



FRONT PAGE
Balochistan: Kalat Night Curfew Announced on...
Page No 1



OPINION
The growth-jobs paradox
Page No 2



BALUCHISTAN
Balochistan Literacy Rate Rises by 7%, 768,000...
Page No 3



NATIONAL
Bodies of Nirmal Purja, 4 other climbers airlifted to Skardu after Broad Peak...
Page No 4

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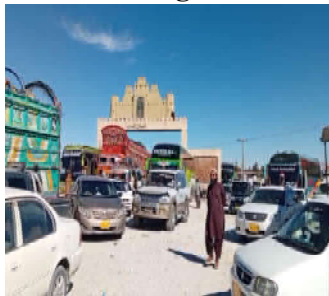
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QUETTA VOICE

Balochistan: Kalat Night Curfew Announced on Selected August Dates



File Photo: Kalat district administration has announced night curfew

Web Desk:

The Kalat district administration has announced a night curfew across the district on selected dates in August to maintain law and order amid the prevailing security situation.

According to Deputy Commissioner Kalat Munir Ahmed Durrani, the curfew will remain in force from 10:00pm to 7:00am on August 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 25 and 26.

Residents have been directed to avoid unnecessary movement during curfew hours and cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies.

The district administration warned that strict legal action will be taken against anyone violating the curfew.

Officials also urged citizens to protect themselves and their families by complying with the restrictions.

Meanwhile, the administration categorically rejected social media rumors claiming that Kalat markets would be closed from 3:00pm, calling the reports false and misleading.

Authorities clarified that no daytime market closure has been ordered, advising the public to rely only on official notifications issued by the district administration.

Officials further explained that a traffic police video message circulating on social media relates only to the night curfew.

Timings of 10:00pm to 7:00am and should not be interpreted as an announcement of daytime market closures.

The Kalat district administration appealed to residents to remain vigilant.

Officials also urged citizens to protect themselves and their families by complying with the restrictions.



File Photo of Asma Jattak.

Balochistan to Form High-Powered Committee to Probe Asma Jattak Case, Home Minister

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: Balochistan Home Minister Zia Ullah Langove has said that the provincial government will constitute a High-Powered Committee to investigate the Asma Jattak case, as authorities continue efforts to arrest the accused.

Speaking to Quetta Voice, Langove said that 12 raids have so far been conducted as part of the ongoing investigation and that law enforcement agencies

are actively pursuing the suspect.

According to the Home Minister, Asma Jattak was allegedly abducted in 2024 by a tribesman.

She was later freed following sustained pressure from the media and the local community. Langove further stated that the accused is believed to have the support of a local tribal elder, which has added complexity to the case.

He said that a few days ago, the same accused allegedly

killed Asma Jattak's father. Langove added that Asma's former fiancé had also been killed earlier, while five to six members of her family continue to face threats and pressure.

In a recent emotional appeal, Asma Jattak appeared before the media holding the Holy Quran.

calling on the government and law enforcement agencies to ensure justice for her family and provide them with protection.

The Home Minister told Quetta Voice that the proposed High-Powered Committee will investigate all aspects of the case to ensure a transparent inquiry and that the government remains committed to bringing those responsible to justice.

The case has drawn widespread public attention, with growing demands from civil society and citizens for the immediate arrest of the accused, protection of the affected family, and a fair and impartial investigation.

Quetta Traders Call Off August 7-8 Strike After Government Assurances

ALI HAMZA:

QUETTA: The strike planned by the traders' community in Quetta on August 7 and 8 has been postponed after successful negotiations between the Balochistan government and representatives of the Anjuman Tajiran Balochistan (Registered).

The announcement was made during a joint press conference held at the Quetta Metropolitan Corporation Office, attended by Balochistan Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langove.

Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehruallah, and Anjuman Tajiran Balochistan (Registered) President Abdul Rahim Agha.

Speaking to the media, Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langove described traders as an essential pillar of the economy and said it is the government's responsibility to resolve their legitimate concerns.

He reaffirmed that peaceful protest is a constitutional right of every citizen and appreciated the traders for choosing dialogue after registering their protest.

