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QUETTA VOICE

World Bank Questions Balochistan Flood Housing Funds as 119,049 Families Remain Without Financing

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: A funding dispute has emerged over a major flood-rehabilitation programme in Balochistan, with the World Bank expressing concern about the decision to limit financing for housing reconstruction and the possible redirection of resources toward other development needs.

The issue is particularly significant for thousands of families whose homes were damaged or destroyed by floods and who were identified as eligible for assistance under the reconstruction programme.

According to World Bank figures, 119,049 verified and eligible households currently have no identified financing after the housing component of the programme was capped.

The affected households largely belong to economically vulnerable communities. The World Bank data shows that approximately 84 percent of eligible beneficiaries fall into the ultra-poor and vulnerable categories, with many families depending on daily-wage work for their livelihoods.

For such households, access to housing support is not merely a matter of rebuilding physical structures.

A safe home is essential for restoring livelihoods, protecting children and elderly family members, and reducing the risk of families falling deeper into poverty after a disaster.

World Bank raises concerns over funding decision

The World Bank has reportedly objected to the change in the allocation of housing-related funds, warning that excluding eligible families could undermine the objectives of the broader reconstruction programme.

The concern comes at a time



Rescue workers rescued a minor girl from floods some where in Balochistan: Photo Quetta Voice.

when Balochistan continues to face serious development challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, poverty and growing exposure to extreme weather events.

The government, meanwhile, has its own development priorities and faces significant pressure to invest in roads, public infrastructure and other facilities across the province.

However, the funding dispute raises an important question: can infrastructure development move forward without reducing

assistance meant for families who have already been identified as eligible for housing reconstruction?

A new road may improve access to a village, but it cannot replace a safe home for a family whose house was destroyed by a flood.

Concerns over fraud need transparent investigation

The government has also expressed concerns about fraudulent or questionable claims within reconstruction programmes.

If irregularities have oc-

curred, they should be investigated through a transparent and accountable process. Genuine beneficiaries should not be penalised because of fraudulent claims made by others.

Authorities can verify beneficiaries, investigate suspected fraud and recover misused funds while simultaneously protecting the rights of families who meet the programme's eligibility criteria.

Government, World Bank urged to find solution

The current disagreement

does not necessarily have to become a confrontation between the provincial government and the World Bank.

A joint review of the programme, beneficiary lists and available financing could provide a way forward. Such an approach could address concerns about transparency while also ensuring that legitimate flood victims are not excluded from reconstruction assistance.

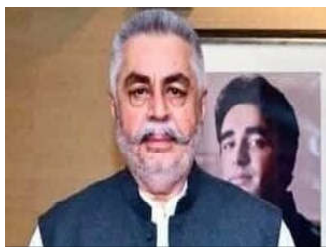
For Balochistan, where poverty and natural disasters have repeatedly affected vulnerable

communities, resilient housing remains a critical part of long-term recovery.

The priority should therefore be to find a solution that allows the government to pursue essential infrastructure projects while protecting funds and opportunities meant for the province's poorest flood-affected families.

At the heart of the issue are 119,049 households waiting for a clear answer about whether the assistance they were deemed eligible to receive will ultimately reach them.

Supreme Court Restores Nawab Changhez Marri as MPA from PB-9 Kohlu



Supreme Court of Pakistan has restored Nawab Changhez Marri as a Member of the Balochistan Assembly

Web Desk:

The Supreme Court of Pakistan has restored Nawab Changhez Marri as a Member of the Balochistan Assembly (MPA) from PB-9 Kohlu, suspending the Balochistan Election Tribunal's July 29 decision against him.

A three-member Supreme Court division bench, headed by Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and comprising Justice Muhammad Shafi Siddiqui and Justice Mian Gul Hassan Aurangzeb, passed the order on an appeal filed

by Marri. The Supreme Court's decision also led to the cancellation of the August 27 re-polling schedule at four polling stations in PB-9 Kohlu. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had scheduled the re-polling following the election tribunal's decision.

With the suspension of the election tribunal's verdict, Nawab Changhez Marri will continue to serve as the elected MPA from PB-9 Kohlu. Marri was represented before the apex court by Advocate Supreme Court Amanullah Kunrani.

Balochistan CM Praises Surab Anti-Terror Operation, Expresses Grief Over Three Civilian Casualties



File photo of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

Ali Hamza, News Desk:

QUETTA — Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti commended security forces and police for a successful joint operation in Surab district that left 18 militants dead,

while simultaneously ex-

pressing deep regret over the loss of three civilian lives during the clash.

