

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 examination process conducted by Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University (SBKWU), triggering widespread concern about merit, transparency, and accountability in Balochistan's education system.

It is 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 teacher positions across the province, such irregularities can not 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's schools.

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, flawed teacher recruitment further deepens an already critical education cri-

sis. Reports that deserving candidates were shorted in interviews, public frustration, and mistrust. All anti-corruption and accountability institutions must take immediate notice. A transparent, independent, and time-bound investigation is necessary to identify those responsible for manipulating the recruitment process conducted under SBKWU's authority.

Accountability must reach every individual involved in the manipulation of status or influence.

This is not merely an administrative controversy; it is a matter of justice and 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.

Muhammad Asghar

Harif:

Pakistan is in a break with the bureaucratic machinery inherited from British colonial period. It was the apparatus that was extractive in nature and has, over time, become rigid, aloof, and increasingly disconnected from contemporary realities. The democratic structure in any form, whatever, was already present, but the coercive tendency of inherited colonial machinery further diminished the chances of public representation in state machinery. While the political and military powers, after independence, were no less in awe from colonisers than the latter's educated and trained tapparatchiks of bureaucracy. The colonialism, pervaded both in politicians and the bureaucracy, generated a fear of anarchy without state machinery.

However, instead

of undergoing meaningful reform after independence, much of this system has ossified into a self-preserving structure of administrative machinery. It has failed to recognise its undemocratic origins, or else defend it. This resistance to change has forced the education system that discourages innovation and critical thinking, and by weak democratic institutions that have been unable to enforce accountability or transparency. Now that mammoth structure is breaking under its own weight on its own.

Seen against this backdrop, the decision by the Chief Minister of Balochistan to abolish the Food and Zakat Departments is a bold and a long-awaited step. It represents a rare and critical moment in the governance culture that generally prioritises continuity over performance. The greatest weakness of Pakistan's bureaucratic system is its institutionalised



pressure on Pakistan's wheat supply, now needs to be met through domestic production and sources its remaining deficit—about 2 million tons—from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and India. This shift has eased external pressure on Pakistan's wheat market and created space for greater private-sector participation, although that policy is set to gradually exit direct wheat trade.

Moreover, under IMF-mandated structural reforms, Pakistan has continued to deregulate the food chain, including the withdrawal of federally determined wheat support prices. In its name of efficiency and technology, a convoluted procurement and subsidy system has evolved—one that may have served a purpose in its early years but has long since been overtaken by changes in agricultural technology and market structures.

Rather than supporting small farmers or boosting rural areas, it is broadly wheat-sufficient, producing nearly 70 percent of the country's output and supplying deficits elsewhere. Government spending on wheat requirement stands at approximately 28 MMT.

Balochistan, being sparsely populated, has the lowest requirement, estimated at 1.08 MMT, while production ranges between 1.0 and 1.15 MMT. This deficit can be substantially reduced through yield-per-acre improvements and the solarisation of groundwater extraction, rather than through costly and inefficient imports.

In Balochistan, the limitations of this system are particularly stark. The province's maximum wheat procurement target has rarely exceeded 0.1 million tons—approximately 3% of total consumption—despite an available storage capacity of about 0.18 million tons across more than 400 warehouses. Such a small procurement volume is insufficient to influence market prices, ensure supply stability, or incentivise increased production. Worse, government procurement has largely benefited influential farmers, having political clout with minimal reach to smallholders. A government stock of only five million tons in storage can neither stabilise prices nor guarantee sustained supply.

Put simply, limited government procurement does not drive agricultural production. What Pakistan requires is a meaningful scaling-up of productivity through improved infrastructure, technology, and targeted market access, and targeted farmer support—not the continuation of an outdated procurement model that delivers little beyond fiscal subsidies and rent-seeking opportunities.

Some are likely to argue that abolishing the Food Department will undermine food security, in particular during periods of price inflation or supply disruption.

This concern, however valid, conflates institutional form with policy content.

Food security is not dependent on the existence of a specific department, but on the effectiveness of the mechanisms deployed to ensure availability and access. In practice, the Food Department's limited procurement—amounting to less than 10 percent of national consumption—has neither stabilised prices nor protected vulnerable consumers. Modern food security is better achieved through diversified supply, private-sector participation, strategic reserves managed by agile regulatory authorities, and targeted social protection programmes.