Langove announced that the provincial government has constituted a special committee to address the issues raised



QUETTA: Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langove, Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehruallah, and Anjuman Tajiran Balochistan (Registered) Addressing Press Conference.

by the business community.

The committee will include the Deputy Commissioner Quetta and the Administrator of Quetta Metropolitan Corporation, who will work closely

with traders to resolve pending matters.

President of the Anjuman Tajiran Balochistan (Registered), Abdul Rahim Agha, said the government had assured

the traders that the concerns of 986 shopkeepers, along with issues related to Haleem Plaza,

would be addressed. Following these assurances, he

officially announced the postponement of the planned strike.

"We have reached a positive understanding with the government and hope the trad-

ers' issues will now be resolved," Agha said.

During the press conference, the Home Minister reiterated that the demands of the traders are genuine and promised that the provincial government would take practical measures to resolve them.

Addressing the broader security situation, Langove urged the public not to be misled by fake news circulating on social media.

He said anti-state elements continue to exploit every opportunity to disrupt peace in Balochistan.

adding that the government's priority is to ensure the safety of national highways and maintain law and order across the province.

He warned that authorities would impose curfews or launch security operations wherever necessary to protect public safety.

Referring to the recent murder of the father of Asma Jattak,

Langove confirmed that law enforcement agencies are conducting raids to arrest the suspects involved in the case.

The joint announcement has eased concerns among traders and residents, with business activities in Quetta expected to continue normally after the withdrawal of the proposed strike.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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 communities 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, Pami, 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 13 (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.

Waterfiltration, 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.

The growth-jobs paradox

Israt Husain:
THE 2024 upheaval that toppled Sheikh Hasina's government in Bangladesh, alongside the youth-led protests over joblessness in India,

point to a shared crisis across South Asia: strong economic growth has not translated into enough good jobs for a workforce that is more educated than ever before.

As access to schooling and universities has expanded, so have people's employment expectations—expectations that a narrow job market has failed to meet, sparking widespread anger.

In India, nearly 40 per cent of graduates under 25 can't find work; youth joblessness is near 29pc.

Roughly four in five Indian workers depend on informal, insecure employment.

Economic theory holds that growth happens as workers shift from low-output farming to more productive factory and service jobs, and that this shift should expand labour demand and shrink joblessness.

But India, Bangladesh and Pakistan call that story. India and Bangladesh have sustained 6-7pc annual growth for over three decades.

Pakistan has managed only 3-4pc. Yet, none of the three has generated sufficient formal, productive work. Growth rate alone doesn't explain the shortfall.

Data from the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies show Indian employment expanding just 1.6pc a year from 2000 to 2012, then flat-lining from 2012 to 2019 even as GDP kept climbing.

The type of growth



a country experiences, not merely its speed, appears to shape how many jobs it creates. India's economic transformation makes the point vividly.

Agriculture accounted for 35pc of GDP in 1990, absorbing 63pc of the workforce; by 2025, its GDP share had dropped to 16pc, yet it still employed about 42pc of workers.

Productivity relative to the rest of the economy fell from 0.54 to 0.40 over this period, a sign of chronic underemployment and surplus labour stuck on the farm.

Meanwhile,

economy-wide productivity nearly quadrupled, ie, rising incomes came mostly from efficiency gains in industry and modern services, not new job creation. Workers haven't left agriculture at the rate that genuine structural change requires.

The outcome is reflected in living standards: CLSA data put average urban household income at around \$20,000, and just \$3,600 in rural areas.

Part of the problem is that new, productivity-boosting technologies tend to displace low-skilled workers faster than emerging industries can absorb them.

For instance, India's IT sector has become a world-class tech hub, pulling in over \$13 billion in venture capital each year, spawning countless start-ups and unicorns, and generating some \$300bn in annual revenue.

Yet, it employs only around six million people, barely 1pc of the national workforce. Rapid GDP growth by itself cannot ensure enough jobs or social stability.

