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# QUETTA VOICE

## 14 children dead in Lahore tuition centre roof collapse: police

### NEWS DESK:

As many as 14 children lost their lives on Tuesday, while several others were injured, when the roof of a private tuition centre collapsed in Lahore's Kahna area, officials said.

Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Inam Nazer confirmed the deaths while speaking about the incident to Geo News after the completion of rescue operations.



He noted that a total of 20 people had been trapped under the debris, who were taken to the nearby Kahna Tehsil Headquarters Hospital.

The minister said 14 children were brought dead to the hospital, while two minors were discharged after treatment.

He added that the rest of the four injured at the THQ were "out of danger".

Lahore Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Operations Faisal Kamran also confirmed the deaths to Dawn. According to an earlier list of deceased provided by Lahore General Hospital, eight of the children were aged between five and 16 years.

In a statement issued at 7pm, Lahore Police said rescue efforts have concluded.

The statement added that two individuals, including the house owner, have been taken into custody as part of the initial investigation.

It quoted the DIG as saying that evidence was being collected and strict action would be taken against those found guilty of negligence.

DIG Kamran said the contractor who constructed the house recently was among those arrested. He noted that a part of the

house was under construction, and labourers were busy at work when the roof collapsed.

An earlier statement by the Rescue 1122 spokesperson said that its team on the spot reported that the condition of the trapped children was critical.

"The children are very young in age and there were two rooms in use. The ceilings collapsed and trapped the children," Rescue 1122 spokesperson Ferooz Ahmed told Dawn News.

A statement by the Edhi rescue service, which was also taking part in the rescue operation, said that the roof of a residence's room "collapsed suddenly".

It said preliminary information indicated that the collapsed roof had been constructed using TR girders.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz directed the police and district government authorities to determine the role of those individual(s) found responsible for the roof collapse, and consequently the deaths, for criminal proceedings.

Lahore District Education Authority Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Tariq Mahmood said the building

housed a private tuition centre and was run by a woman resident of the area.

The health authorities declared an emergency at the nearby Lahore General Hospital, directing the relevant senior administration officials, doctors, nurses and paramedical staff to attend to the injured children being brought there without any delay.

According to initial reports, around 30 to 35 children were present at the site when the incident occurred.



**CM Bugti: No No-Go Areas in Balochistan as He Condoles Family of Slain Tourist Ali Murtaza**

## CM Bugti: No No-Go Areas in Balochistan as He Condoles Family of Slain Tourist Ali Murtaza

### From Our Correspondent:

KARACHI: Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti on Tuesday visited the Karachi residence of slain tourist Ali Murtaza, offered condolences to the bereaved family, and reiterated that there are no no-go areas in Balochistan despite the security challenges facing the province.

Speaking to the media after meeting the victim's fam-

ily, Bugti said the treatment meted out to guests was unacceptable and stressed that the writ of the state exists across every part of Balochistan.

"There are no no-go areas in Balochistan. The state's writ is present everywhere, although our security forces continue to face serious challenges," he said.

The chief minister added that identifying militants is not always straightforward.

"No one has 'terrorist' written on their forehead. Building a negative narrative after such incidents only weakens Pakistan and its institutions."

Bugti announced that the Government of Balochistan would assume responsibility for the education, healthcare, and financial support of Ali Murtaza's children.

He said the investigation into the killing is ongoing and urged the public to avoid draw-

ing conclusions before the inquiry is completed.

According to preliminary findings, Ali Murtaza had been staying at a friend's house and reportedly lost his way before the incident. Bugti said the complete facts would emerge once investigators finalize their report.

The chief minister assured the grieving family that the government is committed to ensuring justice and bringing those responsible to account.

## ATC Confirms BNP Chief Akhtar Mengal's Bail in Quetta



### ALI HAMZA:

QUETTA: An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Quetta on Monday confirmed the bail of Balochistan National Party (BNP) President Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal after he appeared before the court in connection with a case.

A large number of senior BNP leaders, lawyers, and party work-

ers attended the hearing in support of the party chief.

Among those present were BNP Central Information Secretary Agha Hassan Baloch Advocate, Central Deputy Secretary General Malik Nasser Shahwani, Central Labour Secretary Musa Baloch, Central Human Rights Secretary Ahmed Nawaz Baloch, Central Executive Committee members Mir Maghool Lehari, Mir Rauf Mengal, and Chairman

Javed Baloch.

Also present were Baloch Students Organization (BSO) Secretary General Samad Baloch, Quetta District Organizer Haji Waheed Lehari and others were also present on the occasion.

Following the proceedings, the court confirmed Mengal's interim bail. No additional details regarding the case or the date of the next hearing were immediately made public.

