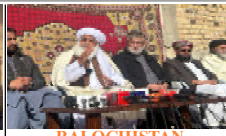




FRONT PAGE
CM Balochistan Expands Women Entrepreneurship...



OPINION
A Billion Dollar, Million Jobs Opportunity : Why Pakistan Must...



BALUCHISTAN
Balochistan: JUI Chief Abdul Wasay Slams PML-N, Stands...



NATIONAL
Security of Chinese in Pakistan 'paramount for us', says PM Shehbaz

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QUETTA VOICE

Govt to fix fuel prices daily due to renewed hostilities in Persian Gulf: petroleum minister

NEWS DESK:

Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik on Friday said that fuel prices would now be fixed on a daily basis due to fluctuations in international market prices following renewed hostilities between Iran and the US.

The government has been announcing weekly revisions to fuel prices since early March, alongside measures for the conservation of fuel and possible oil supply disruptions due to the on-

ket. He added that Ogra would "not just publish the fuel rates on its website that are used to determine prices, but also publish the factors leading to the price that we see in each petrol pump". Malik stated that although the decision would surely add a burden on citizens, they would see how it was necessary for the state.

He said that the decision was part of the government's decision to make the system more transparent, so that people could un-



going conflict in the Middle East. The federal government in April also announced targeted relief measures to provide subsidised fuel.

Addressing a press conference alongside Information Minister Attaullah Tarar, Malik thanked the nation on behalf of the government, who he said have "patiently tried to bear the burden of this war".

He noted that despite the efforts of Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the US-Iran war seemed to be escalating in the region.

The petroleum minister stated that the Cabinet and prime minister had decided to give the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra)

the responsibility to decide the fuel prices on a daily basis, based on the international mar-

ket. He added that Ogra would "not just publish the fuel rates on its website that are used to determine prices, but also publish the factors leading to the price that we see in each petrol pump".

Malik stated that although the decision would surely add a burden on citizens, they would see how it was necessary for the state. He said that the decision was part of the government's decision to make the system more transparent, so that people could un-

derstand why increasing fuel prices were inevitable. He also noted that there had been "a lot of discussion" about the imposition of petroleum and climate levies by the government, and the prime minister's promise that any price reductions would directly benefit the nation.

"The government is still determined to deliver on its promise," he said. He said that the price of diesel dropped from Rs520 to the range of Rs300 today, and similarly a huge price reduction of Rs70-80 was seen for petrol when it happened in the international markets.

He also noted that the petrol levy and the carbon support levy on petrol and diesel were still low today.

The minister said that the government was working on transparency and reducing the burden of indirect taxation.



Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti chairing an important session, photo DGPR.

CM Balochistan Expands Women Entrepreneurship Program After 500 Women Complete Training

News Desk:

Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has announced that the provincial government will expand the Balochistan Women Entrepreneurship Development Program following the successful completion of its first phase by 500 women, reaffirming his administration's commitment to strengthening women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship.

Congratulating the graduates in a message posted on X, the chief minister described the initiative as a landmark step to-

ward improving women's participation in the provincial economy. He said empowering women through entrepreneurship, digital skills, and self-employment opportunities remains one of the government's highest priorities.

Bugti said the first phase of the program equipped women from various districts of Balochistan with practical training in entrepreneurship, business planning, marketing, and the use of digital technologies. He noted that these skills would enable participants to establish their own businesses, become financially independent, and contribute to economic growth in both the

province and the country.

The chief minister said the government has full confidence in the talent and potential of Balochistan's women and will continue creating an enabling environment for their professional and business development. He added that similar initiatives would be expanded to reach more women across the province, creating greater opportunities for skills development, entrepreneurship, and sustainable employment.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti also appreciated Adviser to the Women Development Department Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, the Women

Development Department, and all partner institutions and teams for successfully implementing the program. He said their efforts would play an important role in promoting women's economic independence, encouraging entrepreneurship, and supporting long-term prosperity in Balochistan.

The Balochistan Women Entrepreneurship Development Program is aimed at enhancing women's business capabilities through modern training, helping them access self-employment opportunities and participate more actively in the province's economic development.

Families of crew aboard crashed K2 Airways cargo plane push for international help to find black boxes

NEWS DESK:

Relatives of the five crew members aboard a Boeing 737 cargo plane that crashed into the Arabian Sea off Karachi last week are urging an international search effort to find the flight recorders to determine the cause.

Debris from the K2 Airways freighter was recovered shortly after the July 7 crash, but the water in the area is about 3,000 metres deep.