Quetta City, Proposed Master Plan

Abdul Latif Kakar : QUETTA: The mountain-ringed, Quetta city needs a comprehensive master plan to ensure the solution of problems faced by citizens and 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 in 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, drought, and floods, the need for making a comprehensive master plan for Quetta city is growing. Rather, it is now indispensable to make this plan, before it is already late.

Geography and

Soil Four main units describe the soils of Quetta i.e. (1) piedmont plains (very deep and well-drained soil) (2) piedmont basins (3) salinity and alkalinity (4) gravelly piedmont 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 near foot hills, the soil consists of sandy loam, mixed

with pebbles and rock fragments and is suitable for vegetation. In the Hanna val-

ley, the greater part of the valley floor is covered by barren rock boulders of low re-

lief and dry mala bed. The soil is restricted to the narrow banks and low ter-

races along the main stream.

However, the nature of the soil in Beli-

is silty clay which is not suitable for cultivation.

Similarly, the

Chiltan surface has soils that are predominantly gravelly loams.

The vegetation on these soils is mainly Haloxylon which provides high grazing for livestock.

Soil erosion.

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

The stream erosion takes place in the piedmont plain along the banks and beds of streams.

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

This all requires a review of the existing plans and documents and 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. Current and future population trends need to be reviewed.

Transportation, mass transit, and city traffic management and monitoring system, housing commercial, and industrial 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.

Tear gas fired at protestors demanding release of 5-year-old detainee in Texas

NEWS DESK: Texas state police officers on Wednesday used tear gas to disperse a demonstration outside a US immigration detention facility where protesters demanded the release of a 5-year-old Ecuadorian boy, among others swept up in the Trump administration's immigration clampdown.

About 100 protesters gathered at the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley on Wednesday, carrying signs accusing the federal agents of terrorising communities.

"We want Kristi Noem impeached. We want the US Senate to defund ICE, to not give it any more money. And we need people to pay attention to the midterm elections this year," local elected official Christina Mo-



seeking to arrest the boy's father in Minneapolis.

The child and his Ecuadorian father, Adrian Conejo Arias – both asylum seekers – were taken from their driveway as they arrived home on January 20, after the child was used as "bait" by officers to draw out those inside his home, according to the superintendent of the boy's school, Zena Stenvik.

A federal judge temporarily blocked their deportation on Tuesday. Castro also demands the release of everyone else being held at the privately run facility, saying, "There are no criminals in Dilley. Donald Trump said this was about arresting illegal criminal 'aliens' – that's his language. There isn't a single criminal over there."

UK universities becoming more reliant on Chinese students: FT

NEWS DESK: Leading British universities are becoming more reliant on students from China for overseas enrolment, raising concerns about financial risk and academic independence as global competition for international students intensifies.

Financial Times cites new data which shows that Chinese nationals made up more than two-fifths of international students at the UK's elite Russell Group universities in the 2024-25 academic year. Around 105,000 Chinese students were enrolled at these institutions, accounting for 42.5 per cent of their total overseas intake, which is the highest proportion on record.

By contrast, Chinese students represented less than one per cent of international enrolments across the rest of the UK's higher education sector, highlighting how heavily top-ranked universities depend on a single, diverse country.

The figure comes at a time when British universities are under mounting financial strain, driven by falling domestic funding and tightening admissions rules that have slowed recruitment from several key markets.

Sector leaders have warned that over-reliance on China exposes universities to geopolitical, economic and diplomatic shocks.

105,000 students from China enrolled in elite Russell Group universities in 2024-25 academic year, says report. Concerns about Beijing's influence on UK campuses have also resurfaced.

In recent months, British academics have called for more security and intimidation to take on countries such as Beijing's influence on UK campuses have also resurfaced.

Efforts to diversity recruitment have been complicated by recent policy changes, universities have reduced their take on countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh following stricter visa rules while favouring markets with higher visa completion rates, such as China.

Data also shows that international student numbers in the UK have declined for the second consecutive year, falling by more than 5pc in 2024-25. En-

rollment or intimidation would not be tolerated and stressed that steps were being taken to strengthen the sector's financial resilience.

