provided By DGPR

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi Says “The Blood of Martyrs Is the Guarantee of Pakistan’s Security”

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Thursday visited the residence of Shaheed Major Anwar Kakar in Quetta, where they met the martyr's mother, brothers, and young sons, and offered heartfelt condolences.

Paying rich tribute to Ma-

ajor Anwar Kakar, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said the officer had saved the highest honor of martyrdom by sacrificing his life for the defense of the country.

He emphasized that martyrs are the pride of the nation and their sacrifices will never be forgotten.

The chief minister offered Fataha for the departed soul and praised the courage and resilience of the martyr's

mother, calling such brave mothers the true strength and pride of the nation.

He announced that the martyr's brother, Khudaiuddin Khan, would be provided a government job, while a government school would be named after Shaheed Major Anwar Kakar to keep his sacrifice alive in public memory.

Speaking on the occasion, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said the entire nation is proud

of the martyr and his family. Addressing the martyr's mother, he said she is the mother of a brave son of Pakistan and the courage of such parents is the real power of the nation.

He also expressed affection for the martyr's young sons, consoling them and offering his support.

Both leaders saluted the supreme sacrifice of Shaheed Major Anwar Kakar and

stated that every drop of martyrs' blood serves as a guarantee for the protection of the homeland.

They prayed for patience and strength for the bereaved family and for the elevation of the martyr's ranks.

Provincial ministers, Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakesh Qadir Khan, and Inspector General of Police Balochistan Muhammad Tahir Khan were also present on the occasion.

Social media posts case:
Court cancels bail of Imaan, Hadi after non-appearances, tensions in courtroom

NEWS DESK:

A district court on Thursday cancelled the bail of lawyer and activist Imaan Mazari-Hazar and her husband Hadi Ali Chattha in the controversial social media posts case, following repeated non-appearances and heated scenes in the courtroom.

In the case, registered under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016 (Peca), the two have been accused of inciting division among ethnic groups through social media posts and creating the impression that the armed forces were engaged in terrorism within the country.

The hearing on Thursday was conducted by Additional District and Sessions Judge Mohammed Afzal Maijka, with Prosecutor Rana Usman representing the state.

At the outset, neither Mazari Chattha appeared before the court, as Mazari's counsel sought an exemption from appearance for Mazari, submitting that Chattha was engaged in proceedings relating to a contempt case before the high court.

The court, however, displayed displeasure at the absence of the accused and observed that the request for exemption would be considered later.

Judge Maijka warned that if the accused failed to appear, their right to bail and exemption could be revoked. The hearing was initially adjourned until 12 noon.

When proceedings resumed, Chattha appeared in court and informed the judge that Mazari wished to cross-examine the prosecution witness Shahnaz personally, restating that she intended to ask questions herself.

Maijka directed the defence to complete the cross-examination, warning that failure to do so would result in termination of that right.

During the hearing, Islamabad District Bar Association President Chaudhry Naeem Gujjar appeared in court and requested the court to be fixed for Monday, assuring the court that no adjournment would be sought thereafter. He informed the court that Mazari was unwell but still wished to conduct the cross-examination herself.

The prosecution opposed any adjournment, and the prosecutor urged the court to administer an oath to the witness and commence cross-examination immediately.

“fence Agreement” in Riyadh, pledging that any attack on either nation would be treated as an act of aggression against both.

Should Turkey ink its membership in the alliance, it would underscore the new era in its relations with Saudi Arabia as well.

After turning the page on years of sour ties, the countries are working to develop economic and defence cooperation.

They held their first-ever naval meeting in Ankara this week, according to the Turkish defence ministry.

While they also share longstanding concern over Iran, they prefer engagement with Tehran rather than force. The Turks and Saudis also back a stable Syria and statehood for Palestinians.

While Turkey, defence cooperation remains a key pillar of bilateral relations.

According to the 2023 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri) report, Turkey was Pakistan's second largest arms supplier, accounting for 11% of its total arms imports.

Ankara is building corvette warships for the Pakistan Navy and has upgraded dozens of its F-16s.

JCP recommends making 11 ad hoc LHC judges permanent

NEWS DESK:

The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) on Thursday recommended the confirmation of 11 additional judges for the Lahore High Court (LHC) out of a total list of 13.

Presided over by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afzli, the JCP met at the Supreme Court (SC), a press release issued by the SC said.

After due consideration of the relevant data forms, antecedents and evaluation material placed before it, the JCP, by a majority, recommended the confirmation of 11 additional judges of the LHC as permanent judges.

Those were Justice Hassan Nawaz Makhdoom, Malik Waqar Haider Awan,

Sardar Akbar Ali, Syed Ahsan Raza Kazmi, Malik Javaid Iqbal Waini, Muhammad Jawad Zafar, Khalid Ishaq, Malik Mumtaz, Justice Aslam, Justice Chaudhry Sultan Mahmood, Tanveer Ahmad Sheikh, and a female judge, Abber Gul Khan.

The JCP, by a majority, recommended the extension of Additional Judge Tariq Mahmood Bajwa for another six months.

Talks held on defence pact with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, broader regional trust needed: Turkish FM

NEWS DESK:

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said on Thursday that talks have been held on a possible defence pact with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, but no agreement has been signed.

Reaching at a press conference in Istanbul to a question about whether there might be such an alliance, Fidan pointed to what he said was a need for broader regional cooperation and trust.

He added that regional issues could be resolved if the relevant countries would “be sure of each other”.

Bloomberg, citing people familiar with the matter, reported last week that Turkey was seeking to join the Pak-Saudi defence pact signed in September 2025.

