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QUETTA VOICE

Chagai Attack: Five Trailers, Two Bowser Trucks Torched by Armed Men in Padag, One Driver Injured

Riaz Baloch:

DALBANDIN: Unknown armed men opened fire on parked trailers and bowser trucks before setting them ablaze in the Padag area of Chagai district, Balochistan, leaving five trailers and two bowser

injuries and was rushed to a nearby hospital, where he is receiving medical treatment. Soon after the incident, Balochistan Police and other law enforcement agencies reached the scene, cordoned off the area, and collected evidence.



DALBANDIN: Unknown armed men opened fire on parked trailers and bowser trucks

trucks destroyed and one driver injured, police said. According to police sources, the Chagai attack occurred on Monday when unidentified gunmen targeted heavy vehicles parked outside a roadside hotel in Padag, a remote area of Chagai district. The attackers first opened indiscriminate fire on the parked vehicles before setting them on fire. As a result of the attack, five trailers and two bowser trucks were completely gutted, causing heavy financial losses. One driver sustained gunshot

A search operation has been launched to trace the unidentified attackers, while investigators are examining all possible motives behind the assault. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack so far, and authorities have not yet disclosed further details about the suspects. The latest incident highlights the continuing security challenges in parts of Chagai district and other areas of Balochistan, where attacks on vehicles and transport routes have raised concerns among transporters and local residents.



QUETTA: CM Sarfraz Bugti Announces Modernisation of Quetta's Quaid-e-Azam Library.

CM Sarfraz Bugti Announces Modernisation of Quetta's Quaid-e-Azam Library

Syed Muhammad Yaseen:

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has taken immediate notice of complaints raised by students of the Quaid-e-Azam Library in Quetta and invited them to the Chief Minister's Secretariat for a detailed meeting. During the meeting, the chief minister listened to students' concerns, suggestions and requirements and announced several measures to improve the library's facilities. He also directed the relevant authorities to ensure immediate implementation of the decisions. CM Sarfraz Bugti announced that the Quaid-e-

Azam Library Quetta would be transformed into a modern and model library in Pakistan, with the upgradation process to be completed within the next three months. The chief minister directed authorities to establish a modern digital lab at the library and provide students with quality and latest-edition books covering various academic disciplines. He also ordered the immediate activation of the library's cooling and solar power systems to ensure students have access to a better educational and study environment. Speaking on the occasion, CM Sarfraz Bugti said the Balochistan government con-

siders youth the centre of its development policies. He said it was the government's responsibility to directly listen to the views, suggestions and problems of young people. He stressed the need to strengthen trust and communication between the youth and the state, saying stronger engagement would help lay the foundation for a confident, talented and progressive society. The chief minister further said that access to education, research, reading facilities and modern knowledge was a fundamental right of the youth. He added that the provincial government was taking practical steps to provide mod-

ern facilities in educational institutions and libraries across Balochistan. According to the chief minister, the initiative aims to provide young people with equal opportunities to enhance their skills, pursue academic excellence and contribute to the development of the province. During the meeting, students appreciated CM Sarfraz Bugti's decision to address their concerns promptly, improve facilities at the Quaid-e-Azam Library and engage directly with young people. They described the initiative as a practical reflection of the chief minister's youth-friendly and education-focused vision.

Mahmood Khan Achakzai Announces Pashtun Jirga in Quetta, Nationwide Movement for Imran Khan's Release

Ali Hamza:

QUETTA: Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Mahmood Khan Achakzai has announced a three-day Pashtun Jirga in Quetta from August 29 to 31, along with a nationwide political movement on August 5 to demand the release of former Prime Minister and PTI founder Imran Khan.

Speaking at a press conference in Quetta, Achakzai said the proposed Pashtun Jirga would bring together people to discuss the political, security and administrative challenges facing Pashtun-majority areas.

He said the jirga would particularly address the ongoing division of districts in Balochistan, warning that Pashtun areas should not be divided without taking the people into confidence. He announced that the issue would be formally discussed at the upcoming jirga and that the concerns of the people would be presented before the public. Achakzai further announced that a larger Pashtun



QUETTA: Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Mahmood Khan Achakzai Speaking at a press conference in Quetta.

Jirga would be convened in September or October to discuss broader political and regional issues affecting the Pashtun population.

Turning to national politics, the opposition leader announced that a countrywide movement would be launched

on August 5, coinciding with the completion of three years of Imran Khan's imprisonment.

