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Balochistan CM Bugti Says Suicide Attack Plot in Islamabad Foiled, Girl Rescued

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti on Monday disclosed that security and intelligence agencies had thwarted an alleged suicide attack plot in Islamabad by recovering a young girl who, according to officials, had been manipulated and pressured by militant elements.

Speaking during a press conference in Quetta, the chief minister said the girl was rescued before the alleged attack could be carried out.

He announced that she would not be prosecuted and would instead be returned to her family under protective supervision.

Bugti termed the incident extremely alarming and condemned what he described as the exploitation of Baloch women and girls by militant groups.

He said such actions were entirely against Baloch culture, traditions, and values.

"Our traditions do not allow the misuse of daughters and sisters for violence," he said, adding that those involved in such activities could not claim to represent the Baloch people or the spirit of "Balochiyat."

According to the chief minister, the girl had earlier appeared on social media as a



missing person. However, investigations by intelligence agencies later revealed that she had allegedly been taken to a militant training facility.

Bugti claimed that militant networks were using coercion,

emotional pressure, and threats against families to recruit young women.

He alleged that in this case, the girl had been threatened with harm to her father if she refused to follow instructions.

The chief minister further alleged that the planned attack was aimed at damaging Pakistan's international image at a time when the country's security environment was improving.

He praised intelligence agencies for preventing what he called a major tragedy.

Referring to the overall security situation, Bugti said incidents of militant violence in Balochistan had declined in

recent weeks.

Security monitoring reports have also indicated a noticeable reduction in militant attacks and casualties across the province during the past month.

Pakistan's IT exports expected to reach \$4.6b this fiscal year

NEWS DESK:

Pakistan is expected to achieve IT exports worth \$4.5 to \$4.6 billion in the current fiscal year, the Prime Minister's Office said on Monday as PM Shehbaz Sharif chaired a review meeting on the affairs of

ments. He further urged cooperation from provincial and district governments to reduce the IT gap between urban and rural areas.

The meeting was briefed on a range of measures taken to promote IT across the country.

The number of domestic

formed that fiber connectivity has been provided to government schools and health units in the federal capital. The provision of free internet hotspots in Islamabad is also in its final stages, with e-learning pods being installed in Saidpur Model Village and Fatima Jinnah Park.

HEC launches online degree attestation system to facilitate students

NEWS DESK:

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) on Monday announced the launch of a "fully online and paperless" degree attestation system to facilitate students.

In December last year, the HEC said that it had initiated a project to revamp its degree attestation system by integrating cutting-edge blockchain technology, saying the project would be completed within six months.

Meanwhile, the National Assembly Standing Committee on Government Assurances had also asked the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to reduce the turnaround time in degree attestation.

In a social media post on X, HEC Chairman Dr Niaz Ahmed Akhtar said, "HEC has revamped the Degree Attestation System (DAS) by introducing a fully online and paperless attestation mecha-

nism to facilitate students and graduates across Pakistan."

Under the new system, he explained, applicants will no longer be required to physically visit HEC offices or submit original documents.

"Applications for online attestation can now be submitted 24/7 through the HEC e-Services Portal," he added.

He said that the new e-attribution certificate system was designed to provide a "secure, efficient, and user-friendly process," with online verification available for attested documents and certificates.

According to information available on HEC's official website, "This modern system is fast, convenient, and hassle-free, removing the need for applicants to visit HEC offices or submit original documents in hard copy."

Applications can be submitted anytime (24/7) through the online portal at www.eservices.hec.gov.pk."

Candidates can apply for the online degree attestation by creating an account and providing personal and academic details. The candidates will then upload the transcripts online for scrutiny by the HEC and verification of credentials by the respective universities.

The payment can be made online through 1-link. After a final review, an e-attribution certificate will be issued against the documents applied for attestation. Applicants will be notified via SMS and email.

The applicants can also download the verifiable certificate from their online account at the HEC Portal.

Before this initiative, candidates had to send their documents via post to HEC or visit its offices to get their documents attested.

The new project will now issue a verifiable e-certificate instead of a stamp, mimicking the time and cost required by the manual process.



the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT).

PM Shehbaz reiterated that the promotion of the IT sector and growth in IT-related exports remain among the government's top priorities. "There is immense potential among Pakistan's youth regarding IT, from which full benefit should be derived," he said.

The prime minister also directed that work on establishing Easy Service Centres in Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir be expedited, and called for efforts to launch Easy Services facilities in the provinces in collaboration with provincial govern-

internet connections rose from 1.9 million in 2024 to 5.10 million in 2026, according to the PMO.

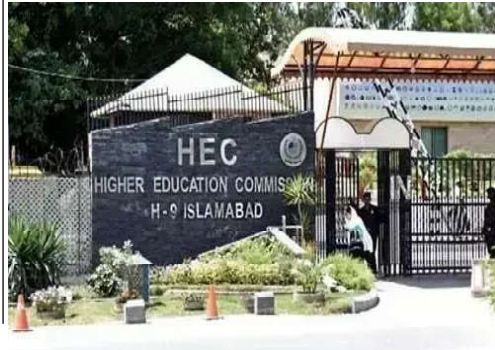
Regarding Fifth Generation (5G) services, the briefing revealed that an auction was recently held in the country and was the world's largest in this regard since 2016, generating revenue of \$509 million for Pakistan.

On the promotion of artificial intelligence (AI) in Pakistan, the meeting was told that the Indus AI Week was organised in February 2025, with events held in 30 cities, over 100 international delegates participating and 88 pavilions set up.

The meeting was also in-

The review meeting was attended by Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Law and Justice Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, Economic Affairs Minister Ahad Khan Cheema, IT and Telecom Minister Shazia Fatima Khawaja and Minister of State for Finance and Railways Bilal Azhar Kayani, along with other senior government officials.

The meeting comes a day after it was announced that the MoITT plans to launch 20,000 online training programmes in AI across Pakistan through an advanced learning management system (LMS), depicting a pattern of developments aimed to promote modern technology in the country.



QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

How Long Will Quetta Pay the Price for SSGC and Federal Negligence?

Editorial: Quetta is once again at the mercy of a winter crisis that has become all too familiar: low gas pressure, unannounced load shedding, and complete administrative silence. Every year, citizens are told to "bear with the situation" as temperatures fall and heaters, stoves, and geysers turn useless. Yet the authorities responsible — Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) and the federal energy managers — continue to operate without accountability.

A City Freezing While Authorities Look Away

The people of Balochistan are right to ask: Why must Quetta suffer the same crisis every winter while no structural reform is introduced? Why are consumers forced to pay heavy bills for a service that barely exists? And why do officials in Karachi and Islamabad continue to treat Balochistan's gas issues as a seasonal inconvenience rather than a governance failure?

Despite Balochistan being an energy-producing region, its residents struggle every winter for the very resource extracted from their own soil. This contradiction reflects a deep-rooted policy imbalance in the federation,

where Balochistan remains last on the priority list — not because of a shortage of resources, but because of a shortage of political will.

SSGC's Repeated Excuses and Decades of Mismanagement — The SSGC's performance adds another layer of frustration. Each year, the company offers the same explanations — "excessive demand," "pipeline pressure issues," "technical challenges."

Yet no one explains why these problems remain unresolved despite decades of complaints. Why have there been no significant infrastructure upgrades? Why has the company failed to introduce a clear winter management plan for Quetta? Why is communication with consumers absent?

The unannounced nature of the load shedding exposes a complete disregard for public convenience. When outages are not scheduled or announced, families cannot plan meals, heating, or even basic daily routines. Hospitals and clinics struggle to maintain warm environments for patients. Small businesses suffer.

In a city where temperatures can drop below freezing, such negligence is not just inconvenient — it is dangerous. Federal Government's Weak Oversight and Balochistan's Low Priority

The federal government cannot escape responsibility either. Energy management is a national issue, and the pattern of winter mismanagement in Balochistan reflects weak oversight, poor planning, and an unfair allocation of resources. The silence of policymakers during these crises sends a clear message: Quetta's safety is not a priority.

What Quetta needs is not another round of hollow statements. It needs a transparent winter gas plan, proper infrastructure investment, honest communication with the public, and real accountability for SSGC. Most importantly, it needs the federal government to finally treat Balochistan as an equal stakeholder in national resource management.

The people of Quetta have endured enough. Their patience should not be mistaken for acceptance. Without decisive action, this recurring winter crisis will continue to expose not only the inefficiencies of SSGC but also the federal government's unwillingness to address long-standing injustices.

In Pakistan, motherhood holds deep cultural, religious, and emotional significance. From an early age, children are taught the timeless principle that paradise lies beneath the feet of mothers. This teaching reflects the immense respect Islam and Paki-

Mothers: The Real Strength Behind Every Nation

By Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi

Motherhood remains one of the most powerful and transformative forces in human civilization. Across cultures, religions, and nations, mothers symbolize love, sacrifice, resilience, and unconditional support. On International Mother's Day, the world reflects on the extraordinary role mothers play in shaping families, strengthening societies, and building nations.

Another is a child's first teacher and lifelong guide. Before formal education begins, it is the mother who introduces values such as kindness, discipline, compassion, honesty, and respect. The moral foundation of every society is first built within her arms, where mothers nurture the character and emotional well-being of future generations. Their influence extends far beyond family life and directly impacts the social, cultural, and national fabric of a country.

In today's fast-changing world, where societies face growing social divisions, emotional stress, and moral uncertainty, the importance of mothers has become even more significant. Mothers are not merely caregivers; they are the guardians of societal values and the backbone of stable communities. No nation can achieve sustainable peace, development, or prosperity without strong families, and strong families are built by empowered and respected mothers.

In Pakistan, motherhood holds deep cultural, religious, and emotional significance. From an early age, children are taught the timeless principle that paradise lies beneath the feet of mothers. This teaching reflects the immense respect Islam and Paki-



stan traditions place on maternal sacrifice and care. Across the country, countless mothers dedicate their lives to securing a better future for their children, often placing the needs, education, and comfort of their families above their own dreams and ambitions.

The mothers of Pakistan have consistently demonstrated courage and resilience during some of the nation's most difficult moments. Whether during natural disasters, economic hardships, or times of conflict, mothers remained the emotional strength of their families and communities. The mothers of soldiers and martyrs deserve particular recognition for their extraordinary sacrifices. Their patience, dignity, and unwavering courage remind us that patriotism is first nurtured within homes before it is witnessed on battlefields.

In Balochistan, motherhood reflects a unique story of endurance and resilience. Women in many remote and underserved areas continue to face serious challenges, including limited access to healthcare, education, and basic facilities. Despite these hardships, mothers across the province continue to raise their children with dignity, strength, and hope.

Their determination and sacrifices deserve acknowledgment not only on Mother's Day but throughout the entire year.