The report said Turkey viewed the pact “as a way of strengthening security and deterrence” and asked questions over the reliability of the US, which has strong military ties with all three countries, and President Donald Trump’s commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato).

Saudi Arabia brings financial muscle, Pakistan has missile and capability, while Turkey has the military experience and has developed a defence industry, Bloomberg quoted Nihat Ali Ozcan, a strategist with Ankara-based think tank TEPAV, as saying.

Asked about reports of Istanbul eyeing such a pact, Defence Production Minister Raza Hayat Harraj told BBC Urdu:

“From a strategic point of view, Turkey, China, Saudi Arabia and Azerbaijan are close friends and there is a close relationship with them in terms of strategic policy.”

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had signed a “Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement” in Riyadh, pledging that any attack on either nation would be treated as an act of aggression against both.

Should Turkey ink its membership in the alliance, it would underscore the new era in its relations with Saudi Arabia as well.

After turning the page on years of sour ties, the countries are working to develop economic and defence cooperation.

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QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

SBKWU Teacher Recruitment
Scandal Raises Alarms for
Pakistan's Education System

Editorial: Serious questions have emerged over the secondary teachers recruitment process conducted by Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University (SBKWU), triggering widespread concern about transparency and accountability in Balochistan's education system.

It is essential to clarify a point that has caused public confusion: the advertised posts were NOT for SBKWU itself. The university was only assigned the responsibility of conducting tests and interviews for Secondary School Teacher recruitment across Balochistan.

According to initial findings, hundreds of candidates who had failed were allegedly declared successful during the teacher recruitment process.

Given the scale of the exercise, involving

thousands of applicants for secondary teaching positions across the province, such irregularities cannot reasonably be described as clerical mistakes.

The magnitude strongly suggests organised manipulation carried out with the involvement or protection of influential individuals rather than the actions of a single official.

This issue strikes at the heart of education governance in Balochistan. Secondary school teachers shape the academic foundation of students, and any compromise on merit directly damages learning outcomes.

In Balochistan, where literacy rates remain among the lowest in the country, a flawed teacher recruitment further deepens an already critical education crisis.

Reports that deserving candidates were sidelined only intensify public frustration and mistrust.

All anti-corruption

and accountability institutions must take immediate notice.

A transparent, independent and timely investigation is necessary to identify those responsible for manipulating the recruitment process conducted under SBKWU's authority. Accountability must reach every individual involved, regardless of status or influence.

This is not merely an administrative controversy; it is a matter of justice for the future of Balochistan's education system.

If credibility in teacher recruitment collapses, public trust in institutions will collapse with it. Balochistan cannot afford silence where integrity is at stake.

address the mega question of climate change. Through the proposed plan, scarce resources would be transparently and rationally utilized to make it a better living city for the country. For the first in the history of the province, the Urban Planning Development (UPD) under the leadership of chief minister Balochistan, Jam Kamal Khan, has started the preparation of the master plan.

Geographical location, looming threat of natural calamities including earthquakes,

it is already late. Geography and Soil

Four main units may describe the soils of Quetta i.e. (1) piedmont plains (very deep and well-drained soil)

(2) piedmont basins (3)

(4) gravelly piedmont

fans and aprons bordering the mountains and plains.

The central part of the Quetta valley is covered by a soil that ranges from sandy loam to silt loam. This type of soil is good for crop production. At the margin of the valley

ley, the greater part of the valley floor is covered by barren rock outcrops of low relief and dry mala bed. The soil is restricted to the narrow banks and low terraces along the mainstream.

However, the nature of the soil in Beliagh is very light which is not suitable for cultivation. Similarly, the Chiltan

valley is covered by a soil that ranges from sandy loam to silt loam. This type of soil is good for crop production. At the margin of the valley

soil takes place in the piedmont plain along the banks and beds of streams.

Such streams are Sarib Lora, Hanna river, Habib Nallah near Hudda. Wind erosion occurs in the valley.

This all requires a review of the existing plan and determine the preparation of the digitized base map of

Quetta with a protocol for its updating. A review of existing policies, procedures, plans, studies conducted by donor agencies, and other relevant data.

housing commercial, and industrial land use evaluation of the existing condition of buildings and housing schemes should be thoroughly reviewed.

To be precise, the city needs a master plan on an emergency basis to address the looming threat of climate change and natural disasters.

Quetta City Proposed Master Plan

The author is currently serving as the secretary urban planning and development department government of Balochistan

Quetta has a better environment, rich culture, manageable population

Amjad Rashid

Quetta is not a case of deprivation related to lack of resources, not a case of unemployment, not a case of climate change, and not even a case of poverty. It's a true and real case of the richness of environment, climate, natural resources, and manageable human population. Unfortunately our planners, thinkers, decision-makers proved to be very selfish and greedy.

In Quetta, we had municipal water posts (I wish I can get the picture of Quetta was a natural habitat with a small population of trees, flowers. The city had few streets with few vehicles and dynamic socio-political harmony).

We did establish universities but abandoned knowledge.

Unfortunately, global and regional influences badly affected the city's culture, modernization and more adversity. We did establish a university, but abandoned consciousness, we did build plazas, but without building codes. If we look back at the pictures of Quetta of the sixties, it was like Zurich or London or little Karachi or Mumbai. Transformed from little London to huge slums (full of garbage and filth). Bad governance, poor education, corruption, and poor planning converted Quetta into an ugly place.

We don't see green Koh-e-Mur Daar a multi-lingual culture which was its beauty and uniqueness has vanished and replaced by the prac-

tition. Every day in the morning when I look at the sleeping beauty of Quetta I feel that the mother of Quetta (sleeping beauty) has become

bricks and cement which after few more years will look like a dumping place of garbage. We must listen and learn from our heroes like Rehman

its true beauty and culture.