Achakzai said the movement would be held across Pakistan and would focus on demanding Imran Khan's release. He urged political forces

and the public to join the movement, describing the country's political situation as a matter of serious concern.

The announcement comes amid continued political tensions in Pakistan, with the opposition raising concerns over the political and constitutional

situation in the country.

Achakzai also expressed serious concern over the deteriorating security situation in Balochistan and the wider Pashtun belt. He said people were facing insecurity, while incidents of violence, attacks on vehicles and the killing of

workers had created fear among the public.

He questioned why no relevant officials had resigned following major incidents in the province and criticized the authorities over what he described as a lack of accountability.

The opposition leader also raised concerns over alleged land allotments in Pashtun areas, saying that the people would not accept recent allocations. He maintained that the people had the right to protect their land and interests.

He also highlighted alleged extortion from drivers travelling on national highways and complained about high airline fares, saying ordinary citizens were facing increasing difficulties.

Achakzai strongly condemned violence against the Kashmiri people and called for solidarity with them.

The Pashtun Jirga scheduled for August 29-31 in Quetta and the nationwide movement announced for August 5 in support of Imran Khan's release are expected to remain key developments in Pakistan's political landscape in the coming weeks.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Balochistan: Qila Saifullah Hailstorm Destroys 7M Fruit Trees, 18,000 Farmers Hit

Atta Kakar: A devastating hailstorm accompanied by powerful winds has caused widespread destruction across Qila Saifullah district in Balochistan, damaging more than 7 million fruit trees and affecting nearly 18,000 farmers and landowners.

The storm struck on April 18, severely impacting one of the province's most important horticultural regions and leaving thousands of rural families facing major economic uncertainty.

The disaster caused extensive damage to orchards, agricultural land, and seasonal crops,

particularly apple, apricot, and grape farms that form the backbone of the local economy.

Farmers say years of hard work and investment were wiped out within minutes as hail and strong winds tore through villages and farming areas across the district. Local growers have described the situation as catastrophic,

warning that many families may



struggle to survive financially without immediate government assistance.

Agriculture remains the primary source of income for

a large portion of Qila Saifullah's population, and the destruction of fruit orchards is expected to have long-term economic consequences for the re-

gion. Residents and farming communities have expressed frustration over delays in relief and compensation efforts.

Many affected farmers claim that official assessment and rehabilitation measures have been slow despite the scale of destruction.

Calls are growing for the provincial and federal governments to announce emergency compensation packages, interest-free agri-

cultural loans, and recovery support for affected communities. Farmers and local representatives are also demanding restoration of damaged ir-

rigation systems and the introduction of crop insurance mechanisms to help rural communities recover from climate-related disasters.

They argue that without urgent intervention, the crisis could deepen poverty and unemployment across the district.

The Qila Saifullah hailstorm has once again highlighted the vulnerability of Balochistan's agriculture sector to extreme weather events.

Experts warn that climate-related disasters, including hailstorms, droughts, and flash floods, are becoming increasingly frequent in the province,

placing additional pressure on farmers already struggling with limited infrastructure and rising production costs.

Analysts say stronger disaster management systems, climate-resilient agricultural policies, and faster

emergency response mechanisms are essential to protect rural livelihoods and ensure long-term stability in Balochistan's farming sector.

Hereditary Politics vs. Self-Made Leaders: Why Privilege Fails the People

Qaseem Shah: Politics in Pakistan has long been dominated by dynastic families, where power is inherited rather than earned.

While such politicians often claim experience and continuity, their record exposes a harsh truth: hereditary leadership breeds entitlement, detachment, and compromise, leaving ordinary citizens' struggles ignored.

Born into privilege, raised in opulent homes, and educated in elite institutions, dynastic leaders are often insulated from the harsh realities of poverty, unemployment, and social injustice.

For them, bungalows, luxury cars, armed convoys, and protocol perks are not luxuries but assumed necessities.

Over time, these comforts transform into entitlement, making public service a secondary concern.

Worse, dynastic politicians are bound by political debts, family obligations, and elite alliances, which forces them to compromise on issues critical to national interest.

Challenging corruption, confronting anti-political elements, or addressing systemic inequality often takes a backseat to protecting their personal and family power.

This creates a leadership class that is cautious, compro-



missed, and frequently unwilling to act decisively for the public good.

In contrast, self-made leaders emerge from struggle, not inheritance, often from humble or poor backgrounds.

Globally, Nelson Mandela, imprisoned for decades under apartheid, led South Africa to justice and reconciliation.

