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QUETTA VOICE



Balochistan to Launch Safe City Authority

WEB DESK:

The Government of Balochistan has approved, in principle, the establishment of a modern Safe City Authority to strengthen security and surveillance across the province. The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Mir Sarfraz Bugti, where progress on Safe City projects was reviewed in detail.

The provincial government agreed to ensure the provision of required financial and technical resources on a priority basis to fast-track implementation. Advanced Surveillance and Monitoring Plan

Officials briefed the meeting on proposals to install state-of-the-art surveillance cameras, command and control centers, and integrated monitoring systems in major cities

of Balochistan. The chief minister directed all departments to remove administrative and technical bottlenecks immediately and accelerate work on the projects.

He said the Safe City system would enable round-the-clock monitoring of road networks, sensitive installations, and public places.

He added that after Punjab, Balochistan would be

come the second province to introduce a comprehensive and modern Safe City framework.

Boost to Law Enforcement and Public Safety

According to the chief minister, the completion of Safe City projects will significantly improve crime prevention, traffic management, and emergency response capabilities. He emphasized that protecting the lives and property of citizens through the use of

modern technology remains a top priority of the provincial government.

He further stated that the establishment of the Safe City Authority would enhance the operational efficiency and coordination of law enforcement agencies. The meeting was attended by Shakeel Qadir Khan, Hamza Shaafiqat, Muhammad Fahim Khan, Principal Secretary Imran Zarkoon, along with other senior officials.

Nawab Aslam Raisani Rejects Proposal to Separate Mastung from Kalat Division

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Former Chief Minister of Balochistan and former Chief of Sarawan Nawab Muhammad Aslam Raisani has strongly rejected the proposal to separate Mastung district from Kalat Division.

In a tweet on X, Nawab Aslam Raisani said that Mastung has historically remained a central and significant part of the former State of Kalat, and its political, cultural, and administrative importance cannot be ignored.



He termed the proposed move as being against history and the long-standing public affiliation of the people with Kalat.

The former chief minister emphasized that any decision taken without public consultation is unacceptable and hurts public sentiment. He urged the concerned authorities to immediately review the proposal and ensure that the opinion of the local population is given priority before taking any final decision.

2 policemen martyred as suicide bomber targets checkpoint in Bhakkar

NEWS DESK:

Two policemen were martyred in a suicide blast at a checkpoint in the jurisdiction of Punjab's Bhakkar district on Tuesday evening, according to officials.

Bhakkar District Police Officer (DPO) Shahzad Rafiq told Dawn that a suicide attack was carried out near the Dajil checkpoint.

He said that two policemen were martyred and one was injured, while three passersby were also injured in the blast. "The suicide attacker came near the check post and blew himself up, while we were conducting a search operation in the area to maintain law and order," he added.

The deceased policemen were identified as Muhammad Faheem and Muhammad Shehbaz, and the injured as Arshad. The identities of the injured passersby have not yet been ascertained.

The injured were taken to the District Headquarters Hospital, DPO Rafiq said.

In a statement, President Asif Ali Zardari strongly condemned the terrorist attack. He expressed grief at the deaths of the officials and offered his condolences to the bereaved families.

He also prayed for the swift recovery of the police personnel injured in the attack.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz strongly condemned the attack on the police checkpoint. In a statement, she paid tribute to the martyred policemen and saluted their sacrifice in the line of duty.

The chief minister expressed heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families. She directed authorities to ensure the best possible medical treatment for the injured policemen and others wounded in the incident.

The development comes on the same day six law enforcement personnel, including a deputy superintendent of police, were martyred after a terrorist attack on a police vehicle in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kohat district.

PTI objects to 'secrecy' after Imran Khan undergoes follow-up treatment for eye ailment at Pims

NEWS DESK:

The PTI took exception to the government's "secrecy" regarding ex-prime minister Imran Khan after it emerged that he underwent a follow-up treatment for his eye ailment at an Islamabad hospital in the early hours of Tuesday.

According to a doctor at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims), Imran was brought to the hospital for a second dose of anti-VEGF intravitreal injection on February 24.

Imran's eye ailment — right central retinal vein occlusion (CRVO) — came to light in late January. His first medical procedure, which was carried out on January 24, was confirmed by the government five days later.

Since then, the government and the opposition have also been engaged in a blame game, with the latter accusing the former of a lack of transparency on the matter, of not ensuring appropriate treatment for Imran, and of not allowing his personal physicians access to him. The government denies these allegations.

Reacting to the development, the PTI's official X account



said: "The situation demands transparency, not secrecy." The party said such "clandestine actions only give rise to more questions." "What are they hiding?" the party asked, reiterating its demand that Imran be taken to Shifa International Hospital for "independent and transparent medical care." The PTI re-shared a video showing a convoy passing

through at night, in which a person can be heard saying the vehicles were "returning from Pims."

It could not be verified whether the convoy was carrying the former premier.

In its statement, the TTAP reiterated that Imran should be immediately shifted to Shifa International Hospital in Islamabad, where his treatment should be

conducted in the presence of his personal physicians and family members to end all concerns regarding his health.

The party added: "We further demand an immediate explanation for this irresponsible conduct. Any future actions must strictly adhere to legal requirements and fundamental rights. "A transparent and credible

mechanism must be adopted regarding the medical care of the party leader to restore public confidence." In her statement on X, Imran's sister Aleema Khanum said: "We do not trust the diagnosis or test reports from government medical facilities."

She said: "From the news, we found out that Imran Khan was taken to Pims again in the middle of the night, supposedly for his second injection in the eye."

"When the law requires that family be informed before any medical procedure is conducted on a prisoner, why was the family not informed?" she asked.

Expressing her lack of trust in the government-affiliated treatments, she claimed, "There are already reports coming from Pims that the doctors are being threatened with serious consequences if any information is leaked about Imran Khan."

Aleema further said, "Our family rejects their reports, even if they issue these doctored reports to the public. "We stand by our demand that Imran Khan be examined and treated in Shifa International (Islamabad) by specialists, under the supervision of Imran Khan's personal doctors and in the presence of his family."

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Koh-e-Suleman and Pishin Divisions: A Necessary Shift Toward People-First Governance



Editorial: The announcement of the Koh-e-Suleman Division by Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti marks a long-overdue administrative correction for an area that has remained distant from effective governance for decades.

Declaring Rakhi as the divisional headquarters reflects a growing recognition that governance cannot succeed when decision-making centers remain far removed from the people.

For residents of Koh-e-Suleman, this step promises easier access to administration, faster service delivery, and greater state presence in everyday affairs.

Administering such a vast population through distant divisions has long strained public services, from healthcare and education to revenue and law enforcement. In this context, the establishment of a new division is not symbolic—it is an administrative necessity grounded in population realities and governance efficiency.

Alongside this development, the provincial cabinet's approval of the Pishin Division deserves equal attention. What now remains is the issuance of a formal notification by the Board of Revenue and its public inauguration by the Chief Minister.

Comprising Chaman, Pishin, Barshore Karezat and Killa Abdullah districts,

the proposed Pishin Division also serves more than two million people. Delaying its notification risks prolonging administrative congestion and public hardship in an already overburdened system.

However, administrative restructuring must follow clear principles. Divisions and districts should be created on the basis of population size, service demand, and administrative feasibility—not political ambition, tribal influence, or electoral engineering.

When designed for political gain, such reforms fail the common citizen. If implemented with sincerity, the Koh-e-Suleman and Pishin Divisions can become models of people-centric governance—where administrative boundaries exist to serve citizens, not power corridors.

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Malnutrition in Balochistan

Amber Munir in Balochistan shared in Quetta Voice on Wednesday, April 14, 2021. The article highlights the role of essential nutrients in human resource development along with a brief introduction of malnutrition, characterization of malnutrition, procedure of taking measurements of SAM and MAM cases, medical complications, community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM), infant and young child feeding (IYCF), etc.

Background: Surveys regarding National Nutrition Survey (2001-2002); The National Nutrition Survey conducted in 2001-2002 assessed the nutritional levels and health status of mothers and children in Pakistan. Data was collected through a questionnaire consisting of four modules including a household questionnaire, biochemical and clinical questionnaires, and dietary form. Additional biochemical samples including serum retinol, serum ferritin, and zinc, were collected from mothers and children under-5. Urine samples were collected from ages 6-12 years for iodine deficiency. The survey sampled 10,656 households from 700 primary sampling units.

National Nutrition Survey (2019): The aim of NNS 2019 is to undertake a field survey and generate district-specific nutrition information related to malnutrition (both undernutrition and overnutrition) and micronutrient deficiencies among women and children in Pakistan.