The way a society treats its motherhood reflects its moral and social condition. Respecting mothers should not be limited to symbolic celebrations, flowers, or speeches once a year. Genuine respect requires practical action. It means ensuring quality healthcare for women, better educational opportunities for girls, maternity protections in workplaces, financial security for families, and safe environments where women can thrive with dignity. There is also an urgent need to recognize the emotional and invisible labor carried by mothers. In countless households, mothers work tirelessly from morning until night without recognition or appreciation. Their sacrifices are often overlooked simply because they are made quietly and consistently. Yet behind nearly every successful individual stands a mother who sacrificed her comfort, sleep, ambitions, and personal well-being for the future of her children. Modern research increasingly highlights that emotional and mental well-being begins within the home. Children raised in stable and loving environments are

more likely to become responsible, confident, and compassionate citizens. Mothers play a central role in creating that environment. Their guidance during uncertainty, patience during hardship, and prayers during difficult times leave lifelong impacts on their children's character and future.

At the same time, motherhood should never become synonymous with exhaustion or isolation. Families and communities must actively support mothers and share responsibilities within households. Raising children and managing family life should not remain the burden of women alone. A truly progressive society is one where mothers receive emotional, social, and institutional support alongside respect and appreciation.

International Mother's Day also serves as a reminder to remember mothers who are no longer with us. Their teachings, sacrifices, and prayers continue to guide our lives. This occasion encourages individuals to express gratitude, love, and care while they still have the opportunity. In an age dominated by technology and digital communication, family structures and human relationships are rapidly changing. Despite these transformations, the warmth, sincerity, and emotional security provided by a mother remain irreplaceable. No institution, technology, or social system can substitute the comfort and strength that a mother gives to her children.

As the world celebrates International Mother's Day, societies must move beyond ceremonial messages and seriously reflect on their responsibilities toward mothers. Respect for mothers should be visible in public policies, social attitudes, and everyday behavior. Children must be taught from an early age to honor their mothers not only through words but through actions, by listening to them, supporting them in old age, and standing beside them during difficult moments.

The true strength of nations does not emerge solely from economic growth, military power, or political systems. It begins within homes, where mothers nurture honesty, resilience, compassion, faith, and humanity in future generations. Every successful civilization has been built upon the sacrifices of mothers whose names may never appear in history books, yet whose influence shapes the destiny of nations.

On this International Mother's Day, let us honor mothers across Pakistan and around the world. Let us recognize their sacrifices, protect their dignity, and build a society where mothers are valued not only through words but through meaningful action. A nation that respects its mothers strengthens its own future, stability, and humanity.

IRC reaches to 29,000 out of school girls in Balochistan

By Shakoor Khan: International Rescue Committee (IRC) under its Teach & Educate Adolescent Girls with Community Help (TEACH) project reached out to 29,000 out-of-school girls of 5 districts of Balochistan including Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Nushki, Kharan and Chagai.

"IRC is striving hard to promote girls' education in Balochistan besides imparting vocational trainings on financial literacy and trades to make them financially independent," said Shareef Mengal, Head of IRC Balochistan during a policy dialogue titled "Improving future of girl's education in Balochistan held in collaboration with UK aid at local hotel here."

Balochistan Education Minister Naseebullah Mari was the chief guest while representatives from the Education Ministry, Directorate of Special Education,

Literacy, Non-Formal Education & Human Rights Department, Balochistan Assessment and Examination Commission, Balochistan Textbook Board, Policy Planning and Implementation Division, Provincial Institute of Teachers Education, Education Support Programme, Global Partnership of Education, German Agency for International Cooperation, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund Society for Community Strengthening and Promotion of Education, Balochistan, Institute for Development Studies and Practices, Japan International Cooperation Agency also attended the event.

The event hosted conversations with mul-



iple stakeholders including education experts and government functionaries on the barriers faced by girls in the province in pursuing their education and discussing possible solutions to combat those barriers.

Salient feature of the project IRC

While highlighting the salient feature of the project IRC chief in Balochistan Shareef Mengal said under the 'Girls Learn' stream of the project, 22,000 girls received classes on Package A, B and C of non-formal curriculum, while 4,000 enrolled in mainstream formal schooling system.

stream of the project, 7,000 girls completed Package A of the non-formal curriculum, out of these 7,000 girls, 5,000 received training on financial literacy and business development planning, 2,400 girls received training on 8 vocational trades and toolkits and 250 girls received financial grants to start a business.

Naseebullah Mari, Education Minister Balochistan, on the occasion urged that "We must do our part to remove the barriers faced by girls in the region so that every girl can pursue her education and become a valuable member of society."

"The Government is making all out efforts to combat the low literacy rate which has affected

girls from all ethnic groups, and socioeconomic backgrounds."

We are committed to assist and contribute to building economically prosperous, and educational and vocational development planning, so every child has access to education.

He however welcomed the support extended by the International Rescue Committee for providing educational and vocational training opportunities, saying he is very grateful for the on-ground initiative of community-based schools in Balochistan.

Abdul Rauf Baloch — Secretary Secondary Education on the occasion appreciated the contributions of IRC for girl's education in Balochistan.

He shared that education is a complex subject which cannot be discussed without WASH, health and other facilities.

This makes it a responsibility of all relevant departments and stakeholders who should play their role effectively.

Zain Ul Abedin Khan, Deputy Director Programs, IRC, in his remarks said that "We as a society need to commit to prioritize and focus on Girls' Education through adequate resources. Girls' education in Balochistan is one of the biggest challenges faced by the country and to deal with it we must work with innovative methods like Non-Formal Education."

He further added

that, "Over the years, we have realized that if girls are unable to reach school, all stakeholders need to fill the gap and provide access to life-long learning opportunities like productive skills and life-skills within communities.

Girl's education is correlated with lower rates of poverty

The panel discussions established an opportunity for the policy makers and practitioners to understand that girl's education is correlated with lower rates of poverty and improved health outcomes. While stimulating dialogue, the stakeholders pledged to work together to eradicate the barriers to girls'

education by providing gender inclusive facilities and quality of education.

The event was a culmination of three sessions where the first was hosted to discuss the barriers faced by girls in pursuing their education. The panelists of the first session classified the barriers into 3 categories: Cultural, Economic and Service Delivery. The panelists recommended Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs) as a viable option while integrated with skill-based trainings and digitized education.

Initiatives to combat the barriers to education

The second session was focused on sustainable initiatives to combat the barriers with the help of Non-Formal Education in bridging the gap between primary and secondary schooling.

Chairperson of the session, Mr. Abdul Khaliq — Chief Planning Officer Policy, Planning and Implementation Unit welcomed the participants and emphasized the importance of solutions to these barriers.

Mr. Ashraf Gichki — Director Literacy and Non-Formal Education shared contribution of NFE department toward provision of second chance of education to out-of-school children.

Personal struggles in overcoming the barriers to education

The third and final session gave the TEACH clients an opportunity to express their personalized struggles in overcoming barriers to education.

Anam — client of TEACH project from Pishin shared that joining TEACH ALP center,

she can read books and newspapers. Simra from the same district shared that her parents don't allow travelling long distances to attend school but after opening of ALP center at doorstep, she was able to join the classroom for first time in her life. Haleema from Nushki district shared that her mother is the only breadwinner of home and works at households of others to earn income. Haleema shared that she is the only child of her family who can read, thanks to joining ALP center.

Iran says made 'legitimate' demands in peace proposal rejected by Trump as 'totally unacceptable'

NEWS DESK: Iran on Monday asserted that it made "legitimate" demands in its latest formal response to the United States' peace proposal, after US President Donald Trump rejected the reply as "totally unacceptable".

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said Tehran had called for an end to the war across the region, the lifting of the US blockade of Iranian ports, and the release of frozen assets abroad in its response.

"We did not demand any concessions. The only thing we demanded was Iran's legitimate rights," said Baqaei in a weekly press briefing.

He said Iran's demands included "an end to the war in the region", lifting the US blockade and "piracy", and the "release of assets belonging to the Iranian people, which have for years been unjustly trapped in foreign banks".

"Safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz and establishing security in the region and Lebanon were other demands of Iran, which are considered a generous and responsible offer for regional security."

Baqaei said Washington committed to uphold "unreason-



able" and one-sided demands.

According to remarks reported by Iran's semi-official Tasnim News Agency, the Iranian official cautioned that any intervention in the affairs of the Strait of Hormuz will further "complicate" the matter, stressing that the issue was the "aggressive actions" of the US and Israel.

"We have conveyed this very clearly to European countries that they should not allow the temptations of the United States and the Zionist regime in regional issues to cause them to be unintentionally drawn into a crisis that will not benefit them," Iran's semi-official outlet ISNA quoted Baqaei as saying.

The Iranian official, according to ISNA, affirmed that Pakistan remained the mediator in US-Iran negotiations.

"The mediator in the negotiations is still Pakistan, and Islamabad will continue its activities in this regard as an official mediator. Other countries, including Qatar, also have relations with both sides and have ideas and

opinions that they will present whenever they deem necessary," he said.

Baqaei further said, "The very presence of the US in the region is an example of creating a cycle of violence and bullying in the region."

He emphasised that "regional security must be ensured by the countries of the region by strengthening

collective trust" between them.

"Recent events have shown that security that relies on the presence of foreign forces in the region will only exacerbate insecurity and will not bring stability to our region," he highlighted.

"Totally unacceptable" Iran's defence of its response, conveyed

through Pakistan on Sunday, came hours after Trump rejected it.

"I have just read the response from Iran's so-called 'Representatives'. I don't like it. TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE," Trump posted on his Truth Social platform, without providing details of the response.

Trump's swift rejection of Iran's re-

sponse sent oil prices surging on Monday amid concerns the 10-week-old conflict will drag on, keeping shipping through the Strait of Hormuz paralysed.

Days after the US floated an offer in the hopes of reopening negotiations, Iran on Sunday released a response focused on ending the war on all fronts, especially Lebanon, where Israel continues its bombardment despite a ceasefire.

Tehran also included a demand for compensation for war damage and emphasised Iranian sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz, Iranian state TV said.

According to Iranian officials, Tehran proposed that the current phase of negotiations may focus primarily on ending hostilities in the region, while more contentious matters, including sanctions relief and the nuclear issue, could be addressed at later stages.

Another Iranian source said that Tehran's response was positive and the ball was now in Washington's court. He hoped that the reply could pave the way for the resumption of dialogue in the coming days. The official said that the response is backed by political consensus within Iran.

China confirms Trump's visit this week

NEWS DESK: President Donald Trump will visit China from May 13 to 15, Beijing confirmed on Monday, with the US leader expected to discuss Iran and trade with his Chinese counterpart.

Washington and Beijing have been at loggerheads over key issues ranging from trade tariffs to the

Middle East war and Taiwan, which China claims as part of its territory.

Trump was originally meant to visit in late March or early April, but postponed his trip to focus on the war on Iran.

"At the invitation of President Xi Jinping, President of the United States of

America Donald J Trump will pay a state visit to China from May 13 to 15," a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said.