Lula da Silva, a former factory worker, became Brazil's president and

obligations, self-made politicians are able to challenge entrenched interests, fight corruption, and prioritize public service over personal gain.

History provides numerous examples of such leaders. Globally, Nelson Mandela, imprisoned for decades under apartheid, led South Africa to justice and reconciliation.

Lula da Silva, a former factory worker, became Brazil's president and

implemented programs that lifted millions out of poverty. Abraham Lincoln, born into poverty, preserved the United States during its gravest crisis and abolished slavery—proving that real leadership grows from struggle, not comfort.

Pakistan's political landscape has its share of self-made leaders who contrasted sharply with dynastic elites.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan (Bacha Khan),

born into modest means, dedicated his life to nonviolence, education, and the rights of the Pashtuns. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, though from a relatively well-off family,

rose through political activism and mass mobilization rather than relying solely on inheritance, leaving a profound imprint on Pakistan's political culture.

More recently, Imran Khan, initially a cricket superstar, built

a political movement emphasizing accountability and reform, rooted in public engagement rather than family power.

These leaders exemplify that real leadership is earned, not inherited, and it demands courage, integrity, and connection with the people.

Dynastic politics, in contrast, remains a structural barrier to progress in Pakistan.

Leaders born into privilege often see public service as an

entitlement rather than a responsibility.

Their compromised independence, obsession with status and perks, and reluctance to confront entrenched interests make them ill-equipped to address pressing social and economic challenges.

As long as politics is dominated by inherited privilege, the needs of the poor and marginalized remain sidelined, and reforms remain superficial.

In the end, self-

made leaders rooted in struggle, empathy, and public service are the only hope for meaningful change.

True leadership requires more than a family name; it requires vision, courage, and the willingness to put the people above privilege, comfort, and personal gain.

For Pakistan, the challenge is clear: move away from dynastic entitlement and empower leaders who have earned the right to lead.

Bashir Ahmed Bangulzai Appointed Chairman of Chief Minister's Inspection Team (CMIT) Balochistan

Ali Hamza: In a major administrative development, senior bureaucrat Bashir Ahmed Bangulzai has been appointed as the Chairman of the Chief Minister's Inspection Team (CMIT), Balochistan. An official posting notification in this regard was formally issued by the provincial government on Monday.

Bangulzai succeeds former head Muhammad Ali Kakar, who was previously serving as the Chairman of the high-profile inspection body.

A Career Bureaucrat Takes the Helm

Bashir Ahmed Bangulzai is recognized as one of the most competent, dynamic, and experienced officers in the Balochistan administrative setup. Known for his strong record in provincial administration, he has held several key postings across the province, including:



Divisional Commissioner (including Nasirabad and Sibi divisions)

Provincial Secretary across key government departments

Senior executive roles in provincial management and public sector development

His appointment comes at a crucial period as the

Balochistan streamlines institutional performance and reinforce administrative accountability across all provincial departments.

Role of CMIT in Institutional Oversight & Anti-Corruption

The Chief Minister's Inspection Team (CMIT)

Balochistan serves as the primary watchdog and investigative organ operating directly under the Chief Minister.

As the principal administrative watchdog in Quetta and across the province, the team is responsible for:

Investigating Corruption & Misconduct:

Conducting detailed inquiries into administrative irregularities, ghost development schemes, and financial corruption cases involving provincial departments.

Monitoring PSDP Development Projects: Carrying out surprise physical audits and quality assurance on public infrastructure projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP).

Evaluating Departmental Performance: Reviewing public sector delivery, ensuring transparency in public fund allocations, and recommending swift disciplinary or corrective action.

With Bangulzai taking charge of the inspection body, observers anticipate accelerated proceedings on pending corruption cases, stricter oversight of development initiatives, and a renewed push for transparent governance in Balochistan.

Musa Khel Health Officials Review EPI Services and Cold Chain Management at Rural Health Units

MUSA KHIL: Deputy District Health Officer Dr. Nadir Khan Esot conducted a detailed inspection of Basic Health Units (BHUs) in Kangri, Rar Hasham, and Khajori to evaluate the delivery of routine immunization services and overall healthcare management.

The visit was attended by BHHN District Coordinator Mueeb-ur-Rehman, who accompanied the health team during the inspections.

The primary objective of the visit was to assess the performance of the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) and review the overall functioning of the primary healthcare facilities.

During the inspection, officials examined

staff attendance, adherence to duty schedules, and the quality of healthcare services being provided to local communities.