Malnutrition status in Balochistan: Balochistan is the most under-developed of Pakistan's provinces, with a high proportion of children under five years of age who are stunted (52%) and 16 percent of who are wasted. Moreover, the prevalence of anemia among children in this age group is 57%

and nearly 49% among women of childbearing age. Numerous factors are thought to contribute to child undernutrition in Balochistan, including sub-optimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices; frequent child infections (especially diarrhea diseases and measles); maternal nutritional deficiencies and/or illness and death; absence/adequacy of micronutrient supplementation; and household food insecurity and gender inequity.

A survey conducted by the National Nutrition Cell revealed that 49% of women in Balochistan were suffering from malnutrition. Moreover, the ratio of maternal anemia was 49%, anemia among children below five years was 57% and iodine deficiency among women was 29%.

Balochistan Nutrition Program for Mother and Children (BNPMC) (41%) was allocated to strengthen institutional arrangements which include staffing, technical assistance for capacity building, strengthening coordination mechanisms, addressing malnutrition among children and PLW (37%), and addressing micronutrient malnutrition (13%).

Future Plans

The aforesaid program ended in December 2019 and was limited to seven districts; whereas the malnutrition situation continues to exist in 22 districts of Balochistan.

Therefore, the Government of Balochistan has assigned DoH and PPHI to extend nutrition intervention in 22 districts for which project proposals are ready; implementation is expected from July 2021.

The author is a program officer in PPHI



In response to the challenging nutrition situation in the province, the Department of Health (DoH) launched the Nutrition Program for Mothers and Children (BNPMC) in 2016. They implemented nutrition activities among the rural and urban population of seven selected districts. The total population of these districts is 1,654,613, of which estimated target populations include 132,369 pregnant and lactating women (PLW). Stakeholders include the DoH, Peoples Primary Healthcare Initiative (providing health services at Basic Health Units in the districts), and local NGOs.

The total cost of the above project was 1,492.62 million PKR (US\$14.21 million) of which 80% were provided by the World Bank and 20% by the Government of Balochistan. A major part of the funding

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THE DILEMMA OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) WEAPONS

Masoor ul Hassan The danger associated with autonomous and semi-autonomous weapons systems is unacceptable. There exist a near consensus that such weapons must not be completely AI-controlled.

The design must include appropriate levels of human judgment while resorting to them. This line of thought gains more credence when the present degree of global polarization is taken into view. The international order is tilting towards autocracy and the likelihood of employment of these weapons is becoming a reality. The norms and values of world politics were subjected to heavy Trumpian Strain in the recent past when the competition of naked power showed its ugliness in international relations.

The Genesis of warfare

The history of warfare is as old as the human race. The Book of Genesis states that Cain killed Abel to satiate his vengeance. Ever since vengeance, confrontation and bellicosity have remained more pervasive than cooperation and amiability in human relations. The perception of life as a zero-sum game breeds selfishness and consequent animosity between individuals, groups, or states. Instincts of survival and procreation are reflexive thus natural for all living organisms including us humans.

War, being one of the forms of human relations, received due attention alongside increased societal complexities. War, being



one of the forms of human relations, received due attention of scientists for defining ethical and moral issues.

Caine, who may have used a sharp stone, a strong branch of a tree, or simple brute force to strangle Abel, would be flabbergasted if he were to visit our times. The civilization we live in today took centuries over centuries to materialize.

The use of electromagnetic spectrum was considered a game-changer The use of electromagnetic spectrum was considered a game-changer before Counter Measures (ECM) were developed which then was countered by Electronic Counter Measures (ECM).

When the lethality of weapons created a situation of mutually assured destruction (MAD) the situation became unacceptable. Various treaties like Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

(START), and many more were signed to avert the unacceptable destruction of the human race.

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

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Word count (592)

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Blizzard pummels US northeast, disturbing flights and road network

NEWS DESK: A powerful blizzard dropped more than a foot of snow across parts of the US Northeast on Monday, bringing travel to a near-standstill for millions of residents as the treacherous conditions closed roads, shut train service and forced the cancellation of some 5,700 flights.

Thousands of homes and businesses were without power and officials, including New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, ordered residents to stay off the roads so emergency crews could clear the streets. Many schools were closed throughout the region.

"I'm urging every New Yorker to please stay home," Mamdani said. More than 15 inches (38 centimetres) of snow had fallen on New York City's Central Park by 8am Eastern time on Monday and another 5 to 6 more inches (13-15 centimetres) are expected to fall before the storm tapers off by late afternoon, said Bob Oravec, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service's Weather Prediction Centre. Winds can blow snowdrifts several feet high. "It's a pretty big storm and it's definitely a blizzard" with wind



gusts of 40 to 60 mph (64-100 kph) from Delaware to New York City to Boston, Oravec said. "It'll probably take a week to dig out." Boston has received about 6 inches so far, but much of Delaware and southern New England have already received 12 to 18

inches, and Philadelphia has already received a foot of snow. The storm is expected to taper off in New York City by Monday afternoon but Boston and upper New England will see snow through Monday night. People walk

through several inches of snow in Central Park, as blizzard warnings were issued for large parts of the US East Coast.—AFP

Long Island, Sandra Wu has never seen a winter storm this bad. Her family cannot open the front door and can barely see out of some windows because of the high snowdrifts.

My husband went out early through the garage to start digging us out, but it was pointless," Wu said. Wu, 53, a veterinarian, said the storm, which had dropped about 18 inches of snow, reminds her of the storms in the 1990s when she lived in Buffalo, New York, which gets an average annual snowfall of 92 inches.

Her two children, ages 13 and 5, were thrilled to have a snow day off from school, so they slept in. "We thought we'd lose power, thankfully not," she said. "So we're taking today. There's nothing else to do while we wait for the snow to

stop." Regional emergencies: At least seven US states had declared states of emergency in response to the storm as of Monday. Airlines had canceled more than 5,700 flights by Monday morning and delayed another 900, according to the tracking site FlightAware.com.

More than 1,600 Tuesday flights had already been canceled, according to the site. Most of the cancellations and delays were in the northeastern US, including New York's John F. Kennedy International and LGA airports, Boston's Logan Airport, and New Jersey's Newark Liberty International Airport. New York Governor Kathy Hochul said she had activated 100 National Guard members to assist in Long Island, New York City and the lower Hudson Valley, areas expected to bear the brunt of the heavy snow and coastal winds. The storm forced the closure of the UN headquarters complex in Manhattan.

Parts of the Northeast could see up to two feet of snow and wind gusts could reach 70 mph, raising the risk of falling trees and power outages, according to the Department of Homeland Security.

Various foreign ministers condemn Israel over West Bank moves, statement says

NEWS DESK: The foreign ministers of Brazil, France, Spain, Turkey and various other states condemned Israeli decisions that they said introduce sweeping extensions to unlawful Israeli control over the West Bank.

"Changes are wide-ranging, reclassifying Palestinian land as so-called Israeli 'state land', accelerating illegal settlement activity, and further entrenching Israeli administration," said the joint statement, issued late on Monday by the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

Other countries to sign the statement included Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Qatar, as well as the heads of the Arab League and

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. Pakistan and 13 other countries have condemned remarks by US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee suggesting he would not oppose Tel Aviv taking over large parts of the Middle East, the Foreign Office said Sunday.

Speaking to journalist Tucker Carlson this week, Huckabee argued Israel has a biblical right to land stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates River. "It would be fine if they took it all," he said after Carlson noted the verse includes territory between the Euphrates in Iraq and the Nile in Egypt. In a joint statement, foreign ministers from Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan, United Arab

Emirates, Qatar, Indonesia, Kuwait, Oman, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Lebanon, Syria and Palestine, along with the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, League of Arab States and Gulf Cooperation Council, expressed "profound concern".

Israel's cabinet on February 13 approved further measures to tighten Israel's control over the occupied West Bank and make it easier for settlers to buy land, a move Palestinians called a "de facto annexation".

The West Bank is among the territories that Palestinians seek for a future independent state. Much of it is under Israeli military control, with limited Palestinian self-rule in some

areas run by the Western-backed Palestinian Authority.

The joint statement said the settlements, and decisions designed to further them, are "a flagrant violation of international law" and a step towards "unacceptable de facto annexation". It said they also undermine the ongoing efforts for peace and stability in the region and threaten any meaningful prospect of regional integration.

United States President Donald Trump on Thursday promised \$10 billion for a new "Board of Peace", an amorphous new institution focused first on Gaza that is being launched just as he threatens Iran with war.

Iranian military helicopter crashes into fruit market, 4 dead: state media

NEWS DESK: An Iranian Army helicopter crashed into a fruit market in the central province of Isfahan on Tuesday, killing the pilot, co-pilot and two merchants, state media reported.

The helicopter came down in the city

of Dorcheh, causing a fire that was put out by emergency services, the reports added.