Trump is expected to push Xi on Iran while aiming to ease trade tensions, according to US officials.

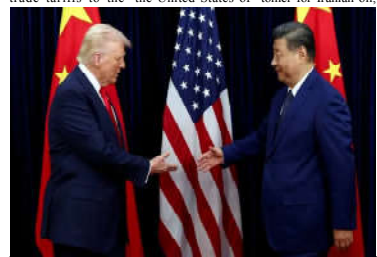
China is a key customer for Iranian oil, mainly through independent "leap" refineries that rely on discounted crude from the Islamic republic.

"This will be a visit of tremendous symbolic significance," US Principal Deputy Press Secretary Anna Kelly told reporters on a call.

"But of course, President Trump never travels for symbolism alone. The American people can expect the president to deliver more good deals on behalf of our country."

Trump's first trip to China in his second term will feature pomp and ceremony, including a tour of the Temple of Heaven in Beijing and a lavish state banquet, the White House said.

This is the first visit by US president to China since 2017.



United State (US) French nationals from hantavirus ship test positive

NEWS DESK: An American national and a French woman evacuated from the cruise ship hit by a deadly hantavirus outbreak have tested positive, officials said on Monday, as the complex operation to repatriate those on board continued.

The French woman, one of five passengers from France flown back from the MV Hondius and placed in isolation in Paris, started to feel unwell on Sunday night, and "tests came back positive", said Health Minister Stephane Rist.

Late on Sunday, the US health department said one American national evacuated from the ship had "mild symptoms" and that another had tested positive for the Andes virus, the only hantavirus strain that is transmissible between humans.

Three passengers from the ship, a Dutch couple and a German woman, have died, while others have fallen sick with the rare disease, which usually spreads among rodents.

No vaccines or specific treatments exist for hantavirus, which is endemic in Argentina, where the ship set sail in April. But health officials have insisted that the risk for global public health is low and downplayed comparisons to the Covid-19

pandemic. Rist said 22 more contact cases had been identified among French nationals, including eight people who had travelled on an April 25 flight between Saint Helena and Johannesburg and 14 more on a flight between Johannesburg and Amsterdam.

The Dutch woman who died was on the flight to Johannesburg and later briefly boarded a flight to Amsterdam but was removed prior to takeoff. Health authorities in several countries have been tracking passengers who had already disembarked from the ship, plus anyone who may have come into contact with them.

The repatriation operation evacuated 94 people of 19 different nationalities on Sunday, Spanish Health Minister Monica Garcia announced on Tenerife, in

Spain's Canary Islands. Spanish officials said the evacuation of most of the ship's nearly 150 passengers and crew, which includes 23 nationalities, would continue until the final repatriation flights to Austria and the Netherlands on Monday afternoon.

The Dutch-flagged ship will refuel in the morning and is expected to depart for the Netherlands with about 30 crew members at 7pm (11pm PKT) on Monday.

Passengers in blue medical suits began disembarking the vessel on Sunday to reach the small industrial port of Granadilla on Tenerife, AFP journalists saw.

Race against time Canary Islands authorities have warned that the operation must be completed by Monday, when adverse weather conditions will force the ship to leave.

The Atlantic archipelago's regional government has consistently resisted taking in the ship, which was only authorised to anchor offshore. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends a 42-day quarantine and "active follow-up", including daily checks for symptoms such as fever, the UN body's epidemic and pandemic preparedness and prevention director, Maria Van Kerkhove, said in Geneva.

Greece's health ministry said a Greek male evacuee would spend 45 days in mandatory hospital quarantine in Athens, while 14 Spanish citizens will also isolate at a military hospital in Madrid.

Australia said it would place its six evacuees in a purpose-built quarantine facility north of Perth for at least three weeks.



Israeli strikes kill three more in Gaza despite ceasefire

NEWS DESK: Israeli strikes killed at least three Palestinians in Gaza on Sunday, including two members of the Hamas-run police force, health officials said, in violence that underscored the fragility of a US-brokered ceasefire.

Medics said an airstrike killed one person in the Maghaza refugee camp, while another killed the head of the criminal police force in Khan Yunis, Wessam Abdel-Hadi, and his aide, according to Gaza's interior ministry.

Reuters has previously reported that Israel has heightened its attacks on Gaza's police force, which the group has used to re-establish governance in areas under its control.

The blast that killed the two police officers left only a mangled metal skeleton where their car had stood in the Al-Amal neighbourhood of Khan Yunis in southern Gaza.

Mourners chanted "there is no God but Allah, the martyrs are beloved by Allah" as the



men's white-shrouded bodies were carried on stretchers through the streets during the funeral. One of the mourners, Ali Mousa, condemned Israel's killing of members of the enclave's police force.

"Although the ceasefire through the streets during the funeral. One of the mourners, Ali Mousa, condemned Israel's killing of members of the enclave's police force.

The occupation aims to create chaos and confusion within the

Gaza Strip. This is its sole objective," he added. Violence in Gaza has persisted despite an October 2025 ceasefire, with Israel conducting almost daily attacks.

At least 850 Palestinians have been killed since the ceasefire took effect, local medics say. Israel and Hamas have blamed each other for ceasefire violations, with Israel conducting almost daily attacks.

More than 72,500 Palestinians have been killed since the Gaza war started in October 2023, Gaza health authorities say, most of them civil-

ians. Two foreign activists departed.

Meanwhile, Israel deported on Sunday two foreign activists seized from a Gaza-bound flotilla, in what a rights group representing them described as a "punitive attack" on a civilian mission.

Saif Abu Keshek, a Spanish national of Palestinian origin, and Brazilian Thiago Avila were among dozens of activists aboard a flotilla intercepted by the Israeli navy in international waters off the coast of Greece on April 30.

Number of small boat migrants to United Kingdom (UK) tops 200,000

NEWS DESK: More than 200,000 migrants have arrived on UK shores in small boats since records began in 2018, latest government statistics showed.

The tally comes as the anti-immigration party Reform UK surged on Thursday in local elections dominated by national issues including immigration.

Home Office figures published on Saturday showed 70 people arrived in one

boat on Friday. The northern French coast is the main point of departure for migrants hoping to reach Britain, usually risking the journey in flimsy, overcrowded boats.

Friday's crossing pushed the total number of arrivals since current data began to 200,013. The figure is calculated using the government's official statistics for 2018 to 2025 and provisional figures recorded so far this year.

Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer is increasingly under pressure over the issue.

His interior minister Shabana Mahmood has proposed cutting back on protections for refugees and ending automatic benefits for asylum seekers.

At least 29 migrants died at sea attempting the crossing in 2025, according to official French and British sources. A further six people have died

this year. Britain and France last month agreed a new three-year deal in an attempt to stop undocumented migrants making the risky journey, with France pledging to ramp up law enforcement and Britain promising hundreds of millions of euros to fund the effort.

Last year a total of 41,472 migrants landed on England's southern shore after making the crossing from northern France.

APHC pays glowing tributes to Pakistan's armed forces, the nation

ISLAMABAD (INP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference-Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) has paid tribute to Pakistan's armed forces and the nation on the first anniversary of "Operation Bunyanum Marsoos," describing it as a symbol of unity, resolve and national strength.

In a statement issued by APHC Information Secretary Mushtaq Ahmed Butt on Sunday, the operation was

termed a historic response to what he described as Indian aggression against civilian areas in Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir during the night of May 6 and 7 last year.

He said the term "Bunyanum Marsoos," derived from a Quranic expression meaning a "fortified wall," reflected the spirit of collective unity, discipline and steadfastness demonstrated by the Pakistani nation and its armed

forces. Quoting a verse from Surah Al-Saff, he said the concept represented unwavering solidarity in defending national sovereignty and dignity.

Mushtaq Ahmed Butt stated that Pakistan's response under the operation had changed the regional security narrative within hours and proved that Pakistan's strategic planning and national unity were stronger than military arrogance and

intimidation. He said the operation highlighted the professional capabilities of Pakistan's armed forces and sent a clear message that the country possessed both the resolve and capacity to defend its territorial integrity against any aggression.

The APHC leader further said the operation was not only a military success but also a manifestation of national cohesion and collective courage.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on matters related to the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications.

Police bust 15 dangerous gangs involved in organized crimes

NAWABSHAH (INP): The district police successfully busted 15 dangerous gangs involved in organized crime.

This was revealed in monthly performance report released here Sunday, detailing extensive operations against criminal elements, drug traffickers and proclaimed offenders.

The operations were conducted under the instructions of SSP Shaheed Benazirabad, Sameer Noor Channa.

According to performance report, police conducted large-scale crackdowns over the past month, out of which 18 police encounters took place across different parts of the district, resulting in 18 suspects being arrested in injured condition, while an additional 14 active criminals were also apprehended.

The police also intensified efforts against fugitives, arresting 95 absconding offenders and bringing them before the law.

In operations against illegal weapons, 29 cases were registered and 29 suspects were

Manshaullah Butt reviews ongoing development projects in city

SIALKOT (INP): Provincial Minister for Labour and Human Resources Punjab Manshaullah Butt on Sunday reviewed the progress of various ongoing development projects in the city.

During the visit, the Minister received briefings from local officials of the Municipal Corporation and Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (WASA) and inspected the ongoing construction activities.

Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Chaudhry Faisal Ikrum and Khawaja Sultan Tipu were also present on this occasion.

Expressing satisfaction over the quality of work, the minister directed the departments concerned to further accelerate the pace of construction to ensure completion of the projects within the stipulated timeframe. He emphasized that no compromise would be tolerated on the quality or quantity of development work and instructed that

all projects must be completed strictly in accordance with the approved plans and estimates.

Manshaullah Butt said transparency and high standards in public welfare projects remain the top priority of the government so that the benefits of these initiatives could directly reach the people. He also instructed all relevant departments to ensure effective coordination and close cooperation in order to avoid any obstacles or delays.

During the visit, officials assured the minister of their full cooperation for the timely and quality completion of the projects.

Provincial Minister Manshaullah Butt said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif had allocated a mega sewerage project worth Rs17 billion for the city, which would significantly improve municipal services and provide a permanent solution to the longstanding issue of urban flooding.

Rs 280 billion projects approved under Gwadar Smart Port City Plan

GWADAR (INP): Under the medium-term phase of the Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan (2025-2035), Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) has announced mega development projects worth approximately Rs280 billion in phases to transform Gwadar into a world-class, modern, smart, environmentally friendly, and economically vibrant port city.

The announcement was made in an important meeting regarding future development projects held under the chairmanship of Director General Gwadar Development Authority (GDA), Muin-ur-Rehman Khan, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Sunday.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on projects including the Gwadar's upcoming 10-year development program.

The program includes projects such as the Central Business District, Special Eco-

economic Zones, GDA Housing Scheme, ecological corridors, and implementation of micro-planning under the master plan. Additionally, commercial centers, public spaces, museums, heritage centers, coastal tourism resorts, foreign trade centers, Gwadar Beach Park, and the GDA Club will also be part of the development agenda.