Special attention was given to the EPI sites, where the inspection team reviewed Lined Refrigerator (ILR)

maintenance, the vaccine cold chain system, vaccine stock levels, monitoring charts, personnel registers, and other relevant documentation to ensure data accuracy and strengthen the immunization program.

At the conclusion of the visit, Dr. Nadir Khan Esot instructed the concerned staff to maintain complete and up-to-date records, ensure regular maintenance of

healthcare services to the public.

Musa Khel news,

Dr. Nadir Khan Esot,

Deputy District Health Officer, BHHN Kangri, BHHN Rar Hasham, BHHN Khajori.

Expanded Programme on Immunization, EPI Balochistan, routine immunization, vaccine cold chain, ILR maintenance, vaccine stock management, primary healthcare, Balochistan health news, immunization services.

Balochistan Adviser Nasim-ur-Rehman Mullahkail Reaffirms

Commitment to Environmental Protection and Climate Action

QUETTA: Balochistan's Adviser for Environment and Climate Change, Nasim-ur-Rehman Khan Mullahkail, has reaffirmed that environmental protection and sustainable development remain among the provincial government's highest priorities, emphasizing the need for coordinated efforts to address the growing environmental challenges facing the province.

Speaking to various delegations at his office in Quetta, the adviser said the government is implementing a comprehensive and effective strategy to tackle key environmental issues, including air pollution, climate change, deforestation, and the depletion of water resources.

Nasim-ur-Rehman Khan Mullahkail stated that, under the directives of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, the government has launched modern initiatives aimed at controlling industrial emissions, expanding tree plantation campaigns,

and improving environmental conditions in urban areas.

He added that relevant departments have been instructed to ensure strict enforcement of environmental laws, warning that legal action will be taken against individuals or organizations found violating environmental regulations.

Highlighting the importance of community participation, the adviser said that environmental goals cannot be achieved without public support.

He noted that the government is expanding awareness campaigns to educate citizens about environmental conservation and sustainable practices.

He further said that educational institutions, civil society organizations, and the media will be engaged to promote an environmentally responsible lifestyle and encourage greater public participation in climate action initiatives.

Reaffirming the provincial government's long-term commitment, Nasim-ur-Rehman Khan Mullahkail assured that their concerns would be addressed on a priority basis.

Quetta news, Nasim-ur-Rehman Khan Mullahkail, Balochistan Environment Adviser, climate change, environmental protection, sustainable development, air pollution, industrial emissions, tree plantation campaign, environmental laws, water conservation, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, Balochistan climate action, green environment, Quetta environmental news.

Balochistan Finalizes Preparations for Pakistan's Independence Day Celebrations

QUETTA: Secretary Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD) Balochistan, Agha Faisal, chaired a high-level meeting to review preparations for Pakistan's Independence Day celebrations on August 14, reaffirming the government's commitment to celebrating the occasion across Balochistan with national enthusiasm and patriotic spirit.

The meeting was attended by senior officials from all relevant government departments and administrative institutions, who reviewed arrangements to ensure a smooth and well-organized celebrations throughout the province.

Addressing the participants, Agha Faisal said that Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti has issued clear directives to ensure that all Independence Day arrangements are completed efficiently, systematically, and well ahead of time. He instructed every department to finalize responsibilities within their respective jurisdictions without delay.

The Secretary directed all Deputy Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners to ensure that flag-hoisting ceremonies are held on schedule at the district level, emphasizing strict adherence to timing and proper coordination.

He also instructed district administrations to implement comprehensive security measures for all Independence Day events and to ensure that personnel deployed on security and administrative duties are provided with clean drinking water, meals, and other essential facilities.

Agha Faisal described freedom as one of the greatest blessings bestowed by Almighty Allah, stating that vibrant national celebrations their Independence Day with gratitude, dignity, and patriotism. He urged all officials to perform their responsibilities with honesty, dedication, and a strong sense of national duty to ensure that this year's Independence Day celebrations reflect discipline, unity, and national pride.

The meeting concluded with a collective commitment by all participating departments to work in close coordination to ensure a successful and peaceful August 14 celebrations across Balochistan.

Quetta news, Balochistan Independence Day, August 14 celebrations, S&GAD Balochistan, Agha Faisal, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, Independence Day preparations, flag hoisting ceremony, district administration, security arrangements, Pakistan Independence Day 2026, Balochistan government news, Quetta updates.