Experts say Iran has a poor air safety record, with repeated crashes, many involving aircraft bought before the 1979 Islamic

Revolution and lacking original spare parts for maintenance.

Last week, a US-built F-4 fighter belonging to Iran's regular air force crashed in the western province of Hamadan, killing one pilot during a training flight.

In May 2024, a helicopter carrying Iran's then-President Ebrahim Raisi and other officials was involved in a "crash upon landing" in the mountainous Varzaqaan region of Iran amid poor weather conditions.



North Korea ruling party promotes Kim Jong Un's younger sister

NEWS DESK: North Korea's ruling party has elevated leader Kim Jong Un's powerful younger sister to a top position, state media said on Tuesday, a sign of her far-reaching influence within the reclusive nation.

Thousands of party elites have packed the capital Pyongyang for a once-in-five-years summit of the ruling Workers' Party, a gathering that directs state efforts on everything from diplomacy to war planning.

Kim Yo Jong — long considered one of her brother's closest lieutenants — was promoted to department director within the party's apex central committee, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

Although it was not clear which department she would lead, she has previously held a senior role within the party's propaganda unit.

Kim Yo Jong has in recent years emerged as one of the most powerful figures in North Korea, playing a highly visible role in diplomacy, nuclear negotiations and other matters of state.



"She also served as a working-level official for Kim's summits with Trump in Singapore and Hanoi. She is experienced and seasoned," he told AFP.

Kim Yo Jong burst on to the international scene in 2018, when she was dispatched to Seoul as North Korea's envoy for the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics.

With that trip, she became one of the first members of the ruling Kim dynasty to set foot in the South since the Korean War.

Since then she has gained a reputation for her vitriolic denunciations of Washington and Seoul.

Kim Yo Jong is one of the very few people Kim Jong Un can trust and rely on," said Ahn Chan-il, a researcher originally from North Korea.



She once derided the government of former South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol as a "faithful dog" of the United States.

Her tone has softened somewhat since South Korea's incumbent leader Lee Jae Myung, who has sought to mend ties with the North — took office last year.

Kim Yo Jong's latest advancement "amounts to promotion to ministerial rank," said Lim Eun-chul from the Institute for Far Eastern Studies at Kyungnam University.

Rapid rise: Remarkably little is known about Kim Yo Jong given her prominent role in North Korea's dealings with the outside world.



Born in 1988, according to the South Korean government, she is one of three children born to Kim's father and predecessor, Kim Jong Il, and his third known partner, former dancer Ko Yong Hui.

She was educated in Switzerland alongside her brother and rose rapidly up the ranks once he inherited power after their father's death in 2011.

Pyongyang has never officially disclosed any information about Kim Yo Jong's marital status or children.

US immigration agents' training 'broken': whistleblower

NEWS DESK: A former US immigration official said Monday that training for federal agents was "deficient, defective and broken," adding to pressure on President Donald Trump's sweeping crackdown.

Ryan Schwank resigned this month from his job teaching law at the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) training academy in Glynn, Georgia, after he said he was instructed to teach new recruits to violate the US Constitution.

The fatal shooting of two American citizens in Minneapolis in January reignited accusations that agents enforcing Trump's militarised immigration operation are inexperienced, undertrained and operating outside law enforcement norms.

The administration scaled back the deployment after the killings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti in broad daylight



by officers sparked mass protests and widespread outrage.

Schwank told a forum hosted by congressional Democrats on Monday that he "received secretive orders to teach new cadets to violate the Constitution by entering homes without a judicial warrant."

"Never in my career had I received such a blatantly unlawful order," he said.

He said that ICE cut 240 hours from its 584-hour training program, curtailing subjects such as the US Constitution, lawful arrest, firearms, the use of force and the limits of officers' authority.

"The legally required training program at the ICE academy is deficient, defective and broken," he said.

As a consequence, poorly trained, inexperienced armed officers were being sent to places like Minneapolis "with minimal supervision," he said.

Price control operations during Ramadan stepped up in Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD (INP): The district administration has stepped up price control operations during Ramadan, sealing shops, arresting violators and imposing fines to ensure implementation of official price lists and provide relief to citizens.

The actions were carried out on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Sarmad Saleem Akram, under which Price Control Magistrates conducted inspections of markets across the district. Several shops were sealed for overpricing, while others faced fines and legal action for violating government-notified rates.

In Lower Tanawal, shops were sealed and notices issued for selling expired and substandard food items, while in the Bilal Town area, the administration sealed chicken shops for selling slaughtered chicken at inflated rates instead of

live chicken after receiving public complaints. Meanwhile, the district administration, in collaboration with social organizations and philanthropists, has arranged Ramadan Dastarkhans at various locations in Abbottabad and Havelian to facilitate fasting citizens. Senior officials visited the sites, reviewed arrangements and joined citizens at Iftar.

In addition, a meet-

ing chaired by the Deputy Commissioner reviewed Ramadan relief measures, directing all relevant departments, including Social Welfare, Local Government and Zakat, to ensure maximum facilitation for the public during the holy month.

Citizens have been urged to report complaints of overpricing to the District Control Room so that prompt action can be taken.



Doha: Minister of State for Foreign Trade of Qatar H.E. Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Sayed calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Punjab gov't makes amendments to pension rules

LAHORE (INP): Significant amendments have been made to the pension rules for government employees in Punjab, following a formal notification issued by the Punjab Finance Department.

Under the revised rules, a new condition has been introduced for voluntary retirement. In addition to completing 25 years of qualifying service, employees must now also meet a minimum age requirement of 55 years.

Voluntary retirement will be granted on the basis of 25 years of service or 55 years of age, whichever occurs later.

In cases of forced retirement, pension benefits will now be governed by the new rules after 20 years of qualifying service.

The amendments also revise provisions related to pensions in cases involving corruption or misconduct.

Completion of quali-

fying service has been formally incorporated as a mandatory condition in such cases.

According to the Finance Department, the amendments aim to bring transparency and discipline to the pension system. The notification clearly states that the new amendments will come into effect immediately.

Earlier, the federal government allowed retired government employees who were required to draw both their salary and pension simultaneously.

The decision applies to retired government servants who are reappointed to government jobs after retirement. The Ministry of Finance has issued an office memorandum withdrawing two earlier notifications dated April 22, 2025, and June 19, 2025, with immediate effect. The new office memorandum has been circulated to all federal ministries and divisions.

KP CM directs cabinet members to initiate monthly e-open courts within their respective departments

PESHAWAR (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister (CM) Muhammad Suhail Afridi Sunday, directed all provincial ministers and advisors to initiate monthly e-open courts within their respective departments.

The initiative, launched under the "Awam Ka Ehsaas" framework, aims to provide citizens with direct access to authority figures, thereby restoring public trust and ensuring a transparent resolution of grievances.

The directive extends to 23 provincial departments and 69 associated autonomous or semi-autonomous institutions, with all administrative secretaries and field officers mandated to begin these regular digital sessions starting March 1.

To ensure the program's success and consistency, a special awareness session regarding Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for these e-open courts will be hosted at the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

CM Afridi emphasized that these sessions are a cornerstone of his strategy to make public communication more effective and to promote the core values of good governance and impartiality. Under this new system, departments are not only bound to address complaints on time but will also face quarterly performance reviews to ensure accountability at every level.

By utilizing this digital platform, KP government intends to take prompt action on public issues at both administrative and policy levels.

ship documents to complete registration. Officials appealed to citizens to cooperate with the drive and follow the deadline.

They said public participation is essential for making the city safer and for the smooth implementation of government measures.

The administration reiterated that the M-Tag system will help in vehicle identification and record management. It also supports law enforcement in routine checks and investigations.

Motorcycle owners were advised not to delay registration and to ensure compliance before February 28 to avoid inconvenience from March 1 onward.

President Zardari reprimands Sindh CM, Karachi Mayor over of Karachi's deteriorating condition

KARACHI (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari has strongly reprimanded Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab over the deteriorating condition of Karachi, sources revealed.

Senior sources said he or she disclosed the details during ARY News program Khabar Mahab.

According to sources, President Zardari and the Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal

Bhutto Zardari have been in Karachi for the past few days. During internal meetings, President Zardari reportedly took the party leadership to task over the city's worsening situation.

Sources said he particularly criticised the Sindh government and the Karachi mayor, questioning what obstacles they faced in terms of the federal government's development projects in Karachi.

He advised the chief minister and the mayor to consult Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on how infrastruc-

ture projects, such as underpasses, can be completed within 60 days. "Ask Mohsin Naqvi how an underpass is built within 60 days, while road projects here face years of delay," he reportedly remarked, adding that he wants to see roads in Karachi comparable to those in Islamabad.