The roughly 2,000 global capability centres set up by MNCs add only about 2m jobs. Against this, India's labour force grows by some 12m young people

annually, including about 1m engineering graduates, only half of whom are considered employable in their field. Over the past decade, the IT sector has added only about 1m jobs.

India may handle over 30pc of global outsourced business-process work, but this tech-driven growth has been skill-intensive, not job-intensive.

As Indian industry and services keep climbing the value chain, the need for unskilled and semi-skilled labour is set to shrink further, a trend that AI, robotics, and automation may speed up,

leaving policymakers with a dilemma: how to keep India competitive in technology while generating enough jobs for millions of young people without advanced skills.

From 2004 to 2023, Indian universities turned out around 5m graduates a year, only 2.8m or so found jobs annually.

The mismatch between supply and demand is severe. Between 2014 and 2022, over 220m applications competed for just 72,000 central government positions. The quality gap is worse than the quantity gap.

McKinsey research found only about a quar-

ter of Indian graduates have globally competitive skills, with another fifth meeting domestic hiring standards, leaving more than half short of what employers want.

Outdated syllabi, rote memorisation and scant hands-on training have left graduates credentialised but not always employable.

Educated unemployment stems from higher education's disconnect with real economic needs. Students, families and institutions are fixated on degrees and scores rather than analytical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Universities churn out graduates in fields with little market demand; technical and vocational roles go unfilled.

Government funding patterns deepen these imbalances. Elite schools like IITs and IIMs receive outsized public investment due to their prestige, while the overall cost of higher education keeps rising.

forcing families into major financial sacrifice, often for degrees that don't pay off, as graduates face long jobless stretches or settle for work below their qualification level.

The lesson from South Asia is that rapid GDP growth by itself cannot ensure enough jobs or social stability. It needs to be more labour-absorbing.

Manufacturing needs new momentum, agriculture needs to enable rather than obstruct structural change, and education must build skills the modern economy actually demands.

Otherwise, the gap between growth and employment will keep breeding frustration, endangering economic progress and political stability in the region.

Balochistan Literacy Rate Rises by 7%, 768,000 Children Return to School, Says Governor Mandokhail

Governor Announces Rs50,000 Cash Award for Top 10 Healthcare Skills Trainees; Says 10 Danish Schools Will Transform Education Across Balochistan

QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffer Khan Mandokhail has hailed a 7 percent increase in the province's overall literacy rate and the return of 768,000 out-of-school children to classrooms as one of the most significant achievements of the Balochistan Education Department.

Addressing a ceremony organized by the Directorate of Education Schools Balochistan in collaboration with UNICEF, Governor Mandokhail said the establishment of 10 Danish Schools across the province under the Prime Minister's Education Program would bring about an educational transformation by expanding access to quality education and creating brighter opportunities for the youth of Balochistan.

During the ceremony, the Governor also announced a cash award of Rs50,000 each for the Top 10 learners who demonstrated outstanding performance in the Healthcare Skills Training Program, in recognition of their academic excellence and practical achievements.



The event was attended by Provincial Education Minister Rameela Hameed Khan Durani, Mir Asim Kurdviello, Member of the National Assembly Jamal Shah Kakar, Parliamentary Secretary Rameela Hameed Khan Durani, Vice Chancellor of Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences Dr. Shabbir Lehi, Education Secretary Lal Jan Jaffar.

Principal Secretary to the Governor Abdul Nasir Dautani, and representatives of UNICEF, including Sherrish Nagi, Shazia, Iftikhar Shah, Naqatullah Khan, and Noorullah Watan Dost.

Governor Praises Skills Development Initiative Governor Mandokhail commended the joint efforts of UNICEF, the Education Department, and Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences (BUMHS) for successfully implementing the Healthcare Skills Training Program.

He emphasized that skills development has become one of the most pressing needs of the medical and health educational institutions must equip students with practical competencies and academic knowledge.

I am pleased that Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences has introduced

various diploma programs in healthcare and medical sciences, and these initiatives are already producing highly encouraging results," he said.