PPP Leader Haji Ali Madad Jattak Holds Open Public Forum to Address Citizens' Issues in Quetta

QUETTA: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Central Leader and Provincial Minister Haji Ali Madad Jattak held an open public forum (Khuli Kachehr) at his residence, Jattak House, Asifabad, where he listened to the grievances and concerns of citizens from various areas and issued on-the-spot directives to the relevant authorities for their immediate resolution.

The public forum was attended by a large number of local residents, community elders, party workers, and delegations representing different neighborhoods. Speaking on the occasion, Haji Ali Madad Jattak said that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) firmly believes in public service, adding that resolving the problems of ordinary citizens and promoting public welfare remain the party's core political mission. He emphasized that



staying connected with the people, listening to their concerns firsthand, and taking practical steps to resolve their issues is both a political and moral responsibility that will continue to receive his full attention.

The provincial minister stated that under the leadership of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, the provincial government is actively implementing development projects, expanding basic public services, and improving infrastructure across Balochistan.

He noted that development work is progressing rapidly in Sindh and other areas in line with the needs of local communities.

Haji Ali Madad Jattak assured residents that all available resources would be utilized to ensure balanced development throughout the constituency, improve basic infrastructure, and enhance the delivery of civic amenities.

He also instructed officials from the open government department that unnecessary delays in resolving public issues would not be tolerated and directed them to perform their duties with honesty, integrity, and a strong commitment to public service.

The PPP leader said the purpose of holding regular open public forums is to reduce the gap between the government and the people while ensuring that citizens receive prompt relief at their doorstep.

Citizens attending the event appreciated Haji Ali Madad Jattak's initiative of meeting people directly, listening

to their concerns, and taking immediate action to address their issues.

Participants described the initiative as a people-friendly tradition and expressed hope that its continuation would further improve public service delivery and strengthen citizens' trust in government institutions.

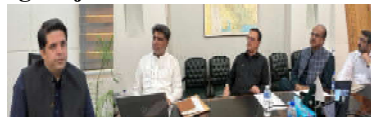
Quetta news, Haji Ali Madad Jattak, PPP Balochistan, Pakistan Peoples Party, Khuli Kachehr, public forum, public grievances, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

Balochistan Reviews Rakhni Town Uplift and Bazaar Remodeling Project to Accelerate Urban Development

QUETTA: Secretary Communications and Works (C&W) Balochistan Babar Khan chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the progress of the Rakhni Town Uplift and Rakhni Bazaar Remodeling Project, a key urban development initiative aimed at modernizing the divisional headquarters of Koh-e-Suleman Division.

The meeting was attended virtually by Deputy Commissioner Barkhan, while Chief Engineer Loralai-Zhob Zone Qazi Noor-ul-Haq, Superintending Engineer Barkhan and Musa Khel Abdul Razaq Mandokhail, Executive Engineer Barkhan Engineer Fazal Karim, project consultants, and other senior officials participated in person.

During the meeting, officials reviewed the progress of construction activities, discussed challenges affecting implementation, and examined the



roadmap for timely completion of the project. Detailed briefing informed participants that work is progressing steadily and that quality standards will not be compromised during execution.

Addressing the meeting, Secretary Babar Khan emphasized that Rakhni has gained strategic importance as the divisional headquarters following the establishment of Koh-e-Suleman Division, making the modernization of

its urban infrastructure a provincial priority.

He said that improving roads, drainage systems, marketplaces, and civic infrastructure is essential to meet the growing administrative and public service needs of the city. He directed the concerned departments to further accelerate construction work while maintaining the highest quality standards.

The Secretary instructed all executing agencies to maximize work wherever conditions permit and stressed the importance of teamwork and close coordination to ensure

the project is completed within the stipulated timeframe.

Babar Khan also directed the Deputy Commissioner Barkhan to establish a joint monitoring committee to conduct comprehensive oversight of the project, identify any shortcomings, and ensure timely corrective measures.

Highlighting the provincial government's vision, he said the project aims to transform Rakhni into a modern urban center equipped with wider roads, an efficient drainage network, improved street lighting, a high-

quality bypass, and a well-organized central market.

Separate and properly planned spaces will also be developed for shopkeepers and street vendors to improve traffic flow and commercial activity.

Reaffirming the government's commitment, the Secretary said that all ongoing development projects in Rakhni will be completed on schedule to provide lasting relief to residents and promote sustainable growth and prosperity in the underdeveloped areas of Balochistan.

He further stated that the department, in coordination with the Traffic Police and other relevant authorities, will continue taking indiscriminate action against those violating traffic laws and transport regulations to improve road safety across Quetta.