Separately, sources said the PPP leadership also expressed strong displeasure over the recent Karachi Conference held at the Governor House by Governor Kamran Tessori.

PHC sentences lawyer to six months in prison for derogatory comments against female judge on social media

PESHAWAR, Feb 24 (INP): The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Tuesday sentenced a lawyer to six months in prison for making inappropriate and derogatory comments against a female judge on social media.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs100,000 on the accused, Asadullah Advocate. According to the court, the lawyer was found guilty of contempt of court under Section 3 of the Contempt of Court Ordinance, 2004.

The case pertains to the use of insulting and offensive language by the lawyer against a female civil judge posted in the city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A complaint had been filed against him for using inappropriate remarks against the judge on social media.

In its verdict, the court ruled that Asadullah Advocate had committed contempt of court.

brief order in the contempt case, stating that a detailed judgment will be released later.

Earlier, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) issued notices to the federal government, seeking a detailed report on measures taken to regulate social media use by children under the age of 16.

Justice Arbab Muhammad Fahir issued a two-page written order on a petition filed by a minor, Akbar Khan Shinwari, through his father, seeking the enforcement of fundamental rights. The petitioner requested the court to direct the government to prohibit and regulate social media use by children under 16.

The court observed that the well-being and safety of children from online harm are of paramount importance. It noted that unregulated access to social media platforms exposes children to potential risks, including cyberbullying, mental health issues,

Three FC personnel martyred after militants torch ambulances in Karak

KARAK (INP): Militants ambushed the ambulances near Ghole Banda Dam, Karak, transporting injured personnel of the Federal Constabulary (FC) to hospital, resulting in the martyrdom of wounded officials.

Those who lost their lives in the blaze included FC Sepoy Murad Gul, Sepoy Ayan Khan, and Lance Naik Adil Khan. Murad Gul and Ayan Khan were residents of Hangu district, while Adil Khan hailed from Manshera district, all in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Other injured individuals included Havaldar Sabir, Muhammad Yousof, Hanif, and ambulance driver Ahmad Hussain. They were shifted to hospitals in Bannu and Karak for medical treatment.

Authorities have condemned the attack, terming it a grave act of violence. Security forces have vowed to continue operations against militant elements involved in such incidents.

Feb 28 last date for Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) motorcycle M-Tag drive

ISLAMABAD, Feb 24 (INP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has set February 28 as the final date for installing M-Tags on motorcycles under the second phase of the citywide registration drive.

From March 1, motorcycles without M-Tags will not be allowed on roads, and such vehicles will be shifted to police stations. Officials said the step is aimed at improving monitoring and public safety, and urged riders to complete registration before the deadline.

According to the Directorate of Excise and Taxation, motorcycle owners can get M-Tags installed up to

administration expects this number to rise as the deadline approaches. To facilitate the public, M-Tag centers will remain open on holidays, including weekends.

Additional staff has been deployed at registration centers to manage increased footfall and reduce waiting time for motorcycle owners.

Authorities advised riders to visit centers early to avoid last-minute rush. The Excise Department also said that information desks are available at centers to guide applicants on the process and required documents.

Motorcycle owners are required to bring standard owner-



ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Prime Minister Youth Program (PMYP) Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan speaks during the launch of PMYS&ALS Impact Report and Fintech Division.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chairing a meeting of the ECC of the cabinet.

Senate passes resolution reaffirming support for Palestine

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Senate of Pakistan on Tuesday unanimously passed a resolution strongly rejecting recent remarks attributed to Israel, expressing concern over what it termed provocative narratives affecting the unity of the Muslim Ummah.

The resolution was moved by Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan in the House on behalf of all parties.

The resolution took strong exception to statements perceived as undermining regional stability and international legal norms.

The resolution criticised Israel's policies and actions, citing disregard for international law, the UN Charter, relevant United Nations resolutions, and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

The Senate rejected any attempts to alter the legal or historical status of the occupied Palestinian territories, including holy sites, and condemned settlement expansion and displacement of Palestinians.

The House explored what it described as continued provocative steps and statements by Israeli leadership that could threaten regional and international peace.

The resolution also condemned any efforts aimed at undermining the sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Islamic countries, while rejecting Israel's reported announcement recognising the independence of Somaliland, describing it as inconsistent with international principles.

The Senate urged the international community to ensure accountability and end impunity for actions violating international humanitarian and human rights laws.

It demanded full Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and called for increased, sustained, and unimpeded humanitarian assistance for Palestinians, particularly in Gaza.

The House emphasised the need for early recovery and reconstruction efforts and reiterated Pakistan's historic and unwavering support for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

The resolution reaffirmed support for the establishment of an independent, viable, and contiguous State of Palestine based on pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

NAB Balochistan Announces Open Court (Khuli Kachehri) in Quetta on February 26

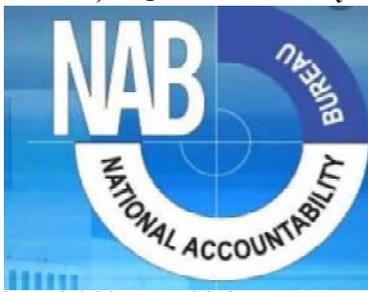
NEWS DESK: QUETTA: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Balochistan will hold its monthly Open Court (Khuli Kachehri) on Thursday, February 26, 2026, at the NAB Balochistan Complex, Shahra-e-Gulistan Road, Quetta Cantt, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

The initiative aims to facilitate citizens in reporting mega financial scams, corruption cases, misuse of authority, and white-collar crimes in Balochistan.

During the session, the Director General NAB Balochistan will personally hear complaints from members of the public.

Strict Verification Under Revised SOPs According to NAB's updated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), anonymous complaints will not be entertained. Only complaints that fall within NAB's jurisdiction and are supported by proper documentation will be processed in accordance with the law. Applicants must submit an affidavit on stamp paper before formal proceedings are initiated.

Mandatory Information for Complaint Submission Complete postal address Thumb impression or signature Full name with parentage Copy of Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) Complete postal address Contact details



(mobile number, landline, and email address)

Multiple Channels for Filing Complaints Citizens can lodge corruption complaints through the following methods:

By post or in person at NAB Balochistan Office, Shahra-e-Gulistan Road, Quetta Cantt

By email at: balochistan@nab.gov.pk

By post or in person at NAB Complaint Cell located at DC Office, Amnabad Road, Quetta

By appearing in person during the monthly Open Court (held on the last Thursday of every month)

Contact Information For further assistance, the public may contact the Regional Complaint Cell NAB Balochistan at:

081-9203614 081-9203468

Governor Mandokhail Says Balochistan's Strategic Location Can Drive Regional Trade and Investment

QUETTA: Governor of Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail stated that Balochistan's strategic geographical location has the potential to transform the province into a key regional hub for economic growth and investment. He expressed these views during a meeting with Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan at the Governor House Quetta.

The Governor noted that it is fortunate for the province that the current Federal Commerce Minister belongs to Balochistan and possesses expertise in promoting the province's economy, agriculture, and border trade.

Governor Mandokhail emphasized



The Governor acknowledged that strengthening infrastructure across the province, in line with changing circumstances and growing public needs, remains a significant challenge for the current government. He pointed out that remote districts continue to face serious underdevelopment and stressed that public welfare must remain at the center of all policies and projects.

Commissioner Loralai Division Conducts Surprise Visit to Matric Exam Centers at Divisional Public School

LORALAI: Commissioner Loralai Division Wali Muhammad Bareech conducted a surprise visit to the ongoing annual matriculation examination centers at Divisional Public School Loralai to review arrangements, student facilities, and ensure a transparent examination process. During the visit, the commissioner thoroughly inspected the examination halls and assessed cleanliness, proper lighting, security arrangements, and other essential facilities.

He emphasized that all examination centers must remain peaceful, secure, and completely free from cheating.

On the occasion, Commissioner Wali Muhammad Bareech issued strict instructions to the concerned staff



and officials, stating that any negligence or irregularity in the examination process would not be tolerated. He underscored that transparency and discipline in examinations are top priorities, and no leniency will be shown in this regard. His firm presence and close monitoring further reinforced seriousness, responsibility, and professional standards in the examination process.

Sardar Abdul Rahman Khetiran Meets Advisor Amir Hamza Zehri to Discuss Development and Public Welfare in Balochistan

QUETTA: Provincial Minister Sardar Abdul Rahman Khetiran met with Advisor to Local Government Nawabzada Amir Hamza Zehri at the Minister PHE Office to discuss the overall situation in the province, ongoing development projects, administrative matters, and issues related to public welfare.