Climate change

poses a serious threat

to the developing world

Environment, Cli-

Now we from Adams to twenty-first century experienced slavery, the industrial revolution, conflict of ideologies, various version of world orders

chameli, bitakh, surkhi and places like hanna, thandi Sarak, and associated culture of art and poetry. Masses

of motherland is demanding the attention of all irrespective of our international commitments. It's a matter of our survival. We need a green economy.

tices influenced by regional inhuman and cultural drama. We lost our green Quetta with green roses which was its aroma and identity.

Balochistan need our attention. Balochistan in general and Quetta, in particular, need our at-

sick and looking toward her siblings for help and support.

Our water level reduced, our population increase, our poor justice system, and our greed for material gain will never make it a little London but will change its fate like the city full of garbage and values of Quetta, which can bring back

Baba, Atta, shad, Asher Jalihi and take care of our environment. Quetta does not need more engineers but needs Thinkers, guides who should work to replace the current environmental struggle for self-interest with the soft power and values of Quetta, which can bring back

mate change, global warming, deforestation, and many such terms were alien to humanity and especially to developing world like Pakistan. We were used to singing and telling stories to our siblings about the kindness of nature.

driving to save and benefit humanity. But our world is taken away from us after seventy-two years and since the establishment of Balochistan Province, its habitats are frequently faced by challenges like conservation.

Balochistan facing a host of issues after independence after seventy-two years and since the establishment of Balochistan Province, its habitats are frequently faced by challenges like conservation.

green industry, green employment, and above all green development.

This situation calls for a committed social, political and religious commitment to rebuild and reclaim our title "Quetta has a better environment, rich culture, manageable population

Quetta City, Proposed Master Plan

Abdul Latif Kakar : The mountain-ringed, Quetta city needs a comprehensive master plan to ensure the solution of problems faced by citizens and

drought, and floods, the soil consists of sandy loam, mixed with pebbles and rock fragments and is suitable for vegetation.

In the Hanna val-

Soil erosion As far as soil erosion is concerned, both stream erosion of soil and wind erosion is occurring in the district. The stream ero-

Current and future population trends need to be reviewed. Transportation, mass transit, and city traffic management and monitoring system,



Opposition demands joint sitting on Iran situation

NEWS DESK: The opposition alliance comprising the PTI and other parties has demanded a joint session of parliament to discuss the tensions in the Middle East, particularly Iran, besides urging the government to convene a meeting of "neighbouring countries" to formulate a "joint and coordinated strategy". The Tehreek-e-Tahafuz-e-Pakistan (TTP) held a meeting in the federal capital under the chairmanship of Mahmood Khan Achakzai. The participants expressed concerns over the deteriorating regional situation. The participants urged the government to call an urgent session of parliament to form a national policy through collective wisdom.

They claimed that the government's failure was causing the Israel-Palestine and the conduct of the United States in Latin America have severely undermined international law. They observed that imperial and



Meanwhile, the PTI denounced the use of force by the Rawalpindi police to disperse its sit-in outside Assembly on Tuesday night. The police, in a midnight operation, had used force to disperse the participants.

In a statement, the PTI said these actions constituted a "grave assault on the Constitution, the rule of law and fundamental human rights, and reflected a systematic campaign of political victimisation designed to suppress dissent. The party vowed that such conduct was unacceptable in any democratic society and would be vigorously challenged in every constitutional, legal and democratic forum.

The party claimed that family members of Imran Khan and party workers were present outside the Assembly to exercise their constitutional and legal right to meet their incarcerated leader, but the police suppressed this activity using force, intimidation and harassment.

3 injured in Bannu ambulance attack



NEWS DESK: Three people were injured when unidentified assailants opened fire on a private ambulance transporting a patient to Islamabad here Wednesday.

The incident occurred at Sparda Chowk in Domet, where armed men already present at the spot signalled an ambulance to stop. When the vehicle stopped to stop the vehicle, the assailants opened fire. As a result, three people accompanying the patient were injured. The vehicle was also damaged. The patient was also damaged. The driver, however, remained unharmed.

The injured were identified as Mazhar Hussain, a resident of Jhang, Punjab, Shakir Ali, a resident of Sargodha (currently residing in Islamabad) and Shehzaz, a resident of Pakpattan, Punjab. All three are em-

ployees of a private care centre in Islamabad.

According to the police report lodged by one of the injured, Mazhar Hussain, the assailants were transporting a patient, Rehman, resident of Model Bazaar, Islamabad for treatment. Upon reaching Sparda Chowk, armed individuals attempted to stop the ambulance and then opened fire.

Meanwhile, unknown miscreants car-

ried out a hand grenade attack on a sentry point of Bannu Central Jail here on Wednesday. However, loss of life was reported.

The attackers targeted the sentry point located at the corner of a road, jail on the side of Khalfia Gul Nawaz Hospital, for postmortem, and initiated an investigation into the incident.

The deceased was identified as Arslan, 35, a resident of Hinjai Ameer Khan. The city police registered a case at the hospital for postmortem, and initiated an investigation into the incident. "There is water in

the road, where it exploded with a bang."

The jail superintendent said that the facility was also targeted by a sniper attack, but due to effective security arrangements, no injuries occurred and all jail personnel remained safe.

Sources said the jail

had already received

threat alerts regarding

possible attacks. In view

of the threats, jail au-

thorities had been con-

ducting regular night

patrols.

However, he

stressed that the system

has created injuries

with benefits flowing to

select groups while

blame is unfairly placed

on the city administration.

"There is water in

the city, but the real is-

sue is its unjust distri-

bution," he said, adding that his adminis-

tration has already "shut down" several illegal hydrants.

