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Editor: Asim Khan.

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Email address: dquettavoice@gmail.com
Website: www.quettavoice.com

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QUETTA VOICE

Security Sources: Four Terrorists Killed in Mastung IBO

Web Desk:

Four suspected militants were killed and a large cache of weapons and ammunition was recovered during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted by Pakistan's security forces in the Khad Kocha area of Mastung district, Balochistan, according to security sources.

cilitating militant activities were taken into custody for further investigation. Security forces have continued search and clearance operations in and around Khad Kocha to locate any remaining suspects and ensure the area is secure.

A strong security presence has been maintained as the operation continues. The latest intelligence-based



The operation, carried out under Operation Azm, also resulted in the seizure of several motorcycles allegedly used by the suspected militants. Security sources said the action was based on intelligence aimed at dismantling militant networks active in the region.

According to security sources, several other suspected militants were injured during the operation, while multiple individuals allegedly involved in fa-

operation follows recent militant incidents reported in the Mastung district. Security sources said counterterrorism operations have been intensified to target militant hideouts and disrupt their activities.

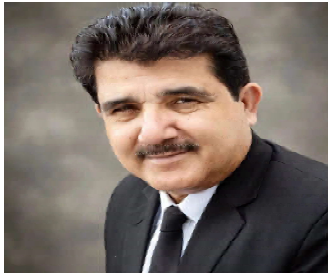
Security officials reaffirmed their commitment to continuing intelligence-led operations across Balochistan until militant networks are dismantled and peace and stability are restored in the province.

Balochistan Lawyers Observe Strike After Session Judge Abdul Kakar Martyred in Mastung Attack

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Lawyers across Balochistan observed a province-wide strike on Friday following the martyrdom of District and Sessions Judge Abdul Hakim Kakar and his official gunman in a deadly attack in Mastung district.

The strike, called by bar associations and legal bodies across the province, brought judicial proceedings to a halt as courts remained largely deserted and hundreds of litigants returned without their cases being heard.



The legal fraternity strongly condemned the Mastung attack, describing it as a serious assault on the judiciary and the rule of law. Lawyers demanded the immediate arrest of those responsible and urged the Balochistan government to enhance security for judges, lawyers and court staff across the province.

According to preliminary reports, unidentified armed assailants opened fire on the vehicle carrying District and Sessions Judge Abdul Hakim

filed. The killing of Session Judge Abdul Hakim Kakar has sent shockwaves through Balochistan's legal community. Bar associations vowed to continue their peaceful protest until these behind

the Mastung attack are brought to justice and effective security measures are implemented to protect members of the judiciary and ensure the uninterrupted administration of justice across the province.



Balochistan CM Mir Bugti kisses the hand of Martyred Judge Abdul Hakim Kakar's son.

Balochistan CM Sarfraz Bugti Visits Family of Martyred Judge Abdul Hakim Kakar, Announces Full Support for Children

Ali Hamza, News Desk:

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Friday visited the family of martyred District and Sessions Judge Abdul Hakim Kakar, expressing solidarity with his loved ones and announcing that the Government of Balochistan will fully support the education and welfare of the judge's children.

The chief minister visited the family's residence in Quetta, where he offered condolences, recited Fataha, and met the martyr's children and other relatives. He prayed for the departed judge's high rank in the hereafter and for strength and patience for the bereaved family.

Describing Judge Abdul Hakim Kakar as a courageous

public servant, Bugti said he embraced martyrdom while performing his duty to uphold the rule of law and strengthen Pakistan's justice system.

"Shaheed Abdul Hakim Kakar sacrificed his life while serving justice and protecting the supremacy of law.

His services and sacrifice will always be remembered with honour," the chief minister said.

Government to Fund Education of Abdul Hakim Kakar's Children

In a significant announcement, Mir Sarfraz Bugti said the Government of Balochistan will bear all educational expenses and necessary financial support for the children of martyred Judge Abdul Hakim Kakar, ensuring that their education and future remain secure.

He assured the family that the

provincial government would continue to stand by the families of martyrs.

"The families of our martyrs will never be left alone. Looking after them is the responsibility of the government, and we will fulfil that responsibility," he said.

Balochistan Government Reaffirms Resolve Against Terrorism

The chief minister also reaffirmed the provincial government's commitment to defeating terrorism and protecting peace across Balochistan.

He said terrorist groups would never succeed in their attempts to destabilize the province or weaken state institutions.

"Every conspiracy against peace, development, and state institutions in Balochistan will fail.

The sacrifices of our martyrs

will never go in vain, and those involved in terrorism will be brought to justice under the law," Bugti stated.

He added that the Government of Balochistan stands shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan's security forces and all state institutions in the ongoing fight against terrorism.