Both leaders expressed their commitment to continuing serious and effective mea-



sures to meet the expectations of the people. The discussion emphasized strengthening law and order, accelerating developmental projects, and enhancing inter-departmental coordination for improved governance. Sardar Abdul Rahman Khetiran highlighted that serving the public remains the government's top priority, and sustainable development is achievable through collective ef-

orts. Advisor Amir Hamza Zehri added that challenges facing the province can be effectively addressed through mutual consultation and strong coordination, ensuring positive outcomes. The meeting concluded on a positive note, with both leaders agreeing to further promote cooperation and adopt joint strategies in the best interest of the public.

ministration to ensure full compliance with government policies at all centers so that students can take their exams without any disruption or inconvenience. The commissioner reiterated that providing

Commissioner Sibi Asadullah Faiz Visits Social Welfare Department, Distributes Wheelchairs to Persons with Disabilities

SIBI: Commissioner Sibi Asadullah Faiz visited the Sibi Social Welfare Department to review its performance and ongoing welfare initiatives. During the visit, the commissioner distributed various programs supporting around 1,100 registered persons with disabilities in the district. Financial and social assistance is being provided through multiple initiatives.

the best possible educational and examination facilities to students across the division is a key priority of the government, and all necessary arrangements will be ensured in a timely and effective manner.

DC Khalid Khan Chairs District Education Group Meeting to Review School Performance in Jafarabad

JAFARABAD: A meeting of the District Education Group was held in Jafarabad under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Khalid Khan to

included the ongoing teaching process, challenges faced by schools, implementation of decisions from the previous meeting, progress on RTSM,

Addressing the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Khalid Khan emphasized that improving the education system is the top priority of the district



review the overall performance of the education sector in the district.

The meeting was attended by District Education Officer Ayesha Bugti, Additional Deputy Commissioner Huzoor Bakhsh Bugti, cluster heads, Deputy District Education Officers (male and female), and other concerned officials.

performance of field staff, action against absent employees, condition of school buildings, functionality of PTSMCs, measures to reactivate non-functional schools, ongoing development schemes in the education sector, and projects being implemented with the support of UNICEF. Issues faced by colleges were also discussed.

He directed all officers to ensure regular monitoring of schools, pay special attention to teachers' attendance and teaching standards, take disciplinary action against absentee staff, and complete ongoing development projects within the stipulated time to further enhance the quality of education in Jafarabad.

Key agenda items were also discussed.

Commissioner Loralai Division Meets Former Provincial Minister Mir Tariq Mehmood Khetran to Discuss Development Agenda

LORALAI: Commissioner Loralai Division Wali Muhammad Bareech met with former Provincial Minister Mir Tariq Mehmood Khetran

and highlighted the importance of equipping youth with technical skills, stating that vocational training is the need of the hour.

Wali Muhammad Bareech stated that the government is prioritizing public welfare projects and accelerating the pace of develop-



ment initiatives in the political, social, and economic situation of the region in detail. During the meeting, special focus was given to improving education and health services, along with creating dignified employment opportunities for youth through technical and vocational training.

Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner

Loralai Division to ensure that basic facilities are made available at the doorstep of the people. He emphasized that strengthening the education and health sectors, along with improving infrastructure, is essential for sustainable regional development.

Mir Tariq Mehmood Khetran appreciated the commissioner's efforts

and highlighted the importance of equipping youth with technical skills, stating that vocational training is the need of the hour.

The meeting concluded in a cordial atmosphere, with both sides reaffirming their commitment to joint efforts and coordinated strategies to address public issues and promote comprehensive development across Loralai Division.

TENDER NOTICE
The Executive Engineer, Public Health Engineering Division, Quetta, invites sealed tenders based on complete schedule of rates (CSR) Government of Balochistan (annexed up to date) from interested Contractors/Firms who are Entitled / Renewal their name for the current financial year 2025-26, for the following works:

FBR chief's accountability sought in cigarette theft case

NEWS DESK: A parliamentary committee on Monday called for accountability for the theft of 2,828 cartons of confiscated cigarettes from Federal Board of Revenue godowns in Swabi and Mardan, and summoned the FBR chairman for an explanation and clarification.

Saifullah Abro chaired the meeting of the Sub-Committee of the Senate Standing Committee on Interior and Narcotics Control to examine the theft case. The committee expressed strong displeasure at the FBR chairman's absence and emphasised that his presence at the next meeting is mandatory to ensure the timely conclusion of this matter of significant public importance.

The committee was informed that the confiscated consignment was seized in 2024 and that three officials — a chowkidar, a Naib Qasid, and a driver — were dismissed on the recommendations of an internal inquiry committee.

However, some concerns were raised



regarding anomalies in the inquiry report.

The convenor questioned the rationale for dismissing lower-

grade officials, given that reports from the police and FIA indicated that the officials could have ex-

ecuted the theft with such precision. He further questioned whether such officials could have ex-

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ecuted the theft with such precision. He further questioned whether such officials could have ex-

ecuted the theft with such precision. He further questioned whether such officials could have ex-

submission of incomplete working papers. The FIA investigation team informed the Committee that, despite repeated requests, CCTV footage, stock registers, and the internal inquiry report had not been provided.

The committee expressed serious concern about the failure to provide critical case records to the FIA.

The committee also questioned the decision to shift the confiscated consignment from a CCTV-monitored godown to another facility lacking surveillance cameras.

The convenor directed FBR to provide complete documentation, including the authority responsible for ordering the transfer and the proceedings of the internal inquiry committee.

While the committee was apprised that FBR has strengthened its security mechanisms and devised comprehensive SOPs, members highlighted recent theft incidents and sought detailed records of similar cases from 2012 onwards.

Members showed dissatisfaction over the

Trade gap widens 42pc with nine countries to \$9bn

NEWS DESK: Pakistan's trade deficit with nine regional countries swelled by 41.37 per cent to \$9,001 billion in the first seven months (July to January) of FY26, up from \$6,367bn in the corresponding period last year.

The widening gap reflects a fall in Pakistan's exports to regional markets, driven largely by reduced shipments to China, followed by Afghanistan, India and Bangladesh. Trade with Afghanistan, including exports, has remained suspended since October 10, 2025.

Exports to India posted a slight increase in percentage terms, though the rise was minimal in dollar value. Meanwhile, shipments to Bangladesh and Sri Lanka declined during the period under review, according to the latest figures released by the State Bank of Pakistan.

The trade deficit with the nine countries widened by 29.42pc to \$12,297bn in FY25 compared to \$9,502bn in the preceding year.

The value of Pakistan's exports to the nine countries — Afghanistan, China,

Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Iran, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives — declined by 16.86pc to \$2,307bn in 7MFY26 compared to \$2,775bn a year ago.

In FY25, exports to these nine countries recorded a modest increase of 1.49 per cent, rising to \$4,401 billion in July to June, up from \$4,336 billion in the corresponding period a year earlier. Contrary to this, imports surged 23.69pc to \$11.31bn in 7MFY26 from \$9,14bn. Imports surged 20.69pc to \$16,698bn in FY25 from

\$13,838bn over the same period of the previous fiscal year.

Further analysis showed that imports from China grew by 24.58pc to \$11,097bn in 7MFY26 from \$8,907bn over the same period last year. In FY25, imports from China stood at \$16,312bn, up by 20.79pc from \$13,504bn a year ago. The bulk of imports in the region are sourced from China, followed partially by India and Bangladesh.

Pakistan's exports to China fell by 1.02pc to \$1,467bn in 7MFY26 from \$1,482bn in the preceding year.

Imports from India dipped by 9.44pc to \$122.56m in 7MFY26 from \$135.55m. In FY25, import from New Delhi increased to \$220.58m from \$206.87m in the preceding year. Meanwhile, exports remained at \$2,926m, slightly increased from \$0,404m.

Exports to Afghanistan dipped 59.07pc to \$228.96m in 7MFY26 from \$559.52m last year. Imports stood at \$6,36m in 7MFY26 against \$15,21m in FY25, a plunge of 58.18pc.



Experts for tapping organic markets

NEWS DESK: As international demand for chemical-free and traceable food continues to expand, policymakers and exporters are revisiting the potential of the organic sector to secure a stronger foothold in global markets.

The worldwide organic food market is expected to reach \$38 billion in 2026 and projected to grow even steadily in the coming years.

Industry observers believe the opportunity is real, but only if structural gaps are addressed.

Najam Mazari, the head of an institute researching organic food and products, has proposed a comprehensive framework to strengthen organic exports and link small farmers with international buyers.

He said that the sector can increase export earnings while also supporting rural communities, provided that a coordinated strategy is adopted.

According to Mazari, one of the core challenges is the fragmented nature of organic farming.

"Most organic growers operate on small landholdings, which makes individual certification both costly and complicated," he said. "If farmers from the same region form clusters and apply for certification collectively, the burden can be reduced. It will also improve quality control, traceability and the ability to secure larger export contracts."