He said that the

contracts of seven

legal hydrants have ex-

pired, leaving only

three hydrants.

He said that his

administration has

proposed to renew the

contracts or perman-

ently close the hy-

drants. Mr Wahab said

that he had proposed a

third option — the

gradual dismantling of

the hydrant and tanker

system, but

he said that such a

step could not be taken

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sive alternative plan.

"If hydrants are

closed, how will water

reach areas that depre-

ssed?" he asked. The

officials of the KWSC to

develop a practical and

citywide water supply

strategy. We want to end

this system, but respon-

sibly," he said.

According to the mayor, once the KWSC finalises its proposal, it will be submitted to the City Council for approval. Only after formal approval will tanker services be phased out, and work on this strategy is currently underway.

Regarding political

motives behind the

move, he said that his

party had no hidden

agenda. "This hydrant

system was inherited.

The beneficiaries are

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accusations are directed at us," he said. He ac-

knowledged that Karachi faces a grave shortage but re-

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the mayor was

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months earlier.

They said the

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the KWSC to consider

shutting down the city's

hydrants in order to

achieve a fairer distribu-

tion of water. The

sources said that cutting

the hydrants would not

improve the city's water

supply, as only 15-

20 million gallons of

water daily (MGD), or 3.5

per cent of the total

650 MGD, was deliv-

ered through tankers.

Despite scepticism, mayor confident to dismantle water tanker network



NEWS DESK: While Mayor Murtaza Wahab outlined his plan to eventually dismantle the de-creased water tanker system, officials at the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC) voiced scepticism, saying it would not be possible to entirely shut down hydrants and end tanker services given the existing water infrastructure.

Talking to the reporters Wednesday after inaugurating the Jehangir Old Rehabilitation project, the mayor, who is also the chairman of the KWSC board, said that the water tanker system had been operating in Karachi for decades, largely filling gaps where the piped water supply does not reach.

However, he stressed that the system has created injuries with benefits flowing to select groups while blame is unfairly placed on the city administration.

"There is water in

the city, but the real issue is its unjust distribution," he said, adding that his administration has already "shut down" several illegal hydrants.

He said that the contracts of seven legal hydrants have expired, leaving only three hydrants.

He said that his administration has proposed to renew the contracts or permanently close the hydrants.

Mr Wahab said that he had proposed a third option — the gradual dismantling of

the hydrant and tanker system, but he said that such a step could not be taken without a comprehensive alternative plan.

"If hydrants are closed, how will water reach areas that depended on tankers?" he asked. The officials of the KWSC to develop a practical and citywide water supply strategy. We want to end this system, but responsibly," he said.

According to the mayor, once the KWSC finalises its proposal, it will be submitted to the City Council for approval. Only after formal approval will tanker services be phased out, and work on this strategy is currently underway.

Regarding political motives behind the move, he said that his party had no hidden agenda. "This hydrant system was inherited.

The beneficiaries are someone else, but the

accusations are directed at us," he said. He acknowledged that Karachi faces a grave shortage but reiterated that equitable distribution remains the administration's key objective. "Hydrant closure may hit DHA hardest. According to sources who spoke to Dawn, the mayor was told in a meeting with the water utility's senior management that a decision was to renew the renovated hydrant contracts, which had already expired about seven months earlier.

They said the mayor had instructed the KWSC to consider shutting down the city's hydrants in order to achieve a fairer distribution of water. The sources said that cutting the hydrants would not improve the city's water supply, as only 15-20 million gallons of water daily (MGD), or 3.5 per cent of the total 650 MGD, was delivered through tankers.

They said the

mayor had instructed

the KWSC to consider

shutting down the body

for an autopsy.

The Saddar SHO

said that the police

were investigating

the incident from

all angles. He added that the post-mortem

report would help determine the exact

range and nature of the gunshot wound to the head.

OBITUARY: Dist

rietary newspaper Sell

ers Association Gen

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Ahmed Qureshi

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He was laid to rest at the Mai Shah

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citizens attended the funeral.

3 dead, 6 injured in fog-related accidents in Sahiwal

NEWS DESK: Three people, including a woman, lost their lives while six others were critically injured in separate fog-related road accidents late on Tuesday night and in the early hours of Wednesday.

As per details, in one accident a car hit an unidentified 55-year-old man near the outer bus stop and fled the scene. Rescue 1122 shifted the body to the Sahiwal Teaching Hospital, while police had not failed to trace either the driver or the victim's identity.

In another accident, one Raj Murtaza, 22, a resident of Chak 42 (ABD), lost control of his motorcycle near the River Ravi at Qutab Shahnah Bridge on the Sahiwal-Faisalabad Road. He failed to notice a turn and fell into a 40-foot-deep trench due to poor visibility and sustained a fatal head injury.

The third accident happened near the Gulshan Fatima Housing Society, Village 40/1, in the Lower Jhalawali area. A bound passenger bus ran over 45-year-old Rukhsana Parveen, who died on the spot.

Meanwhile, four passengers were seriously wounded after it collided with a sugar-cane-laden tractor-trolley near Bootaywali Jhalal on

Police Chichawati Road. But arrests have been made so far in any of the cases.

BOYCOTT: The District Bar Association of Sahiwal on Wednesday accused the AC of corruption and mistreatment of lawyers.

The lawyers chanted slogans near their office and refused to appear in her court for any hearing. The DPA unanimously passed a resolution condemning the AC, accusing her of corruption, receiving kickbacks, and harassing lawyers.

The resolution, signed by DPA President Muhammad Saeed Sagha and Secretary Tariq Kamana, also denounced the alleged

mistreatment of bar member Mazhar Ali Fatyan.

Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent could not obtain the AC's version.

Reports suggest that lawyers plan to meet the Sahiwal deputy commissioner to discuss the matter and demand transfer of the AC from Sahiwal.

SUICIDE: A second-year student reportedly committed suicide by shooting himself in the head in the village 18/11-L Chichawati tehsil on Wednesday noon.

The deceased was identified as Saqib.

His parents confirmed to the DPA that he died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Upon receiving

the report, the Sadder SHO arrived at the scene, conducted a forensic examination, and shifted the body for an autopsy.

The Saddar SHO said that the police were investigating the incident from all angles. He added that the post-mortem report would help determine the exact range and nature of the gunshot wound to the head.

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Reko Diq Mining Company (RDMC) Awards 53 Students from Chagai with Fully Funded Scholarships

Syed Muhammad Qaseem:
Reko Diq Mining Company (RDMC), in partnership with Community Development Committees (CDCs), held a Scholarship Award Ceremony in Nokundi to celebrate academic excellence.

A total of 53 talented students from District Chagai, including 10 female students, were awarded fully funded scholarships under the RDMC Scholarship Program.

The selected students will attend a six-month Foundation Program at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Sukkur. Parents and community members attended the ceremony to acknowledge the students' hard work and achievements. RDMC Head of Sustainability, Ashley Price, said the company remains committed to people-centered development. She stressed that education is key to building strong and self-reliant communities and



praised the students

and discipline.

Nokundi, Humai, and

Fan Sediments also

appreciated the gathering.

They appreciated RDMC's continued support for local development and

company for the long-term welfare of the communities.

During the event, certificates were presented to the scholarship recipients. The foundation program will help them strengthen academic skills, build confidence, and prepare for admission to universities across Pakistan.

RDMC General Manager Ryan Mitchell congratulated the students, noting that their success would benefit not only them but also their communities. He encouraged them to give back and contribute positively to society.

He also thanked CDC members for ensuring that RDMC's community initiatives are aligned with genuine local needs.

RDMC continues to prioritize inclusive and sustainable development, with education as a central focus. The scholarship program is part of a broader effort that includes support for primary education and financial assistance to deserving university students from Balochistan.

DC Jaffarabad Chairs Key Meeting on Agricultural Land Identification Under Green Pakistan Initiative



JAFFARABAD: A special meeting was held under the chairman of Deputy Commissioner Jaffarabad, Khalid Khan, to identify agricultural land in the district under the Green Pakistan Initiative.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Director Agriculture Extension Jaffarabad Mehr Dil Abo, Tehsildar Jhaptab Abdullab Lashari, Naib Tehsildar Jhaptab Abdil Ghani Chachar,

Qanoongo Fakhruddin Umran, Superintendent Cattle Farm Abo, Pakhsit Soomro, along with other concerned officers and members.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the objectives of the Green Pakistan Initiative, increasing agricultural production, identification of barren and cultivable government and private land, and its effective utilization.

Officials from the Agriculture and Revenue departments and a panel of experts discussed the availability of agricultural land in the district, existing irrigation facilities, and potential development projects.

Addressing the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Khalid Khan stated that the Green Pakistan Initiative is a major government program aimed at strengthening the agricultural sector, achieving food self-sufficiency, creating employment opportunities, and stabilizing the economy.

He emphasized the need for transparent and accurate identification of agricultural land and directed all relevant departments to work in close coordination to ensure practical implementation so that the benefits of the initiative reach farmers at the grassroots level.

During the visit,

the provincial food minister met the injured patients individually, inquired about their condition, and expressed heartfelt sympathy with their families.

He prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured and assured them of full support from the provincial government.

Haji Noor Muhammad Khan Domki also received a detailed briefing from the hospital administration regarding the ongoing medical treatment and overall healthcare arrangements.

He too inquired about the condition of the injured and assured the hospital administration of his cooperation. The families and attendants of the injured expressed their gratitude to the provincial food minister for personally visiting the patients and taking keen interest in resolving their issues, terming the gesture as commendable and reassuring.

UNICEF and CPD Organize Two-Day AI-Based Training for Teachers in Sherani to Reduce School Dropout Rate

ZHOB: A two-day training workshop was organized in Sherani through the joint collaboration of UNICEF and CPD to train teachers on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for student attendance tracking and monitoring.

Master Trainers Aimal Khan and Noor Muhammad conducted the training sessions, while Teachers Association Headman and Project Assistant Shoaib Salar supervised the overall training process.

During the training, the master trainers highlighted findings from a comprehensive study conducted by

the School Education Department Balochistan in collaboration with UNICEF and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

The study re-

vealed an alarming school dropout rate at the primary level in Balochistan. According to the research, the dropout rate among boys ranges from 59 to 61 percent, while among girls it stands at 56 percent.

The study, titled "Study on School Dropouts in Balochistan," reviewed data from 20 districts of the province between 2016 and 2021. The report recom-

med child-centered interventions, increased parental support, improvement in school infrastructure, and teaching quality, and the establishment of an effective drop-out prevention system.

To address the current challenges, special training programs for teachers are underway across Balochistan, with a

strong focus on modern technology, particularly Artificial Intelligence.

During the sessions, teachers received practical training on using AI tools for monitoring student attendance, assessing academic performance, and generating comprehensive evaluation reports.

According to officials, the AI-based system will help in early identification of dropout trends and enable timely and effective interventions, contributing to improved education outcomes and a reduction in dropout rates across Balochistan in the future.

During the session, participants reviewed the progress of development projects and PSDPs for the second quarter of fiscal year 2025-26.