CM Visits Injured Additional Sessions Judge Tariq Lashari

Following the condolence visit, Chief Minister Bugti visited a local hospital to inquire about the health of Additional Sessions Judge Tariq Lashari, who was injured in the same terrorist attack.

He received a briefing from doctors on Lashari's treatment, expressed satisfaction with the medical care being provided, and prayed for his speedy and complete recovery.

PM Pakistan Promotes General Aamer Raza to Four-Star Rank, Appoints Him Commander National Strategic Command



NEWS DESK:

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has promoted Lieutenant General Aamer Raza, HMM, SBT, to the rank of Four-Star General and appointed him as the Commander National Stra-

tegic Command, the Prime Minister's Office announced on Friday.

The official statement said General Aamer Raza, who had been serving as the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) of the Pakistan Army, will take charge of the National Strategic Command fol-

lowing his promotion.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulated General Aamer Raza on his elevation to the four-star rank and his appointment to the new command.

He expressed confidence in the senior military officer and wished him success in carrying

out his new responsibilities in the service of the country.

General Aamer Raza's appointment marks a significant development in Pakistan's military leadership, with the National Strategic Command playing a vital role in the country's strategic security framework.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Poverty and inequality

UMAIR JAVED:

The release of the Household Integrated Economic Survey and Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement data presents a clearer picture of poverty and economic distress in Pakistan. This data has appeared after a gap of nearly six years, during which several important events and shocks took place.

In 2018-19, the country had to go through a painful macroeconomic adjustment to counteract the yawning current account deficit left behind by the then departing PML-N government. Between 2020 and 2021,

the global economy faced massive contraction on account of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The expansionary policies designed to mitigate this contraction then led to increased inflation and monetary tightening the world over, which dried up dollar liquidity and raised commodity prices.

During this cycle, the PTI government pursued ill-advised growth via the expansion of domestic consumption,

which once again increased imports and reintroduced another balance-of-payments crisis.

That crisis, coupled with the global oil price shock, sent Pakistan into its worst inflationary period in decades; it took an extraordinarily painful



stabilisation period to tame the cost spiral, though at the cost of growth and any notion of increased prosperity.

This precarious stability is threatened once more by regional geopolitical events.

Given the frequency of shocks — self-inflicted and external/global in nature — and the painful adjustments needed to fight them off, it is little surprise that poverty rates have gone up in the country.

The government's own poverty estimates narrate an increase of seven per cent between 2018-19 (21.8pc) and 2024-25 (28.9).

Rural areas were impacted more, reporting an 8pc increase, compared to 6pc for urban areas.

We're stuck in a doom-loop of low growth, recurrent stabilisation, and half-hearted attempts at poverty alleviation.

Likely for the first time ever on record, average household inflation-adjusted incomes and consumption actually fell during two successive survey cycles.

In real terms, households on average are both earning less and consuming less than six years ago. Stretch that back to 10 years, and the numbers remain flat.

In other words, Pakistan has witnessed a lost decade in both incomes and consumption. On its own, this story is distressing enough.

For a country of 250 million with a young and large labour force, enhancing shared prosperity should be the central plan of economic policymaking.

Instead, we're stuck in a doom-loop of low growth, recurrent stabilisation, and half-hearted attempts at poverty alleviation.

But what makes it worse is that there is a creeping inequality story that is becoming more apparent via data and anecdotes.

By now, it is clear that the story of the past decade is of economic slowdown interspersed with outright stagnation.

The recently released survey data adds the increase in poverty to this story too.

But what about the fact that growth has actually not been zero during this time? The average annual growth rate from the past six years is around 3pc.

And yet poverty has gone up during this time. As my colleague Dr Ali Hasanain and several others have noted,

these two parallel trends (low but positive average growth and increased poverty) show that the benefits of even anaemic growth are being accrued to a narrower sliver of the population.

If the gain from all economic growth was distributed equitably, we would not see a real-term decline in average incomes or consumption and an increase in the poverty rate (using a fixed threshold).

Breaking the income and consumption data by quintile predictably shows that the lowest quintiles have seen greater erosion compared to the upper ones.

However, it's the missing top 10pc or so

that is likely benefiting from the growth that has taken place.

In large-scale consumption and income surveys, it is standard practice to assume that the top 10pc of the distribution is unlikely to be captured by standard sampling frames.

These are richer households in smaller elite communities that are both a very small fraction of the overall urban landscape and are less likely to entertain door-to-door survey requests.

Given the absence of these households from the data, we don't know what the impact of the past six years (or the past 10) has been on their incomes and consumption patterns.

For those at the very top (the top 1pc to 5pc), there may have been a slow-down in income and consumption growth, but probably not an absolute decline.