## Balochistan Weather Forecast: PMD Predicts Intense Heat Across Province

### QASEEM SHAH:

Most parts of Balochistan will continue to experience hot and dry weather, with central districts facing intense heat, while Khuzdar and surrounding areas are likely to receive rain accompanied by strong winds and thunderstorms, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD).

The weather department said southern districts are ex-

pected to remain partly cloudy, although dry conditions will prevail across the majority of the province.

The latest weather data showed Nokkundi recording the highest maximum temperature at 47°C, followed by Sibi at 46°C.

Quetta and Chaman each recorded a maximum temperature of 41°C, while Turbat and Zhob registered 39°C. In the highland regions, Kalat recorded 36°C, whereas Ziarat remained compara-

tively cooler with a maximum temperature of 30°C.

Along the Makran coast, temperatures stayed relatively moderate, with Gwadar recording 32°C and Jiwan 33°C.

The PMD has advised residents, particularly in areas experiencing extreme heat, to avoid unnecessary outdoor activities during peak daytime hours, stay hydrated, and remain alert to possible thunderstorms in Khuzdar and adjoining areas.



# QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

## Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan Recognised for Driving Governance Reforms in Balochistan

By Sheikh Abdul Razaq:

QUETTA: The role of an efficient bureaucracy remains central to effective governance, particularly in provinces facing complex administrative and developmental challenges. In Balochistan, the recent recognition of Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, by the provincial cabinet and Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti during the provincial budget session has highlighted the significance of strong institutional leadership in advancing governance reforms.

Governance experts argue that while elected governments provide policy direction, successful implementation depends largely on a capable and professional civil service.

In Balochistan, where issues such as vast geography, infrastructure gaps, developmental disparities, and security concerns continue to pose challenges, an effective administrative framework is essential for sustainable progress.

Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, widely regarded as an experienced and competent civil servant, has played a pivotal role in enhancing interdepartmental coordination, strengthening



administrative efficiency, and supporting the provincial government's reform agenda.

His tenure has coincided with renewed efforts by the Balochistan government to promote institutional reforms, fiscal discipline, transparency, and performance-based governance.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti has consistently emphasized the importance of governance reforms, institutional strengthening, and improved public service delivery.

Analysts believe that translating these policy objectives into tangible outcomes requires a bureaucracy capable of aligning administrative priorities with the government's

development vision. The formulation of the provincial budget served as a key example of this collaborative governance model.

Modern budget-making extends beyond financial accounting and reflects a government's development priorities, fiscal management strategy, and long-term planning objectives.

Effective budget preparation requires strong interdepartmental coordination, data-driven decision-making, and prudent allocation of resources.

The acknowledgment extended to Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan by both the provincial cabinet and the Chief Minister on the floor of the Balochistan As-

sembly reflects a broader recognition of the critical role played by the civil service in ensuring policy implementation and institutional continuity.

Observers note that such recognition promotes a culture of merit, professionalism, and accountability within the public sector, encouraging civil servants to maintain high standards of pub-

lic service. Balochistan's unique governance landscape demands administrative foresight, continuity, and strategic leadership.

Effective oversight of development projects, monitoring mechanisms, departmental coordination, and accountability systems remains vital for achieving sustainable development goals

across the province.

Experts maintain that institutional reforms are ultimately measured by their implementation. Strong institutions are built through consistent leadership,

professionalism, and efficient governance practices. Public officials who uphold these principles contribute significantly to strengthening government institutions and enhancing administrative performance.

The recognition accorded to Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan underscores the growing importance of a professional and responsive civil service in supporting Balochistan's development agenda.

It also sends a positive message throughout the bureaucracy that dedication, competence, and commitment to public service continue to be valued.

As Balochistan advances towards improved governance and sustainable development, the partnership between political leadership and an effective administrative structure will remain essential.

The province's long-term progress will depend not only on visionary policies but also on the institutional capacity required to implement them successfully.

## Forced Marriage in Islam: A Clear Violation of Women's Rights and Human Dignity

By Musavir Durrani:

Forced marriage remains one of the most damaging cultural practices in parts of the Muslim world today. Despite being justified in the name of honor, tradition, or family unity, Islam itself strictly forbids forcing any woman, or man, into a marriage they do not want. Islamic teachings make consent the

core of marriage, while coercion makes a marriage batil (invalid).

The Qur'an Clearly Forbids Forced Marriages. Allah states in Surah An-Nisa:

"O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will."

(Qur'an 4:19) This verse was revealed to abolish the jahiliyyah practice of controlling or forcing women into marriages.

Islam replaced oppression with dignity, choice, and responsibility.

Prophetic Example: Forced Marriages Declared Invalid

A woman once came to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)



complaining that her father had married her without her permission. The Prophet (PBUH) gave her the full right to reject or accept the marriage, proving that consent is mandatory.