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rolments dropped in three of the four largest source countries — India, China and Nigeria — with Nigeria seeing particularly sharp falls following its currency crisis.

Pakistan was the only major source country to record growth, with numbers rising by about 5pc. Nepal also saw a sharp increase, nearly doubling its student population in the UK.

Despite this, Russell Group universities reported a fall in total international enrolments, meaning their dependence on Chinese students has grown even as absolute numbers decline.

Joaquin Castro and Jasmine Crockett conducted an inspection to visit the child. Liani Conejo Ramos, and 1,100 others detained there.

"His dad said that he hasn't been himself, and he's been sleeping a lot because he's been depressed and sad," Castro said in a video message posted to X, in which the congressman insists Ramos and his family were "legally in the United States".

National outcry followed images of the

apparently terrified preschooler, dressed in a fluffy blue bunny hat and wearing his school backpack, being held by immigration officers who were

reliant on Chinese students for overseas enrolment, raising concerns about financial risk and academic independence as global competition for international students intensifies.

The UK Department of Education said any form of foreign in-

terference or intimidation would not be tolerated and stressed that steps were being taken to strengthen the sector's financial resilience.

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Driver arrested after car crashes into New York Synagogue

NEWS DESK: A car slammed into the entrance of the headquarters of a Jewish religious order in New York City on Wednesday morning, an incident that police said they were investigating as a hate crime.

No injuries were reported from the incident at the Chabad Lubavitch World Center in Brooklyn, and police said the driver was arrested. Chabad followers, also known as Lubavitchers, belong to the ultra-Orthodox Hasidic school of Judaism.

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani said the man who was arrested "intentionally, and repeatedly, crashed his vehicle into the building." Mamdani, who said he visited the location after the incident, described the act as "horrifying," "dangerous" and "deplorable." Tisch told reporters the incident was being investigated as a hate crime.

Earlier tonight, a car crashed into a side entrance of the building at 770 Eastern Parkway, the building encompasses one of the most important synagogues in the world." Chabad Lubavitch's Rabbi Mendel Solis, said on social media, adding the driver was arrested "almost immediately."

Tisch told reporters the incident was being investigated as a hate crime by the New York City Police Department's hate crimes task force. Police have not yet identified the vehicle as a grey Honda with New Jersey plates.

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"Antisemitism has been a part of our city, and violence or intimidation against Jewish New Yorkers is unacceptable," Mamdani said.

Earlier tonight, a car crashed into a side entrance of the building at 770 Eastern Parkway, the building encompasses one of the most important synagogues in the world." Chabad Lubavitch's Rabbi Mendel Solis, said on social media, adding the driver was arrested "almost immediately."

Tisch told reporters the incident was being investigated as a hate crime by the New York City Police Department's hate crimes task force. Police have not yet identified the vehicle as a grey Honda with New Jersey plates.

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Has India's dominance in ICC revenue model factored in Bangladesh's dismissal from World Cup?

NEWS DESK : Bangladesh's request to play the T20 World Cup 2024, which the Indian team was not entertained by the International Cricket Council (ICC), leading to their ejection from the tournament.

After Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) had refused to play their matches in India in response to the termination of Mustafizur Rahim's contract by Kolkata Knight Riders, on the instructions of the BCCI.

There were no reasons given by the BCCI for its decision.

The board that did not let a single Bangladeshi player compete in its biggest league wanted the entire team to assemble to play their matches in India.

The ICC dismissed the security concerns raised by the BCB, stating that "no credible or verifiable document to the Bangladeshi national team, officials or supporters in India" was



found in their elaborate assessment of the situation.

While mainstream analysis has treated this as a singular conflict between the ICC and BCB, the lack of mention of

the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) signals that the world's most influential cricketing body's absence did not factor in.

This has also been

the official stance of the BCCI. When Devajit Saikia, the BCCI's secretary, was asked about the conflict earlier this month,

he stated that the matter falls beyond the purview of the Indian

cricketing board. "It's not our domain to talk about that," Saikia had said.

The ICC functions

not on a specific framework, but on the principles of the BCCI, as suggested by The Wire journalist, Ravi Raj. For instance, last year, India adopted a similar stance, asking the team to Pakistan, which was hosting the Champions Trophy

2025.

Their request was promptly heard, and their matches were shifted to Dubai.