The operation, which targeted suspected militant hides in the region, also resulted in injuries to several military personnel.

Officials noted that part of the militant casualties occurred when explosive materials in their possession detonated dur-

ing the engagement.

Speaking on the outcome, Chief Minister Bugti praised the rapid deployment of law enforcement but stressed the government's grave concern for the non-combatants caught in the crossfire.

He assured the affected families of full state support, emphasizing that civilian sacrifices in the struggle against

violence would not be forgotten.

Bugti reiterated that intelligence-led security measures will continue across Balochistan to dismantle armed groups and their support networks,

maintaining that public safety and regional stability remain the provincial government's top priority.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Soil Erosion in Bolan, Balochistan: When the Land We Depend On Begins to Disappear

By Ayesha Tanveer:

In the valleys of Bolan, the land tells a story that is easy to miss if we only look at the surface. The mountains stand tall, the valleys stretch across the landscape, and farmers continue to work the soil as their families have done for generations. But beneath this familiar picture, something is changing. Little by little, the soil that supports agriculture and rural life is being washed away by sudden floods, carried off by strong winds and weakened by years of pressure on the land. Soil erosion may not happen overnight, and it rarely makes headlines. Yet for the people who depend on the land, its effects are real. A field that once produced a reasonable harvest may gradually become less productive. A farmer who once relied on rain and traditional methods may find that the same approach no longer works. For communities in Bolan, soil erosion is becoming more than an environmental concern—it is increasingly a threat to agriculture, livelihoods and the future of rural life.

A Fragile Land Under Pressure

Balochistan is Pakistan's largest province by area, covering nearly 44 percent of the country's land. Yet only a small portion of this vast region is suitable for cultivation. In places like Bolan, farming has always depended on a delicate relationship between soil, rainfall, water availability and traditional knowledge.

That relationship is now under growing pressure. Bolan lies in an arid to semi-arid region where rainfall is limited and unpredictable. Farmers can experience long dry periods followed by sudden and intense rainfall. Instead of slowly soaking into the ground, heavy rain can rush through valleys and fields, creating flash floods that carry away

the most valuable layer of soil.

This is one of the greatest problems with soil erosion: the soil that disappears first is often the soil that agriculture needs the most.

The topsoil contains organic matter and nutrients essential for healthy crops. Once it is washed away, rebuilding it can take years, sometimes decades.

When Rain Becomes a Threat Rain is essential for life and agriculture, but in Bolan, the way rain arrives can sometimes be as important as how much rain falls.

After months of dryness, the soil may become hard and vulnerable. When intense rainfall suddenly arrives, water can move rapidly across the surface instead of being absorbed into the ground. In the mountainous terrain of Bolan, steep slopes make this runoff even faster. The result can be devastating. Water cuts through fields, carries soil downhill and deposits sediment in streams and irrigation channels. What begins as erosion on a hillside can eventually contribute to blocked waterways, increased flood risks and damage to agricultural land.

This creates a difficult cycle: dry conditions weaken the land, intense rainfall removes the soil, and the loss of soil makes the land even more vulnerable the next time heavy rain arrives. Human activities are making the problem worse.

Nature is not the only factor behind the changing landscape. Human activities have also played an important role.

Vegetation is one of the land's natural defenses against erosion. Trees, shrubs and grasses help hold soil together through their roots and reduce the speed at which rainwater flows across the ground. When vegeta-



tion is removed, the soil is left exposed.

In many areas, trees and shrubs are cut for fuelwood and construction. Over time, the loss of vegetation leaves hillsides and open land more vulnerable to wind and water.

Livestock grazing is another important part of the problem. Goats, sheep and cattle, too much grazing can place enormous pressure on fragile rangelands. Goats, sheep and cattle depend on these lands for food, while local families depend on livestock for income and survival. The problem arises when grazing becomes excessive and vegetation does not have enough time to recover.

Without sufficient grass and shrub cover, the soil is exposed. Repeated movement of animals can also compact the ground, making it harder for rainwater to enter the soil. More water then flows across the surface, taking soil with it. Farming practices and the loss of fertility

Farmers in Bolan are working under difficult circumstances. Water is scarce, rainfall is uncer-

tain and access to modern agricultural resources can be limited. Many farming practices have developed out of necessity rather than choice.