Proposal for 1,000-Bed Teaching Hospital and a Technical University Highlighting his vision for higher education and healthcare, the Governor said he is actively pursuing the establishment of a 1,000-bed state-of-the-art hospital and a Technical University near Kuch Road on the outskirts of Quetta.

He said the proposed institution would provide world-class training in healthcare, engineering, information technology, and other

emerging disciplines, enabling young people to acquire internationally competitive skills.

The Governor also stressed that skills development should become an integral part of the formal education curriculum, ensuring that graduates are equipped with practical expertise needed for employment and national development.

Focus on Modern Education Governor Mandokhail reiterated that improving educational standards remains one of the provincial government's highest priorities.

He said expanding access to quality education, promoting technical and vocational learning, and investing in human capital are essential for building a prosperous and competitive Balochistan.

Provincial Education Minister Rameela Hameed Khan Durani and Vice Chancellor Dr. Shabbir Lehi also addressed the ceremony, highlighting the importance of integrating healthcare and technical skills into mainstream education.

Quetta Administration Reviews Independence Day Decoration

Plans for Public and Private Buildings

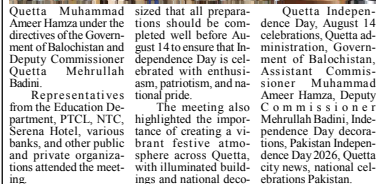
QUETTA: In preparation for Pakistan's 79th Independence Day, the Quetta district administration has held a coordination meeting to review arrangements for decorating and illuminating government and private buildings across the provincial capital.

The meeting was chaired by Assistant Commissioner (City)

During the session, the Assistant Commissioner instructed all participating departments and institutions to coordinate their respective buildings with national flags, decorative lighting, and patriotic displays in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Government of Balochistan.

Officials emphasized that all preparations should be completed well before August 14 to ensure that the Independence Day celebration is marked with enthusiasm, patriotism, and national pride.

The meeting also highlighted the importance of creating a vibrant festive atmosphere across Quetta, with illuminated buildings and national decorations.



Hub: 2.5-Kilometer Main Dariji Road to Sakran Completed in Record Time, Improving Connectivity and Economic Growth

HUB: The Balochistan Communications and Works (C&W) Department has successfully completed the construction of a 2.5-kilometer Main Dariji Road from Mamu Hotel to Sakran in a record timeframe, marking another significant milestone in the province's infrastructure development.

The project was completed under the special directives of Provincial Minister for Communications and Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khoso, with guidance from Secretary Communications and Works Babar Khan, and under the supervision of Executive Engineer Roads, Hub District, Abdul Wahab Zehri.

According to the C&W Department, the timely completion of the road reflects effective planning, strong administrative leadership, and adherence to high construction standards.

The newly completed road is expected to provide residents with safer, smoother, and more reliable transportation, while also improving access between local communities.

Officials said the improved road network will facilitate easier movement of people and goods, stimulate commercial activities, and contribute to the social and economic development of Hub District.

The enhanced connectivity is also expected to benefit businesses, commuters, and the surrounding communities by reducing travel time and improving accessibility.

The department pledged to further enhance its performance by ensuring the timely and high-quality completion of future infrastructure projects, supporting Hub's development, economic prosperity, and improved public services in line with the Government of Balochistan's broader development vision.

Hub road project, Main Dariji Road, Sakran Road construction, Balochistan Communications and Works Department, Mir Saleem Ahmed Khoso, Babar Khan, Abdul Wahab Zehri, Hub infrastructure development, Balochistan road projects, public infrastructure Pakistan.

Secretary C&W Babar Khan, stating that the department remains committed to ensuring the timely execution of development schemes across the province. They further affirmed that the Communications and Works Department in Hub District will continue implementing public welfare projects with the same level of professionalism and dedication.

The department pledged to further enhance its performance by ensuring the timely and high-quality completion of future infrastructure projects, supporting Hub's development, economic prosperity, and improved public services in line with the Government of Balochistan's broader development vision.

Hub road project, Main Dariji Road, Sakran Road construction, Balochistan Communications and Works Department, Mir Saleem Ahmed Khoso, Babar Khan, Abdul Wahab Zehri, Hub infrastructure development, Balochistan road projects, public infrastructure Pakistan.