The basis for this speculative assessment is the classic distinction between asset-owning households and non-asset owning

households. Keeping farmland, livestock, and personal residence aside, most Pakistanis are asset poor.

They especially do not have access to assets that can be used to generate rents, profits, dividends, or any other form of capital income.

During periods of high inflation (especially coupled with

devolution), asset owners may see a temporary erosion in the real value of their assets, but this is often mitigated by the rise in interest rates, which ultimately benefit net savers.

Think about some of the other steps taken by governments in the recent past. Concessional finance for employers is a direct subsidy to owners of capital.

The real estate amnesty scheme/package from 2021 helped spur growth in the construction sector but it had the (likely intended)

effect of raising land values of urban residential and commercial real estate, owned by a small sliver of the population.

Even shocks are experienced differently — higher energy prices have been off-set by

high-income households through access to low-tax solar products and now new energy vehicles.

In recent months, various forms of conspicuous consumption in big urban centres — expensive real estate,

leisure opportunities, coffee shops and restaurants — provide anecdotal evidence of an increasingly bifurcated economy.

Combined with the statistical picture shared earlier, prognosis of a k-shaped economy might seem speculative right now, but the signs are all pointing in that direction.

Plastic in the Womb: Balochistan's Invisible Health Crisis

By Myra Zahid:

In the dusty plains of Balochistan, where drought already strains farms and families, a different kind of threat is moving in quietly. It cannot be seen, smelled, or stopped at the door.

It is microplastics, plastic fragments smaller than five millimeters, and they are now turning up in the air we breathe, the soil we farm, and even inside newborn babies.

Microplastics form when plastic waste breaks down under sun, heat, and friction.

They have been found almost everywhere scientists have looked: household dust, farmland, drinking water, vegetables, and human tissue.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) estimates that the average person eats and breathes in roughly 39,000 to 52,000 microplastic particles every year.

In 2019, a global study commissioned by WWF International made headlines when it calculated that people may be ingesting close to a credit card's worth of plastic every week. The Express Tribune carried the story for Pakistani readers, a reminder that this is not a distant problem, but one already inside our food and water.

Pakistan's Plastic Problem

Pakistan generates an estimated 6.41 million



tons of plastic waste a year, according to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), with the vast majority never properly collected or recycled. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) says 86 percent of the country's plastic waste is mismanaged.

left in open dumps, burned, or washed into rivers and the sea. That puts Pakistan among the world's worst plastic

polluters. When this waste breaks down in open dumps, fields, and gutters, it does not disappear. It fragments into microplastics that drift into the air or sink into the soil, eventually working their way into the crops we eat.

Mothers and Babies at Risk

The most alarming discoveries are happening before birth. In 2020, scientists in Italy found microplastics inside the human placenta for the first time, proof that plastic particles can pass from a pregnant mother to her unborn child. Since then, researchers have also found microplastics in human breast milk.

According to exposure data reported in the Journal of the Pakistan Medical Association (JPMA),

microplastics can carry toxic chemicals such as BPA and phthalates, both known to disrupt hormones. These chemicals are linked to low birth weight and long-term developmental risks in children.

In Pakistan, a 2024 study by the University of Karachi's Institute of Marine Science found microplastics in the breast milk of lactating mothers in fishing com-

munities along the Karachi coast, where seafood is eaten almost daily. No equivalent study has yet been done in

Balochistan, but the risk factors are familiar here too: communities along the Gwadar, Pasni, and Ormara coastline depend just as heavily on the sea, while facing even thinner access to maternal and child healthcare.

What Can Be Done

There are practical defenses. Lab tests show that fine water filters (around 0.2 microns, such as certified reverse-osmosis systems) can remove 94 to 100 percent of plastic particles from drinking water.

Balochistan's Agriculture Department is already distributing seeds for home gardening. Families

growing their own vegetables on terraces or small plots, using compost instead of plastic mulch, can cut their exposure while also improving food security.

Small daily habits help too: choosing cloth bags and glass or metal bottles over plastic, never heating food in plastic containers, and never burning plastic waste, which releases microplastics and toxic fumes directly into the air.

A Policy Gap, and a Climate Connection

Experts say microplastic pollution needs to be treated as both an environmental and a public health issue.

That means enforcing waste management laws, banning single-use plastics and plastic mulching in farming, and monitoring microplastics in soil, air, and food, something Pakistan currently does very little of.

Climate change is

making the problem worse.

Rising heat speeds up plastic breakdown, drought driven dust storms carry particles further through the air, and floods wash plastic waste into farmland and waterways.

Protecting mothers and children from microplastics is, in that sense, also a matter of climate justice.

Pakistan's progress on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals is already behind: official data shows

reliable figures exist for less than 10 percent of SDG indicators nationally, and only 7 percent for

Balochistan. Microplastics sit at the intersection of two of those goals, SDG 15 (Climate Action) and

SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), yet remain almost entirely unmeasured here.