Finding the "black boxes" would require a costly underwater search likely to need foreign assistance, according to aviation experts familiar with deepwater crashes such as Air France 447 in 2009.

The locator beacons on the 27-year-old plane were designed to transmit pings for only 30 days.

Recovering the recorders could show whether a navigation system issue reported shortly before the crash was linked to a navigation component that relatives say was replaced before the flight.

The Pakistan Airports Authority has not provided an update on the search operation for a week, and an industrial company with underwater search expertise told Reuters it had not heard of any requests by Pakistan for assistance from foreign companies or navies.

"The search has to continue, and whatever resources can be deployed, locally and internationally, should be deployed," Yashib



Rizwan, the eldest son of Captain Rizwan Idris, told Reuters.

"For us, a transparent investigation is key," he said.

Engineer Muhammad Arif Siddiqui's son, Abdul Rafay Siddiqui, also called for international assistance if needed.

Both families have held funeral prayers after losing hope that the bodies would be recovered.

The government has not responded to questions about whether it will seek foreign assistance to search for the plane.

K2, which lost its only plane in the crash, has not responded to requests for comment.

Navigational system issue The pilots reported a navigational system issue at 9:18 pm while flying to Karachi from Sharjah in the United Arab Emir-

ates, the PAA said last week.

Local air traffic control tried to guide it, but three minutes later, radar systems showed the plane descending rapidly and communication was lost, it said.

Flight radar 24 data showed the plane plunged about 5,000 feet in less than a minute, climbed about 6,000 feet in 30 seconds and then entered a catastrophic dive from 36,550 feet.

The plane spent about 10 days in Sharjah before the flight but the pilots awaited a replacement part from the US after a maintenance fault, said Ghulam Nabi, the father-in-law of co-pilot Faisal Jatoi.

One of the plane's two inertial reference units (IRUs), which feed information on the aircraft's position, speed and orientation to the cockpit displays, was re-

placed in Sharjah, the captain's son Yashib Rizwan said.

"If you have a problem with your IRU, you just can't rely upon the instruments," said John Goglia, a former US National Transportation Safety Board member, adding that pilots flying at night over the ocean without visual references could struggle to determine the aircraft's orientation.

Aircraft accidents are usually caused by multiple factors, and it remains unclear whether the replacement of the IRU is related to the crash.

An inertial reference system malfunction contributed to the 2007 Adam Air crash in Indonesia, where investigators found the pilots became fixated on troubleshooting erroneous information, failed to notice a steep right bank and lost control before the aircraft plunged into the sea, killing all 102 people aboard.

Pings from the Adam Air black boxes were detected about three weeks after the crash in a search aided by the US Navy, but recovering the recorders from about 2,000m of water took a months-long multimillion-dollar effort using a specialised remotely operated vehicle.

US aviation expert Todd Curtis said on the "Flight Safety Detectives" podcast that Pakistan was unlikely to mount a similar recovery operation unless there was a compelling reason given the K2 plane was an ageing cargo jet rather than a current-production passenger model.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

A Billion Dollar, Million Jobs Opportunity : Why Pakistan Must Recognize NGOs as an Economic Industry

By Gul Hassan Durrani:

Pakistan today faces a convergence of serious challenges: rising unemployment, fiscal pressure, climate vulnerability, and widening social inequalities.

While the state continues to pursue foreign investment in traditional sectors such as energy, mining, and infrastructure, a powerful and already existing engine of inclusive growth remains largely overlooked—the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and social development sector.

Globally, NGOs are no longer perceived merely as charitable entities.

In advanced economies and developing countries alike, they function as professional service providers, innovation hubs, and major employers in education, healthcare, humanitarian response, climate adaptation, and social protection.

If properly recognized and regulated, Pakistan's NGO sector alone has the potential to attract over one billion dollars annually in foreign funding and generate more than one million jobs nationwide, with transformative implications for underserved regions such as Balochistan.

In Pakistan, NGOs play a critical role in complementing government services, particularly in remote and marginalized areas where state capacity is limited.

They operate schools, health facilities, vocational training centers, disaster response systems, and climate resilience programs.

Through social mobilization, community



engagement, and awareness raising, NGOs are major employers. They provide direct jobs to teachers, doctors, nurses, field mobilizers, researchers, data analysts, engineers, and climate specialists, while indirectly supporting local suppliers, trainers, and entrepreneurs. In low-employment provinces such as Balochistan, this job creation potential is especially critical.

These functions are not peripheral; they are central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

According to estimates from the United Nations and development partners, Pakistan receives more than USD 1 billion annually in foreign NGO assistance, making the sector a significant contributor to the national economy. Beyond funding in-

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supported. This structure limits its long-term planning, professionalization, and employment growth.