Loralai Security Review: District Intelligence Coordination Committee Strengthens Measures Ahead of National Events

LORALAI: A high-level meeting of the District Intelligence Coordination Committee (DICC) was held in Loralai under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Haseeb Shuja, where senior civil, military, intelligence, and law enforcement officials reviewed the district's overall security situation and adopted a series of measures to strengthen public safety.

The meeting was attended by SSP Dr. Fahad Ahmed, Major Kamran, Additional Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ismail Mengal, representatives of intelligence agencies, and officials from various security and law enforcement institutions.

Comprehensive Review of Security Situation Participants conducted a detailed assessment of the law and order situation, security threats, protection of sensitive government installations, and preparedness for upcoming national events.



Intelligence agencies presented updated threat assessments, following which authorities directed all relevant departments to further strengthen security arrangements by reviewing police deployment, weapons, and operational resources.

The forum also emphasized closer coordination with the Frontier Corps (FC), conducting joint security exercises for sensitive installations, and completing a comprehensive security audit of all key government facilities across the district at the earliest.

Focus on Border Security, Smuggling, and Illegal Activities The committee reviewed

the ongoing repatriation process of illegal Afghan nationals and agreed to make the process more effective.

Participants also decided to intensify operations against illegal cannabis cultivation, continue coordinated anti-smuggling operations, ensure the secure transportation of minerals, and strengthen security for workers and heavy machinery engaged in development projects in remote areas.

Restrictions on Explosives and Urea Fertilizer to Continue Considering the prevailing security situation, the committee decided to maintain the existing ban on the transportation and

use of explosive materials for blasting purposes.

Officials also directed strict enforcement of the Government of Balochistan Home Department's ban on the sale, transportation, and distribution of urea fertilizer until further orders.

The meeting further resolved to continue to discriminate action against illegal arms dealers and eliminate unauthorized weapons trade throughout the district.

Enhanced Security for Public Institutions The forum instructed authorities to strengthen security arrangements for courts, judicial officers, hospi-

tals, universities, colleges, schools, and other sensitive public institutions.

Educational institutions were directed to prepare comprehensive security plans for national events and maintain close coordination with law enforcement agencies.

New Guidelines for Public Gatherings The committee decided that no rallies, processions, or large public gatherings would be permitted without an approved security plan, adequate protective arrangements, and a formal undertaking by organizers accepting responsibility for compliance with security protocols.

Balochistan Demands Resolution of Jacobabad Disputed Drain Issue, Rejects Additional Sindh Water Without Mutual Agreement

JACOBABAD: A high-level delegation from the Government of Balochistan held talks with officials in Jacobabad to address the long-standing dispute over the Jacobabad drainage channel (Sam Drain) connecting Sindh and Balochistan, emphasizing that no construction work within Balochistan's territory will be permitted until the province's concerns are fully addressed.

The meeting was held at the Deputy Commissioner's Office, Jacobabad, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner



Jacobabad Shahzad Ahmed Sali, following directives from Commissioner Nasiraband Division Salahuddin Nazraizi aimed at resolving the

inter-provincial drainage dispute through dialogue.

The Balochistan delegation included Deputy Commissioner

Jaffarabad Khalid Khan, Deputy Commissioner Sohbatur Farooq Tareen, Superintendent Engineer Irrigation Circle Madassir Zafar Khoso,

Assistant Commissioner Sohbatur Farooq Tareen, Divisional Officers Amanullah Gajani, Abid Ali Khoso, Imtiaz Ali Khoso, and other senior officials.

During the meeting, officials from the Sindh Irrigation Department delivered a detailed briefing on the disputed Jacobabad drainage project.

Presenting Balochistan's position, Deputy Commissioners Khalid Khan and Farooq Tareen, along with Superintendent Engineer Madassir Zafar Khoso,

Green Gwadar Movement: A Shared Responsibility for a Cleaner, Greener, and Sustainable Future

GWADAR: A clean, green, and environmentally friendly city is the hallmark of a progressive society.