The meeting was attended by senior officials and representatives from the Department

of Education, CPD,

and other concerned

departments, as well as

representatives from

the chairmanship of

Secretariat Agriculture & Cooperatives Balochistan, Noor Ahmed Pirkani, to review key agricultural development initiatives, Public Sector Development Programs (PSDPs) and Schedules of New Expenditure (SNEs) across the province.

Directorate General

of Agriculture, Extension, Agriculture & Cooperatives College Quetta, and

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Green Pakistan Initiative

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Semenyo an instant hit as City close on League Cup final

NEWS DESK: Antoine Semenyo made himself an instant Manchester City hero as Pep Guardiola's men took a giant stride towards League Cup final with a 2-0 victory against Newcastle United.

The Ghana international, who joined from Bournemouth for 65 million (\$87 million) last week, was the star of the evening and also had a second goal controversy ruled out.

But Rayan Cherki delivered what could be the last kick of the season holder in the 98th minute. The Magpies ended a 70-year wait for a domestic trophy by winning the League Cup last season, but will now have to wait another year to reach Wembley when the sides meet again for the second leg of the semi-final on Feb 4.

Semenyo also scored on his debut on Saturday in a 10-1 demolition of Exeter in the FA Cup. "The whole envi-



ronment here is perfect," Semenyo said. "Everyone is confident and wanting to achieve the best. I've just come into that and they've helped me with my confidence and they've made me feel welcome."

In previous years he

would have been cupped after featuring for Bournemouth earlier in the competition.

Newcastle boss Eddie Howe made one change to his team for the game with a rule change this season that allows players to play for two clubs in the one campaign and City took full advantage.

Guardiola showed his desire to reach the final for the first time in his three years at the club. Haaland made a first League Cup start in three years in a strong

City selection just days before they visit Manchester United in the Premier League.

Yeone Wissa blasted a glorious early goal for Newcastle roared out of the blocks in front of a packed St. James' Park.

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PCB names Women's squads for SA tour

NEWS DESK: The Pakistan Cricket Board has today unveiled the ODI and T20I squads of the Pakistan Women's team for the upcoming tour to South Africa starting 10 Feb 2026.

Fast bowling all-rounder Fatima Sana will continue to lead the side in both formats as Pakistan build towards the ICC Women's T20I Cup 2026 in June. Ayaashia Zafar, Gull Feroza, Muneeba Ali, Nashra Sundhu, Natalia Parvaiz, Rameen Shamim, Sadaq Iqbal, Sida Amin, and Tasnia Rubah have earned their maiden T20I call-ups.

Opening batters Ayesha and Gull, along with left-arm pacer Tasnia and right-arm wicket-keeper Sana, have been called up to the 15-member ODI squad after missing out on the ODI World Cup selection.

Diana Baig, Naijha Sadaq, Ayesha and Saeed Arroob Shah are set to open the ODI tour squad, while Huma, Saira, Tuba Hassan and Eman Fatima are in the T20I squad only.

During the tour, mentor Wahab Riaz will be assisted by a seasoned set of coaches including Imran Farid (batting coach), Aman Asif (fast bowling coach), Abdur Rehman (spin bowling coach) and Abdul Majeed (fielding coach).

Afghanistan approve three-foreign-league annual cap for top players

NEWS DESK: Top Afghanistan players such as Rashid Khan can play a maximum of three foreign leagues abroad per year, alongside mandatory availability for a rehotted domestic competition, according to a new policy approved by the Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB).

The decision was taken at the board's annual general meeting in Kabul on Wednesday "to protect player fitness and mental well-being," the ACB said in a statement.

"This measure aims to manage workload and ensure peak performance for national duties," it added.

All players should be available for the five-team Afghanistan Premier League slated to launch

around October 2026 in the United Arab Emirates.

Star all-rounder Rashid plays franchise cricket in India, the UAE, the United States, South Africa and England. His teammates Noor Ahmad, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Rahamanullah Gurbaz and teenager AM Ghazanfar also play in multiple leagues across the world. Similar caps exist elsewhere. Pakistan restricts centrally contracted players to two overseas leagues outside the Pakistan Super League, while India does not allow its contracted male players to participate in any league abroad.

Katie Ledecky posts second-fastest 1500m free time ever in Pro Swim win

NEWS DESK: Nine-time Olympic gold medalist Katie Ledecky clocked the second-fastest women's 1,500m freestyle time in history on Wednesday to launch the US Pro Swim Series event in Austin, Texas, with a dominant victory.

Ledecky was unemployed in the 1500m, 15:23.21, more than a minute in front of the second-place runner-up Brinley Hansen, who touched in 16:31.31.

Becca Manei was third in 16:35.09.

Ledecky didn't have to wait long for a second-place finish in the 200m, 2:09.48, set in 2018, but she used a strong late surge to improve on the second-

best time of 2:12.51 that she set at the Pro Swim Series in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, last April.

Since then she has

gone on to win her sixth world title in the event at last year's world championships in Singapore.

She has won both

Olympic gold medals — Tokyo in 2021 and Paris 2024 — since the 1500m race was made an Olympic event for women.

Now 28, the American can who won her first Olympic gold in the 800m freestyle at the 2012 London Games is showing no signs of fading as she approaches the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Ledecky, the only woman to break 15:30 for the 1500m free, did so for the 10th time.

She owns the top

12 times ever and 24 of the top 25, with Italian swimmer Federica Pellegrini's 2:09.27 to times ahead of Teagan O'Dell (2:13.15), Emma Weyant was third fast-

est, winning her semi in 2:14.74.

France's Marshad, who won two golds in Paris, topped the men's 200m medley semi-finals in 2:00.10 ahead of Kieran Smith (2:00.19) and Carson Foster in 2:00.24. World record-holder Regan Smith of the United States won the men's 100m backstroke in 53.80 and reigning world champion Anna Elendt of Germany won the women's 100m breaststroke in 1:06.91.