But the same request from Bangladesh has not been given the

same consideration.

The ICC is now more wary of setting a "precedent that could jeopardise the sanctity of future ICC events", and "undermine its neutrality as a global governing body."

The incident was set a year ago by the BCCI, and the BCB was simply following the same script.

Jason Gillespie, the former Australian cricketer, pointed out the inconsistency when he posted on X:

"Has there been an explanation from the ICC why Bangladesh could not play their games outside of India?"

The tweet is deleted as of now following abuse from netizens.

India refused to play Champions Trophy matches in Pakistan and were allowed to play those games outside the country.

Can someone make this make sense?"

Gillespie wrote in the post.

Djokovic gets out of jail to set up Sinner semi-final showdown

NEWS DESK: Novak Djokovic continued his quest for a record-extending 11th Australian Open title and standalone 25th Grand Slam crown, but only after a cruel twist of fate for Lorenzo Musetti, who quit their quarter-final due to injury on Wednesday.

While the stars may

seem to be aligning for Djokovic in his bid for more major glory, the road will be a rocky one. After Janus Sinner beat Ben Shelton to book a blockbuster semi-final against him, and Carlos Alcaraz potentially in the final.

Swiatek arrived in

Melbourne chasing a

career Grand Slam—the

feat of winning all four

of the sport's biggest

titles—but her bid

went up in smoke after a

defeat by Elena Rybakina earlier in the day.

Jessica Pegula had

little trouble as she

reached the Melbourne

Park semi-finals for the

first time after dashing

American Amanda Anisimova's

hopes of reaching three

titles in a row.

The drama in the

day session was re-

served for the afternoon

match and Djokovic ar-

rived fresh for the

final after dashing

home.

After getting a walkover

on Sunday from injured

Czech Jakub Mencik.

The Serb made a

fast start but it was then

one-way traffic as the

match and Djokovic ar-

rived fresh for the

final after dashing

home.

These things hap-

pened in sport and it's

happened to me a few

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home.

I am extremely

lucky to get through this treatment, but lasted only one more game and he threw in the towel.

After a 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 win, Djokovic clinched the landmark 25 since his last major title at the US Open in 2023.

It has proved increasingly difficult with the emergence of Sinner and world number one.

Djokovic, who needed treatment during the match for a gruesome blister, added: "I am going to see my doctors and go to bed tonight to God, giving me this opportunity again."

A heartbroken Musetti said he was particularly disappointed after taking a big lead against the experienced Djokovic, adding the trouble in his leg first began in the second set.

"In the end, when I took the ball in my hand and started to play again, I felt it even more and it was getting higher and higher, the level of the pain."

Although he eclipsed Roger Federer with his 103rd match win at Melbourne Park, the task will get only tougher for Djokovic when he meets Sinner, who won 22 consecutive sets against his serving Shelton in a 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 victory in the evening session.

PSG and Real Madrid miss automatic qualification

NEWS DESK: Holders Paris St Germain and Real Madrid both failed to seal automatic spots in the Champions League knockout round as they slipped out of the top eight on a frenetic final night of group-stage action across Europe on Wednesday.

PSG could only draw 1-1 at home to Newcastle United—a result that left both sides facing a playoff despite starting the final night in the automatic places.

Five-time winners Real Madrid were beaten 4-2 at Jose Mourinho's Benfica, meaning they fell from third to ninth.

Liverpool thrashed

Qarabag 6-0 to end their group campaign in style, but finished in third place. Barcelona, who began the evening in ninth spot, spared themselves a playoff tie as they came from a goal down to beat Copenhagen 4-1 and finish fifth, one place

behind Tottenham Hotspur who won 2-0 at Eintracht Frankfurt.

Chelsea came from behind to win 3-2 at Napoli with Joao Pedro's double helping them clinch sixth spot. Defeat left Napoli down

and out in 30th place.

Portugal's Sporting grabbed a last-gasp 3-2 win at Athletic Bilbao thanks to a goal by Alisson Santos to snatch a top-eight spot and effectively relegate Real Madrid to the play-

offs.

Manchester City beat Galatasaray 2-0 to jump from 11th to eighth. Arsenal, who like Bayern Munich were already assured of a top-eight finish, became the first club to

the new 36-team group format to finish with a 100% record, beating bottom club Kairat Almaty 3-2. Bayern finished second after a 2-1 victory at PSV Eindhoven that left the Dutch club eliminated.