The Bottom Line

Microplastics are invisible, but the risk they carry is not. In a province already facing drought, poverty, and stretched healthcare, this is a threat reaching the next generation before it is even born.

Water filtration, home gardens, and less plastic use can help right now.

But lasting protection will need real monitoring, enforced policy, and research — starting with the studies Balochistan still doesn't have.

Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail Calls for Population Management and Youth Skill Development on World Population Day

QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stressed that Pakistan's rapidly growing population presents both a major challenge and a significant opportunity, emphasizing the need to manage population growth while transforming the country's youth into a skilled, productive, and healthy workforce.

He made these remarks while addressing a World Population Day event held at a local hotel in Quetta.

The ceremony was attended by Provincial Minister Mir Asim Kurb Gello, Parliamentary Secretary Princes Agha Omar Ahmadzai, MPA Dr. Nawaz Kabzai, Provincial Secretary Zafar Baloch, UNDP representative Zulfikar Durani, former Senator Koshan Khurshid Brocha, BRSP Chairman Malik Anwar Saleem Kasi, BRSP Chief Executive Officer Dr. Fahar Kashid, Director Governor Secretariat Ata-ur-Rehman Khilji, and representatives from various sectors.

Addressing the participants, Governor Mandokhail said that a country's population is closely linked to the well-being of its people,



their quality of life, employment opportunities, and economic prosperity.

He noted that Pakistan's population is expected to reach 260 million by the end of 2026, presenting the country with two major challenges.

The first is to effectively manage the rapid population growth, while the second—and perhaps even more important—is to transform this large population into a skilled, productive, healthy, and capable workforce," he said.

The governor praised Prince Agha

Omar Ahmadzai and his team for successfully organizing the World Population Day event and acknowledged their efforts in raising awareness about population-related issues.

Highlighting Pakistan's demographic advantage, Mandokhail said the country has one of the youngest populations in the region, while Balochistan has the youngest population among Pakistan's provinces.

He described this youthful demographic as an extraordinary opportunity, provided the government invests in education, vocational

training, employment generation, and youth empowerment.

The future of Pakistan will not depend on how many people we have, but on how well we educate them, equip them with modern skills, create employment opportunities for them, and empower them to contribute to national development," he said.

The governor expressed satisfaction over the launch of skill development programs in public sector universities, saying these initiatives are expected to produce positive outcomes by preparing young people for the

modern job market.

Referring to Quetta's urban growth, he observed that the city's population has increased severalfold over the past three decades, while public resources and infrastructure have not expanded at the same pace.

Governor Mandokhail urged the relevant authorities to expand family planning awareness campaigns to the district and union council levels and adopt additional measures to manage population growth, enabling Pakistan and Balochistan to achieve sustainable peace, economic prosperity, and long-term development.

The event concluded with the distribution of commemorative shields among organizers and participants in recognition of their contributions to population awareness initiatives.

Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, World Population Day 2026, Pakistan population growth, Balochistan youth empowerment, World Population Day Quetta, Balochistan development.

Road Rehabilitation Begins in Dasht Tehsil as Kech Administration Accelerates Infrastructure Development

TURBAT: On the special directives of Deputy Commissioner Kech Yasar Iqbal Dashti, the Communication and Works (C&W) Department has launched an extensive road repair and rehabilitation campaign across various areas of Dasht Tehsil to improve

vide residents with safe and reliable road networks.

In the first phase of the initiative, repair work has officially commenced on the Sangai Road and Nilag Kor Road, where C&W teams have been deployed to carry out res-

creased.

To ensure quality standards and transparency, all Assistant Commissioners have been directed to personally inspect development projects within their respective jurisdictions and ensure that work is completed within the



transportation infrastructure and public connectivity.

According to the district administration, all relevant departments have been instructed to ensure that construction and maintenance work is carried out with complete transparency, strict quality control, and timely execution to pro-

vide residents with safe and reliable road networks.

The administration noted that complaints had previously been received regarding delays and slow progress in road maintenance projects. However, following the Deputy Commissioner's firm directives, the pace of road rehabilitation activities has significantly in-

stipulated timeframe while meeting the required engineering standards.

Residents of Sangai, Kasar, Nilag, and Daddel welcomed the initiative, praising Deputy Commissioner Yasar Iqbal Dashti for taking timely action to address long-standing infrastructure issues.

Harnai Administration Provides Immediate Relief to Fire-Affected Family in Akhtar Abad

HARNAI: In line with the public welfare vision of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and the directives of the provincial government, the district administration of Harnai has continued its tradition of providing immediate assistance to citizens facing hardships.