Trees, effective waste management, and a healthy environment not only enhance the beauty of urban areas but also contribute to public health, economic growth, and sustainable development.

Recognizing this, the Government of Balochistan has placed environmental protection, afforestation, sanitation, and sustainable urban development at the heart of its development agenda to ensure a healthier and greener future for coming generations.

Trees are among nature's greatest gifts. They produce oxygen, reduce air pollution, regulate temperatures, improve rainfall patterns, prevent soil erosion, and provide habitat for birds and wildlife.

As the world faces the growing challenges of climate change, tree plantation is no longer just a social activity—it has become an environmental necessity.

Gwadar, the economic gateway of Pakistan, a strategic hub of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and a focal point for international investment,

is undergoing rapid urban and industrial development. Alongside this growth, environmental conservation has become equally important.

Given Gwadar's hot and arid climate, large-scale tree plantation is essential to reduce heat, improve air quality, and create a healthier urban environment.

Environmental experts believe that transforming Gwadar into a truly green city will require the planting of hundreds of thousands of trees—a goal that cannot be achieved by government institutions alone. Active public participation is indispensable. Keeping this national need in view, the

Green Gwadar Movement was launched to transform the city into a greener, cleaner, and more environmentally sustainable urban center. Under this initiative, extensive tree plantation campaigns are being carried out along roadsides, in parks, educational institutions, government offices, coastal areas, cemeteries, and other public spaces.

The campaign also places strong emphasis on cleanliness, beautification, and promoting an environmentally responsible civic culture.

However, environmental protection is not limited to planting trees. Ensuring their survival is equally important.



120 Female Students Graduate from Healthcare Skills Training Program in Gwadar as Second Phase Begins

GWADAR: In line with the Balochistan government's vision of equipping students with quality education and practical skills, the District Education Department Gwadar, in collaboration with the Education Support Program (ESP), UNICEF, and the European Union, has successfully completed the first phase of the Skills Education Healthcare Center training program at Government Girls High School



Shamshay Ismail, Gwadar. A total of 120 female students successfully

completed the first phase of the healthcare skills training program,

while the second phase has officially commenced with a new batch of participants. Medical Superintendent of Mir Abdul Ghafoor Kalmiti Teaching Hospital, Dr. Hafeez Baloch, said the initiative provides an eight-month comprehensive healthcare training course for female students from Grades 7 to 9. The curriculum includes First Aid, Emergency Response, Health and Safety, Basic Patient

Care, and other essential clinical and practical healthcare skills.

He explained that the program combines both theoretical and practical training, ensuring that students develop the confidence and competence to respond effectively and responsibly during medical emergencies. According to the program, students who complete the eight-month training will sit for an examination conducted.



Leaders from all political parties have voiced deep concern over the deteriorating law and order situation across Balochistan.

They highlighted that rising violence, extortion, and security threats continue to disrupt daily life, local businesses, and governance.

The leadership urged both federal and provincial authorities to take immediate, concrete steps to restore state writ and protect citizens.

PMDC Reschedules MDCAT 2026 to September 20 on Prime Minister's Directions

Syed Muhammad Yaseen
ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) has officially rescheduled the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) 2026 from August 16, 2026, to September 20, 2026, following the directions of the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

According to an official notification issued on August 6, 2026, the decision applies to all MDCAT 2026 candidates across Pakistan. PMDC stated that the postponement has been made in the best public interest to ensure the smooth, secure, and transparent conduct of the nationwide medical entrance examination.

The regulatory body clarified that all other terms, conditions, examination arrange-

ments, and admission procedures will remain unchanged unless further notified. Candidates have been advised to regularly check the official PMDC website and its communication channels for updates regarding the MDCAT 2026 exam schedule.



ment centres, and other important instructions. PMDC also expressed appreciation for the understanding and

cooperation of students, parents, universities, and other stakeholders, while regretting any inconvenience caused by the revised examination date.

The MDCAT 2026 is Pakistan's mandatory entrance examination for admissions to MBBS

and BDS programmes, with thousands of aspiring medical and dental students expected to appear in the test nationwide.