Hadith References: Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith 5138.

Sahih Muslim, Hadith 1419. These narrations all confirm that the Prophet (PBUH) allowed the woman to annul her forced marriage.

One narration even states that she chose to remain married but wanted to teach women that fa-

thers have no right to force their daughters. Parents Can Advise, But They Cannot Force.

Islam highly respects parents, but marriage choice is not their right. They can guide, suggest, and advise, but they have ab-

solutely no power to force their child into marrying someone. Even if parents think they "know what is best," they cannot override the choice of their daughter or son. The final decision always

belongs to the person getting married.

Statements such as: "If you don't marry this one, who will marry you?" "You have no choice." "Do it for family honor." "You must obey your parents."

These are pure emotional manipulation, and Islam does

not allow it. Emotional or Psychological Pressure is Also Haram. Forced marriage is not only when someone is physically pressured. Even emotional, mental, or family pressure

counts as force. Any Nikkah done under fear, pressure, or

threats is invalid (Batil) in Islam. This ruling is based on multiple hadith in which the Prophet (PBUH) annulled marriages done without consent.

Modern Forced Marriages, A New Way of Burying Women Alive. Before Islam, Arabs used to bury baby girls alive. Today, many scholars say: "We no longer bury women in the ground, we bury their dreams on the day of their Nikkah."

When a girl is forced into a marriage, pressured emotionally, or told she has no other choice, we destroy her life while she is still alive. This is the new form of burying women alive, and Islam came to end this injustice completely.

Forced marriage has no place in Islam. It is against the Qur'an, against the Sunnah, and against the dignity that Islam gives to every woman and man. Parents must love, support, and guide, but never control or force marriage decisions.

Allah gave women this right, and no one can take it away."

Quetta Administration to Conduct Comprehensive Agricultural Land Survey to Strengthen Agricultural Income Tax System

QUETTA: Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Hafiz Muhammad Tariq chaired an important meeting to review matters related to Agricultural Income Tax, with a focus on improving land records, crop data, and tax administration across District Quetta.

The meeting was attended by officials from the Agricultural Statistics (Crop Reporting Service) and other relevant administrative departments. During the session, participants received a detailed briefing on Quetta's agricultural land, cultivated areas, the current status of crops, and issues related to the implementation of the Agricultural Income Tax system.

Officials also highlighted the importance of maintaining accurate land records, verifying agricultural data, and ensuring the timely submission of information to improve transparency and efficiency.

Following detailed deliberations, the meeting decided that the district administration and the Agricultural Statistics (Crop Reporting Service) would jointly conduct a comprehensive survey of agricultural land throughout the district. The survey aims to prepare an authentic database of agricultural holdings, improve the effectiveness of the Agricultural Income Tax system, and ensure the accuracy of official land and crop records.



Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Hafiz Muhammad Tariq (center) chairs a meeting to review matters related to Agricultural Income Tax.

Addressing the participants, Additional Deputy Commissioner Hafiz Muhammad Tariq directed the concerned officials to complete the survey and compile all required information within the stipulated timeframe. He emphasized that the exercise should be carried out with transparency, accuracy, and close interdepartmental coordination to strengthen agricultural governance and revenue management. The initiative is expected to enhance the credibility of agricultural land records, support evidence-based policymaking, and improve the administration of agricultural taxation in District Quetta.

Quetta Agricultural Income Tax, Hafiz Muhammad Tariq, Agricultural Statistics Crop Reporting Service, Quetta Land Survey, Agriculture Tax Pakistan, District Quetta, Balochistan News.

Khaliqabad Assistant Commissioner Visits Damaged Girls' School, Orders Legal Action Against Vandals

KALAT: Acting on the special directives of Deputy Commissioner Kalat, Munir Ahmed Durani, Assistant Commissioner Khaliqabad Dr. Ali Gul Umrani visited the Government Girls Model School, destruction of educational facilities and the impact of the vandalism on the learning environment. Dr. Ali Gul Umrani conducted a thorough assessment of the situation and assured the

cordance with the law. The district administration reaffirmed its commitment to protecting educational institutions, ensuring the safety of public assets, and maintaining a secure environment for students and teachers across the district. Kalat News, Khaliqabad Assistant Commissioner.



Assistant Commissioner Khaliqabad Dr. Ali Gul Umrani (center) visits the Government Girls Model School in Khaliqabad.

Fazalabad, to inspect damage caused to the school's infrastructure by unidentified individuals. During the visit, the Assistant Commissioner held a detailed meeting with the school administration to review the extent of the damage and discuss the circumstances surrounding the incident. School officials briefed him on the

school administration that strict legal action would be taken against those responsible for damaging public property. He directed the relevant authorities to ensure the immediate registration of a First Information Report (FIR) and instructed law enforcement agencies to identify the culprits and proceed against them in accordance with the law.