However, some traditional and intensive practices can unintentionally contribute to soil degradation. Repeated deep ploughing can disturb soil structure, while limited crop rotation and a lack of organic matter can gradually weaken the soil.

In areas where farmers struggle to find enough fodder for livestock, crop residues may be removed from fields instead of being left to protect the soil. As a result, fields can remain exposed for long periods.

The consequences become visible over time. As fertile topsoil disappears, the soil loses nutrients and organic matter. Crops may grow less vigorously, and harvests may decline. For a small farmer, this is not simply a number on a production chart. A smaller harvest can mean less food for the family, less income

and greater difficulty paying for seeds, fertilizer and other agricultural expenses.

The Hidden Cost of Declining Soil Fertility

Healthy soil does more than provide nutrients to crops. It also acts like a natural reservoir, holding water and making it available to plants during dry periods.

When erosion removes organic matter and damages soil structure, the land becomes less capable of retaining moisture. In a dry region like Bolan, this can be particularly damaging.

Farmers may then turn increasingly to chemical fertilizers to compensate for declining fertility. Fertilizers can help crops in the short term, but they cannot replace the lost structure and organic matter of healthy soil.

They can also increase production costs for farmers who are already financially vulnerable. This can create a difficult cycle: Soil erosion reduces fertility, crop yields decline, farmers spend more on inputs, production costs increase, household in-

come falls, poverty and economic pressure grow.

Breaking this cycle requires restoring the health of the soil itself rather than relying only on short-term solutions.

The Problem Does Not Stop at the Farm

The effects of erosion do not remain within the boundaries of agricultural fields.

When soil is washed away, it often ends up in rivers, streams and irrigation channels. Over time, this sediment can reduce water storage capacity and interfere with irrigation systems.

Sedimentation can also increase flood risks during heavy rainfall. At the same time, the loss of vegetation can damage natural habitats and reduce biodiversity.

If degradation continues for years without intervention, productive land may gradually become severely degraded and increasingly difficult to cultivate. For Balochistan, where cultivable land is already limited, losing even more agricultural land could have serious consequences.

A Crisis That Affects People, Not Just Soil

Perhaps the most overlooked aspect of soil erosion is its human cost.

For many families in rural Bolan, agriculture and livestock are not simply occupations. They are a way of life. When the land becomes less productive, the effects reach directly into people's homes.

Lower crop yields can reduce household income and increase food insecurity. Families may become more dependent on outside food supplies or government assistance. As farming becomes less reliable, young people may leave villages and move toward urban areas in search of better opportunities.

Over time, environmental degradation can therefore contribute to social change and migration.

This is why soil erosion should not be treated as an isolated environmental issue. It is connected to poverty, food security, employment, migration and the long-term stability of rural communities.

There Is Still Time to Act There are practical steps that can make a difference. Farmers can adopt conservation agriculture techniques such as reduced tillage, crop rotation and retaining crop residues. Adding organic matter to the soil can improve its structure and help it retain moisture.

Restoring vegetation is equally important. Planting native trees, shrubs and grasses can help stabilize slopes and protect the land from erosion.

Grazing also needs to be managed carefully. Controlled grazing systems can give damaged rangelands time to recover while still allowing communities to maintain their livelihoods.

Water management offers another important opportunity. Small check dams, rainwater harvesting systems and im-

proved irrigation methods can slow down runoff, capture water and reduce soil loss. These measures can be particularly valuable in areas where every drop of water matters.

But no solution will work without the involvement of the people who live on the land.

Farmers, livestock owners and local communities must be part of the decision-making process. They understand their environment, its challenges and its changing conditions.

Government institutions, agricultural experts and development organizations can support them with technical knowledge, training and resources, but long-term success will depend on local participation.

Conclusion Soil erosion in Bolan is a quiet crisis, but its consequences are anything but small. Every layer of fertile soil that disappears represents a loss of agricultural potential. Every degraded field puts additional pressure on a farmer. Every damaged hillside increases the vulnerability of communities to floods and land degradation.

The challenge is becoming more urgent as climate change, water scarcity and extreme weather place additional pressure on already fragile landscapes.

Protecting Bolan's soil therefore means protecting much more than farmland. It means protecting the food security and livelihoods of families who depend on agriculture. It means preserving the natural environment and reducing the risk of future land degradation.

The soil beneath our feet may seem ordinary, but for the people of Bolan, it is the foundation of their lives.

Saving that soil is not just an environmental responsibility. It is an investment in the future of Bolan and the people who call it home.