The 10-year program will also include construction and expansion of internal and external roads, completion of unfinished GDA roads, and development of new highways in accordance with the master plan.

Special emphasis will also be placed on modernizing urban infrastructure, environmental protection, socio-economic growth, and provision of public amenities.

While briefing the meeting, Deputy Director Town Planning Abdul Razaq stated that, in line with direc-

No credible S. Asia's security review can ignore Kashmir dispute: President Zardari

ISLAMABAD, May 10 (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari has honored the national and armed forces on the first anniversary of Marka-e-Haq, praising the military leadership for their unwavering resolve and discipline.

In a statement issued by the Presidency's Media Wing, the president termed the leadership, strategy and "courageous decisions" of Field Marshal Asim Munir instrumental in the success of the operation.

He also lauded Air Chief Marshal Zabeer Ahmad Babar Sidhu and Pakistan Air Force for their "exceptional skill and professional excellence," while commending Admiral

Naveed Ashraf and the naval forces for maintaining full operational readiness and robust defence capabilities.

President Zardari said the events of April and May last year were not merely a military episode but a moment of national reckoning. "When India launched a flag operation, launched unprovoked strikes on our soil, devastating civilian areas as well as military installations, Pakistan responded with discipline, precision, courage and unity," he said.

The president said Operation Bunyanum-Marsoos, described as the decisive centrepiece of Marka-e-Haq, demonstrated the capabilities of Pakistan's armed forces when backed by national unity. "Our re-

sponse was calibrated, measured, precise and proportionate. Our message was unambiguous," he said, adding that Marka-e-Haq showed the world that Pakistan's determination was resolute, calculated and disciplined response to external aggression.

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Kashmiris reaffirm accession to Pakistan resolve

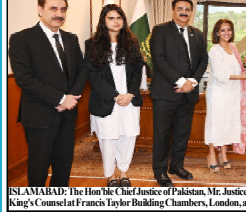
ISLAMABAD (INP): Speakers at a webinar hosted by the "18K Accession to Pakistan Forum" urged the international community to address ongoing atrocities in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir and press India to grant Kashmiris their right to join Pakistan, saying India violated the 1947 partition formula by landing troops in Srinagar.

Former AJK Minister Ms. Farzana Yaqoob said India's decision to initiate war in 2025 was a strategic miscalculation that ended in humiliating defeat. "Operation Bunyanum-Marsoos shattered India's pride. It was a grave miscalculation by Narendra Modi to think he could suppress Pakistan through

false-flag operations," she stated, adding that the operation bolstered the national morale and showcased Pakistan as a resilient power.

Scholar Ms. Naila Altaf said Pakistan's victory in the 2025 Marka-e-Haq conflict demonstrated military superiority and earned greater global recognition.

"Following its decisive victory in the four-day conflict, Pakistan has emerged as a global proponent of peace," she said, noting that the May 2025 confrontation proved the unresolved Kashmir dispute remains the root cause of Pakistan-India tensions. Ms. Soma Aslam, a scholar on Kashmir, said the Indian "Instrument of Accession" is fraudulent and never accepted by



ISLAMABAD: The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, presenting a souvenir to Barrister Saira Kabir Sheikh, King's Counsel at Francis Taylor Building Chambers, London, at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

District administration celebrates "Maarka-e-Haq"

SIALKOT (INP): The district administration organized a grand and dignified ceremony in the city, where strong expressions of patriotism, national unity, and devotion to the Armed Forces of Pakistan were witnessed on the completion of one year since the historic success of "Battle of Truth" ("Maarka-e-Haq").

For the event, Paris Road was beautifully decorated with colorful lights, green crescent flags, and attractive ornaments, while a magnificent fireworks display lit up the night sky and greatly excited the participants, a press release said.

The ceremony featured colorful cultural dances, patriotic

songs, and special performances representing all four provinces, Azad Kashmir, and regional cultures, which were highly appreciated by the citizens.

The patriotic songs and cultural presentations evoked inspired feelings of love for the country among the attendees.

The event was attended by Punjab Provincial Minister for Labour and Human Resources Muhammad Mansha Ullah Butt, Deputy Commissioner Saba Asghar Ahi, District Police Officer Captain (R) Dost Muhammad, Members of the National and Provincial Assemblies Chaudhry Faisal Ikrum, Rana Arif Harnah, Begum Gulnaz Shujaat Pasha,



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik chaired a high-level meeting with the CEOs/Managing Directors of oil refineries to review and accelerate the operationalization of Brownfield Upgradation Refinery Policy.

ther said that the Pakistan Army is the strong guardian of the country's ideological and geographical borders, and that the entire nation stands united under the green crescent flag alongside its armed forces for the defense and progress of the country.

During the ceremony, the atmosphere echoed with passionate slogans of "Allah-u-Akbar," "Pakistan Zindabad," and "Long Live Pakistan Army," while participants waved national flags to express their deep love for the country. Special prayers were also offered at the conclusion of the event for Pakistan's security, progress, and prosperity.

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Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Development Squad Vehicle Hits Two Women in Quetta

Staff Reporter: QUETTA: Two women were injured after a vehicle belonging to the squad of the Additional Chief Secretary (Development) Balochistan allegedly hit them near B.A. Mall in Quetta, triggering outrage on social media as videos of the incident circulated widely online.

According to an official statement issued by the government, the accident involved a squad vehicle assigned to the Additional Chief Secretary (Development). Officials claimed the security staff immediately shifted the injured women to the Trauma Center, where they were provided emergency medical treatment before being moved to ARIA Hospital for further care.

The statement said CT scans, X-rays and other medical examinations confirmed that both women suffered minor fractures, while no serious head injuries or life-threatening complications were reported. Authorities described the condition of both patients as stable and satisfactory.

Government officials further stated that the affected family submitted written consent indicating they did not wish to pursue legal action, terming the incident an unintentional accident. The incident, however, sparked strong reactions after videos showing the aftermath of the accident spread across social media platforms, with many users questioning the conduct and moving of official protocol vehicles in busy public areas.

In its statement, the government also criticized what it described as "misleading and unverified information" being shared by some individuals and media outlets, urging the public to rely only on confirmed reports.

Officials said medical assistance and support for the injured women and their families were continuing. Detailed Verification of Candidates Conducted During the meeting, all shortlisted candidates were called one by one for a thorough scrutiny of their records and credentials.

Officials carefully examined Educational certificates Professional degrees Experience certificates Other relevant documents. The purpose of the review was to ensure that all stages of the recruitment process are completed strictly on merit, fairness, and in accordance with government policy.

Complaints Reviewed Under Rules and Regulations The committee conducted a detailed review of each candidate's record while also seriously addressing the complaints received regarding the recruitment process.

Officials stated that all complaints were handled under prescribed rules and regulations to maintain transparency and accountability.

Officials also stressed that principles of equality and justice in employment opportunities for youth would remain a top priority, ensuring equal chances for all applicants.



On the occasion, XEN PHE Shehzada Farrukh Baloch briefed the participants about the project and stated that it would ensure the supply of clean and safe drinking water to students as well as nearby residents. New Hall inaugurated at Sibi Press Club Later, IGFC North inaugurated a newly constructed hall at the Sibi Press Club. XEN UP&D Raziq Marri provided a detailed briefing regarding the facilities, construction standards, and the role of the project in promoting journalistic activities. He said the new hall would provide journalists with a better professional working environment. Water Supply Project to Benefit Hundreds of Families The final project inaugurated was a water supply line scheme aimed at providing clean drinking water to hundreds of families in Ghareebabad and

IGFC North Inaugurates Public Welfare and Development Projects in Sibi Under BSDI Program

SIBI: Inspector General Frontier Corps (FC) North Balochistan Major General Atif Mujtaba inaugurated several public welfare and development projects in District Sibi under the Balochistan Special Development Initiative (BSDI).

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Commandant Sibi Scouts Colonel Munir Ahmed Sultan Deputy Commissioner Sibi Major (R) Ilyas Kabzai NSP Abdul Hameed Assistant Commissioner Sibi Mansoor Ali Shah Assistant Commissioner Sibi Bakhtiarabad Mir Bahadur Khan Bangalazi Other concerned officials Tube Well and RO Filtration Plant Opened at Girls College The first inauguration took place at the Government El-

ementary Girls College Sibi, where a tube well and RO filtration plant were formally opened.

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Allahabad areas. Local residents described the initiative as a major milestone in public welfare and appreciated the efforts of the Sibi district administration under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner (R) Ilyas Kabzai. Focus on Education, Health, Water, and Infrastructure Speaking on the occasion, IGFC North Major General Atif Mujtaba said that timely completion of public welfare projects not only improves access to basic facilities but also strengthens public trust in state institutions.

He emphasized that education, healthcare, clean drinking water, and infrastructure development remain among the joint priorities of the government and security institutions. The meeting was attended by officers and staff members of the Information Department Naserabad. Division, including Assistant Clerk Chohan Hussain Jamali Article Writers Akhtar Mangi and Ali Raza Manju Assistant Computer Operator Sher Khan Mirani Junior Clerk Muhammad Naeem Photographer Mujahid Hussain Bhangar Detailed Review of Departmental Performance During the session, participants reviewed matters related to: Performance of officials Departmental

Turbat Administration Fixes New Poultry Prices to Provide Relief to Citizens

TURBAT: Following the special directives of Deputy Commissioner Kech Yasir Iqbal Dashti, an important meeting was held under the chairmanship of Assistant Commissioner Turbat Muhammad Hanif Kabzai with representatives of the Anjuman Tajran Kech and poultry traders to discuss measures for providing relief to the public in food prices, particularly poultry rates. The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Tump Shehaz Hayat Trade leaders Nisar Ahmed Joski and Ejaz Ahmed Joski Poultry representatives Din Muhammad and Shahid Ali Price Control Committee representative Niaz Ahmed

Detailed Review of Poultry Market Prices During the meeting, participants reviewed the current poultry market rates, supply situation, and public concerns to ensure the availability of chicken at affordable and officially approved prices for citizens. Speaking on the occasion, Assistant Commissioner Turbat Muhammad Hanif Kabzai said that Deputy Commissioner Kech has issued clear instructions to provide maximum relief to the people of the district and that artificial inflation would not be tolerated under any circumstances. He stated that the administration remains fully active in safeguarding public interests and that poultry prices will be monitored weekly to maintain price stability in the market.

New Official Poultry Rates Announced After market surveys and consultations with traders, the administration announced new official prices for: Broiler Chicken (Live Wholesale): Rs. 500 per kg Broiler Chicken (Live Retail): Rs. 520 per kg Broiler Chicken Meat: Rs. 720 per kg Warning Against Overpricing and Hoarding The Assistant Commissioner clearly stated that all shopkeepers and poultry sellers across District Kech would be bound to sell poultry according to the official price list.