He further suggested that dedicated organic zones should be established on the pattern of industrial export processing zones.

"We need specialised facilities for storage, cold chain management, chemical-free processing, laboratory testing and modern packaging," Mazari said. "Without proper infrastructure, it is difficult to meet the strict requirements of markets in Europe and North America."



He also stressed the importance of government facilitation. "Certification costs, lab testing and participation in international markets are major hurdles for small and medium-scale exporters," he said.

"Support in the form of fee subsidy, easier financing and policy continuity can make a meaningful difference."

He added that branding and joint participation in global trade fairs are essential to build recognition for organic products abroad.

While Mazari presents a forward-looking roadmap, the ground realities point to a more complex picture.

Pakistan continues to face recurring food security concerns, particularly related to staple crops such as wheat and sugar.

Despite producing surplus wheat and sugar in several seasons, authorities have repeatedly turned to imports to stabilise domestic supply and prices.

Storage limitations, weak procurement management and inter-provincial coordination gaps have often undermined the handling of traditional crops.

Nisar Ahmed, a small-scale progressive farmer from southern Punjab, said the organic push must be seen within this broader context.

Relief disbursement for Ramazan accelerated

NEWS DESK: The government on Monday reviewed progress on the Prime Minister's Ramazan Relief Package 2026, directing banks and payment institutions to accelerate account activation and fund disbursements to beneficiaries ahead of the holy month.

The review took place at a high-level meeting chaired by the Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, with participation from partner financial institutions and representatives of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) according to an official statement.

The minister underscored the urgency of completing account creation and activation at full scale and instructed institutions to speed up the release of funds over the coming days.

He stressed that all remaining beneficiaries must be mobilised immediately to ensure seamless activation and onward crediting of relief amounts in line with the prime minister's directives.

Officials from partner financial institutions

briefed the meeting on progress made in opening new accounts, reactivating dormant accounts and carrying out disbursements through both cash and digital channels.

Institutions, including commercial banks, microfinance banks and digital payment providers, shared updates on measures taken to meet the requirements of the Ramazan relief package and reiterated their commitment to close coordination during the implementation phase.

The daily updates, the statement said.

The SBP represent-

ative informed the meeting that ATM awareness flyers were being displayed across partner institutions to facilitate beneficiaries on accessing funds.

To prevent delays, the federal minister directed that required funds be transferred promptly for onward release to partner institutions and instructed them to share daily progress reports with the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety.

The daily updates, the statement said.



Nepra urges completion of key NGC projects

NEWS DESK: Pakistan's national transmission system — managed by both the government and K-Electric — continues to struggle to provide cost-effective and reliable power supply to consumers due to grid weaknesses, project delays, underutilisation of expensive foreign-financed assets, and inadequate technical expertise.

This alarming situation has been highlighted by the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) in its Performance Evaluation Report of the Transmission Sector for FY2024-25, ending June 30, 2025.

It demanded that completion of key projects under the NGC was of utmost priority to enhance South-to-north power flow capability, minimise dependence on high-cost generation sources and ensure optimal utilisation of the HVDC Matiari-Lahore transmission line.

"The execution of these projects is essential to avoid additional financial burden on the national exchequer", the report noted.

Says around Rs80bn of electricity could not be transmitted in FY25 due to line tripping alone and higher system losses.



assets, including the 4,000 MW HVDC line (a Chinese investment) and several HVAC corridors.

The failure to timely commission the 500 kV Lahore North Grid Station and associated transmission lines exemplified inadequate coordination among planning, procurement and construction functions.

"Such inefficiencies have not only impeded the evacuation of economical generation but have also contributed to operational bottlenecks, higher system losses, and increased financial burdens on the sector," the report said, adding that recurring implementation delays reflect sys-

temic deficiencies in project management and governance.

These shortcomings pose serious impediments to achieving a reliable, efficient, and modern transmission network. Nepra called for immediate institutional reforms within NGC to ensure timely project completion and foster a more transparent and responsive system.

Similar delays have also affected several other transmission projects within K-Electric's networks, including the 220 kV GIS Landhi Grid and transmission line (TL), HVUB Grid and TL, 1x600 MVA ATR at 500 kV NKI with TL, 500kV KKI Grid and 220kV KKITL.

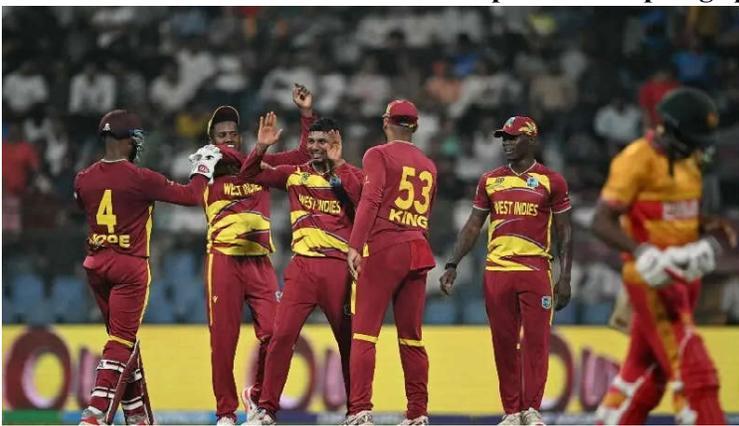
West Indies thrash Zimbabwe in T20 World Cup clash after piling up 254-6

NEWS DESK: The West Indies blew away T20 World Cup surprise package Zimbabwe by a colossal 107 runs in Mumbai on Monday as Shai Hope's team opened their Super Eight's campaign with a dominant victory.

Shimron Hetmyer blasted 85 off 34 balls as the West Indies piled up 254-6, the second-highest total in the history of the tournament. Zimbabwe, who stunned Australia and Sri Lanka to reach the Super Eight, got off to an awful start chasing a monumental 255.

They were reduced to 20-3 in the third over when two wickets fell to Akeal Hosein's left-arm spin and never threatened to get close. They were all out for 147 in 17.4 overs with Brad Evans hitting some lusty late blows before being last man out for 43 off 21 balls with five sixes.

Left-arm pacer Gudakesh Motie was



the pick of the West Indies bowlers with 4-28 as he found some sharp turn. Hosein took 3-28. Zimbabwe captain Sikandar Raza won the toss and opted to bowl, then saw his bowlers flogged to all parts of the Wankhede stadium.

Only Sri Lanka, who made 260-6 against Kenya in 2007, have scored more in a T20 World Cup match.

Coming in at 17-1, the left-handed Hetmyer was given a life Zimbabwe would come to regret.

A routine catch at deep fine leg was spilled by Tashinga Musekiwa when the batsman was on nine.

Hetmyer took full advantage, racing to his fifty off 19 balls, equalling South Africa's Aiden Markram for the fastest half-century of the tournament so far.

Hetmyer and Rovman Powell, who came in at 54-2, completed their century stand in 45 balls.

They had added 122 off 52 balls when Hetmyer became the third wicket to go down with 176 on the board in the 15th over.

Hetmyer, having been dropped for a second time on 70 by the hapless Musekiwa, this time was held in the deep by Brian Bennett having smashed seven sixes and seven fours.

Powell was out soon after for 59, off 35 balls, with four sixes. Sherfane Rutherford took up the mantle and guided his side past 200 and then 250 as he scored 31 not out off 13 balls with two sixes.

Romario Shepherd joined in the fun by smacking 21, and Jason Holder took 13 off three balls as 38 runs were bludgeoned off the final two overs.

Mourinho's return upended by suspension

NEWS DESK: Jose Mourinho has not set foot in the Santiago Bernabeu since leaving Real Madrid in 2013, but his Champions League homecoming with Benfica on Wednesday will be far more complicated than initially anticipated.

Mourinho cannot sit in the dug-out for the play-off second leg after being sent off during his team's 1-0 first-leg defeat in Lisbon last week.

The 63-year-old also came under fire for his controversial comments in the aftermath of alleged racial abuse aimed at Madrid star Vinicius Junior by Benfica midfielder Gianluca Prestianni.

The Argentine will miss the second leg after UEFA provisionally suspended him for one game amid an investigation into the incident.

Mourinho, who won a La Liga title with Los Blancos during three years at the helm, made a big impact on the Spanish giants during a period of particularly bitter rivalry with Barcelona and a dressing room divided for and against him.

Madrid president Florentino Perez is



known to be a big fan of the Portuguese coach and rumours persist that Mourinho could be hired next season to replace Alvaro Arbeloa, if the current campaign ends badly. The Spaniard, one of Mourinho's disciples during his spell at the helm of the 15-time European champions, faces his biggest test yet since replacing Xabi Alonso in January as Benfica visit the Spanish capital.