Reaffirming the district administration's commitment to public welfare, Khalid Khan said that continuous monitoring of development projects will remain a top priority to ensure that public investment translates into sustainable improvements in education, healthcare projects, particularly the under-construction Civil Hospital, should be completed at the earliest in accordance with approved engineering standards.

Jaffarabad Deputy Commissioner Reviews Special Development Projects, Directs Timely Completion of Education and Health Schemes

JAFFARABAD: Deputy Commissioner Khalid Khan conducted a detailed inspection of development projects being implemented under the Balochistan Special Development Initiative (BSDI), emphasizing timely completion and strict quality control of all ongoing schemes. During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected Girls High School Azizullah Khazai, Government

healthcare projects, particularly the under-construction Civil Hospital, should be completed at the earliest in accordance with approved engineering standards. Reaffirming the district administration's commitment to public welfare, Khalid Khan said that continuous monitoring of development projects will remain a top priority to ensure that public investment translates into sustainable improvements in education, healthcare projects, particularly the under-construction Civil Hospital, should be completed at the earliest in accordance with approved engineering standards.

Deputy Commissioner Khalid Khan directed the concerned engineers to ensure that continuous monitoring of development projects will remain a top priority to ensure that public investment translates into sustainable improvements in education, healthcare projects, particularly the under-construction Civil Hospital, should be completed at the earliest in accordance with approved engineering standards.

the improve GDA's recovery and revenue collection mechanisms. Reaffirming the authority's commitment to good governance, Moeen-ur-Rehman Khan stated that sound financial management, transparency, fiscal discipline, and effective administrative strategies would enable the Gwadar Development Authority to achieve its development objectives while accelerating sustainable urban development and public welfare initiatives across Gwadar.

Gwadar Development Authority, GDA Budget 2026-27, Moeen-ur-Rehman Khan, Gwadar Financial Management, Public Sector Transparency, Revenue Generation, Fiscal Discipline, Gwadar Development Projects, Balochistan News.

Gwadar Development Authority Saves Over Rs130 Million Through Financial Reforms and Cost-Cutting Measures

GWADAR: Director General of the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA), Moeen-ur-Rehman Khan, chaired a meeting of the GDA Finance Section to review the authority's financial performance and budget planning for the upcoming fiscal year.

The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer GDA Haji Syed Muhammad, Director Finance Zakir Majeed, and Deputy Director Finance Abdul Shakoor. During the session, participants conducted a comprehensive review of the 2025-26 fiscal year's financial performance, including detailed reports on expenditures and budget estimates, and proposed budget allocations for the 2026-27 fiscal year.

Officials informed the meeting that the Gwadar Development Authority had achieved savings of more than Rs130 million during the 2025-26 fiscal year by implementing strict financial discipline, promoting transparency, enhancing monitoring mechanisms, controlling unnecessary expenditures, and adopting an effective cost-management policy.

According to the briefing, the savings were generated through prudent management of expenditures on fuel



Director General of the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA), Moeen-ur-Rehman Khan, chairs a meeting to review the authority's financial performance.

(POL), medical expenses, travel and daily allowances (TA/DA), refreshments, transportation, and utility bills, reflecting the authority's commitment to fiscal responsibility and efficient resource utilization. Addressing the meeting, Director General Moeen-ur-Rehman Khan emphasized that strengthening financial discipline, transparency, and accountability remains a top priority for the organization.

He directed officials to modernize financial management, accounting systems, and budget planning in line with contemporary professional standards to ensure the optimal use of available resources. The DG also instructed the finance team to explore all potential avenues for increasing revenue generation, develop practical proposals to strengthen the authority's financial sustainability, and fur-

ther improve GDA's recovery and revenue collection mechanisms. Reaffirming the authority's commitment to good governance, Moeen-ur-Rehman Khan stated that sound financial management, transparency, fiscal discipline, and effective administrative strategies would enable the Gwadar Development Authority to achieve its development objectives while accelerating sustainable urban development and public welfare initiatives across Gwadar.

Gwadar Development Authority, GDA Budget 2026-27, Moeen-ur-Rehman Khan, Gwadar Financial Management, Public Sector Transparency, Revenue Generation, Fiscal Discipline, Gwadar Development Projects, Balochistan News.

Chaman District Coordination Committee Reviews Security, Public Services, and Development Initiatives

CHAMAN: Deputy Commissioner Habib Ahmed Bangulzai chaired an important meeting of the District Coordination Committee (DCC) to review the overall law and order situation, public service delivery, and ongoing development initiatives across District Chaman.