PM's Aide Mubarak Zeb Urges PMDC to Immediately Allocate MBBS/BDS Seats for Balochistan and Ex-FATA Students

Health Desk
ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Mubarak Zeb has formally urged the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) to immediately issue the long-awaited MBBS and BDS seat allocation for students from Balochistan and erstwhile FATA under the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Phase-III Scholarship Project for the 2025-26 academic session.

According to an official letter dated August 6, 2026, addressed to the President of PMDC, Mubarak Zeb expressed concern over the prolonged delay in the allocation of medical and dental seats, describing the matter as urgent and critical for hundreds of deserving students.

The letter states that the Ministry has remained in continuous coordination with PMDC over the past several months, repeatedly emphasizing the need to finalize the seat allocation without further delay. It warns that the prolonged process has created uncertainty, anxiety, and distress

among talented students from Balochistan and erstwhile FATA, many of whom are awaiting admissions through the HEC Phase-III scholarship programme.

Mubarak Zeb noted that with the academic year nearing its conclusion, any additional delay could result in students losing an entire academic session, affecting their educational future. Highlighting the broader significance of the initiative, he described the allocation of medical seats as an important step toward national integration, equal educational opportunities, and youth empow-

erment in historically underserved regions. He stressed that timely admissions would strengthen public confidence in national institutions and promote access to higher education for deserving candidates. The Minister requested PMDC to issue the formal notification for MBBS and BDS seat allocation at the earliest and communicate the finalized merit and college-wise allocation to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and the relevant provincial authorities, enabling HEC to complete the nomination process without further delay.



Bodies of Nirmal Purja, 4 other climbers airlifted to Skardu after Broad Peak avalanche

NEWS DESK: Bodies of five more international climbers, including world-renowned British-Nepali Nirmal Purja, have been airlifted to Skardu after they were killed in an avalanche on Broad Peak, the Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP) said on Thursday.

The avalanche struck on July 30, cutting off contact with the 10-member international expedition led by 43-year-old Purja on Broad Peak, one of the world's highest mountains. His company confirmed there were no survivors.

Following one of the most technically demanding recovery operations on Broad Peak, the Alpine Club of Pakistan confirms that the bodies of Nirmal Purja, Wang Zhong, Nima Sherpa, Gyalu Sherpa, and Kili Pemba "Kili" Sherpa have been transported to Skardu CMH Hospital by helicopter," ACP said in its statement on Thursday.

"Following necessary procedures and documentation, they will be transferred to Islamabad," it said, adding that they have been prepared for repatriation to their respective home countries under special arrangements.

ACP Secretary General Ayaz Shigri told Dawn that so far, seven bodies have been recovered and airlifted to Skardu. The search operation continues for the eighth day as Pakistani mountaineer Sohail Sakhi and American Sa-

rah Mallory Geis remain missing.

Shigri said remains believed to belong to Geis had been airlifted on Saturday along with bodies of two other climbers, but her body has still not been found.

The body of Nawang Thindu Sherpa was spotted but could not be recovered due to

butions and expressed their condolences to the bereaved families.

Later, all the bodies were transferred to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Skardu, where the necessary legal formalities, documentation and identification procedures were completed, ACP said.

The bodies were

ism and dedication. "Pakistan Army, local rescue teams and relevant agencies are participating in the search and rescue operation, and the search for the remaining missing mountaineers is continuing using all possible resources," the ACP statement noted.

The bodies of Purja,



its location in a high-altitude, avalanche-prone area, Niala Kiani of the ACP told Dawn.

A Pakistan Army helicopter on Thursday brought the five bodies to Skardu, where they were received by ACP, Balistan Commissioner Kamal Khan, army officers, civil administration officials, the tourism department, the district administration and local representatives.

The participants paid tribute to the deceased climbers, acknowledged their contri-

then placed in coffins, each draped with the national flag of the respective country before being accorded an official farewell with state honours.