He warned that strict legal action would be taken against anyone involved in Violation of official prices Hoarding Illegal profiteering Citizens Appreciate Administration's Measures Local citizens and business circles appreciated the public-friendly initiatives, effective administrative strategy, and timely decisions taken by Assistant Commissioner Turbat Muhammad Hanif Kabzai to control prices.

Authorities to ensure that no negligence is shown in providing timely and quality medical services to the public. Orders Issued for Repairs and Better Management The DHO instructed B&R SDO Junaid Kashani to immediately identify repair and rehabilitation work required at the hospital and ensure prompt action for improvements.

He also directed the hospital administration to ensure Proper cleanliness and sanitation Strict implementation of SOPs Functionality of medical equipment Punctuality and attendance of doctors and staff.

Gwadar Health Officials Inspect Ormara Health Facilities to Improve Public Healthcare Services

GWADAR: In line with the vision of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, practical measures are continuing across the district to make public healthcare services more effective, quality-oriented, and people-friendly.

As part of these efforts, District Health Officer (DHO) Gwadar Dr. Yasir Tahir, accompanied by DHO Dr. Farooq Baloch, conducted a detailed visit to the Rural Health Center (RHC) Ormara and the MNCH Center Orman.

The officials also reviewed the availability of medicines, cleanliness standards, attendance of medical staff, and the quality of

various sections of the hospital, including Outpatient Department (OPD) Male and Female Wards Dental Unit Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) Center X-ray Room Other healthcare facilities.

The officials also reviewed the availability of medicines, cleanliness standards, attendance of medical staff, and the quality of

healthcare services being provided to patients. Hospital Management Briefs Officials on Challenges On the occasion, RHC In-charge Dr. Ali Akbar Lal gave a detailed briefing regarding hospital facilities, operational matters, and challenges faced by the healthcare center.

District Health Officer Dr. Yasir Tahir directed the concerned au-

thorities to ensure that no negligence is shown in providing timely and quality medical services to the public. Orders Issued for Repairs and Better Management The DHO instructed B&R SDO Junaid Kashani to immediately identify repair and rehabilitation work required at the hospital and ensure prompt action for improvements.

Sohbatpur Reviews Complaints in Phase-IV Contract Teacher Recruitment to Ensure Transparency

SOHBATPUR: An important meeting was held in Sohbatpur to review complaints related to the Phase-IV recruitment of contract teaching staff and to ensure complete transparency in the hiring process.

The meeting was attended by relevant officers, district committee members, and other concerned officials.

Detailed Verification of Candidates Conducted During the meeting, all shortlisted candidates were called one by one for a thorough scrutiny of their records and credentials.

Officials carefully examined Educational certificates Professional degrees Experience certificates Other relevant documents. The purpose of the review was to ensure that all stages of the recruitment process are completed strictly on merit, fairness, and in accordance with government policy.

Complaints Reviewed Under Rules and Regulations The committee conducted a detailed review of each candidate's record while also seriously addressing the complaints received regarding the recruitment process.

Officials stated that all complaints were handled under prescribed rules and regulations to maintain transparency and accountability.

Officials also stressed that principles of equality and justice in employment opportunities for youth would remain a top priority, ensuring equal chances for all applicants.

At the conclusion of the meeting, officials expressed hope that a transparent and merit-based recruitment process would not only restore public confidence but also contribute positively toward improving educational standards in Sohbatpur district by bringing competent professionals into the education sector.

Zero Tolerance for Merit Violations The committee made it clear that any form of irregularity favoritism, recommendation, or violation of merit would not be tolerated under any circumstances.

It was emphasized that all recruitment decisions would be made solely on the basis of Merit Eligibility Capability Legal requirements Commitment to Fair and Transparent Recruitment Process Expected to Improve Public Confidence

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Naserabad Information Department Reaffirms Commitment to Effective Public Communication and Media Outreach

NASERABAD: In light of special directives issued by Director General Public Relations Askar Khan, an important review meeting was held under the chairmanship of Divisional Deputy Director Information Naserabad Nek Muhammad to evaluate departmental performance and strengthen government communication efforts across the division.

The meeting was attended by officers and staff members of the Information Department Naserabad. Division, including Assistant Clerk Chohan Hussain Jamali Article Writers Akhtar Mangi and Ali Raza Manju Assistant Computer Operator Sher Khan Mirani Junior Clerk Muhammad Naeem Photographer Mujahid Hussain Bhangar Detailed Review of Departmental Performance During the session, participants reviewed matters related to: Performance of officials Departmental

efficiency Challenges faced by staff Public Relations and awareness efforts Promotion of government initiatives development projects Officials also received guidance regarding responsibilities and professional standards in carrying out their duties effectively.

Emphasis on Professionalism and Public Service Addressing the meeting, Divisional Deputy Director Information Nek Muhammad directed officers and staff to utilize their capabilities in producing Quality news reports Feature articles Informative photos Photographs and professional excellence.

He said that, under the public-friendly vision of government efforts and public services would help improve public confidence and awareness.

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(ADMISSION NOTICE)

INVITATION FOR ADMISSION AGAINST ALL GENERAL COLLEGES OF BALUCHISTAN IN FAIR & OPEN

(SESSION 2025-26)

Applications are invited through online portal i.e. www.dgpb.gov.pk or portal.dgpb.gov.pk from the local/omic candidates of Balochistan in FAIR & OPEN in various Colleges of Balochistan. The interested candidates must have passed their Matric Annual Examination 2025 or earlier up to Annual Examinations of previous three (03) years. All seats will be filled on merit.

Merit Criteria

- Candidates should not be more than 18 years of age.
- All candidates who passed their Matric Annual Examination 2025 or in the previous three (03) years.
- All candidates will be selected on merit and according to administrative order.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- The Candidates will apply through online portal i.e. www.dgpb.gov.pk or portal.dgpb.gov.pk.
- The prospectus of all colleges and video 'How to Apply' is available at the above mentioned website.
- Fill online form carefully before submission, the candidates may not change their priorities after submission.
- The admission through portal are going to be started from 09th May, 2025 and the closing date for online admission is 31st May, 2025. No application will be accepted after the closing date.
- The Merit list of all colleges will be declared on 01st June, 2025.
- The shortlisted candidates will have to submit admission fee on 10th 18th June, 2025 in the concerned colleges, after due date the admission of all those candidates will be considered cancelled, who failed to submit their fees within due date.
- Commencement of classes in all colleges of Balochistan will be from 15th June, 2025 positively.
- The Candidates must select at least three and maximum five options / colleges priorities, where they want to secure admission.
- The classes of summer zone will commence after the summer vacations on 1st August (Tentatively).
- The candidates will be informed through Newspapers, website www.dgpb.gov.pk or portal.dgpb.gov.pk in tracking application section, and social media pages. So, keep frequently visiting our website and Facebook, at the given links.
- Initially no documents are being required for admission through portal therefore, do not wait for DMC.

DIRECTOR COLLEGES & HIGHER EDUCATION BALUCHISTAN QUETTA

PRO No. 5005/11-05-2025

TENDER NOTICE

THE-52361945463 Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. The Assistant Director Local Govt, Quetta invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following work for the Year 2025 based on Composite schedule/rates 2023-24 Percentage Rates.

Tender Fee 1000 PKR and Bid Security 2%

S.No	Name of Works	ECent
1	INSTALLATION OF SOLAR LIGHTS AT NA-264 & CONST. OF BIT ROAD DRAIN & PCC & SOLAR SCORE IN KILLI BARRAZI NEAR QUMBRANI ROAD QUETTA.	106,000,000

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required. The bidder must have completed 3 Assignment of similar nature of work Turn over of at least 100,000 PKR Annual net sales/turnover in last 3 years showing financial capacity of the firm Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) C-4 and above (Up to 200 million) in Relevant Category and Specialized Code (Registration with PEC) (Water Supply), CE100 (Civil/Env Civil Engineering), EE110 (Solar), EE110 (Solar Energy) Procedure Of Procurement: Single Bid or submitted electronically from www.dgpb.gov.pk Issuance of tender Documents: Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.dgpb.gov.pk Last Date of bid submission: Bid can only be submitted electronically until 25 May, 2025/08 09:30 AM through supplier dashboard. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at 10:30 AM at EPRS System Address: Assistant Director, Local Govt & Rural Development Deptt Quetta Phone no: 0081902029 Email: sdgpr@quetta.gov.pk

PRO No.4987/11-05-2025

Sector Assistant Director Local Government & Rural Development Quetta

From corridors to competitiveness: can CPEC deliver Phase II?

NEWS DESK: Why Pakistan's next economic test lies in turning strategic partnership into industrial performance? Pakistan's economic engagement with China is among the most stable and strategically significant pillars of its external relations. As the largest trading partner, a key investor, and a consistent source of financial support through loans and rollovers, China occupies a central place in Pakistan's external economic architecture.

Recent diplomatic and commercial engagements, including high-level investment forums in Beijing and the expected participation of dozens of Chinese enterprises, signal sustained interest in Pakistan as a potential regional production and connectivity hub. At the same time, China's evolving global investment strategy—shifting from infrastructure-led expansion toward industrial relocation, digital integration, and supply chain diversification—creates a natural opening under the next phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Yet Pakistan's challenge today is not only access to opportunity, but the ability to convert that opportunity into credible domestic out-

comes. It is within this context that CPEC Phase II must be understood, not as an extension of infrastructure, but as a test of industrial competitiveness.

The first phase of CPEC was largely defined by infrastructure development. Energy generation projects, transport corridors, and connectivity networks addressed critical bottlenecks that had constrained growth for decades. This phase created physical capacity and reduced immediate supply-side constraints. However, infrastructure was never intended to be the final outcome. It was a foundation for industrial transformation.

CPEC Phase II is now positioned around that shift—towards Special Economic Zones (SEZs), industrial clusters, export-oriented production, agriculture modernisation, and deeper integration into regional value chains. The ambition is to move from transit geography to production geography. But infrastructure enables industry; it does not automatically generate it. This is where Pakistan's real challenge begins.

CPEC Phase II and the SEZ question
Special Economic Zones have been central



to Pakistan's industrial strategy under CPEC. More than three dozen zones have been approved across provinces, including five priority SEZs identified under bilateral cooperation. At the centre of this transition are SEZs, not as execution platforms.

Yet despite years of policy focus, most of these zones have not reached meaningful operational scale. Recent legislative and administrative efforts—ranging from accelerated land allocation frameworks to

revised institutional arrangements—reflect renewed urgency to revive momentum and reduce investor friction. However, the fundamental question remains unchanged: why have SEZs not delivered industrial outcomes at scale? The answer lies less in policy design and more in the execution environment.

SEZ strategies have traditionally relied on incentives—tax concessions, subsidised land, regulatory facilitation, and public-private partnerships. Pakistan's

model has followed a similar path. But global experience suggests a consistent pattern: incentives attract attention, not necessarily investment durability. Land availability or fiscal concessions may initiate interest, but they do not anchor long-term industrial investment.