Mitchell ton helps NZ level ODI series against India

NEWS DESK: Daryl Mitchell scored an unbeaten 131 from 17 balls to lead New Zealand to a seven-wicket win over India in the second One-Day International on Wednesday and level the three-match series at 1-1.

New Zealand won the toss and sent India into bat, restricting the hosts to 284/7 in Rajkot. The visitors chased down that target with 15 deliveries remaining to set up a series decider.

Mitchell, who has been in fine form in ODI cricket and scored 761 runs in 2025 at an average of 54.35, came from New Zealand in a difficult position at 46-2.

The 34-year-old quickly built a strong partnership with Will Young for the 162-run 5th-wicket stand. Mitchell then dropped on 80 by Prasidh Krishna before going on to notch his eighth ODI century.

"We haven't won here for a couple of years but getting a century I am just enjoying doing the job for the country," Mitchell said. "Young is a class player, I love bat with him, we also have a great working together. He enjoys playing the spinners and using all his options."

Indian bowlers enjoyed early success when Harshal Patel took the wickets of both men who made 16, and fellow quick Krishna had Henry Nichols inside-edge a delivery onto his stump.

"It is a complete performance from us and proud of the team," Mitchell said.

Young and the finish

line helped them complete their highest ever ODI run chase in India.

It was too little late from India, however, as Mitchell and Glenn Phillips (32) put on 50 runs before Mitchell dropped on 162 by Prasidh Krishna before going on to notch his eighth ODI century.

"We were very happy at the halfway point. We were ready to chase anything," New Zealand captain Michael Bracewell said.

Earlier on Wednesday, Kristian Clarke took three decisive wickets to



for 10

After that Young was joined at the crease by experienced Mitchell and the pair steered the team to victory.

Young (87) came close to scoring a century before he top-edged a Kuldeep Yadav delivery. Mitchell then dropped on 80 by Prasidh Krishna before going on to notch his eighth ODI century.

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Earlier on Wednesday, Kristian Clarke took three decisive wickets to

stall India's top-order, after Young had sent Rohit Sharma, Shreyas Iyer and Virat Kohli back to the dressing room.

Ki-rahul was the cornerstone of India's innings as he struck an unbeaten 112 from 92 balls.

He put together a 73-run second-wicket stand with Ravindra Jadeja (27) and added another 57 with Reddy (20) as he scored his eighth century and also recorded his joint-highest score in the 50-over format.

"We did get a decent start with the ball, but they batted very well in the middle overs," India captain Shubman Gill said. "It was a good game, but we bowled well. After that the wicket settled. But we could have been more brave, and taken more chances."

The decisive third

match of the series will be played in Indore, before the teams wrap up

their preparations for next month's Twenty20 World Cup with a five-match T20I series.

INDIA: R. Sharma c Young b Clarke 24S. Gill c Mitchell b Jameson 56. V. Kohli b Clarke 23 S. Iyer b Bracewell b Clarke 8K. L. Rahul not out 112. S. Chahal b Gill 27. N. K. Reddy b Phillips 27. H. Rana c Bracewell b Lennox 2M. Siraj not out 2 EXTRAS (LB-2, NB-1, W-7) 10 TOTAL (for 7 wickets, 50-2) 284 FALLS: 0 WICKETS: 7 (Sharma 2-99 (Gill), 3-115 (Yen-4-118 (Kohli), 5-191 (Jadeja), 6-248 (Reddy), 7-256 (Rana))

NEW ZEALAND: D. Young b Clarke 94-6. P. Jefferies b Kohli 1-1. T. Bracewell b Kohli 1-1. T. Lennox b Kohli 1-1. H. Jefferies b Kohli 1-1. T. Phillips b Kohli 1-1. D. Conway b Kohli 16 H. Nicholls b Krishna 10 W. Young c Reddy b Yadav 87 D.

Bangladesh Cricket Board removes director Najmul Islam amid player boycott

NEWS DESK: The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Thursday removed director Najmul Islam following protests from cricketers ahead of Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) matches over comments against the country's cricketers made by local media on Wednesday.

The Daily Star reported that the BCB match scheduled for 1pm local time today was delayed as a protest by Chittagong Royals and Noakhali Express did not show up at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium for the game, according to a BCB statement.

Since then, the Board remains committed to upholding the honour and dignity of all players under its jurisdiction. The BCB hopes that all cricket clubs and associations will support the highest standards of professionalism and dedication to the betterment of Bangladesh cricket, and will do their utmost to

ensure continued participation in the Bangladesh Premier League.

Until further notice,

Bulbul will serve as the acting chairman of the finance committee that Islam headed, the chairman said on Wednesday night that he believes national cricketers should be asked to return to the "cores and cores of the BCB stands on the ESPN Cricinfo reported.

The BCB officially distanced itself from Islam's comments and expressed its "sincere regret for remarks that were deemed inappropriate or hurtful." The Bangladesh Cricket Board also makes it clear that it will take appropriate disciplinary action against individuals whose conduct or comments show disrespect towards cricketers or cause harm to the reputation and integrity of Bangladesh cricket.



around October 2026 in the United Arab Emirates.

His teammates Noor Ahmad, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Rahamanullah Gurbaz and teenager AM Ghazanfar also play in multiple leagues across the world. Similar caps exist elsewhere. Pakistan restricts centrally contracted players to two overseas leagues outside the Pakistan Super League, while India does not allow its contracted male players to participate in any league abroad.