To unlock the sector's full potential, Pakistan must adopt a reform-oriented, industry-based approach. First, the government should establish a One-Window Digital NGO Authority, such as a National NGO Regulatory Authority (NNRA), with online registration, reporting, and renewal systems.

Time-bound approvals, automatic renewals for compliant organizations, harmonized laws, and risk-based oversight would reduce bureaucratic friction while strengthening transparency and accountability. Second, financial sustainability must be addressed.

The government should expand tax incentives for individual and corporate donations, mandate CSR spending for large corporations, and establish federal and provincial NGO endowment funds.

NGOs should be allowed to adopt social enterprise models, generating a portion of their income through training institutes, micro-services in health and education, and impact products.

Law-abiding NGOs are often treated with suspicion rather than as development partners. Financial sustainability is another major constraint. Most Pakistani NGOs remain heavily dependent on short-term foreign funding, leaving them vulnerable to policy shifts and donor fatigue.

Local philanthropy mechanisms remain underdeveloped, corporate social responsibility spending is inconsistent, and NGO endowment models are rarely

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Benazir Bhutto: A Legacy of Courage, Democracy and Reform

Bashir Niechari:

In the story of nations, some figures transcend their personal identity and come to represent an entire era. Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto stands among those rare names—a leader whose memory brings pride, inspiration, and an enduring sense of loss.

From a young age, she confronted the realities of power, exile, imprisonment, and sacrifice, embracing politics not as privilege, but as duty.

The execution of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto placed an extraordinary burden of leadership on her shoulders while she was still very young. Instead of retreating, Benazir chose defiance over fear and perseverance over silence. Neither prison walls nor exile broke her determination.

Her influence extended far beyond Pakistan's borders. On the world stage, Benazir Bhutto earned respect as a defender of democratic values and human rights.

Honors from international institutions, recognition from global leaders, and her celebrated appearance at the Oxford Union all reinforced her reputation as a visionary voice for the developing world.



These acknowledgments reflected both her intellect and her unwavering political struggle.

When she took oath as Pakistan's first woman prime minister in 1988, it was more than just a change of government—it was a defining moment in history. She emerged as a symbol of

women's leadership not only in Pakistan, but across the Muslim world. Reconciliation, respect for constitutional order, and tolerance formed the essence of her political approach, rather than bitterness or revenge.

Although she assumed office twice, she was denied the opportunity to complete her terms. Even then, Benazir Bhutto remained committed to democratic principles. During moments of political crisis, including the no-confidence motion, she refused to

undermine parliament or weaken democratic institutions. She believed that true authority must rest with the people, not be concentrated in the state. For her, democracy could not exist alongside poverty, in-

justice, and deprivation. Guided by this vision, she introduced policies aimed at empowering women, workers, and disadvantaged communities. Initiatives such as women police stations, the Women's Bank, the Lady

Health Workers Programme, and social-economic reforms addressed longstanding inequities and opened new opportunities.

The global media regarded her as a poised and courageous leader who spoke the language of democracy, rights, and dialogue.

Through her, the world witnessed a Pakistan striving toward constitutional order and political inclusion.

Her final speech at Liaquat Bagh in Rawalpindi still resonates—a message of hope, defiance, and commitment to constitutional struggle.

Her assassination was a devastating blow to the nation, but the ideals she championed continue to shape Pakistan's democratic conversation.

Though Benazir Bhutto is no longer physically present, her legacy—anchored in constitutional supremacy, tolerance, and trust in the people—remains a guiding force for Pakistan's political journey today.

The writer is a PPP worker and can be reached out @BashirNiechari1

Balochistan: JUI Chief Abdul Wasay Slams PML-N, Stands with Pakistan Army

NEWS DESK: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) Balochistan Chief Senator Maulana Abdul Wasay declared that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has repeatedly incited the public against state institutions.

While JUI has always defended and strengthened them. He reminded that during India's attack on Pakistan, JUI was the first to announce full support for the armed forces, and later the first to express gratitude when the Pakistan Army inflicted a humiliating defeat on India.

Abdul Wasay warned that unless institutions silence PML-N leaders, they will continue to provoke the people against national institutions.

He added that those branding Mayana Fazlur Rehman a traitor are themselves guilty of betraying the country.



Security forces' youth amounts to and it was the scholars who struggled to achieve it," he remarked.

The press conference, attended by JUI Lawyers' Wing leader Senator Kamran

Murtaza and other party members, also highlighted preparations for the upcoming All Pakistan Lawyers' Convention in Islamabad on Sunday.