Investors evaluate deeper structural conditions—policy predictability, contract enforcement, regulatory consistency, logistics efficiency, and financial system reliability. In their absence, SEZs risk

evolving into real estate ventures rather than industrial ecosystems. This helps explain why many CPEC-linked zones have struggled to move beyond initial planning stages.

A parallel constraint lies in institutional fragmentation. Pakistan operates multiple layers of governance for industrial development—the Board of Investment, provincial SEZ authorities, CPEC coordination mechanisms, and newer facilitation platforms.

While each is intended to improve coordination, the cumulative effect has often been overlap rather than clarity. The issue is not the absence of institutions, but multiplicity without integration. For investors, this translates into uncertainty: overlapping mandates, multiple approval channels, and inconsistent implementation timelines. Industrial policy requires not just intent, but institutional coherence.

China as strategic anchor, not substitute

China remains Pakistan's most significant long-term economic partner—spanning trade, investment, financing support, and strategic alignment. From infrastructure financing to repeated rollovers, the relationship has provided both development capital and macroeconomic stability at critical moments. As this engagement evolves toward industrial cooperation, its limits also become clearer. Strategic partnership can create opportunity, it cannot substitute for domestic competitiveness. This distinction is central to understanding the stakes of CPEC Phase II.

The next phase of CPEC is often described as a transition from infrastructure corridors to industrial corridors. In reality, it is a transition from physical connectivity to economic credibility. This requires more than infrastructure. It demands industrial production integrated with local supply chains, export capacity that is globally competitive, energy systems that are reliable and cost-predictable, and regulatory frameworks that are stable and enforceable. Without these, corridors remain corridors—movement without transformation, connectivity without competitiveness.

Pakistan's core limitation is not the absence of external interest, but the weakness of domestic absorption capacity. The country has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to attract external engagement.

The constraint lies in converting that engagement into sustained industrial growth. This is where SEZs become critical; not as isolated enclaves, but as embedded components of a national production system. If they remain disconnected from domestic value chains, their impact will remain limited. If not anchored in domestic capacity, CPEC risks reinforcing a familiar pattern: what may be described as rented resilience.

AJK premier opens work on new grid station near Line of Control

NEWS DESK: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore on Sunday laid the foundation stone of a 132/11 KV grid station in Samahni at a cost of Rs1 billion, in response to a long-standing demand of the local population.

During the visit to the area, he also inaugurated a Rs680 million road project and welcomed PML-N leaders into the Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

Samahni, an administrative unit of the southern Thimber district along the Line of Control, had come into international focus in February 2019 when Pakistan Air Force shot down an Indian aircraft in the area and captured its pilot, Abhinandan Varthaman.

Rathore was accompanied during the visit by PPP AJK President Chaudhry Mohammad Yasin, former president Haji Mohammad Yaqoob Khan, ex-prime minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas, local lawmaker and Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Ali Shan Soni and other cabinet members.

Two PML-N leaders join ruling party

along with their supporters. Soni had been elected to the AJK Legislative Assembly in 2021 on a PTI ticket but joined the PPP last year along with Mr Ilyas.

At the foundation stone-laying ceremony, Chief Engineer Electricity (South) Mohammad Nazir Mughal briefed the prime minister on the project and said the grid station would have six feeders in Samahni, Chokri, Jandala, Sona Bazaar, Bandala and Puna, besides a 24-kilometre double-circuit transmission line from Islamgarh to Samahni.

He said the project, spread over 32 kanals, would benefit around 145,000 people by ensuring electricity supply at standard voltage levels. He added that residents of Samahni tehsil had long been receiving electricity at less than 90 volts, resulting in inadequate power supply.

The prime minister also inaugurated the 8.2-kilometre Jandala-Peer Gali road project completed at a cost of Rs680 million.

Chief Engineer Mahmood Mumtaz Rathore, who is the premier's elder brother, briefed him on the scheme. PM Rathore directed officials concerned to ensure quality, speedy execution and timely completion of development projects.

Later, addressing a

public reception at Jandera, the prime minister welcomed former PML-N leaders retired Major Khizar Rehman and Raja Mohammad Ayub into the PPP after they announced joining the party along with their supporters.

Rathore said the PPP was "a party of martyrs" that provided opportunities to ordinary workers to rise to key political positions.

Those who left the PPP for political decline and eventual irrelevance, he said.

Rathore claimed his government had restored public confidence by resolving issues through democratic institutions rather than street protests.

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Oil rises \$4 after Trump rejects Iran's response to US peace proposal

NEWS DESK: Oil prices rallied on Monday, after US President Donald Trump said Iran's response to a US proposal was "unacceptable," raising supply fears as the Strait of Hormuz stayed largely closed, which kept the global market tight.

Brent crude futures climbed \$4.16 or 4.11 per cent to \$105.45 a barrel at 0340 GMT. US West Texas Intermediate was at \$99.80 a barrel, up \$4.38, or 4.59pc.

Last week, both contracts recorded 6pc weekly losses on hopes for an imminent end to the 10-week-old conflict that would allow oil transit through the Strait of Hormuz.

The oil market continues to trade like a geopolitical headline machine, with prices swinging sharply based on every comment, rejection, or warning coming from Washington and Tehran," said Priyanka Sachdeva, senior mar-

ket analyst at Phillip Nova.

Trump is scheduled to arrive in Beijing on Wednesday and is expected to discuss Iran, among other topics, with Chinese President Xi Jinping, according to US officials.

"Market attention now shifts squarely to President Trump's visit to China this week," IG market analyst Tony Sy-camore said in a note.

There is hope he can persuade Beijing to leverage its influence over Iran to push for a comprehensive ceasefire and a reso-

lution to the ongoing disruption in the Strait of Hormuz.

The world has lost about 1 billion barrels of oil over the past two months and energy markets will take time to stabilise even if flows resume, Saudi Aramco CEO Amin Nasser said on Sunday.

Another two tankers carrying crude exited the Strait of Hormuz last week with trackers switched off to avoid Iranian attacks.

Kpler shipping data showed, underscoring a rising trend to sustain Middle East

oil exports.

"Even if the acute oil shock fades by late 2026, the ongoing risk of renewed disruption in the Strait of Hormuz, depleted inventories and weaker policy coordination is expected to keep a geopolitical risk premium embedded in prices," ING analysts wrote in a note on Monday.

They expected Brent to remain above \$90 per barrel through 2026 and around \$80 to \$85 per barrel into 2027 as demand growth resumes and inventories are gradually rebuilt.

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India shares, rupee fall on Modi's call for austerity, crude price spike

NEWS DESK: Indian shares fell on Monday and the rupee declined after Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged a spate of measures, including fuel conservation, fewer imports and gold purchases, as surging energy prices pressure foreign exchange reserves.

India, the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer, late last month said there was no proposal to raise pump prices for diesel and gasoline, leaving it among the countries yet to raise prices despite the global surge. The Nifty 50 fell 1.49 per cent to 23,815.85, while the BSE Sensex shed 1.7pc to 76,015.28. The rupee logged a record closing low of 95.31 per dollar, dropping about 0.9pc on the day—its steepest single-day drop since March 27.

Brent crude jumped more than 2.6pc to about \$104.4 barrel after US President Donald Trump on Sunday dismissed the Iranian response to Washington's proposal for peace talks as "unacceptable".

Arun Kejriwal, founder of Kejriwal Research and Investment Services, called the slide in markets on Monday's session a "knee-jerk reaction" to the prime minister's comments.

"The bigger overhang for Indian markets is oil refusing to fall and hold below \$100 despite peace efforts between Iran and the US, which will



keep weighing on sentiment," he said.

Thirteen of the 16 major sectors logged losses. The broader small-caps and mid-caps declined about 1.5pc each.

Oil marketing companies Indian Oil, BPCL and HPCL fell about 2.3pc-3pc. Index-heavyweights Reliance Industries lost 3.3pc. Travel-linked stocks such as Indian Hotels, Lemon Tree, Chait Hotels, Thomas Cook and Yatra Online dropped between 1pc and 4.5pc.



Airline operator Indigo fell 4.8pc. Shares of jewellery, Senco Gold and Kalyan Jewellers lost between 6.7pc and 9.3pc.

State Bank of India fell 4.5pc, extending losses after missing quarterly profit view, dragging PSU banks 2.5pc lower.

Hyundai Motor India rose 2.8pc on a smaller-than-expected fall in quarterly profit, and agro chemicals firm IPI gained 3.6pc on quarterly profit rise.

NEWS DESK: Federal Reserve's Monetary Affairs Junaid Anwar Chaudhry on Monday announced a major reduction in tariffs at Gwadar Port aimed at boosting global transit traffic, according to an official statement.

According to the statement, the minister said that berthing fees for container ships have been reduced by 25 per cent, while port charges on international transshipment containers have been cut by 40pc.

He added that port charges on transit container cargo have also been reduced by up to 31pc.

Further, a one-month free storage facility has been introduced for general cargo, compared to the standard five-day allowance at other national ports, the minister added.

"Ships bringing transit and transship- ment cargo have been given major relief,"

Chaudhry was quoted as saying.

"These incentives take effect immediately, and further adjustments will be reviewed in phases based on operational data and market response," the minister added, noting that future revisions would be guided by cargo trends, regional competition, and sustainability considerations.

Chaudhry said the measures formed part of a broader strategy to transform Gwadar into a competitive, investor-friendly, and modern deep-sea port serving as a strategic gateway for trade with Central Asia, the Middle East, East Africa and beyond.

He said that amid rising demand for low-cost and congestion-free shipping routes, Gwadar was well placed to capture a larger share of regional trade flows.

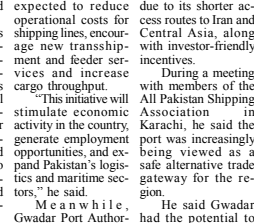
The revised tariff regime, he added, was expected to reduce operational costs for shipping lines, encourage new transshipment and feeder services and increase cargo throughput.

"This initiative will stimulate economic activity in the country, generate employment opportunities, and expand Pakistan's logistics and maritime sectors," he said.

He said Gwadar had the potential to become the future hub of regional trade and logistics because of its low operational costs, modern facilities, and shorter trade routes.

He added that the Gwadar-Rimand border route had emerged as an effective multimodal corridor for promoting trade with Iran and Central Asia.

Earlier this month, Baloch also said that four transshipment shops were recorded at the port during April, indicating Gwadar's growing importance as an alternative trade route in the region.



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Prizmic follows up on Djokovic exploit to reach Italian Open last 16

NEWS DESK: Dinko Prizmic followed up knocking out Novak Djokovic from the Italian Open by beating France's Ugo Humbert 6-1, 7-5 on Sunday to reach the last 16 in Rome.

Prizmic had to qualify for the main draw but the Croatian player looks like he could be a contender after another brilliant display of power and precision on clay.