On the special instructions of Deputy Commissioner Harnai Arshad Hussain Jamali, Additional Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Saleem Tareen and Assistant Commissioner Khosht Israr Ahmed Shahwani visited Akhtar Abad locality to meet a family affected by a devastating fire and provide emergency relief assistance.

According to the district administration, a sudden fire broke out in the tent of Ghulam Nabi, a financially vulnerable resident of Akhtar Abad. The blaze quickly engulfed the entire tent, destroying house-

hold belongings, essential items, and food supplies, leaving the family without shelter and basic necessities.

Upon receiving information about the incident, Deputy Commissioner Arshad Hussain Jamali immediately took notice and directed senior administrative officers to visit the site and assess the family's needs.

During their visit, the Additional Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner Khosht Israr Ahmed Shahwani visited Akhtar Abad locality to meet a family affected by a devastating fire and provide emergency relief assistance.

Other essential household items a spokesperson for the district administration stated that the administration stands with citizens during times of hardship and that the affected family would not be left alone during this difficult period.

He added that support would continue until the family's rehabilitation is fully ensured.

The swift response and humanitarian gesture by the district administration were widely appreciated by local residents. The affected family expressed gratitude to the district administration and the Government of Balochistan for providing timely assistance.

The administration reaffirmed its commitment to public welfare and stated that helping citizens affected by emergencies and natural disasters will remain a top priority in Harnai district.

Harnai fire incident, Arshad Hussain Jamali, Akhtar Abad Harnai, Ghulam Nabi, Balochistan relief efforts, district administration Harnai, emergency assistance, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, fire victims support, Harnai news.

Quetta Finalizes Comprehensive Security and Emergency Plan for Chehlum of Imam Hussain (RA)

QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Mehrullah Badini chaired a District Coordination Committee meeting to review and finalize security and administrative arrangements for the peaceful observance of the Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) in Quetta.

The meeting focused on a comprehensive review of security, sanitation, street lighting, medical services, traffic management, and other civic arrangements to ensure the smooth and safe conduct of the religious event.

Participants included representatives of the Shia Ulema Conference, Assistant Commissioners, Balochistan Police, Frontier Corps (FC), Sida Quetta, Quetta



Metropolitan Corporation, Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Benazir Bhutto Hospital, Civil Hospital Quetta, Sheikh Zayed Hospital, District Health Office (DHO) Quetta, PHQ Quetta, Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC), Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO), Anjuman-e-Tajir, and officials from other relevant departments.

During the meeting, a comprehensive security plan for the Chehlum procession was approved.

Authorities were directed to ensure the peaceful observance of the occasion, and the availability of all essential municipal services along the procession routes.

The district administration also instructed all government hospitals to remain on emergency alert, with ambulances placed on standby throughout the event.

Relevant departments were directed to ensure the uninterrupted supply of electricity and natural gas to facilitate the peaceful observance of the occasion.

Addressing the participants, Deputy Commissioner Mehrullah Badini said that Quetta belongs to all its residents and maintaining it as a city of peace, harmony, and mutual respect is a shared responsibility.

He urged all departments to maintain close coordination and effective communication to ensure that the Chehlum procession is observed in a peaceful, well-organized, and secure manner.

Quetta Chehlum security, Chehlum Basim, Chehlum Imam Hussain, Quetta District Coordination Committee, Balochistan Police, Quetta, PDMA, Balochistan, Quetta traffic plan, emergency services Quetta, Chehlum arrangements 2026.

Quetta Chehlum security, Chehlum Basim, Chehlum Imam Hussain, Quetta District Coordination Committee, Balochistan Police, Quetta, PDMA, Balochistan, Quetta traffic plan, emergency services Quetta, Chehlum arrangements 2026.

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Quetta Chehlum security, Chehlum Basim, Chehlum Imam Hussain, Quetta District Coordination Committee, Balochistan Police, Quetta, PDMA, Balochistan, Quetta traffic plan, emergency services Quetta, Chehlum arrangements 2026.

Irrigation Department Reviews Water Distribution in Damb Distributary to Ensure Fair Supply for Farmers

NASIRABAD: Executive Engineer Ghulam Muhammad Badini of the Kirthar Canal Irrigation Division conducted an inspection of the warabandi (rotational water distribution) system at the Damb Distributary, reviewing the ongoing irrigation process to ensure equitable water supply for farmers.

During the visit, Ghulam Muhammad Badini said that under the current Phase-II warabandi schedule, water distribution is continuing smoothly, and the Irrigation Department is taking all necessary measures to ensure that farmers and landowners across the command area receive their allocated share of irrigation water fairly and without interruption.