Earlier, New Zealand got off to a blazing

start with Seifert and Conway combining to put the ball in the net.

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New Zealand thrash India to end losing streak

NEWS DESK: New Zealand thumped India by 50 runs in the fourth Twenty20 International to end their five-wicket losing streak in the five-match series in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday.

Put in to bat, New Zealand struggled to build on their early opening stand between Tim Seifert (62) and Devon Conway (44) but still posted a commanding 215-7.

The tourists then returned to bowl out India for 165 in 18.4 overs despite Shivam Dubey's brilliant 65 off 23 balls that included seven sixes.

India lead the series 3-1 ahead of Saturday's final match in Thiruvananthapuram.

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Field Marshal Munir says Pakistan Army shifting to tech-led, multi-domain warfare

NEWS DESK: Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir on Thursday said the Pakistan Armed Forces are undergoing a major transformation across multiple domains, with technology reshaping the future character of warfare, according to the military's media wing.

"Character of war has evolved massively, with technological advancements driving the evolution, dictating huge paradigm transformation at all tiers."

In future, technological manoeuvres will replace physical manoeuvres and will fundamentally alter the way military offensive operations are undertaken. Therefore, Pakistan Armed Forces are embracing and absorbing technology at a rapid pace.

"In this process innovation, indigenisation and adaptation shall remain fundamental," he said.

The remarks were made during his visit to Bahawalpur Garrison, where he was briefed on

operational, training and administrative matters of the Corps, with special focus on preparations for multi-domain warfare. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

The army chief also witnessed a high-intensity field exercise, "Steadfast Resolve," at Kharpur Tamewali

to maintain optimum readiness to meet future battlefield and security challenges.

Field Marshal Munir inaugurated the ROHIS Skills Learning Hub (STP), aimed at

the handout issued on

promoting digital skills and learning opportunities for students, particularly from southern Punjab and across the country.

The exercise showed

the integration of

niche technologies,

including unmanned aerial systems (drones), ad-

vanced sensors, electronic warfare

capabilities and modern

command-and-control

mechanisms, reflecting

the Armed Forces' em-

phasis on technology-

enabled multi-domain

warfare.

Addressing the

troops, the COAS and CDF praised their high

morale, professional

conduct and operational

preparedness.

He reaffirmed that the Pakistan Armed

Forces remain fully pre-

pared to defend the

country's sovereignty

and territorial integrity

against all threats, stressing the need to

the supreme sacrifices of the martyrs.

Imran Khan taken to hospital for minor eye procedure, confirms Tarar

NEWS DESK: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Thursday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and former prime minister Imran Khan, who is incarcerated at Adiala Jail, has been admitted to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) for medical treatment.

His statement came amid growing concern expressed by senior opposition leaders over Khan's health.

On Wednesday, top leaders from PTI and allied parties held a joint press conference, raising alarm over what they described as the continued denial of access to the jailed former prime minister, a day after reports surfaced that he was suffering from an eye infection.

"The last meeting with Imran Khan took place on December 20,

after which party officials and family members had not been allowed to meet him," PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said at the press conference. He added that a petition had been filed in court against the promised meet with Khan, but approval had not yet been granted.

Speaking to a private news channel TNN, Tarar said eye specialists recommended Khan at Adiala Jail and advised that he be shifted to Pims for further assessment and treatment.

Rejecting rumours circulating on social media about Khan's condition, Tarar said that the former prime minister's health was severely false.

"Ahmadullah, he is completely fine," he said.

The hospital visit was solely for a minor eye-related procedure carried out on medical advice.

Asked about that

judgment during his weekly press briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, FO Spokesman Tahir Hussain Andrabi said, "This judgment [...] is the view of the learned judge. Pakistan, of course, does not subscribe to it."

And frankly, this kind of designation does not exist either under the United Nations (UN) or under international law," he said.

Judge Majoka had made the observation while noting that Pakistan was "not included in the list of terrorist states." It is worth mentioning that the UN does

not maintain a list of "ter-

rorist states."

The United Nations

Security Council

(UNSC) has a "Consolidated List" of individu-

als, entities and other

groups that it sanctions

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to various reasons.

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