Mourinho was dismissed in the first leg for vociferous complaints from the touchline.

The coach said referee Francois Letexier was avoiding booking Madrid players who were at risk of suspension for the second leg.

"I've had my butt on the bench for 1,400 games and I (could see) that he knew perfectly well who he could book and he couldn't," complained Mourinho bitterly. "I (won't be) sitting on the bench, I can't go to the dressing room, I can't communicate with the team," he added.

"It's hard for me, but my teammates and my assistants are there, they'll do their job."

Prestianni banned the first leg was tarnished by

Prestianni's alleged racial slur aimed at Vinicius.

UEFA's decision to suspend the Benfica player for one game has eased some tension ahead of the second leg, and he could miss at least 10 if European football's governing body finds he racially abused Vinicius.

"Vinicius wrote that 'racists are above all cowards', on social media after the game, while Madrid striker Kylian Mbappe backed his team-mate and said he had heard Prestianni calling the winger a monkey."

Mayweather to fight Pacquiao in September

NEWS DESK: Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao will meet in a long-awaited rematch of the highest-grossing clash in boxing history this September at the Sphere in Las Vegas, Netflix announced Monday.

The bout between two of boxing's biggest names - who famously fought a blockbuster clash in 2015, and are now both in their late forties - comes days after Mayweather announced he is coming out of retirement.

It will be broadcast live September 19 on Netflix, as the global streaming platform increasingly moves into live sports with glitzy one-off events.

"Floyd and I gave the world what remains the biggest fight in boxing history. The fans have waited long enough - but I believe this rematch," said Pacquiao, 47, in a joint statement.

Mayweather beat fellow welterweight Pacquiao in their money-spinning 2015 "Fight of the Century," which generated a record 4.6 million pay-per-view buys but largely failed to live up to the hype.

Rumors of a Mayweather-Pacquiao rematch have circulated for years, and speculation soared following



fight in history and generated more than \$600 million revenue.

Former multi-weight world champion Mayweather retired from boxing in 2017, unbeaten in 50 bouts, though he has continued to fight in exhibitions since, including an upcoming clash this spring with Mike Tyson.

Pacquiao, also a multiple world champion, retired for a four-year period from 2021 in which he unsuccessfully ran for the Philippine presidency. He came out of retirement last year "One loss".

Rumors of a Mayweather-Pacquiao rematch have circulated for years, and speculation soared following

Mayweather's announcement last week that he would return to the professional arena this year.

"I already fought and beat Manny once. This time will be the same result," said Mayweather, in the statement. "I want Floyd to live with the one loss on his professional record and always remember who gave it to him," said Pacquiao.

The clash will be the first-ever professional boxing match to take place at Sphere, a venue primarily used for concerts and films which opened in 2023 and features an immersive 160,000-square-foot wraparound screen on its curved interior walls.

It will be shown globally on Netflix, which boasts some 325 million subscribers.

The streamer has recently increased its sports offerings, with a super middleweight clash between Terence Crawford and Saul "Canelo" Alvarez in Las Vegas last September viewed by 41 million people.

It also aired divisive fights pitting YouTube-turned-boxer Jake Paul against a 58-year-old Tyson in November 2024, and versus Anthony Joshua last December.

Both were criticized for proving to be lackluster contests, but drew enormous global attention.

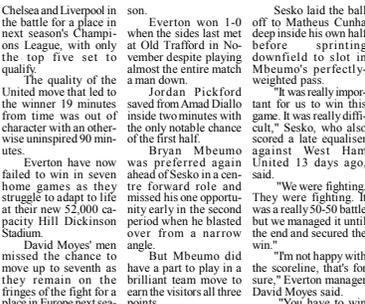
Sesko seals win for Manchester United

NEWS DESK: Benjamin Sesko came off the bench to fire Manchester United up to fourth in the Premier League with a 1-0 win at Everton to extend Michael Carrick's unbeaten start in charge of the Red Devils.

Sesko is yet to start in Carrick's six games but has hit top form since Ruben Amorim was sacked in last month.

The Slovenian, who scored just twice in his first 22 appearances after a £74 million (\$100 million) move from RB Leipzig, has netted six goals in his last seven games.

Victory lifts United three points clear of



Chelsea and Liverpool in the battle for a place in next season's Champions League, with only the top five set to qualify.

The quality of the United move that led to the winner 19 minutes from time was out of character with an otherwise uninspired 90 minutes.

Everton have now failed to win in seven home games as they struggle to adapt to life at their new 52,000 capacity Hill Dickinson Stadium.

David Moyes' men missed the chance to move up to seventh as they remain on the fringes of the fight for a place in Europe next season.

Everton won 1-0 when the sides last met at Old Trafford in November despite playing almost the entire match a man down.

Jordan Pickford saved from Amad Diallo inside two minutes with the only notable chance of the first half.

Bryan Mbeumo was preferred again ahead of Sesko in a centre-forward role and missed his one opportunity early in the second period when he blasted over from a narrow angle.

But Mbeumo did have a part to play in a brilliant team move to earn the visitors all three points.

"You have to win games if you are going to keep moving on and we haven't been doing that, especially here."

They got the one goal on the counter-attack and we put in a great effort to try and get the goal back but just lacked the quality to make it count."

United had to see out a late Everton rally as Senne Lammers tipped over Michael Keane's pilerdriver from long range.

But after keeping just two clean sheets all season prior to Amorim's departure, they have kept three in six under Carrick to close in on a return to the Champions League for the first time in three seasons.

Sesko laid the ball off to Matheus Lanks deep inside his own half before sprinting downfield to slot in Mbeumo's perfectly-weighted pass.

It was really important for us to win this game. It was really difficult," Sesko, who also scored a late equaliser against West Ham United 13 days ago, said.

"We were fighting. They were fighting. It was a really 50-50 battle but we managed it until the end and secured the win."

"I'm not happy with the scoreline, that's for sure," Everton manager David Moyes said.

"You have to win games if you are going to keep moving on and we haven't been doing that, especially here."

South Africa announce eight home Tests for 2026-27

NEWS DESK: World champions South Africa will play eight Test matches at home in the 2026-27 season, Cricket South Africa (CSA) announced on Monday.

South Africa, who beat Australia in the 2023-25 Test championship final at Lord's in England last year, did not play a single home Test match during the current 2025-26 season.

But they will play three Tests against Australia, two against Bangladesh and three against England in the coming season with all three series counting towards the 2025-27 World Test Championship.

South Africa are currently in third place in the standings after sharing a series 1-1 in Pakistan and beating India 2-0 in India.

The Tests against Australia will all be at coastal venues - Durban, Gqeberha and Cape Town.

All three tours will also include three-match One-day Internationals series, while Bangladesh will



also play three T20 Internationals.

England were also due to play a T20 series but it will be rescheduled because of a clash with the SA20 franchise competition.

CSA chief executive Pholele Moseki said the Test and ODI series were both particularly important for the South African team.

"We have made a promising start to the new World Test Championship cycle and it is important that we continue to build on that momentum and strengthen our position on the WTC table." On the white-ball front, our focus remains firmly on building towards hosting the ICC men's Cricket World Cup in 2027. Every ODI series from here forms part of our preparation for that global event."

The Bangladesh series will be played in Johannesburg and Centurion during November while England will be the visitors over the holiday period of December-January.

The England Tests will be in Johannesburg, Centurion and Cape Town.

All three tours will also include three-match One-day Internationals series, while Bangladesh will



DSP among 6 police personnel martyred in Kohat terrorist attack

NEWS DESK: Six law enforcement personnel, including a deputy superintendent of police (DSP), were martyred after a terrorist attack on a police vehicle in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kohat district on Tuesday.

A senior police officer told Dawn that six police personnel — the DSP, an inspector and four constables — were martyred when the vehicle, which was transporting two individuals for a court appearance, was attacked.

He added that one of the two individuals was also killed in the attack. The attackers also torched the vehicle after the ambush.

Earlier in the day, state-run APP reported that heavy firing by armed assailants targeted the DSP of Lachi police station near Shakardara Road.

Following the attack, additional police contingents were dispatched to the area, and a search operation was launched to apprehend the attackers.

Authorities have cordoned off the area, while investigations into the incident have begun.

Condemnation

In a statement, President Asif Ali Zardari condemned the terrorist attack.

Paying tribute to the fallen police personnel, he expressed heartfelt sympathy and condolences to their families.

KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi also strongly condemned the terrorist attack.

The governor paid glowing tribute to the DSP and other police officials who embraced martyrdom in the line of duty and prayed for their elevated ranks. He also extended heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs and wished for the speedy recovery of the injured police personnel.

Kundi noted that the law and order situation in KP's southern districts had deteriorated significantly.