The 20-year-old raced into a 5-0 lead in the first set, which he closed out in just 28 minutes against a shell shocked Humbert, who was seeded 31st.

Such was Prizmic's dominance in the first set that he could even afford to try a trick shot between his legs and give up a point in game six.

Humbert battled back in the second set but after he gave up his serve for the third time in game 11 Prizmic closed out on his second match point.

After his superb performance on the Pietrangeli court, Prizmic will face 13th seed Karen Khachanov in the next round.



Prizmic follows up on Djokovic exploit to reach Italian Open last 16

As it stands Prizmic will already be up 11 places to 68th come Monday week, just before the start of the French Open, after his best ever performance in a Master 1000 tournament.

Alexander Zverev kept up his bid for a third title at the Foro Italico with a straight-sets win over Alexander Bublik, 6-1, 6-4 on centre court where the threat of rain looms large.

Second seed Zverev, who was heavily beaten by Jannik Sinner in the Madrid final last weekend, will face one of Tommy Paul or Italy's Luciano Darderi in the fourth round.

Home hope Lorenzo Musetti will face clay court specialist Casper Ruud in the last 16 after winning a tough match with Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo 7-6 (9/7), 6-4.

Musetti was in tears at the end of a clash which featured 81 unforced errors, and told Sky Sport that it wasn't right physically without specifying what was wrong.

Naomi Osaka could face three-time winner Daniil Medvedev with his campaign in the third round after his match, which was scheduled to be the first on centre court, was shelved when his opponent Tomas Machac pulled out of the tournament with an unspecified illness.

Rome champion Iga Swiatek in the last 16 of the women's tournament after easily seeing off Diana Schneider 6-1, 6-2.

The four-time Grand Slam winner beat her Russian opponent in just 54 minutes to equal her best result of a difficult season in which she was knocked out of Indian Wells and Madrid at the same stage by Aryna Sabalenka.

But with Sabalenka suffering a shock early elimination on Saturday, 15th seed Osaka could yet be a contender.

In Saturday's late action, Jannik Sinner got his campaign underway by swatting aside Sebastian Ofner 6-3, 6-4 to start his bid to extend a record-breaking run of five straight Masters 1000 tournament victories.

The world number one delighted fans in the packed centre court stands with a predictably dominant display which left Austria's Ofner little room to breathe, even in the breezy atmosphere of Rome.

Sinner won his 24th consecutive match in one hour and 40 minutes, the 24-year-old barely breaking a sweat to set up a clash with Alexei Popyrin or Jakob Mensik in the third round.

No Italian man has won at the Foro Italico since Adriano Panatta 50 years ago, and with Carlos Alcaraz out of action, Sinner is expected to go one better than last year when he lost the final to his great rival.

It was the third win for an Italian man on Saturday, with Flavio Cobolli, who helped his country win last year's Davis Cup in Sinner's absence, beating France's Terence Atmane 7-6 (7/1), 6-3.

Mattia Bellucci, ranked 64 in the world, is in the fourth round after a 5-7, 6-2, 6-3 win over 24th seed Tomas Martin Etcheverry.

Former winner Daniil Medvedev will begin his campaign in the third round after his match, which was scheduled to be the first on centre court, was shelved when his opponent Tomas Machac pulled out of the tournament with an unspecified illness.

DHA Hockey Academy a landmark initiative for revival of Pakistan hockey

NEWS DESK: President of the Pakistan Sports Writers Federation and Secretary General of AIPS Asia, Amjad Aziz Malik, has termed the DHA Hockey Academy, Lahore a major step towards the revival of Pakistan hockey, urging young players to dedicate themselves to restoring the country's lost glory in the national game.

He expressed these views while addressing under-30 players participating in training sessions at the DHA Hockey Academy at Manzoorul Hassan Hockey Stadium. Former Olympian

Manzoorul Hassan and ex-World Cup player Colonel Saad Khan were also present on the occasion.

Malik received a warm welcome upon his arrival at the stadium, where he was introduced to the young players. Addressing the participants, he described hockey as a symbol of Pakistan's identity, national pride and glorious sporting traditions. He stressed that the younger generation must work with commitment, discipline and patriotic spirit to bring Pakistan back among the leading nations in

world hockey. Recalling Pakistan's historic achievements, he said the country had earned global recognition by winning Olympic gold medals, World Cups, Champions Trophy titles and Asian Games championships. He paid tribute to the legendary hockey players who brought fame to Pakistan through their outstanding performances on the international stage. He advised the young athletes to focus not only on sports but also on education, physical fitness, discipline and character building. According to

him, these players have the potential to represent Pakistan at the international level and carry the national flag with pride in future competitions.

Highlighting the significance of the DHA Hockey Academy, he said such initiatives were vital for nurturing fresh talent and strengthening the future of Pakistan hockey. He remarked that success in sports could only be achieved through continuous hard work, sacrifice and determination rather than talent alone.

Encouraging the players to remain focused on their dreams, he urged them to move forward with confidence and national spirit so that Pakistan could once again reclaim its former stature in world hockey.

On the occasion, Malik also paid rich tribute to Manzoorul Hassan, who is currently serving as head coach of the Pakistan Hockey Federation. He presented the latest edition of the AIPS Asia magazine to the Olympian in recognition of his services to the sport.



Australia include uncapped trio on white-ball tours of Pakistan, Bangladesh

NEWS DESK: Australia will use the upcoming white-ball tours of Pakistan and Bangladesh to test their depth after naming squads featuring three potential debutants, selectors said on Monday.

All-rounder Liam Scott has been included in the ODI squads for Pakistan and Bangladesh, with Victoria batter Ollie Peake joining him in the Pakistan squad.

T20 specialist Joel Davies has been included in the squad for three T20Is in Chhattisgarh, Bangladesh, starting on June 17.

Mitchell Marsh will captain all squads, with Australia to play three ODIs against Pakistan in Rawalpindi and Lahore from May



30 before travelling to Bangladesh for three ODIs in Dhaka in the run-up to the T20 series. "It's always exciting to see new players get an opportunity to play international cricket and be a part of the national team," selector George Bailey said in a statement. "The blend of experienced players coupled with new or returning players will provide a nice mix for these subcontinent tours." Fast bowlers Billy Stanlake and Riley Meredith return for the Pakistan ODIs, while spinner Tanveer Sangha was named in both 50-over squads. Meredith will also remain with the group

for the T20 leg in Bangladesh. Travis Head, Cooper Connolly, Ben Dwarshuis and Xavier Bartlett will join the squad for the Bangladesh ODIs after their Indian Premier League commitments, replacing Peake, Stanlake, Meredith and Matt Short.

Trossard's late strike secures vital win for Arsenal at West Ham

NEWS DESK: Arsenal cleared arguably the most dangerous remaining obstacle in their path to the Premier League title by the skin of their teeth as Leandro Trossard's late goal secured a dramatic 1-0 win at West Ham United on Monday.

Earlier, Aston Villa blew the chance to close in on Champions League football next season with a 2-2 draw at already-relegated Burnley.

Villa booked their place in the Europa League final on Thursday with a 4-0 demolition of Nottingham Forest.

But Unai Emery's men suffered a European hangover at Turf Moor. Villa extend their lead over sixth-placed Bournemouth to four points and move six ahead of Brighton in the home ranks.

Arsenal rode their luck and survived a huge scare deep in stoppage time as West Ham substitute Callum Wilson had an equaliser ruled out for a foul after a long VAR review. Victory put Arsenal a step closer to a first Premier League title since 2004 and they will be crowned champions if they win their last two games at home to Burnley and away to Crystal Palace on the final day.

Arsenal have 79 points from 36 games with Manchester City, who have a game in hand, on 74.

For West Ham it was a bitter pill to swallow as defeat left them

starting at relegation and they could find themselves four points from the safety zone with two games left if Tottenham Hotspur beat Leeds United on Monday.

Earlier, Aston Villa blew the chance to close in on Champions League football next season with a 2-2 draw at already-relegated Burnley.

Jaidon Anthony punished a slow Villa start to put Burnley in front after Emi Martinez spilled Lesley Ugochukwu's shot.

Ross Barkley headed the visitors level from a corner before half-time. Ollie Watkins then pounced on a long punt forward by Martinez to put Villa in front and headed up to fourth in the table. Burnley, though, hit back to avoid a sixth consecutive defeat. Zian Flemming fired home



Pakistan's Test against Bangladesh evenly poised after Mehidy takes 5 wickets

NEWS DESK: Mehidy Hasan Miraz claimed five wickets to give Bangladesh a slender lead after Pakistan debutant Azan Awaiz hit 103 on a rain-hit third day of the first Test on Sunday.

Pakistan made 386 all out in response to Bangladesh's first innings total of 413 in Dhaka.

Bangladesh closed the day on 7-0 in their second innings to increase their lead to 34 runs, after bad light ended play with Mahmudul Hasan Joy unbroken on two and Shadman Islam yet to score.

Left-handed Azan, who resumed on 85, completed his hundred off 153 balls to become the 14th Pakistan and sixth player overall to score a century on debut against Bangladesh.

He became pace bowler Tasnim Ahmed's 50th Test wicket after captain Najmul Hossain Shanto caught the opener at slip.



feeling for me because I know it's my debut match and I performed very well for my country," a visibly moved Azan said.

"When I was going in to bat, I was a little nervous, but I performed very well for my team." Pakistan lost wickets at regular intervals but kept coming back as Abdullah Fazal, another debutant, scored 60. Salman Agha made 58 and Mohammad Rizwan chipped in with 59.

Rizwan and Agha made 119 for the sixth wicket, one of three century partnerships for the visitors, before rain wiped out a large portion of the afternoon session.

The pitch offered more assistance to the spinners when play resumed and Mehidy exploited the conditions to perfection, with Pakistan bowled out in 100.3 overs.

Mehidy, who bowled 38 overs of his off-spin, was rewarded

for his patience. "On a true wicket like this, as a spinner, my mind is that I will not get help from the pitch in the first three days," Miraz said.

"If I bowl in good areas and the batter makes a mistake, then I have a chance of taking wickets. My job was to make sure I did not concede runs from one end." "In the second innings, I will come as an attacking bowler when the ball is turning," he said.

Afghanistan issued demarche after 15 police personnel martyred in Bannu suicide attack

NEWS DESK: The Foreign Office (FO) said on Monday that the Afghan chargé d'affaires was summoned and handed a "strong demarche" over the suicide attack in Bannu, which claimed the lives of 15 police personnel.

In a statement, the FO said, "The Afghan chargé d'affaires was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today to deliver a strong demarche regarding the cowardly vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (IED) attack carried out by terrorists of Fatah Khalwarji on the Fateh Khel police post in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bannu District on May 9."

Fatma al Khawarij is a term the state uses for terrorists belonging to the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, while Fatah al Hindustan is a term designated by the state for terrorist organisations in Balochistan.