BUIITEMS Organizes Open Day to Inspire Students Across Balochistan

Syed Dara Shikoh

Quetta, September 2025 – The Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) opened its doors to thousands of college students

from across the province by hosting a vibrant "Open Day" showcasing its modern academic facilities, innovative programs, and lively campus culture.

Delivering a special message, BUIITEMS Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Khalid Hafeez reaffirmed

the university's mission of inclusive education and knowledge sharing. He stated,

"BUIITEMS is the university of every student in Balochistan. Our classrooms, research opportunities, and resources are open for all so that no



young learner in the province remains deprived of quality education."

The event attracted an enthusiastic response, with more than 2,000 students from 18+ colleges attending.

Visiting students and their teachers explored BUIITEMS' facilities, interacted directly with profes-

sors, and participated in detailed career guidance and counseling sessions designed to help them choose the right academic path.

Special awareness stalls, departmental exhibitions, and program presentations provided students with insights into BUIITEMS' wide-

range of programs, research prospects, and campus life. Many participants praised the initiative, calling it a valuable opportunity to connect with higher education and future career options.

Prof. Dr. Khalid Hafeez applauded the organizing team for successfully conducting the Open Day, adding that such outreach efforts strengthen the bridge between the university and youth across Balochistan.

By holding this large-scale Open Day, BUIITEMS has further solidified its reputation as a center of excellence in higher education, innovation, and student empowerment in Balochistan, encouraging young learners to strive for academic success and contribute to the province's development.

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Quetta Administration Launches Crackdown on Illegal Rickshaw Parking and Encroachments

Balochistan, he added, has an especially large youth population and its young people are second to none in terms of talent, determination and potential.

The assistant commissioner noted that



encroachments and illegal parking on major roads, service roads and around hospitals to ensure uninterrupted traffic flow across Quetta.

Nasirabad Sets August 25 Deadline to Complete Six Remaining BSDI Phase-II Projects

At the conclusion of the event, certificates were distributed among female students who successfully completed the Skill Education Health Care course. Certificates were also awarded to students who demonstrated outstanding performance in the Kangaroo Competition Test.

departments that no delay in development projects would be tolerated. All schemes must be completed within the stipulated timeframe in accordance with transparency, merit and depart-

number of residents. Regular Field Monitoring Ordered. The deputy commissioner directed relevant officials to regularly monitor ongoing projects and conduct field inspections of construction work. He instructed officials to immediately take effective measures to remove any obstacles affecting the completion of a project.

He also directed officials to pay particular attention to the quality of construction materials.

He reaffirmed that collective efforts for the development, peace and prosperity of Balochistan would continue within the framework of the Constitution and law.

TENDE
The PLANNING P&D DEPAR
Bidders for supply of following at
All Procurements of GOB V
Manual Bid Submission, It is
Registered At Electronic Publ
GOB. Tender Code: 14300.0

NOTICE

MENT invites bids from eligible firms. TSE-2627081154981 Note: In whether Through Electronic or Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Procurement System of BPPRA

Deputy Commissioner Khalid Khan on the healthcare services available at medical facilities across the dis-

ling, surveillance, escort duties, force protection and assistance during law and order situations and rapid response during emergencies.

SSP Hub Mirza Bilal expressed appreciation to the Managing Director of LIFDA for providing support and assistance aimed at strengthening security arrangements in the district.

He said the cooperation would contribute

the fact that the bidder has the information along with the bid. The found forged engineering credentials be declared blacklisted in accordance with the performance guarantee. **PRESENCE | MANDATORY** Presence: Stage Two Envelope Bidding is a must accompany Bid Security as specified above in the name of the bank. **Tender Documents:** These are from the office of the undersigned. **Documents:** From the date of 2028 during office hours on submission: The Tenders are September, 2028 01:30 PM. It is opened on same day at the office. Address: Budget Section, Planning Block No 13 Civil Secretariat, Chandigarh. Phone no: 019202276. Email: dpqr@proton.me

bidders' names, correct and complete. If any document information is missing at any stage, the bidder will intend with the law followed by penalty of call deposit LOCAs.