He said the police were fighting on the front lines in the war against terrorism and rendering immense sacrifices.

The governor termed the sacrifices of police officers and soldiers for establishing peace a source of pride for the nation.

PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhattu-Zardari also condemned the attack and expressed sorrow over the loss of lives, as per a statement issued via the PPP's media cell.

As per the statement, Bilawal paid tribute to the KP police for their "unwavering resolve and sacrifices in the war against terrorism."

Islamabad court grants pre-arrest bail to Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi in multiple cases

NEWS DESK: A local court in Islamabad on Tuesday approved pre-arrest bail applications for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and former first lady Bushra Bibi in multiple cases.

Both were granted bail against surety bonds of Rs 50,000 each. Bushra Bibi also received pre-arrest bail in a separate protest-related case.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka heard six pre-arrest bail applications of the PTI founder and one of Bushra Bibi.

The PTI founder faces cases related to May 9 incidents, the Azadi March, attempted murder, vandalism, arson, and alleged fake Toshakhana receipts, while Bushra Bibi faces a Toshakhana-related case registered at Kohsar police station.

During proceedings, the prosecution argued that substantial evidence existed against the PTI founder and Bushra Bibi, claiming they were not entitled to bail and requesting dismissal of their applications.

Barrister Salman Safdar, representing the defendants, argued that these were among the first pre-arrest bail requests in his and the court's experience that had faced such prolonged delays.

He noted that 63 adjournments were granted to the state, the court ordered the jail authorities to produce the PTI founder on 30 occasions, but he was not presented, and five show-cause notices were issued to the superintending.

Safdar emphasised that the bail applications were based on merit, not medical grounds, and highlighted that except for the May 9 case, no previous bail application had ever been rejected.

He also noted that some cases appeared to have been filed to intimidate, with no charges formally framed.

After hearing the arguments, the court approved pre-arrest bail for both the PTI founder and Bushra Bibi.

Separately, Additional District and Sessions Judge Amir Zia also granted Bushra Bibi pre-arrest bail in a protest and vandalism case registered at Rama police station, allowing bail against a Rs 50,000 surety bond.

Ex-KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur's security detail withdrawn; govt denies issuing orders

NEWS DESK: The security detail provided to former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister Ali Amin Gandapur has been withdrawn, it emerged on Tuesday.

It is worth mentioning that while the security detail from Peshawar was withdrawn, the ex-CM has a police detail from his native Dera Ismail Khan district. It was not immediately clear who ordered the withdrawal of the security detail from Peshawar, with incumbent chief minister Sohail Afridi's press secretary denying that orders to this effect were issued.

According to the sources, a 16-member security squad assigned to Gandapur was recalled late last night. The contingent comprised two jammer operators, eight gunmen and drivers, who had been working in shifts. All personnel belonged to the police department.

Of them, 14 officials had been deployed for Gandapur's security, while two were assigned to his brother-in-law, MNA Faisal Amin Gandapur. Sources close to the ex-chief minister said that one jammer and one pickup carrier had been returned to the provincial government.

The sources said that Gandapur and his brother had personally spoken with the officer who had conveyed KP CM Afridi's orders to confirm and authenticate the withdrawal of the police escort.

In a statement, Gandapur said that at 11 pm last night, Afridi's deputy chief security officer (CSO) called his security personnel, saying that it was the CSO's order to withdraw the security.

"I had one jammer and one double-cabin vehicle provided by the provincial government," he said, adding, "There were 14 personnel deployed with that vehicle."

"When these personnel informed me, I told them to pack up everything. This is the actual truth," he said. He stated that even if this security were now restored, he would not accept it.

"I want to tell the chief minister that there is no need to return this security to me now. I do not need it," Gandapur said.

Gandapur's spokesperson, Faraz Ahmed Mughal, insisted that the withdrawal was initiated on the instructions of KP CM Afridi.



CM Afridi

Secretariat said that Gandapur was asked to return two jammers and the associated personnel.

An official at the CM Secretariat clarified that the former CM was asked to return two jammers and the associated personnel, which were required for the use of the incumbent chief minister.

"Under the rules, the former chief minister was not entitled to retain the jammers."

He was supposed to return the jammers and vehicle" the official said, insisting that no security detail had been withdrawn from Gandapur. "He continues to retain police escort", the official maintained. Gandapur had previously faced multiple security threats, and a hand grenade attack also took place at his residence in the past.

Official sources maintained that decisions regarding security deployment and withdrawal were made in accordance with threat assessments and administrative requirements. Political observers said that the development was also significant in the context of the recent differences between Gandapur and CM Afridi.

Indian man moves LHC to annul wife's marriage to Pakistani citizen

NEWS DESK: Indian national Karnal Singh filed a fresh constitutional petition in the Lahore High Court on Tuesday seeking the annulment of the marriage of his wife, Sarabjeet Kaur, with a Pakistani citizen, Nasir Hussain.

The petition was moved through advocate Ali Changezi Sandhu.

According to the petition, Sarabjeet contracted marriage with Hussain after converting to Islam without first obtaining a legal divorce from her Indian husband.

The petitioner contended that the marriage violated principles laid down by Pakistan's constitutional courts, particularly by the Federal Shariat Court, regarding the procedure for a married non-Muslim woman to marry a Muslim man after conversion.

Counsel for the petitioner stated that under the principles set by the superior courts, a married non-Muslim woman must first secure a judicial divorce under her domestic law. She was also required to invite her non-Muslim husband to embrace Islam in the presence of two witnesses and wait for a period of 90 days in case he declined.

Only after lawful dissolution of the earlier marriage could she validly contract a new marriage.

The petitioner argued that Sarabjeet's marriage with Singh remained intact as no divorce was obtained. It was further prayed that cohabitation during the subsistence of the earlier marriage amounted to an offence under Islamic law, and a request was made to initiate criminal proceedings against Hussain on that basis.

The petitioner also sought directions for Sarabjeet's deportation under the Foreigners Act, 1946, alleging violation of visa conditions. He requested that she be sent to a women's shelter home until the disposal of the case, that he and their sons be allowed to communicate with her and that forensic examination of certain call recordings be conducted.

Allegations of forced conversion were also raised in the petition. The counsel claimed that documentary and financial evidence was annexed, along with material relating to allegations of private images and videos, and sought an investigation into these claims.

The case surfaced earlier after reports emerged that Sarabjeet had travelled to Pakistan, converted to Islam and married Hussain.

The matter attracted attention in both countries due to legal questions surrounding conversion, subsistence of her earlier marriage and cross-border marital status.

Indian man moves LHC to annul wife's marriage to Pakistani citizen

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Senate denounces Netanyahu's plans to form 'hexagon of alliances' with India against Muslim nations

NEWS DESK: The Senate unanimously passed a resolution on Tuesday, strongly condemning and rejecting Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's remarks about a plan to ally with India and other countries to counter Muslim states.

The resolution expressed concern over what it described as provocative narratives that threaten the unity of the Muslim Ummah.

The resolution was passed in response to comments made by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu during a Cabinet meeting on Sunday ahead of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Tel Aviv, that said that Israel "will create an entire system — essentially a kind of hexagon of alliances around or within the Middle East."

Modi will arrive on Wednesday and deliver a speech before the Knesset, or Israeli parliament. Netanyahu listed India, Greece, the Greek Cypriot Administration and unnamed Arab, African and Asian countries as members of the proposed alliance.

The aim is "to create an axis of countries that see reality, the challenges, and the goals in the same way, in contrast to the radical axes," he said. "Both the radical Shia axis, which we have hit very hard, and also the emerging axis — the radical Sunni axis."

The resolution affirmed support for Palestinian self-determination.

In December, Israel became the first country to formally recognise Somaliland as an independent and sovereign state, sparking strong condemnation from Muslim nations and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The resolution called for an immediate and full Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and stressed the importance of increased humanitarian assistance for Palestinians, particularly in Gaza. It further urged the international community to hold Israel accountable for actions that violate international humanitarian and human rights laws.

The Senate reiterated its unwavering support for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state based on pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. The resolution also called for efforts towards the early recovery and reconstruction of Palestine.

Last week, US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee said it "would be fine" if Israel took control of territory described in a biblical passage as stretching from the Nile River to the Euphrates, remarks he made during a televised interview that sparked broad attention after excerpts circulated online.

Huckabee made the comments during an appearance on The Tucker Carlson Show, invited by conservative commentator Tucker Carlson. The discussion centred on religious texts, Israel's modern borders, and the relationship between theology and geopolitics.

Carlson said the description would encompass large parts of what is now the Middle East and asked Huckabee whether Israel therefore had a right to that land. "So God gave that land — basically the entire Middle East," Carlson said, asking Huckabee whether he therefore had a right to that territory.