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Governor Balochistan Meets PM Youth Program Focal Person, Discusses AJK Elections and Democratic Participation

QUETTA: Governor of Balochistan Jaffer Khan Mandokhail met with Naeem Karim, Central Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and Focal Person for the Prime Minister's Youth Program in Balochistan, along with voters and party workers from Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) residing in Quetta.

The meeting focused on the latest political developments, preparations for the upcoming Azad Jammu and Kashmir General Elections, and the party's electoral strategy.

Discussions included the election campaigns of PML-N candidates Nasir Hussain Dar (Constituency LA-34 Jammu-I) and Naeem Khan Niazi (Constituency LA-40 Sindh & Balochistan), as well as organizational matters and campaign planning.



The delegation briefed the Governor on ongoing election activities and reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the party's candidates in the upcoming polls.

Among those present were Ashraf Javed, Shaheel Butt, Moinis Raza, General Secretary Muhammad Ashraf Dar,

Umair Butt, Nisar Dilawar, Siyaz Hussain Butt, Muhammad Siddique Butt, Yaseen Mubarak,

Muhammad Ali Butt, Mushtaq Ahmad Butt, Irfan Iqbal, Yasir Khurram, Usman, Shahid, Nomi, Adil Raza Butt, and Faiza Sikandar, along with other party members.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Jaffer Khan Mandokhail expressed his best wishes for the peaceful conduct of the AJK elections and emphasized that the strength and stability of democracy depend on active public participation.

He stated that democracy derives its true strength when every citizen exercises the right to

vote for the better future of the nation.

According to the Governor, electing honest, dedicated, and public-oriented representatives lays the foundation for sustainable development and good governance.

Mandokhail further noted that responsible public leadership ensures that development extends beyond political slogans by improving education, healthcare, road infrastructure, and employment opportunities in their constituencies.

He stressed that Pakistan's democratic progress requires transparency, accountability, and long-term planning rather than short-term reforms. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to strengthening democratic institutions and encouraging greater public participation in the electoral process.

A major focus of the meeting was the slow progress on the Barkhan-Rakhni Highway project. Project Director Zafar Ali Khoso briefed participants on the current status of the project. It was decided that construction work on the highway would resume the following day, with the Deputy Commissioner receiving daily progress reports to ensure the project is completed on time and according to quality standards.

Public Demands Highlighted Participants also raised several public

He urged all newly appointed educators to perform their duties with honesty, professionalism, and a strong sense of responsibility to strengthen the education sector and improve learning outcomes across the district.

Nasirabad education. Balochistan schools, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, Salahuddin Noorzi, teacher ap- pointed. The provincial government's commitment to improving the welfare, social protection, and empowerment of vulnerable and underprivileged communities across the district.

He added that the distribution process is continuing to support more eligible beneficiaries and promote their independence and active participation in society. Employment and Skills Development Initiatives The Director General also noted that the department distributed employment and vocational toolkits to thousands of persons with disabilities across the province.

These included sewing machines, washing machines, handcraft equipment, plumbing and electrician toolkits, mobile phone repair kits and other professional tools. He explained that these initiatives are designed to create sustainable livelihood opportunities, reduce poverty, and help young people, especially those with disabilities, become financially self-reliant through vocational skills and self-employment.

Drug Rehabilitation Programs Discussing re- habilitation efforts,

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Over 100,000 Afghan Refugees Receive Free Medical Treatment in Chaman Camp Over 14 Months

Our Correspondent: More than 100,000 Afghan refugees have received free medical treatment and health check-ups at the Afghan refugee camp in Chaman during the past 14 months, according to the Pakistan Red Crescent.

The organization said the camp continues to provide a wide range

Deputy Commissioner Chaman Habib Ahmed Bangulzai said the district administration is making every possible effort to ensure Afghan refugees have access to healthcare and humanitarian assistance on medical and humanitarian grounds.

He said the Chaman district administration is

rupted medical services and relief efforts at the refugee camp.

Bangulzai said the joint initiative is aimed at ensuring that every refugee requiring medical attention receives timely treatment and essential humanitarian support, while strengthening healthcare services at the camp.



of humanitarian services, including free medical consultations, medicines, ambulance services, wheelchairs, and mobile phone charging facilities to support refugees during their stay.

working in close coordination with the Government of Balochistan, the District Health Department, the District Chaman, the Pakistan Red Crescent, and other relevant organizations to maintain uninter-

The Pakistan Red Crescent said its medical teams have continued providing free healthcare services throughout the past 14 months, highlighting the sustained humanitarian response for Afghan refugees in Chaman.