"The ministry conveyed that a detailed investigation into the incident, along with evidence collected by the technical intelligence, indicates that the attack was masterminded by terrorists residing in Af-



ghanistan," the FO said.

"Reiterating Pakistan's grave concern over the continued use of Afghan soil for terrorist attacks against Pakistan, it was impressed upon the Afghan side that Pakistan reserves the right to respond decisively against the perpetrators of this barbaric act," the

statement added.

"The fight against terrorism is a common cause, and the Afghan Taliban must honour their commitment not to allow their territory to be used for terrorism against other countries," the FO said.

It stated that Pakistan had repeatedly urged the Afghan Taliban regime to take

concrete and verifiable action against Fatah al Khawarij, Fatah al Hindustan, and NKP/Daesh elements operating from Afghan soil.

"Pakistan has also constructively engaged with the Afghan Taliban regime through several rounds of talks mediated by brotherly and friendly countries. How-

ever, the Afghan Taliban have consistently failed to commit to, or deliver, meaningful and verifiable action against these terrorist outfits," the statement said.

"The Afghan Taliban regime has also been categorically informed that, if it continues to harbour these ter-

rorist organisations, Pa-

kistan will not compromise on its national security or on the safety and protection of its citizens," the FO concluded.

At least 15 police officers were martyred and three others wounded late on Saturday night after terrorists rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into Fateh Khel police post in Bannu, followed by attacks from multiple directions with heavy weaponry and drones.

Bannu Regional Police Officer (RPO) Sajjad Khan confirmed that a total of 18 police personnel were on duty at the post when it was attacked. The initial assault began when terrorists drove a vehicle filled with explosives into the post, followed by a prolonged ground attack, he said.

A senior administration official in Bannu told AFP the assaults were conducted through a series of snipers during the assault.

Recent Pak-Afghan ties has been in the tatters since the resurgence in terrorism in

Pakistan since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in Kabul in 2021.

Islamabad has repeatedly urged the Taliban administration to dismantle terrorist sanctuaries on Afghan soil, particularly those linked to the banned TTP. Officials say those appeals have gone unheeded.

Operation Ghazab lil-Haq was launched on the night of February 26, following unprovoked firing by the Afghan Taliban from across the border. From March 18 to 23, Pakistan observed a five-day temporary pause in the operation on the occasion of Eidul-Fitr, with the FO later saying it would continue "until its objectives are achieved."

De-escalation requests from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey were part of the process, according to the pauses announced by both sides, according to their respective statements. In early March, Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir had said that peace between Pakistan and Afghanistan could only prevail if the Taliban regime.

LHC accepts Maryam's plea seeking return of bail surety in Chaudhry Sugar Mills case

NEWS DESK: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday allowed an application filed by Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz seeking the return of Rs70 million deposited as surety for bail in the Chaudhry Sugar Mills case.

The case by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) pertains to alleged money laundering and income beyond means via "dubious" business transactions of the Chaudhry Sugar Mills, of which Maryam was a major shareholder.

At the outset of the hearing, a NAB deputy prosecutor submitted an affidavit to an LHC bench about the withdrawal of its plea before the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) challenging directives for the closure of the Chaudhry Sugar Mills

investigation against Maryam.

At this, Chief Justice Aalia Neelum, who headed the bench, accepted Maryam's application with instructions to the registrar's office to return the surety amount.

A NAB team had arrested Maryam in connection with the case on August 8, 2019 when she was present at the Kot Lakhpat jail on her weekly visit to her incarcerated father, Nawaz Sharif.

On Nov 4, 2019, the LHC released Maryam in the case on bail, subject to surrendering her passport to the court. She was also ordered to deposit a surety amount of Rs70m with the judicial registrar of the court.

In October 2022, the LHC directed officials to return the passport to Maryam after the NAB said it did not require the travel document anymore.

Justice Aurangzeb, along with Lahore High

Court's Justice Jawad Hassan, was presenting a keynote address at the launch event in Islamabad of "ADR ODR International x ICIDRL Peacemakers Community (AIPC)", linked to the International Centre for Dispute Resolution Lahore (ICDRL).

Justice Aurangzeb also said that the SC was in the process of establishing a "court-annexed mediation centre", with financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

He highlighted that the SC now had two accredited, trained mediators and that the law ministry was starting a programme on Monday to train more mediators.

"To encourage parties to go into mediation, what we have decided now is to train as many judges as mediators, and also officials in the high court and the Supreme Court who are law graduates, who will be willing to conduct mediation in their own pay scale," he said.

Justice Aurangzeb, along with Lahore High

Justice Aurangzeb calls for encouraging alternative dispute resolution, says SC to establish mediation centre

NEWS DESK: Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb has called on the judiciary to encourage alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and detailed the Supreme Court's ongoing efforts to establish a mediation centre.

In remarks aired on television on Monday, the SC judge stressed the need for mediators to be referred more cases, saying "For that, the courts have to be willing to refer cases to mediation and must not be reluctant in doing so, they are shying away from their primary responsibility of adjudication."

He noted that having already paid lawyers, parties were reluctant to pay a fee for mediators and, therefore, some mediation centres had a policy of pro-bono mediations.

"To encourage parties to go into mediation, what we have decided now is to train as many judges as mediators, and also officials in the high court and the Supreme Court who are law graduates, who will be willing to conduct mediation in their own pay scale," he said.

Justice Aurangzeb, along with Lahore High

Court's Justice Jawad Hassan, was presenting a keynote address at the launch event in Islamabad of "ADR ODR International x ICIDRL Peacemakers Community (AIPC)", linked to the International Centre for Dispute Resolution Lahore (ICDRL).

Justice Aurangzeb also said that the SC was in the process of establishing a "court-annexed mediation centre", with financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

He highlighted that the SC now had two accredited, trained mediators and that the law ministry was starting a programme on Monday to train more mediators.

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"By the end of this year, I hope to take the number to at least a dozen, so that parties who cannot afford to pay for the mediators are referred to the mediation centre, which will be housed in the Supreme Court [...]" for mediation to be conducted free of cost, the judge said.

He further noted, "When being responsible for choosing lawyers to be trained as mediators, I had to bear in mind that they had to represent the entire spectrum of law, ranging from banking law, service law, civil disputes, and so forth."

Justice Aurangzeb observed that there was no shortage of mediators in Pakistan, adding

that they were "experts in different fields".

"You cannot be expecting mediators to work pro bono," he said, emphasising that mediation was a "very lucrative part of the profession". However, Justice Aurangzeb also warned against the "counterproductive effect" of referring cases to mediation with mediation becoming a "time-consuming device".

He contended, "The experiment of mandatory mediation can start off with a few trials." While asserting that mediations will be more common in Pakistan, Justice Aurangzeb said, "But we are at the nascent stage. Do remember: our journey started in 2022."

Turkiye, it started in 2013 and by 2022, they had three million cases decided through a process of mediation."

He highlighted that the figure for Turkiye was now at a staggering 9m. "Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms have to be adapted to the context of this issue," he asserted.

Speaking about the SC's planned mediation centre, he recalled that the chief justice was very reluctant to give me the best space in the SC for this purpose. The mediation centre has to be nice, it has to have a nice view. People have to come there and be comfortable."

"So I have taken the nicest view overlooking Constitution Avenue," he added. The judge explained that this was inspired by his visit to Turkiye's chamber of commerce, where he was told that the mediation room with a scenic view of the Bosphorus had more successful mediations than the one with a dull view.

SC's former senior puisne judge Syed Mansoor Ali Shah has previously repeatedly called for adopting the ADR mechanism.



KPCM Afridi decries decisions made behind closed doors during visit to Bannu

NEWS DESK: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi on Monday decried decisions taken behind closed doors, saying that the provincial government would oppose those decisions that went against peace in the province and the people's interests.

He made the remarks during a visit to Bannu, after 15 police personnel were martyred and three sustained injuries after a suicide attack on the Fateh Khel police post.

According to a

statement issued by the CM House, Afridi met the families of the martyred police personnel and also offered Fa'ha.

The statement said that he also visited the hospital to inquire about the health of the injured personnel and directed officials to provide them with the best possible healthcare facilities.

The statement quoted Afridi as saying that the KP police had shown bravery and courage against terrorism. He said that the people of the province had to

stand up for their rights, otherwise the "imposed circumstances" would continue to prevail.

"We have been continuously saying that terrorists are again rearing their heads, but decisions behind closed doors have been imposed on us for the last 78 years," he lamented, adding that the imposed policies had "pushed the province into a quagmire of unrest".

"We have made immense sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. Further unrest is unacceptable," he asserted.



Budget may include income tax relief amid salary, pension freeze

NEWS DESK: The government is considering reducing the income tax burden on salaried individuals while refraining from increasing salaries and pensions in the upcoming budget, aiming to provide equitable fiscal relief to both public and private sector employees.

Informed sources told Dawn that Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has expressed a desire to lower tax rates and, if possible, raise the taxable income threshold for the salaried class in recognition of their significant contribution to revenue generation compared to retailers, wholesalers, exporters, and real estate players.

"On the other hand, the government may keep salaries and pensions unchanged at current levels, using the resulting fiscal savings to provide tax relief instead.

There is no reason to increase salaries if it pushes employees into higher taxable income brackets, leaving government employees with little to no increase in take-home pay," an official said. He added that with lower tax rates and higher taxable income

thresholds, government employees would remain net beneficiaries of the budget increase. "Government employees would not be worse off financially. That is neither the idea nor the intention," he said.

Government salaries have increased by

proposals to be discussed with the IMF mission during budget consultations beginning on May 15.

During this fiscal year, salaried class paid more than double the real estate taxes, even higher than the combined revenue from wholesalers, retailers

and exporters. In addition, the development programme may be reduced further to a skeleton allocation, although final decisions on income tax, salaries, and development spending will become clearer during discussions with the IMF.

Last year, the federal government incurred an additional burden of more than Rs170 billion due to increases in salaries and pensions, while the provincial impact was more than double. An official noted even part of this amount could significantly reduce personal income tax burden.

The salaried class reportedly paid more than Rs425bn in taxes during the first three quarters of the current fiscal year — more than double the real estate sector's contribution of about Rs200bn, and significantly higher than the combined revenue from

wholesalers, retailers, and exporters. The salaried class has not only contributed the largest share of revenue but has also faced rising household expenses due to inflation, particularly after the onset of the Middle East crisis.

However, the official clarified that salary increases for PSDP-related employees, already notified by the government last month, would remain protected. After a four-year gap, the government last month approved a 20 to 35pc increase in the minimum salaries of employees working on development projects funded by the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), effective from July 1, 2026. Their pay packages were last revised on April 1, 2022.

Unlike other government employees, PSDP project employees previously faced cuts of up to 28pc in annual increments and 14pc in maximum salaries, according to an office memorandum issued by the finance ministry. During the same period, salaries of all other government employees, including those in finance ministry, increased by more than 60pc.

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