The meeting was attended by the Commanding Officer 40 Frontier Force (FF) Chaman, Superintendent of Police (SP) Chaman, Commanding Officer ISI Chaman, representatives of Intelligence Wing (IW), Counter Terrorism (CT), Military Intelligence (MI 304), Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Chaman, Assistant Commissioner (AC) Chaman, Assistant Director Intelligence Bureau (IB), District Officer Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), Circle Officer Special Branch, Anti-Narcotics Officer, District IT Officer, officials from the Land Department, law enforcement agencies, and representatives of various government departments.

During the meeting, participants reviewed the overall security situation in the



Deputy Commissioner Habib Ahmed Bangulzai chairs a meeting to review the overall law and order situation, public service delivery, and ongoing development initiatives across District Chaman.

district, the repatriation of illegally residing Afghan nationals, and the performance of key government departments, including Health, Education, Roads, Water Supply, pipeline projects for tube wells, solarization initiatives, and the functioning of the police and other public sector institutions.

Heads of the concerned departments presented detailed

briefings on their performance, ongoing projects, operational challenges, and future action plans aimed at improving public service delivery throughout the district. Addressing the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Habib Ahmed Bangulzai directed all departments to strengthen interdepartmental coordination, improve the delivery of public services, and ensure the effective

implementation of government policies and development programs. The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment from all participating institutions to continue working through close coordination and a unified strategy to maintain peace and stability, enhance public welfare, and accelerate development activities across District Chaman.

Chaman District Coordination Committee, Habib Ahmed Bangulzai, Chaman Security Meeting, Law and Order Balochistan, Afghan Repatriation, Public Services Chaman, Health and Education Balochistan, Development Projects Chaman, District Administration Chaman, Balochistan News.

Quetta District Compensation Committee Reviews Relief for Victims of Security Incidents

QUETTA: An important meeting of the District Compensation Committee was held under the chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Quetta, Muhammad Anwar Kakar, to review compensation and relief measures for victims of various security-related incidents in the district.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the Social Welfare Department,

Communication and Works (C&W) Department, Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), Civil Hospital Quetta, Bolan Medical Complex (BMC), Metropolitan Corporation Quetta (MCQ), the Police Surgeon's Office, and other relevant government institutions. During the meeting, officials presented comprehensive data on the injured individuals and minors from various incidents that

occurred in Quetta. Participants also reviewed detailed assessments of damage caused to residential and commercial buildings, vehicles, and other public and private properties. The committee discussed the compensation process for affected families, including documentation requirements, verification procedures, and coordination among relevant departments to ensure the timely

disbursement of financial assistance. Emphasizing efficient interdepartmental coordination, the meeting focused on streamlining administrative procedures so that victims and their families receive prompt relief and support without unnecessary delays.

The district administration reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring a transparent and efficient compensation mechanism

while extending all possible assistance to those affected by security incidents in Quetta. Quetta District Compensation Committee, Muhammad Anwar Kakar, Quetta Security Incidents, Victim Compensation, Additional Deputy Commissioner Quetta, CTD Balochistan, Civil Hospital Quetta, Bolan Medical Complex, Relief for Victims, Balochistan News.

Election Commission Announces By-Election Schedule for Bela Municipal Committee Ward in Lasbela

UTHAL: The Election Commission of Balochistan has officially announced the schedule for the by-election on the General Seat of Ward No. 08 (Mera Pir-II) in the Municipal Committee Bela, District Lasbela. According to a public notice issued by Assistant Commissioner/Returning Officer Uthal, Atiab Ahmed, candidates may submit their nomination papers from July 1 to July 3, 2026. The scrutiny of nomination papers will be conducted from July 6 to July 8, 2026, while candidates will

be allowed to withdraw their nomination papers until July 18, 2026. As per the election schedule, polling will be held on August 9, 2026, to elect the representative for the vacant general seat in Ward No. 08 of Municipal Committee Bela. The public notice further states that nomination papers will be received at the Assistant Commissioner's Office, Main RCD Road, Uthal, during official working hours from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The Election Commission has urged all prospective candidates to comply with the prescribed election rules and submit their nomination documents within the stipulated timeframe to ensure the smooth conduct of the electoral process. Election Commission Balochistan, Bela Municipal Committee, Lasbela By-Election, August 2026, Assistant Commissioner Uthal, Balochistan Elections.

Commission has urged all prospective candidates to comply with the prescribed election rules and submit their nomination documents within the stipulated timeframe to ensure the smooth conduct of the electoral process. Election Commission Balochistan, Bela Municipal Committee, Lasbela By-Election, August 2026, Assistant Commissioner Uthal, Balochistan Elections.