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Iran warns of retaliation if Trump strikes, US withdraws some personnel from bases

NEWS DESK: The United States is withdrawing some personnel from bases in the Middle East, an US official said on Wednesday, after a senior Iranian official said Tehran had warned neighbours it would hit American bases if Washington strikes.

With Iran's leadership trying to quell the worst domestic unrest the Islamic Republic has ever faced, Tehran is seeking to deter US President Donald Trump's repeated threats to intervene on behalf of anti-government protesters.

The UN Security Council is due to meet on Iran on Thursday at the request of the United States.

A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the United States had withdrawn personnel from key bases in the region as a precaution given heightened regional tensions.

"All of this is imminent, but that is also how this administration behaves to keep everyone on their toes,"



Unpredictability is part of the strategy," a Western military official told Reuters later on Wednesday. At the White House, however, Trump suggested he was adopting a wait-and-see posture toward the crisis. Trump told reporters

that he has been told that killings in the Iranian government's crackdown on the protests were subsidising and that he believes there is currently no plan for large-scale executions.

Asked who told him that the killings had stopped, Trump described them as "very important sources on the other side."

The president did not rule out potential US military action, saying, "we are going to watch what the process is before we do anything." His administration had received a "very good statement" from Iran.

Iranian Foreign Minister Alireza Mirzaei Hamedani said on Wednesday, "there is no plan" by Iran to hang people, when asked about the anti-government protests. "There is no plan for hanging at all," the foreign minister told Fox News in an interview on the "Special Report with Bret Baier" show. "Hanging is out of the question," he said.

According to the Norway-based Iran Human Rights Society, hangings are common in Iranian prisons. Timing is unclear, but US European officials said US military intervention could come in the next 24 hours. An Israeli official also said it appeared

Trump had decided to intervene, though the scope and timing remained unclear.

Other said drawdowns from its Al Udeid air base, the biggest US base in the Middle East, were "being undertaken in response to the current situation."

Those diplomats said some personnel had been told to leave the base, though there were no immediate signs of it. Large numbers of troops had been hustled out to a soccer stadium and shopping mall as took place hours before an Iranian missile strike last year.

Iranian was also withdrawing some personnel from an air base in Qatar ahead of possible US strikes. The I Paper newspaper reported the British defence ministry had no immediate comment.

Trump has repeatedly threatened to intervene in support of pro-government forces in Iran. Some thousands of people have been reported killed in a crackdown on the unrest against cleric rule.

China asks firms to stop using US, Israeli cybersecurity software

NEWS DESK: Chinese authorities have told domestic companies to stop using cybersecurity software made by roughly a dozen firms from the US and Israel due to national security concerns.

As trade and diplomatic tensions have between China and the US and both sides vie for tech supremacy, Beijing has been keen to replace Western-made technology with domestic alternatives. The US companies whose cybersecurity software has been banned include Broadcom-owned VMWare, Palo Alto Networks and Fortinet, while the Israeli companies include CheckPoint Software Technologies, the sources said.

Shares of Broadcom and Palo Alto Networks were down more than 1pc in premarket trading, while those of Fortinet

fell nearly 3pc.

Washington allows Nvidia to send advanced components to China with restrictions.

Chinese authorities expressed concern that the software could collect and transmit confidential information and, as a result, be used to damage China. They declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the situation.

While the West and China have clashed over China's efforts to catch up to Chinese buyers in certain conditions are met — including proof of "sufficient" US supply — while sales of the most advanced processor will still require a license. However, uncertainty has grown over how much demand there will be from Chinese companies, as Beijing has reportedly been encouraging tech companies to use home-grown chips.

Chinese officials have informed some firms they would be restricted from using H200 chips under special circumstances, such as development labs or university research, news website The Information reported on Tuesday, citing unnamed sources with knowledge of the situation.

The Information had previously reported that Chinese officials were calling on companies to stop using H200 purchases while they deliberated requiring them to buy a certain ratio of AI chips made by Nvidiavars in China.

Its official update on Wednesday, the US Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security said it had changed the licensing review policy for H200 and similar chips from a presumption of denial to handling applications case-by-case.

Global unemployment 'stable' in 2026

NEWS DESK: The global unemployment rate is expected to hold steady in 2026, the United Nations said Wednesday, but cautioned the labour market's seeming stability belies a dire shortage of decent jobs.

The UN's International Labour Organization said the global economy and labour market appeared well-adapted to weathered recent economic shocks better than expected.

But the ILO warned that efforts to improve global job markets had stagnated, leaving hundreds of millions of workers wallowing in poverty, even as trade uncertainty risked cutting into workers' wages.

The global unemployment rate was estimated at 4.9 percent last year and the year before, and is now projected to remain at a similar level until 2027, a report from the UN labour agency said.

That amounts to 186 million people out of work this year, it said.

"Global labour markets look stable, but that stability is quite fragile," Caroline Fredrickson, head of the ILO's research department, told reporters.

Going forward, the ILO said its modelling suggested that a moderate increase in trade policy uncertainty "may reduce returns to labour and, as a consequence, real wages for both skilled

and unskilled workers across all sectors", especially in Southeast Asia, Southern Asia and Europe.

The potential of

trade to generate new employment opportunities was also being challenged by the on-going pandemic, the report said, pointing out that 465 million jobs globally depended on foreign demand through exports of goods and services and related supply chains in 2024.

Trump reiterates desire for Greenland following high-stakes meeting

NEWS DESK: US President Donald Trump reiterated on Wednesday that the United States needs Greenland and that Denmark cannot be relied upon to protect the island, even as he said it is "something I'll work out" with respect to the future governance of the Danish overseas territory.

The remarks, which came during a high-stakes meeting between US, Danish and Greenlandic officials, indicate that there are still fundamental, if not intractable, differences between the two countries.

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