Accompanying the



executive engineer were Sub-Engineer Riaz Ahmed Memon, Canal Supervisor Rajab Ali Umri, and Darogha Koshan Ali Chahwan. During the inspection, Sub-Engineer Riaz Ahmed Memon briefed the delegation on the

current water supply situation and the overall field conditions. Ghulam Muhammad Badini emphasized that there would be no compromise on the transparent distribution of irrigation water, adding that no eligible farmer of land-

owner would be deprived of their rightful share. He further stated that, in accordance with the directives of Balochistan Provincial Minister for Irrigation Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umri and Provincial Secretary for Irrigation

Suhail Rehman Baloch, the department is strictly implementing a transparent, fair, and scheduled warabandi system to ensure that all agricultural areas receive their allocated water on time.

The inspection reflects the provincial government's continued efforts to strengthen irrigation management and support the agricultural sector through fair and efficient water distribution across Balochistan.

Nasirabad irrigation, Ghulam Muhammad Badini, Kirthar Canal, Damb Distributary, warabandi, irrigation water distribution, Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umri, Suhail Rehman Baloch, Balochistan agriculture, farmers water supply, irrigation department Pakistan.

Acting DIG Asad Nasir Chairs Minority Peace Committee Meeting to Strengthen Security in Nasirabad

QUETTA: Acting DIG Police Nasirabad Asad Nasir chaired an important meeting of the Minority Peace Committee, bringing together leaders of the minority community to discuss security arrangements, religious harmony, and mea-

sures to ensure a peaceful environment for all citizens.

During the meeting, participants held detailed discussions on security concerns facing minority communities, law and order during religious events, interfaith harmony, and other issues affecting the community. Community representatives also shared their concerns and presented recommendations to the police leadership. Addressing the meeting, Acting DIG

Asad Nasir said that the protection of the lives and property of minority communities remains one of the top priorities of the police.

He assured participants that all available resources would be utilized to provide a safe and peaceful environment for minority citizens, while effective measures would be taken to address their legitimate concerns. The DIG further emphasized that coordination and communication between the district police and minority communities would be strengthened to promote peace, mutual respect, religious harmony, and social cohesion across the region.

Participants appreciated the efforts made by the police to



between the police and community leaders to ensure the peaceful observance of religious activities and strengthen communal harmony in Nasirabad Division.

Asad Nasir, Nasirabad Police, Minority Peace Committee, minority security Pakistan, religious harmony Balochistan, Quetta police, interfaith harmony, Balochistan law and order, minority community meeting, Pakistan police news.

Hub District Launches Crackdown on Water Theft to Tackle Water Crisis

HUB: Deputy Commissioner Captain (Retd.) Juma Dad Khan Mandokhail chaired a high-level meeting to address the ongoing water crisis in Hub district, focusing on drinking water supply, water availability for industries and agriculture, and measures to prevent canal water theft.

The meeting, held at the Deputy Commissioner's Office, was attended by the Executive Engineer Irrigation, Executive Engineer Public Health Engineering (PHE), Executive En-



General of the Lasbela Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Municipal Committee Hub, the President of the Farmers' Association, representatives of the Tanker

Association, the Tehsildar Hub, DSP Hub, and other relevant officials. Participants conducted a detailed review of the district's water shortage, the equitable distribution of canal water, and strategies to curb illegal water ex-

traction of canal water. Officials decided that criminal cases (FIRs) would be registered immediately against individuals or organizations involved in water theft, with strict legal action to follow.

The anti-water theft campaign will be jointly supervised by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) and the Executive Engineer Irrigation.

Water Meters and Industry Cooperation

The meeting also agreed that major industrial companies, LIEDA,

authorized extraction of canal water. Officials decided that criminal cases (FIRs) would be registered immediately against individuals or organizations involved in water theft, with strict legal action to follow.

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Water Meters and Industry Cooperation

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Afghan soil must not be used against Pakistan: PM Shehbaz

NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said Pakistan continued to seek good relations with Afghanistan but urged the Afghan interim government not to allow its territory to be used for terrorism against Pakistan.

"We share a 2,000-kilometre border with Afghanistan. We are neighbours and have to live together, but we continue to urge the Afghan interim government not to allow its soil to be used for terrorism against Pakistan," he said.

Addressing participants at the Balochistan National Workshop in Islamabad, the prime minister also said Balochistan's vast geography and scattered population posed development challenges but it was not like those faced by other provinces, stressing that Pakistan could only prosper if all four provinces progressed together.

He welcomed attendees from across the province, saying they represented not only Balochistan but Pakistan. "You are all representing Pakistan here," he said.

PM Shehbaz said Balochistan had played an important role in Pakistan's creation, recalling that the province's political and tribal leadership had voluntarily joined the federation after independence.

"In 1947, the leader-



ship of Balochistan accepted Qaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's leadership and became part of Pakistan. The loyal leadership of Balochistan put aside personal interests and egos and overwhelmedingly supported the federation," he said, adding that Balochistan as Pakistan's largest province could only prosper if all four provinces progressed together.