Quetta Tightens Safety Rules for Water Tanker Operations, Bans Underage and Unregistered Drivers

QUETTA: Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Muhammad Anwar Kakar chaired a meeting with the Water Tanker Association to review road safety measures and regulatory compliance for water tanker operations in the provincial capital. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Traffic Police, the Regional Transport Authority (RTA), and the Water Tanker Association. During the meeting, it was decided that un-



derage drivers and individuals without a valid Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) will not be permitted to operate water tankers. Authorities warned that any violation of this directive would result in strict legal action, including arrest and suspension of water supply services. The meeting also instructed all water tanker owners to comply with mandatory safety measures. Owners were directed to ensure that all front and rear lights on their tankers remain

fully operational and to complete the issuance and renewal of valid driving licenses for all tanker drivers without delay. Addressing the participants, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Muhammad Anwar Kakar empha-

sized that the protection of citizens' lives and property is the administration's top priority and that there would be no compromise on public safety.

He further stated that the department, in coordination with the Traffic Police and other relevant authorities, will continue taking indiscriminate action against those violating traffic laws and transport regulations to improve road safety across Quetta.

Govt, 'protesters' must agree to formation of a truth commission to resolve unrest in AJK, demands Bilawal

NEWS DESK: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Tuesday demanded that the government and the "protesters" agree to the formation of a truth and reconciliation commission to resolve ongoing tensions in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

The PPP has repeatedly called for the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission amid protests in AJK.

Over the past month, the regional administration and the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) have been at odds over various issues, most notably the committee's demand to abolish the 12 seats in the region's Legislative Assembly, which has resulted in protests across the region.

Addressing a gathering of party workers in Muzaffarabad amid ongoing elections in the region, the PPP chairman said, "It is necessary that during these historic elections, we restore peace and maintain fairness and transparency. To honour the future of Kashmir and Pakistan's stance on Kashmir, this is not about anyone's victory or defeat. The state and the protesters will have to accept this recommendation from the PPP."

Bilawal said he had been campaigning for the formation of the commission for the past month.

"All the state had to



do was form a truth and reconciliation commission and task it with discerning the truth, and the protesters would have been asked to halt their protests until the commission presented its findings," he said. However, he recalled that neither party had been willing to "back down".

"What will then become of my innocent Kashmiris, who have no connection to either the protesters or the government?" he added.

Bilawal maintained that the unrest could have been resolved "peacefully and without endangering anyone". "I understand their pain, whether they are right or wrong [...] I feel for their mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers," he said, urging that the protesters should be punished on the spot.

"If you want to take action, investigate and

form a commission, which will then tell you who is the murderer and who is whose agent; this issue cannot be resolved on the street."

On AJK polls, the PPP chairman began his address with a saying by Roman philosopher Tacitus: "To robbery, butchery and rapine, they give the lying name of 'government'; they create a desolation and call it peace."

He said that the saying reminded him of the current situation in AJK. "What is happening here, from Mirpur to Poonch, can we call it democracy?"

Bilawal went on to claim that the PPP was leading the race in Mirpur in the elections. "I understand their pain, whether they are right or wrong [...] I feel for their mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers," he said, urging that the protesters should be punished on the spot.

According to preliminary results issued by the AJK Election Commission (Forms-26 and Forms-27), the PML-N has emerged as

the winner in nine constituencies, while the PPP could secure only four seats. It should also be mentioned that the violence, and allegations of rigging have marred the polling process in AJK, with the PML-N and PPP accusing each other of electoral malpractice.

"It is our responsibility to honour their votes; we will neither back down nor bow before anyone. We will claim every single one of our votes," he said, as he levelled rigging allegations at the opposing side.

"We have a 100 per cent vote in Mirpur, and we are willing to take it back," Bilawal warned. He questioned how PPP candidate Chaudhry Yasir could have lost his native constituency, terming the outcome "unacceptable".

If, he said, they will let them steal our mandate in Mirpur and Kotli, then they are gravely mistaken," he remarked.

PMD forecasts fresh spell of monsoon rains across country from July 29 to August 5

NEWS DESK: A fresh spell of rainfall is expected in the country from July 29 to August 5, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said on Tuesday as several parts of the country reeled from a preceding spell and subsequent flooding.

"Monsoon currents from the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal are likely to penetrate upper and central parts of the country from July 29," the Met Office said in its forecast, adding that a westerly wave currently affecting northern areas would likely strengthen from August 1 and affect most of the upper and central parts of the country.