Officials said that the search and rescue operation was carried out under extremely challenging conditions. They praised the exceptional efforts of the local high-altitude porters, rescue personnel and mountaineers who took part in the operation, and also commended the rescue team's professional-

Wang, Nima Sherpa and Kili Pemba Sherpa had been recovered on Sunday and airlifted to the base camp on Wednesday. Previously, Gyalu Sherpa's body had also been shifted to base camp.

The five bodies could not be immediately moved from the base camp of Broad Peak as helicopter service was needed to airlift them, but bad weather had created difficulties in the transfer.

The bodies of two other climbers, identified

IHC reserves order on pleas against Imran, Bushra's alleged solitary confinement

NEWS DESK: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday reserved its order on petitions seeking to declare the alleged solitary confinement of PTI founder Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi illegal after hearing details from both sides.

Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro observed that the court would issue an order after examining the record and extended the parties to submit in writing any judgments they wished to rely on.

During the hearing, Adiala Jail Superintendent Sajid Baig, Islamabad Advocate General Naveed Hayat Malik and counsel for the petitioners Barrister Salman Safdar appeared before the court.

The advocate general argued that the petitions were not maintainable and maintained that neither Imran nor Bushra had been kept in solitary confinement. He said the prison authorities had instead provided them with facilities exceeding those available to B-class prisoners.

He submitted that, owing to security considerations arising from Imran's political profile,

he had been housed separately from inmates, but such arrangements could not be termed solitary confinement. The jail authorities, he added, complied with previous court directions by providing newspapers, books and other facilities.

Justice Soomro questioned the nature of the security arrangements and asked whether Imran had been extended B-class facilities.

The advocate general replied that he was

500 books so far, besides daily newspapers.

He said the PTI founder was not confined to a single cell for 24 hours, explaining that he had access to a compound comprising seven cells where he could move freely during the day.

He further contended that the concept of solitary confinement required a prisoner to remain locked in a cell continuously, which was not the case.

The advocate general further argued that

prayed for in their petitions.

Barrister Salman Safdar disputed the government's stance, arguing that his clients were effectively being subjected to prolonged isolation amounting to mental torture, during which most of the discussion centred on the alleged mental distress caused by prison conditions.

Justice Soomro asked whether the petitioner had supported the allegations through an affidavit. Barrister Safdar replied that he intended to address every aspect of the case through his arguments.

The counsel requested the court to appoint a panel of lawyers to inspect prison conditions, allow weekly telephone conversations between Imran Khan and his two sons, facilitate regular meetings with lawyers and family members, and direct the authorities to permit Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi to spend time together in accordance with prison rules.

During the proceedings, books sent by Imran's family for delivery to the prison were produced before the court, prompting Justice Soomro to seek the list of the books.



Islamabad ATC extends former senator Mushtaq Ahmad's physical remand by four days

NEWS DESK: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad on Thursday extended former Senator Mushtaq Ahmad and a co-accused, Daniyal, physical remand in police custody for a further four days in connection with a case registered over a protest related to Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

The accused were produced before Duty Judge Abdul Ghafoor after completing a three-day physical remand granted on August 3, when the court rejected the prosecution's request for a 30-day remand.

Prosecutors had argued that investigators needed additional custody to recover a vehicle and weapons allegedly linked to the case. Police registered the case at Islamabad's Shalimar Police Station.



During the hearing, the prosecution requested a 30-day physical remand, arguing that investigators had yet to recover a vehicle and weapons allegedly linked to the case. "Recovery of a vehicle and weapons from the accused is still pending," the prosecution told the court.

After hearing the arguments, the court granted a further four-day physical remand in-

stead of the 30 days sought by the prosecution. Last week, Ahmad's team alleged he had been detained for more than 24 hours after being denied entry into AJK by security personnel, claiming his detention was linked to his support for the ongoing protests in the region.

During a press conference after his release from alleged detention, Ahmad announced a condolence, solidarity and peace gathering for AJK, inviting members of the public, student organisations,

journalists and Kashmiris living in Islamabad to attend the event at F-10 Markaz.

According to an earlier statement issued on his X account, the former

senator was travelling to AJK on Tuesday "carrying white flags" to express solidarity with the innocent people of Kashmir who have lost loved ones due to violence by security forces."