Barkhan Administration, Political Leaders Agree to Resume Barkhan-Rakhni Highway Construction

BARKHAN: Deputy Commissioner Saeed Ur Rehman Kakar chaired an important meeting with leaders of all political parties and prominent community representatives to review key public issues, the progress of development projects, and the provision of essential public services across the district.

A major focus of the meeting was the slow progress on the Barkhan-Rakhni Highway project. Project Director Zafar Ali Khoso briefed participants on the current status of the project. It was decided that construction work on the highway would resume the following day, with the Deputy Commissioner receiving daily progress reports to ensure the project is completed on time and according to quality standards.

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Drug Rehabilitation Programs Discussing re- habilitation efforts,

project to ensure accountability and proper utilization of public resources.

Call for Transparency in Education Budget The meeting also discussed the Education Department's current budget. Participants called for transparent distribution of budgets among primary and middle schools. Investigations into alleged financial irregularities. Public display of budget allocations at every school to improve transparency and public awareness. Commitment to Better Governance Representing the All Parties Alliance were

Siddique Khetran, Haji Tan Khan Khetran, Engineer Jamal Khan Khetran, Taj Muhammad Qasmani, Maulvi Abdul Razzaq Behdiani, and Wadera Nek Muhammad Badani. Community representatives included Wadera Ghulam Sarwar Khan Khetran and Muhammad Hanif Khetran.

The meeting stressed the need for a transparent investigation into alleged irregularities related to the implementation of the

Review of Flood Housing Project Participants reviewed the progress of the World Bank-supported one-room housing project for families affected by the 2022 floods.

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Balochistan Government Expands Social Welfare Programs to Empower Vulnerable Communities: DG Social Welfare

QUETTA: Director General of Social Welfare Balochistan Saifullah Khan Khetran has reaffirmed the provincial government's commitment to improving the welfare, social protection, and empowerment of vulnerable and underprivileged communities across the district.

He added that the distribution process is continuing to support more eligible beneficiaries and promote their independence and active participation in society. Employment and Skills Development Initiatives The Director General also noted that the department distributed employment and vocational toolkits to thousands of persons with disabilities across the province.

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Khetran said the department has played an important role in supporting drug rehabilitation programs across the province.

Through rehabilitation centers, numerous individuals have received medical treatment, psychological counseling, and social reintegration services, contributing to significant progress in reducing drug addiction in Quetta and promoting a healthier and safer society.

The government is working to further strengthen rehabilitation centers and expand their capacity so that more people struggling with addiction can benefit from these services. Commitment to Inclusive Social Protection The Director General affirmed that the Social Welfare Department will continue expanding its welfare programs in line with the policies of the Government of Balochistan.

Future initiatives will focus on providing greater access to social protection, vocational training, employment opportunities, and welfare services for persons with disabilities, low-income families, and other marginalized communities.

Balochistan Activates Closed Schools in Nasirabad, Appoints 11 New Teachers Under Phase III

NASIRABAD: In line with the vision of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and the directives of Chief Secretary Shaheel Qadir Khan, practical measures to eliminate illiteracy and promote education in Nasirabad district continue under the leadership of Nasirabad Division Commissioner Salahuddin Noorzi.

As part of Phase III of the government's initiative to reactivate closed schools, appointment orders were distributed to 11 newly recruited male and female teachers in Nasirabad district.

The ceremony was attended by Deputy Commissioner Nasirabad Virender Lal, SSP Asad Nasir, Divisional Director Schools



Abdul Was Kakhar, and District Education Officer Nasirabad Hafeezullah Khosa, who also participated in handing over the appointment letters to the successful candidates.

Addressing the newly appointed teachers, Commissioner

Salahuddin Noorzi said they carry a significant responsibility to help eradicate illiteracy in Nasirabad through quality education and efficient student development. He emphasized that teachers play a vital role in preparing young people to become re-

sponsible citizens who will contribute to the progress and reputation of both Balochistan and Pakistan. The commissioner further stated that the divisional administration will ensure effective monitoring of the newly appointed teachers to maintain high edu-

Shaheed Usman Ashiq Library Inaugurated in Khuzdar, Offering Modern Learning Facilities for Students

KHUZDAR: A major step toward promoting education and literacy development was taken in Khuzdar with the inauguration of the Shaheed Usman Ashiq Library, a state-of-the-art public library established at the DPC premises along the National Highway.

The library was formally inaugurated by Commissioner Kalat Division Dr. Tufail Baloch, accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Khuzdar Abdul Razzaq Sasoli, SSP Khuzdar Dosteen Dashti, and other senior district officials.