PMD warned that heavy rainfall may cause urban flooding in low-lying areas of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Multan and Faisalabad from July 30 to August 4. It also warned of landslides in KP, particularly in Dir, Chitral, Swat, Kohistan, Buner, Battagram, Mansehra, Haripur and Abbottabad, as well as in GB, Murree, Galiyat and AJK from July 30 to August 5.

According to the advisory, heavy rainfall may also produce flash floods in "local streams/ nullahs of Kashmir, Punjab, Balochistan during the night of July 28 to August 5 with occasional gales."

It advised tourists to exercise caution during the forecast period.

The region-wise forecast issued by the PMD is as follows:

According to the forecast, rainfall accompanied by wind or thunderstorms is expected in Azad Jammu and Kashmir's (AJK) Neelum valley,

Khushab, Mianwali, Layyah, Bhakkar, Noorpur, Sargodha, Sahiwal and Pakpattan from July 29 to August 4 with occasional gales, the Met Office said.

It added that in B a h a w a l p u r, Bahawalnagar, Rahim Yar Khan, Khanpur, Multan, Vehari, Khanewal, Lodhran, Muzaffargarh, Kot

Mardan, Hangu from July 29 to August 5 with occasional gales, according to the forecast.

For Gilgit-Baltistan, the Met Office predicted rainfall and thunderstorms with moderate to heavy falls in Diamer, Astor, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, and Shigar from the evening or night of July 28 to August 6 with oc-



Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber, Mirpur, Attock, night of July 28 to August 5 with occasional gales.

In Punjab, scattered heavy to very heavy showers are expected in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Murree, Galiyat, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mandi Bahaudin, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Wazirabad, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Okara, Kasur, Sheikhupura, Nankana, Sahib, Faisalabad, Jhang, Fatah, Tek Singh, Chiniot,

Addu, Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajanpur, thunderstorms with scattered heavy showers are expected from July 31 to August 3 with occasional gales.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, rainfall with wind and thunder showers is expected in Dir, Chitral, Swat, Kohistan, Malakand, Nowshera, Charsadda, Karak, Tank, Lakki Marwat, Swabi, Shangla, Battagram, Buner, Kohat, Kurram, D.I. Khan, Bannu, Waziristan, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Peshawar,

casual gales. In Sindh, rain and thunderstorms with isolated moderate to heavy falls are expected in Karachi, Hyderabad, Tharparkar, Umer Kot, Mirpur Khask, Badin, Sanghar, Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Allahyar, Matari, Jamshoro, Shaheed Benazirabad, Ghotki, Kashmore, Jacobabad, Shikarpur, Sukkur, Qambar Shahdadkot, Larkana, Khairpur, Naushahro Feroze and Thatta districts from the evening of July 31 to August 2 with occasional gales.

Govt almost doubles blood money payment to heirs of victim on account of rising silver prices

NEWS DESK: With an unprecedented 97pc increase, the federal government on Tuesday set the value of blood money (diyat) at more than Rs19 million for the fiscal year 2026-27.

According to a notification issued by the Ministry of Finance, the government set the value of diyat at Rs19,352,390, as required under the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC), 1860.

Diyat is compensation for murder payable by the offender to the heirs of the victim.

The amount reflects the value of 30,630 grams of silver under subsection (2) of Section

323 of the PPC. The notified value of blood money marks an increase of around 97pc from the FY2025-26 value of Rs9,828,670, mainly because of an increase in the value of silver.

The notified value of diyat stood at Rs6,757,902 for FY2023-24, which also marked a phenomenal 56pc increase over Rs4,318,524 in FY2022-23.

Section 323 of the PPC requires that the court, subject to the injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Holy Quran and Sunnah and keeping in view the financial position of the convict and the heirs of the victim,

fix the value of diyat, which should not be less than the value of 30,630 grams of silver.

Subsection (2) requires the federal government to declare, through a notification in the official Gazette, the value of silver on the first day of July each year, or on a date it may deem fit, which will determine the diyat amount for the fiscal year.

In July 2025, an amendment was proposed in the Senate seeking to substitute minimum blood money from 30,630 grams of silver to 2,000 grams of gold or one fourth of the assets held by the convict.

CM Maryam hails PML-N's 'outstanding victory' in AJK elections, urges PPP to accept defeat

NEWS DESK: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Tuesday hailed the "outstanding victory" of the PML-N in the first phase of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) elections, urging the PPP to accept defeat.

In her televised address, CM Maryam said, "The PPP should have accepted its defeat by affirming the spirit of democracy, but I felt aggrieved by the kind of words used by PPP leaders."