## Biwal calls for Int'l convention against 'weaponisation of waterways', says it threatens global peace

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday called for a new international convention against the "weaponisation of waterways", arguing that India's decision to place the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in abeyance was not simply a bilateral dispute but a challenge to international law, global peace and the rights of downstream states.

Addressing the session of the international seminar, "The Indus Waters Treaty: A Key Instrument for Peace and Regional Stability," at the Jinnah Convention Centre in Islamabad, Bilawal urged Pakistan to pursue its legal, diplomatic, humanitarian, climate and deterrence cases simultaneously, while warning that attempts to manipulate shared rivers should be treated as a form of coercion rather than a technical disagreement. Bilawal broadened the discussion beyond South Asia, arguing that water coercion and unilateralism are recognised internationally as a distinct form of aggression. He proposed what he described as "a new international convention against the weaponisation of waterways", saying international law should explicitly prohibit states from exploiting civilian dependence on shared rivers.



The convention, he said, should establish that no upstream state could hold downstream populations hostage, that waterways could not be used as instruments of coercion or blackmail, and that "water is not a weapon," "thirst is not diplomacy", and "famine is not statecraft".

He argued that the principle should apply globally, citing waterways including the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal, the Panama Canal, the Nile, the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Ganges, and the Indus, arguing that waterways sustaining civilisation and international stability cannot be turned into weapons of coercion. Bilawal also urged Pakistan to continue making its case internationally. "We must take

the climate case to every summit. We must take the diplomatic case to every capital," he said, adding that Pakistan should also present "the deterrence case to every strategist who thinks South Asia can survive casual experiments with the Indus".

A river can be made into a weapon. Bilawal compared the strategic significance of the Indus River to the Strait of Hormuz, arguing that regional peace depended on preserving both. "And no peace can be achieved between the United States and Iran with the Strait of Hormuz shut," he said. "Similarly, how can any ceasefire between India and Pakistan hold to endure without the IWT being restored?"

"We are strengthening Pakistan because we have a duty to survive," Bilawal said. "He also argued that the dispute formed part

of a wider campaign against the East, alongside border tensions, proxy violence, propaganda, economic pressure and hybrid warfare. "A bullet is not the only weapon. A blockade is a weapon. A sanction can be a weapon. A lie can be a weapon. A proxy can be a weapon."

A river can be made into a weapon. Bilawal compared the strategic significance of the Indus River to the Strait of Hormuz, arguing that regional peace depended on preserving both. "And no peace can be achieved between the United States and Iran with the Strait of Hormuz shut," he said. "Similarly, how can any ceasefire between India and Pakistan hold to endure without the IWT being restored?"

## Case registered against 14 prisoners who escaped from prison van bound for Rawalpindi's Adiala jail

**NEWS DESK:** A first information report (FIR) was registered on Tuesday against the 14 prisoners who escaped from a police van a day earlier while being transported to Rawalpindi's Adiala jail, with the police officers emerging that the fugitives threw red chilli powder at the police officials escorting them to facilitate their escape.

Along with the 14 accused, the FIR, a copy of which is available with Dawn, also nominated five police officials who were present at the site of the incident, which occurred within the jurisdiction of the Sihala police station in Islamabad, for neglecting their respective duties, enabling the prisoners to escape.

The complaint was registered under the following provisions of law: Sections 224 (resistance or obstruction by a person to their lawful apprehension), 353 (assault or criminal force to deter a public servant from discharging their duty), 186 (obstructing a public servant in the discharge of public functions), 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of a common intention) and 120B (punishment for criminal conspiracy) of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).



The police officials were charged under Section 223 (escape from confinement or custody negligently suffered by a public servant) of the PPC and Sections 155-C (guilty of any wilful breach or neglect of any provision of law) and 155-D (guilty of any violation of duty) of the Police Ordinance, 2002.

According to the FIR, the police driver and complainant, Imtiaz Ahmed, stated that the incident occurred when the police van reached the Chakian station at around 4:45 pm on Monday and the prisoners started fighting inside the vehicle and shouting. "To resolve the commotion, we started verbally telling them to stop, but they refused to listen. So I, with the

help of Constable Tahir Mehmood, unlocked the van and entered it, however, the prisoners threw red chilli powder into our eyes and escaped from the van," the driver stated.

He added that the police officials, "with great difficulty", pulled out their weapons and attempted to chase the escapees. Last year, over two hundred inmates managed to escape from District Prison Malir in Karachi. In the wake of the jailbreak, dubbed as "one of the largest-ever in Pakistan" by provincial Law Minister Ziaul Hasan Janjira, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah removed the provincial prisons chief and suspended the deputy inspector general of prisons, as well as the superintendent of the penitentiary.