The ceremony was attended by government officers, educationists, professors, and prominent members of civil society.

Abandoned Building Transformed into a Modern Knowledge Hub One of the project's

most remarkable achievements is the transformation of a building that had remained abandoned into a functional, modern library. Under the vision of Commissioner Dr. Tufail Baloch and the efforts of the district administration, the neglected structure has been restored into a vibrant center for education and research.

The library has also been equipped with a solar power system by Bolan Mining Enterprises (BME) Khuzdar, offering a winterproof services despite electricity shortages and load-shedding.

Advanced Facilities for Students and Researchers The Shaheed Usman Ashiq Library offers a wide range of modern facilities, including: Separate reading

halls for men and women A dedicated research room A conference hall A digital learning section High-speed internet access Modern computer systems Online research databases Books for CSS, PMS, NTS, and other competitive examinations A quiet and well-equipped study environment These facilities are expected to provide students in Khuzdar with educational resources that were previously available only in major cities.

Officials Highlight Importance of Knowledge Addressing the inauguration ceremony, Commissioner Kalat Division Dr. Tufail Baloch described the project as the beginning of an educational transformation in Khuzdar.

This library is not merely a building; it marks the beginning of

an intellectual revolution for Khuzdar.

Access to knowledge is the foundation of progress, and this facility will provide young people with opportunities to learn and compete at national and international levels.

Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razzaq Sasoli emphasized that providing quality educational facilities for youth remains a top priority of the district administration. He remarked that the library represents one of the most advanced public learning facilities in the region.

Community Welcomes Landmark Initiative Teachers, professors, students, and local residents praised the initiative, describing the library as a much-needed educational resource for talented students who previously lacked access

Security of Chinese in Pakistan 'paramount for us', says PM Shehbaz

NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif asserted on Friday that the security of Chinese in Pakistan is "paramount for us".

"I would like to say with fullest force at my command that the security of Chinese brothers and sisters in Pakistan is paramount for us, it is most important. And we will leave no stone unturned to provide them with the best possible security," he said while addressing the Pakistan-China Pharmaceutical and Healthcare B2B Investment Conference in Islamabad.

The conference also saw the signing of multiple agreements between Pakistan and Chinese companies in the areas of healthcare, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, with PM Shehbaz saying that the deals were cumulatively valued at almost \$440 million.

PM Shehbaz's assurance came two days after State Minister for Interior Talal Chaudhry said authorities were stepping up security around the China-run Saindak copper and gold mine in Balochistan after supply routes were disrupted in the region by terrorists.

His statement came against the backdrop of kinetic operations in the province under Operation Shaban, a high-intensity counterterrorism and counterinsurgency campaign launched by security forces following multiple high-casualty



ty and high-profile terrorist attacks in Balochistan. Chinese citizens and projects have also come under attack multiple times in Pakistan in the past. According to data shared by the National Counter Terrorism Authority in December 2024, as many as 20 Chinese citizens had been killed and 34 injured in terror attacks in the country from 2021 until then. In 2024, five Chinese nationals working on the Dasu dam project perished in a suicide bombing in Bisham in March. In April 2022, at least four people, including three Chinese nationals, were killed while four others were injured in a suicide attack outside the University of Karachi's Confucius Institute, which was claimed by the banned Balochistan Liberation Army. Of the major attacks that have targeted Chinese citizens in Pakistan since 2021, a major one was when at least 12

persons, including nine Chinese engineers and two Frontier Corps personnel, were killed when a bus was attacked near the Dasu hydropower plant in KP's Upper Kohistan district in July 2021. 'Step forward in promoting CPEC 2.0'

Apart from assuring that the security of Chinese citizens in Pakistan would be ensured, PM Shehbaz also spoke about the ties between the countries and said that the agreements would be converted into "implementable documents". "These agreements will most definitely convert into actions and implementable documents, and I think this is a step forward in promoting CPEC 2.0," he said. He described his recent visit to China as "wonderful", further stating that China was one of Pakistan's "most trusted and dependable friends".

"China stood by Pakistan through thick

and thin, through the most difficult times, promoting Pakistan's economic trajectory, supporting Pakistan's stand at international forums and joining hands together in CPEC 1.0, where more than \$30 billion was invested by China in Pakistan — the single largest investment portfolio," he said.

He also said that China was second to none in the field of economy and a power to reckon with in the field of strategic development and progress.

The world cannot move without China, and I think this great achievement couldn't have been without the very forward-looking dynamic leadership of President Xi Jinping," he added.

He said Friday's conference would be "great" in the field of promoting the pharmaceutical industry and would eventually lead to the manufacturing of life-saving medicines.