Procedure of Procurement: Single procedure Bid Security: The bidders form of Deposit at Call of 2% of the under-signed from a scheduled bidding documents can be obtained @ 1500 PKR Issuance of tender publication of NIT to 02 September, working days Last Date of bid will be submitted latest by 02 tender opening. All tenders will be opened by the under-signed at 02-30 PM on Tuesday & Development Department Mohon Road Quetta

tnd prc.offn4031@gmail.com

**Section Officer
PLANNING P&D DEPARTMENT**

Pakistan 'still far' from becoming a social welfare state: PM Shehbaz

NEWS DESK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that Pakistan was "still far" from becoming a social welfare state, which he said was the original purpose of the country's formation.

The premier was speaking at an event in Islamabad to mark International Youth Day 2026, observed on August 12. He also inaugurated several initiatives for the youth, including the Power Sector Innovation Programme, the National Youth Employment Policy and the Skills Ambassador Programme.

As part of the National Youth Employment Policy, the premier announced that a 35 per cent quota would be specified for women in the labour force.

Every year, a 10pc quota will be specified for startups as well to facilitate youth in starting their own businesses, he said.

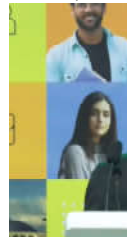
In his speech, PM Shehbaz said that Daanish schools were a step towards making Pakistan a country where young people would have equal opportunities for advancement, irrespective of their financial status.

He said that during his tenure as Punjab chief minister, he had established Daanish schools to improve access to quality education for the poor.

"How unfortunate is it that, on the one

hand, there is a Pakistan for the children of the elite, who not only receive the best education in Pakistan but also attend the best international institutions in the UK and North America."

"Contrastingly, there are another Pakistan where millions of parents' children, who des-



perately want an education, are not provided even basic educational opportunities."

Today, thousands of graduates of Daanish schools are doctors, engineers and teachers, he said. The PM said that progress being achieved through Daanish schools was a realisation of the dream that Qaid-i-Azam had for Pakistan.

Addressing the Daanish school students present in the audience, he said, "the largest part of Pakistan's population is you. And if we could not give you essential skills, then we

won't be forgiven in this world or the next."

PM Shehbaz mentioned that in this year's budget, an amount has been specified for youth empowerment and development.

Like last year, 1,000 high-achieving students will be sent to China this year for agriculture studies.



Education at Daanish University will be provided free of cost, only based on merit, the premier said.

PM Shehbaz added that 250,000 high-achieving students all over Pa-

kistan would be awarded Chromebook laptops this year.

He commented that his laptop scheme, when it was first started in Punjab, was criticised but, he added, the programme has allowed the youth to gain advancement opportunities.



"Today, I, in front of the youth, promise that until Allah has given me the responsibility to serve the nation, I will do everything in my power for your prosperity and employment."

Our ancestors built Pakistan in 1947, and the Pakistan of 2047 will be built by your vision and energy," the premier told the students attending the event.

Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan also spoke at the event, where he said, "We work day and night for our youth."

3 cops arrested for alleged role in prisoner's escape in Rawalpindi

NEWS DESK: his accomplices. Rawalpindi police said on Wednesday that they had arrested three cops, who were posted as guards at Adiala jail, for their alleged involvement in the escape of a prisoner while he was being transported to Jhelum jail from a court in the garrison city.

According to a police statement, Assistant Sub-Inspector Taugeer Hussain, Head Constable Mahboob Khan and Constable Qasim were arrested on the direction of Rawalpindi City Police Officer Hassan Mushtaq Sukhra.

Police said the escape took place in the Mandra area on Tuesday, identifying the prisoner as Hamid, who had a record of involvement in cases of "serious crime".

According to police, search operations and raids were underway to arrest the prisoner.

According to the first information report, a copy of which is available with Dawn, the prisoner was being transported back to Jhelum jail after a court appearance when the three cops "conspired" with him and made the van driver stop at a hotel along the GT Road near Mandra police station as part of their "escape plan".

The prisoner and the policemen got out at the hotel, where they were joined by three of

his accomplices. According to the FIR, the prisoner and his accomplices began firing at the police," the FIR read. It was registered on behalf of the state by Mandra police Station House Officer (SHO) Zakia ul Hassan.



It invoked Sections 324 (attempt to murder), 353 (assault or criminal force to deter a public servant from the discharge of his duty), 186 (obstructing public servant in discharge of public functions), 120-B (punishment for criminal conspiracy), 222 (intentional omission to apprehend on the part of a

public servant bound to apprehend a person under sentence or lawfully committed), 223 (escape from confinement or custody negligently suffered by a public servant), 224 (resistance or obstruction by a person to his lawful apprehension), 34 (acts done by several persons in fur-



therance of a common intention), 118 (concealing design to commit offence punishable with death or imprisonment for life), 440 (misconduct committed after preparation made causing death or hurt) of the Pakistan Penal Code, Sections 155-C and 155-D of Police Order 2002, which pertain to misconduct of police officers, and multiple sections of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997.