"The distances between cities are vast, settlements are scattered, and the problems are different from those faced by other provinces," he said.

PM Shehbaz said the federation had recognised these challenges through the Na-

tional Finance Commission (NFC) Award, adding that Punjab had voluntarily supported a larger financial share for Balochistan.

"This was not a favour; it was an act of brotherhood. When a family has four members, they support one another," he said, adding that Punjab had contributed around Rs150 billion to Balochistan over the years and continued to do so.

Highlighting development initiatives, the prime minister said successive governments, including those led by Nawaz Sharif and the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), had expanded funding for the province.

He said the federal government had contributed around Rs50 billion towards a Rs75 billion

project to convert around 27,000 agricultural tube wells to solar power, addressing persistent electricity shortages affecting farmers.

PM Shehbaz added that this would be in the best interest of all SCO member states and beyond. He said that currently, the threat of terrorism emanating from Afghanistan was one of the most serious security challenges for Pakistan. He said that terrorist organisations continued to recruit, train and operate from Afghan soil "under the watch and facilitation of the Afghan Taliban regime."

He said that this support was "well-documented," adding that Pakistan was at the forefront of this threat. He added that this year alone, more than 560 Pakistanis have been killed in over 2,000 terrorist at-

Peace, stability only possible by eliminating terrorism emanating from Afghanistan, Dar says at SCO meeting

NEWS DESK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said on Friday that durable peace and stability in the region can only be achieved by eliminating the threat of terrorism emanating from neighbouring Afghanistan.

"Durable peace, stability and economic development can only be achieved with the eradication of the menace of terrorism emanating from Afghan soil," he said while speaking at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Foreign Ministers' meeting.

He said that Pakistan desired to see a "peaceful, stable, regionally integrated and prosperous Afghanistan which is at peace with itself and its neighbours," adding that this would be in the best interest of all SCO member states and beyond. He said that currently, the threat of terrorism emanating from Afghanistan was one of the most serious security challenges for Pakistan. He said that terrorist organisations continued to recruit, train and operate from Afghan soil "under the watch and facilitation of the Afghan Taliban regime."

He said that this support was "well-documented," adding that Pakistan was at the forefront of this threat. He added that this year alone, more than 560 Pakistanis have been killed in over 2,000 terrorist at-

tacks.

It is also deeply concerning that Afghan nationals have been found to be involved in these terrorist incidents," the minister said.

He urged the SCO to demand the Afghan Taliban regime to "honour its counter-terrorism commitments to the international community and fulfil its respon-

culture and peace among others."

Looking towards the future, Dar said, the SCO's development strategy for the next decade should focus on digital inclusivity, bridging technological divide and ensuring energy security.

Talking about the conflict in the Middle East, Dar also said, "Pa-

kistan's close engagement with both parties, Dar said. He added that Pakistan also engaged in "intensive diplomatic outreach to regional and international partners" to make the deal possible.

"Pakistan deeply appreciates the trust and confidence reposed in it by both Iran and the United States in under-



sibilities towards global peace and security."

During his remarks, Dar said that since its establishment, the SCO has become "an anchor for regional cooperation, driving vital progress in peace, security, stability and economic connectivity while also simultaneously fostering deep cultural exchanges among member states."

He said that over the last 25 years, the SCO had transitioned from a security-centric Shanghai Five to a "comprehensive entity that integrates security, economy, development,

kistan firmly believes that dialogue, diplomacy and mutual respect provide the only sustainable way forward to resolve conflicts and achieve durable peace and security."

He added that this principle led to Pakistan hosting talks between the United States and Iran in Islamabad in April, "enabling first high-level direct diplomatic contact between the two sides after 47 years."

The Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed in June 2026, was a "historic breakthrough" that became possible due to

taking this challenging responsibility in the larger interests of peace and security." Dar then urged the international community to seize the opportunity provided by the Islamabad MoU and US-Iran technical talks to push for lasting peace. Dar meets Kyrgyz president, Iranian and Chinese foreign ministers

Dar also held separate bilateral meetings with Kyrgyz Republic President Sadyr Nurgaliyev, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi,

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

SC rules FCC has exclusive jurisdiction over NAB cases

NEWS DESK: Supreme Court (SC) on Friday ruled that it no longer has jurisdiction to hear cases under the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) law, holding that the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) must hear all criminal appeals and pending petitions under amendments introduced earlier this year.

The ruling is expected to affect pending proceedings involving Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi in the £190 million NAB case.

They had challenged the rejection of their bail pleas before

member bench, comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Musarrat Hsani and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan, reserved its verdict on July 16 before issuing the short orders and subsequently releasing the detailed reasons.