Pakistan chairs 12th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting of heads of border services: FO

NEWS DESK: Pakistan on Friday chaired and hosted the 12th meeting of the Heads of Border Services of the Competent Authorities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Foreign Office (FO) said.

The meeting was attended by the heads and representatives of the border services of Belarus, India, Iran,

casts, the FO said.

The participants "discussed and approved the results of the Joint Border Operation 'Solidarity-2025', conducted by the border services of the competent authorities of the SCO member states," the FO statement said.

The meeting participants also considered and approved a plan for

trust along their shared

borders," FO added. Iran's border guard commander, Brigadier General Ali Akbar Javidan, leading the Iranian delegation, said on the sidelines of the meeting that Tehran was interested in fostering cooperation with SCO member states, ISNA reported. He added that Iran intended to enhance

The SCO comprises 10 member states, namely India, Iran, China, Pakistan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The two observer states are Afghanistan and Mongolia.

In June, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the



Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, along with the Executive Committee of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS).

The meeting participants exchanged information and assessments of the situation along the international borders of SCO member states and discussed development trends and fore-

the preparation and conduct of the joint border operation 'Solidarity-2026', as well as supported a proposal for Tajikistan to host the joint border operation in 2027. The participants of the most noted that today's discussion

"would contribute to further strengthening cooperation among the member states' border services, while enhancing security and mutual

collaboration with SCO member states in various fields, including expanding security cooperation, exchanging information, and combating drug trafficking, organised crime and smuggling.

Initially formed as a security cooperation group in 2001, the SCO has now evolved into a forum for trade and economic cooperation in the region.

"Shanghai spirit" and called for a joint strategy among SCO member states to counter terrorism, organised crime, drug trafficking, cybercrime and terror financing.

Pakistan is set to assume the chairmanship of the SCO Council of Heads of State (CHS) in September this year, while next year's CHS summit will also be hosted by Pakistan.

Foreign women's abduction, rape case: Lahore court sends 4 suspects on 14-day judicial remand

NEWS DESK: A judicial magistrate at the Cantonment Courts granted police 14-day judicial remand of four suspects, including one related to a senior political figure, in a case of alleged kidnapping and rape of two foreign women.

One of those two women is a national of the Netherlands and the other of Venezuela, and a case of their alleged abduction and sexual assault was registered on July 2.

Subsequently, police had arrested four of the suspects and were initially granted their five-day physical remand on July 3. The suspects' remand was extended twice in the following days, last on July 13.

They were produced before Judicial Magistrate Azhar Mahmood on Friday, following the expiry of their physical remand.

The investigating officer (IO) submitted a progress report before the court and requested that the suspects now be

tified by the two foreign women.

When the case was first reported on July 2, it emerged that the father of one of the two foreign women had called the Police Emergency Helpline 15 and reported their alleged abduction and rape.

Lahore Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Operations Faisal Kamran had told Dawn that police subsequently dispatched a team of senior officials, recovered the women, arrested four suspects and registered an FIR.

The case had been registered under sections 375-A (rape) and 365-A (kidnapping for extortion) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

According to the case's FIR, the women were abducted by five suspects, including a close relative of a senior political personality, who demanded ransom and subjected them to sexual assault during their captivity.

The suspects allegedly demanded \$1.5 mil-

lion in ransom before they were released. The father of one of the two foreign women, who claimed to be well-connected to influential government figures, arranged their visas under the guise of setting up meetings with high-profile investors for the victim's company, the Dutch woman said.

After spending three days at a hotel in Islamabad — during which they made sightseeing trips to Nathia Gali and attended business presentations — the group travelled to Lahore by car on the afternoon of June 29.

The suspect allegedly lured the victim and her companion to a modern house in Lahore under the pretext of celebrating a relative's birthday. However, upon entering the residence, they found it empty.

Within 15 minutes, four men armed with firearms and ropes stormed the premises. The captors immediately tied the victims' hands behind their backs and subjected both women to

Bilawal promises to be 'voice' of people of AJK in Centre

NEWS DESK: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Friday promised to be the voice of the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) in the Centre and globally by bridging the gap between the federal capital and the people.

Addressing the rally, the PPP chairman said, "We have seen both good and bad times in AJK, but I have not witnessed the conditions that I am seeing today."

He termed the prevailing situation a "test" for the AJK government, the state of Pakistan and all political parties.

It is the primary duty of a politician to be the voice of the people in the Centre and on international forums, but they are not fulfilling their responsibilities," he said, adding that "politicians have to act as a bridge between the people of AJK and the Centre, but this is not happening."