Earlier this month, two police officials and two other persons were booked by the police after an under-trial prisoner escaped from Benazir Bhutto Hospital (BBH) in Rawalpindi.

Last year, over two hundred inmates managed to escape from District Prison Malir in Karachi. In the wake of the jailbreak, dubbed as "one of the largest-ever in Pakistan" by provincial Law Minister Ziaul Hasan Janjira, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah removed the provincial prisons chief and suspended the deputy inspector general of prisons, as well as the superintendent of the penitentiary.

## Life begins returning to normal in Azad Jammu and Kashmir's (AJK)

**NEWS DESK:** Life began returning to normal in Azad Jammu and Kashmir's (AJK) capital on Monday after traders and transporters ended their weeks-long shutdown, with commercial activity resuming in many parts of the city and public transport returning to the roads.

The reopening followed a joint decision by the central traders' body and transporters' representatives after the prolonged largely paralysed since June 9 due to a strike called by the pro-seceded Joint Action Committee (JAAC).

Although traders estimated that between 50 and 70 per cent

businesses had resumed operation across Muzaffarabad, said the restoration of commercial activity remains far from complete because of the continued suspension of internet services, several traders banking, limited banking operations and the shortage of fuel.

The city's major roads, deserted for weeks, witnessed the return of regular traffic, while passenger transport services resumed on local and inter-district routes. In the downtown commercial district, however, business activity remained patchy. In Madina Market, unstitched clothing, cosmetics and electronics, only about 30 per cent of shops had reopened.

The prolonged suspension of internet services has rendered digital banking largely inoperative, forcing many businesses that depend on electronic transactions to either scale down or suspend their operations.

By contrast, major dealers-dealing in essential commodities, as well as pharmacies, laboratories and clinics—along with CMMH Road, were operating almost normally. Several traders complained that the administration had sealed some shops for failing to reopen without taking into account the practical difficulties facing business owners.

The prolonged suspension of internet services has rendered digital banking largely inoperative, forcing many businesses that depend on electronic transactions to either scale down or suspend their operations.

## Indus commissioner says he wrote to Indian counterpart 4 times over Chenab fluctuations, but no reply so far

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan Commissioner for Indus Waters

Syed Muhammad Mehar Ali Shah said on Tuesday that he had written to his Indian counterpart regarding fluctuations in the flow of the Chenab River four times since last April — when New Delhi unilaterally decided to hold the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance — but there had been no response thus far.

Speaking at a seminar held in Islamabad to highlight the legal and constitutional framework of the IWT, he said he last wrote to his Indian counterpart last night over "significant fluctuations" in the flow of the River Chenab.

The IWT allocates the eastern rivers Ravi, Beas and Sutlej — to India, while the western rivers Indus, Jhelum and Chenab — are largely allocated to Pakistan.

The 1960 water-sharing agreement has also established mechanisms for data-sharing and dispute resolution.

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"I will state this carefully and without overclaiming caution. These events require explanation and we have been asking India to create a risk channel, but there is no response from the Indian side, and no response creates a risk," he said.

He said that no "responsible" downstream commissioner would look at the fluctuation as "routine and move on". "These are the events that constitute a breach of the privileges of the House and its member," Abbas asserted.

He further said that Pakistan, in the past year, had tried to keep the channel of communication and data-sharing under the IWT active despite India hold-

## Case registered against 14 prisoners who escaped from prison van bound for Rawalpindi's Adiala jail

**NEWS DESK:** A first information report (FIR) was registered on Tuesday against the 14 prisoners who escaped from a police van a day earlier while being transported to Rawalpindi's Adiala jail, with the police officials emerging that the fugitives threw red chilli powder at the police officials escorting them to facilitate their escape.

Along with the 14 accused, the FIR, a copy of which is available with Dawn, also nominated five police officials who were present at the site of the incident, which occurred within the jurisdiction of the Sihala police station in Islamabad, for neglecting their respective duties, enabling the prisoners to escape.

The complaint was registered under the following provisions of law: Sections 224 (resistance or obstruction by a person to their lawful apprehension), 353 (assault or criminal force to deter a public servant from discharging their duty), 186 (obstructing a public servant in the discharge of public functions), 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of a common intention) and 120B (punishment for criminal conspiracy) of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

According to the FIR, the police driver and complainant, Imtiaz Ahmed, stated that the incident occurred when the police van reached the Chakian station at around 4:45 pm on Monday and the prisoners started fighting inside the vehicle and shouting. "To resolve the commotion, we started verbally telling them to stop, but they refused to listen. So I, with the

help of Constable Tahir Mehmood, unlocked the van and entered it, however, the prisoners threw red chilli powder into our eyes and escaped from the van," the driver stated. He added that the police officials, "with great difficulty", pulled out their weapons and attempted to chase the escapees. Last year, over two hundred inmates managed to escape from District Prison Malir in Karachi. In the wake of the jailbreak, dubbed as "one of the largest-ever in Pakistan" by provincial Law Minister Ziaul Hasan Janjira, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah removed the provincial prisons chief and suspended the deputy inspector general of prisons, as well as the superintendent of the penitentiary.