The court rejected arguments that it could continue hearing bail applications while the Constitutional Court dealt with the main appeals, saying such a course would be contrary to law.

"It is not possible" for bail petitions to remain before the SC while substantive appeals are heard by the Constitutional Court, the judge-

ment bench, comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Musarrat Hsani and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan, reserved its verdict on July 16 before issuing the short orders and subsequently releasing the detailed reasons.

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the SC, but the registrar returned their petition after raising objections, stating that the appropriate forum was the FCC. Friday's judgment confirms that such matters fall within the Constitutional Court's jurisdiction.

The ruling, delivered by a three-member bench headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, settled a jurisdictional question that emerged following amendments to the NAB law on March 5 this year. The court held that Sections 32 and 32A of the amended law, read with Articles 175A and 175F of the Constitution, vest appellate jurisdiction in NAB matters exclusively in the FCC.

In a detailed 30-page judgment issued today, the SC directed that all pending criminal appeals and petitions in NAB cases be transferred to the Constitutional Court. The three-

member bench, comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Musarrat Hsani and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan, reserved its verdict on July 16 before issuing the short orders and subsequently releasing the detailed reasons.

The court emphasised that jurisdiction is determined by the conduct of litigants or the courts.

Addressing an argument based on an earlier SC order issued after the NAB amendments came into force, the court observed that the question of jurisdiction had not been raised in that case. It said the absence of an objection could not confer jurisdiction where the law did not.

"Even if no objection is raised, jurisdiction is determined by law," the judgment said.

The court further observed that the reasons behind the earlier bail order could only be explained by the bench that heard the matter, as the issue of jurisdiction



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'Not a matter of surrender or conquest': SC says it cannot hear NAB cases, transfers them to FCC

NEWS DESK: The Supreme Court on Friday settled a jurisdictional dispute by declaring that it could not hear bail applications in pending National Accountability Bureau (NAB) appeals, and all such pending criminal appeals should be transferred to the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC).

This court has no jurisdiction to take cognisance in the NAB cases in terms of Article 175F (a) of the Constitution, read with Section 32 and 32-A of the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999 (NAO)," stated a 30-page judgment

authored by Justices Muhammad Ali Mazhar, who headed a three-member bench that took up the matter.

The ruling also referred to arguments that the Supreme Court should not surrender its jurisdiction come what may, with the judges observing that courts could "not play to the gallery" for admiration, popularity and media commendations or for public perception, instead of adhering to the

law and Constitution. The duty of the court was to follow the law and not make decisions or assume a jurisdiction motivated by media mileage or public consumption, the bench noted.

"We are fully conscious and also sanguine that neither the court should assume the jurisdiction not vested in it by law nor should abdicate its jurisdiction so vested under the law, rather, the jurisdiction is decided by the Consti-

tution and the law itself. It is not a matter of surrender or conquest, but it is regulated by the law," the judgement read.

The bench further observed that "unbridled judicial overreach, including flagrant

misuse of suo motu powers as might be right in the past, unerringly harmed the institutional image and its legitimacy and ultimately resulted in major legislative changes in the Constitution and the laws of

our judicial system".

"If a court does not possess statutory jurisdiction over a matter, it must step away without any intervention. No judge is robbed, crowned or sceptered as a king to do whatever suits his whim and caprice as one-

man rule," the judgement concluded.

The ruling came on two petitions taken up by the bench headed by Justice Mazhar and comprising Justices Musarrat Hsani and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan.

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Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) governor seeks federal tax relief for ex-Fata, Malakand

NEWS DESK: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday requested Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to abolish federal taxes in the erstwhile tribal areas and Malakand division.

In a letter to the prime minister, Kundi stated that under Article 247 of the Constitution, as it stood before the 25th Amendment, and subsequent legal commitments made at the time of the merger, the erst-

while tribal areas and merged districts were granted a special tax-exempt status in recognition of their unique historical, economic and security circumstances.

He said the exemption was to remain in force for a transitional period to allow long-neglected areas to rebuild and integrate into the national economic mainstream.

The governor informed the prime minis-

ter that the KP government had abolished provincial taxes applicable to the merged districts and Malakand division, honouring the spirit of the merger agreement and easing the economic burden on a population still recovering from decades of conflict, displacement and underdevelopment.

He described the move as a significant gesture of goodwill and solidarity with the tribal people, but added that

the relief remained incomplete without a corresponding federal commitment.

Kundi said federal taxes, including income tax, sales tax and other levies, continued to be applied in these areas despite the lapse of the exemption period without adequate consultation and despite the ground reality that had necessitated the original exemption remaining largely unchanged.

He said the exemption was to remain in force for a transitional period to allow long-neglected areas to rebuild and integrate into the national economic mainstream.

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