He emphasised that this was not an issue limited to AJK; Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,

Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan were facing the same fate.

"If the people of AJK give me the mandate, I promise that I will be your voice in Islamabad and globally," Bilawal said.

He stressed that there was "no issue that cannot be resolved positively and peacefully," and affirmed his commitment to resolving the

dress the AJK issue.

"If this is acceptable to the government and the protesters in AJK, then this can be a way to resolve our issues," he said, urging the protesters to halt their demonstrations and the government to refrain from taking further measures until the proposed truth and reconciliation commission was formed

and completed its work.

However, the PPP chairman clarified that neither the government nor the protesters had responded to his proposal.

The PPP chairman further said that he had proposed the formation of a truth and reconciliation commission to ad-

dress the AJK issue.

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The PPP chairman further said that he had proposed the formation of a truth and reconciliation commission to ad-

testers; it is punishing all Kashmiris."

The PPP chairman urged the government to arrest the "terrorists who had committed terrorism or the robber who had committed robbery," questioning why it was punishing those who had not committed any such acts. "It is our demand; otherwise, the government and the protesters to spare some space so that ordinary residents of Kashmir do not face any difficulties," said the Bhutto scion.

"If the state of Pakistan can establish peace between America and Iran, if the state of Pakistan can reopen the Strait of Hormuz, then it is my demand that there is my demand that our Kashmir has been shut; open it," the PPP chairman stated. Turning to the upcoming election in AJK, the PPP chairman said that it was the "most important election in the history of AJK."

He said that the right to self-ownership, the right to self-government and the right to employment were part of the PPP's manifesto.



Islamabad ATC initiates proclamation proceedings against KPCM Afridi, others for failing to appear in court

NEWS DESK: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday initiated proclamation proceedings against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, PTI leader Junaid Akbar, and Abdul Ghani Afridi, over their continued failure to appear before the court despite the issuance of non-bailable arrest warrants in a case related to the Nov 26 protest.

ATC Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra took up the case, examining a progress report submitted by the Islamabad police regarding the investigation into a first information report (FIR) registered at Margalla police station over the Nov 26 incidents.

According to the report, submitted through the office of the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the Islamabad police, the investigation into the case has been completed. A reply was said to be in response to the court's notice seeking an explanation for the delay in the issuance of the challan against the accused.

The police informed the court that, in view of the continued non-compliance with the warrants, proclamation proceedings had been initiated against the accused.

The report stated that the court had issued non-bailable arrest war-

rants, proclamation proceedings had been initiated against the accused.

completion of the legal formalities relating to the proclamation pro-

ceedings. The investigating agency maintained that there had been no negligence, unnecessary delay or lack of effort on the part of the police during the investigation or in pursuing the arrest of the accused. It asserted that all legal steps required under the law had been taken to secure their appearance before the court.

According to the report, the challan would be submitted before the court immediately after

After examining the report, Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra formally in-

itiated proclamation proceedings against the three accused over their persistent absence despite the issuance of non-bailable arrest warrants. The court subsequently adjourned further proceedings in the case until September 9, directing that the matter be taken up after completion of the remaining legal process and submission of the challan.

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sent on judicial remand. The magistrate allegedly accepted the request and sent the four suspects on judicial remand for 14 days.

During the hearing, the state prosecutor opposed a plea by the counsel of one of the suspects to discharge his client from the case, contending that he was accused of destroying evidence and aiding in the commission of the alleged offence.

At one point, Judge Mahmood noted that just one of the suspects was named in the first information report (FIR) while the rest were arrested after being iden-

tion in ransom before they were released. The father of one of the two foreign women, who claimed to be well-connected to influential government figures, arranged their visas under the guise of setting up meetings with high-profile investors for the victim's company, the Dutch woman said.

Following the registration of the FIR, the women were later produced before a judicial magistrate at the Cantonment Courts to record their statements under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

According to the case's FIR, the women were abducted by five suspects, including a close relative of a senior political personality, who demanded ransom and subjected them to sexual assault during their captivity. The suspects allegedly demanded \$1.5 mil-

lion in ransom before they were released. The father of one of the two foreign women, who claimed to be well-connected to influential government figures, arranged their visas under the guise of setting up meetings with high-profile investors for the victim's company, the Dutch woman said.

While the primary suspect initially acted as a fellow victim to mask his complicity, it later became evident he was working in tandem with the armed group, she further claimed.

She alleged that the captors demanded exorbitant ransom amounts, starting at \$2m, threatening to kill the women and sell their organs if they did not comply. The victims were separated, the complainant said, recalling she was held downstairs under armed guard while her companion was kept upstairs.