Earlier this month, two police officials and two other persons were booked by the police after an under-trial prisoner escaped from Benazir Bhutto Hospital (BBH) in Rawalpindi. Last year, over two hundred inmates managed to escape from District Prison Malir in Karachi. In the wake of the jailbreak, dubbed as "one of the largest-ever in Pakistan" by provincial Law Minister Ziaul Hasan Janjira, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah removed the provincial prisons chief and suspended the deputy inspector general of prisons, as well as the superintendent of the penitentiary.

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## Senate opposition leader files privilege motion against Bhara Kahu SHO over 'discourteous' conduct

**NEWS DESK:** Senate Opposition Leader Alama Raja Nasir Abbas on Tuesday filed a privilege motion in the upper house of Parliament against the sitting house officer (SHO) of Islamabad's Bhara Kahu police station over his "rude and discourteous" conduct.

The privilege motion comes after a delegation of opposition leaders, including Abbas, was stopped by Islamabad police from travelling to Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Monday. The delegation, led by National Assembly Opposition Leader Mehmood Khan Achakzai and including former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and former senator Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar, had planned to express solidarity with protesters participating in a sit-in in Rawalakot.

Khokhar had alleged that Raja Nasir Abbas was also stopped from reaching his residence in Bhara Kahu and was forced to continue on foot after authorities prevented his vehicle from proceeding.

In the privilege motion, a copy of which is available with Dawn, Abbas said that Sub-inspector (SI) Naameel Hassan, the Bhara Kahu SHO, stopped him from travelling to his residence at a checkpoint.

He said that the officials, accompanied by a large number of police personnel, "approached my vehicle and, in a rude and discourteous manner, directed that I could not proceed further". He said that he introduced himself and his purpose for moving onward, adding that his residence was located approximately 2km away

from the checkpoint. "Despite this, the SHO neither paid heed to my explanation nor extended the courtesy due to a member of Parliament. Instead, he continued to behave in an insulting and disrespectful manner," he said.

"The conduct of SI Naameel Hassan and the accompanying police personnel amounts to an obstruction in the discharge of my duties and creates a risk," he said. "I will state this carefully and without overclaiming caution. These events require explanation and we have been asking India to create a risk channel, but there is no response from the Indian side, and no response creates a risk," he said.

He further said that Pakistan, in the past year, had tried to keep the channel of communication and data-sharing under the IWT active despite India hold-

## Indus commissioner says he wrote to Indian counterpart 4 times over Chenab fluctuations, but no reply so far

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan Commissioner for Indus Waters

Syed Muhammad Mehar Ali Shah said on Tuesday that he had written to his Indian counterpart regarding fluctuations in the flow of the Chenab River four times since last April — when New Delhi unilaterally decided to hold the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance — but there had been no response thus far.

Speaking at a seminar held in Islamabad to highlight the legal and constitutional framework of the IWT, he said he last wrote to his Indian counterpart last night over "significant fluctuations" in the flow of the River Chenab.

The IWT allocates the eastern rivers Ravi, Beas and Sutlej — to India, while the western rivers Indus, Jhelum and Chenab — are largely allocated to Pakistan.

The 1960 water-sharing agreement has also established mechanisms for data-sharing and dispute resolution. The Indus Waters commissioner said the fluctuation in the Chenab was not a "technical inconvenience, but rather a strategic hazard". "There is no trainer in understanding that data-sharing is the line between natural risk and man-made risk," he said, adding that India should answer for the fluctuations in the Chenab flows. "I will state this carefully and without overclaiming caution. These events require explanation and we have been asking India to create a risk channel, but there is no response from the Indian side, and no response creates a risk," he said.

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He further said that Pakistan, in the past year, had tried to keep the channel of communication and data-sharing under the IWT active despite India hold-

ing the treaty in abeyance. "Pakistan continued to provide the requested data, so far as respondents, requested meetings, inspections, project information and the flow of the Chenab fluctuations," he said; however, he added that Pakistan received no response from the Indian side. He said that the Indian side followed a similar pattern before the 2025 abeyance, recalling

the last commission meeting was held in May 2022. "No general or special tour inspection, corresponding monthly data has remained outstanding after August 2022," he said.

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