"The state does not decide election results; only the people make this decision," she said in response to PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's allegations.

She added that when the PPP secured a majority in Gilgit-Baltistan's elections, the PML-N acknowledged it, congratulated it and offered it the opportunity to form the government. "Now you are alleging PML-N of rigging; when you won the GB election, there was no rigging there, but as you have lost the AJK election badly, you are now levelling rigging allegations," CM Maryam said.

The provincial chief executive further said that the PPP should have worked on its performance, built its narrative and presented a programme for the

people. "Neither did we have the narrative, nor a programme for the people of AJK or any record of your governance."

The Punjab chief minister added that the "continuity" the PPP received in Sindh could never be achieved by any other party. "Despite this, you had no project to show from Sindh; you could not tell [people about] your performance and could not give a roadmap of the future to the people of AJK."

"If you want to get votes, you cannot cry before the people; the people are much more aware these days."

PM Shehbaz directs elimination of unnecessary positions to improve govt performance

NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed the relevant authorities to eliminate unnecessary posts and positions in government departments to improve performance, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

In a statement, the PMO said PM Shehbaz chaired a review meeting on the federal government's right-sizing initiatives and measures to enhance public sector efficiency.

"Modern technology and improved training should be utilised to significantly enhance the performance of government institutions," the PMO stated.

During the meeting, the prime minister was apprised that under the right-sizing initiative, the Utility Stores Corporation,

Pakistan Public Works Department, and Pakistan Agriculture Storage and Services Corporation had already

been closed, resulting in savings for the national exchequer, the statement added.

Eliminating unnecessary posts and posi-

tions is an important component of the government's reform agenda," it quoted PM Shehbaz as saying.

"The implementation of right-sizing measures should be accelerated to improve the overall performance and efficiency of the government," he stressed.

According to the

Right-Sizing Committee regarding the implementation of the initiative.

"The right-sizing measures have reduced the ratio of the federal government's expenditure to GDP," it added.

During the meeting, it was informed that vacant posts across various ministries and gov-

ernment departments had been abolished.

"Proposals are being prepared for the right-sizing of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and autonomous bodies," it said.

The meeting was informed that Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and First Women Bank Limited had been privatised, while further steps were being taken for the privatisation of



Pakistani passport's ranking slips to 101st, still 4th-worst in the world

NEWS DESK: Pakistan's passport ranking has slipped by one position to the 101st spot globally and remains the fourth worst in the world, according to the Henley Passport Index, it emerged on Tuesday.

The Henley Passport Index compares 199 different passports across 272 different travel destinations, and the country's passport based on the number of destinations that can be accessed without a prior visa, or with a visa on arrival.

With visa-free access declining from 30 countries in May to 29 countries in July, the Pakistani passport's rank slipped by one rank to 101st.

The travel document has been declared the world's fourth worst since at least January 2021 on the Henley Index, based on multiple reports issued each year.

A graph showing Pakistan's ranking on the Henley Passport In-

dex over the years since 2006. — screengrab via henleyglobal.com

According to the Henley Index, Pakistani passport holders have free visa access to Barbados, Cook Islands, Dominica, Haiti, Micronesia, Montserrat, Rwanda, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, and Vanuatu.

Visa-on-arrival (VOA) is available for

Burundi, Cambodia, Comoro Islands, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Maldives, Mozambique, Nepal, Niue, Palau Islands, Samoa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, and Tuvalu. Electronic travel authorisations can also be obtained for Kenya, Seychelles and Sri Lanka.

Cape Verde Islands, Mozambique and Qatar have stopped offering

visa-free or VOA access to Pakistanis this year, although they did so in January.

The 100th ranking in May was also a descent from March, when the travel document ranked 98th with 31 countries accessible without a visa.

In February, the passport ranked 97th as Pakistani citizens had access to 32 destinations — up from 31 in

January, following the reinstatement of The Gambia.

Currently, the only countries scoring lower than Pakistan are Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Yemen now sits a spot higher on the list, with visa-free access to 30 countries.

Meanwhile, Singapore retains its position at the top of the list with a score of 192, followed by Japan, South Korea and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) continuing to tie for second place at 188 and Sweden in third at 187. Over the past decade, Pakistan has remained close to the bottom of the rankings, although its position has improved since 2021 when it stood at 113th in the world.

The travel document placed 100th on the list in 2024 and 2023, 109th in 2022 when it allowed entry into 32 countries sans a prior visa, and 107th in 2021 with the same visa-free score.