Gujar Khan Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Syed Danyal Hassan told Dawn that Mandra police had managed to arrest one of the

accomplices, identified as Dunaal, and recover an AK-47 from his possession, while the others managed to escape.

The official said the police van had also been taken into custody. He told Dawn that the prisoner was accused of killing an Adiala jail official and had been trans-



ferred to Jhelum jail a few days ago following the recovery of a mobile phone from his possession at Adiala.

In June, 14 under-trial prisoners escaped from a prisoner van while being transported from Kahuta to Adiala jail after overpowering security guards.

Four of the escaped prisoners were re-arrested during an operation, a Rawalpindi spokesperson said soon after the incident.

The incident occurred within the jurisdiction of Shihala police station in Islamabad district.

SC rejects Punjab plea seeking review of rape-to-fornication verdict

NEWS DESK: The Supreme Court has rejected the Punjab High Court's government's petition seeking a review of its Dec 2, 2025 verdict that committed a rape conviction into a charge of fornication — a ruling that sparked considerable controversy, with rights organisations, including the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), censuring the verdict.

"Learned counsel for the petitioner is unable to point out any material illegality or irregularity in the order under review," ruled Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan.

Justice Khan was heading a three-judge bench, also comprising Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi and Justice Shakeel Ahmad, which took up the review petition moved by the Punjab Prosecutor General.

"All the main questions raised in this review petition have already been answered in the impugned order," stated the one-paragraph order, adding: "Under the circumstances, there is no substance in this review petition; hence, the same is hereby dismissed."

Upholds five-year sentence after reclassifying rape conviction. Filled by Additional Prosecutor General, Punjab, Ahmad Raza Gilani, the petition under Article 188 of the Constitution had pleaded with the Supreme Court to revisit its Dec 2, 2025 verdict and restore the respondent's conviction and sentence under Section 376 of the Pakistan

Penal Code (PPC). "The impugned judgement is a profoundly stigmatising, casting a permanent shadow over the victim and her entire family for generations to come," the review petition had argued, adding that such an approach ran contrary to the principles of dignity and victim protection and, with respect, called for clear judicial disapproval.

Headed by Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan, Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi and Justice Salahuddin Panhwar, the SC, while hearing an appeal by Hassan Khan against the Lahore High Court's (LHC) Dec 18,

is convicted under Section 496-B of PPC (fornication) and is sentenced to five years rigorous imprisonment with a fine of Rs10,000 or in default thereof to further undergo two months over the judicial appointments.

A permanent judge of the Lahore High Court (LHC) and four Peshawar High Court (PHC) permanent judges also took their oath the same day after the president approved their confirmations.

Of the 19 additional judges, 10 were appointed to the LHC and three each to the Islamabad, Balochistan and Sindh high courts. The new appointments were made for one year from the date of their oath.

While all the newly appointed judges took oath of their offices, the three additional judges of the SHC will be sworn in on Wednesday.

The appointments of additional judges and confirmation of permanent judges had been

pending since July 20 and July 21, when the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) — the body responsible for appointing judges to the superior judiciary — recommended them.

After approval of the summary based on the JCP recommendations forwarded by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to the Presidency, the Ministry of Law and Justice issued notifications.

The oath-taking ceremony for the additional judges, scheduled for July 27, was indefinitely postponed after President Zardari neither approved the summary nor returned it for reconsideration. The government maintained there was no legal justification for the delay.

The president's legal team had raised objections to the JCP proceedings, noting that nearly all PPP nominees were rejected and that some recommended candidates had criminal records. The delay prompted the federal

government to consider invoking Article 48(1) of the Constitution to bypass presidential approval, arguing that the president was required to act on the summary within a fortnight, sources said.

However, officials later maintained that, with the matter sub judice, notifications could not be issued. Sources said the government's legal team planned to seek an "out-of-court" settlement with the Presidency.

The approvals followed a meeting between the two legal teams, with sources describing the matter as

All but three new judges sworn in after Zardari's nod

NEWS DESK: Sixteen of the 19 additional judges of the four high courts across the country were sworn in on Tuesday within hours after President Asif Ali Zardari assented to their appointments, ending a weeks-long deadlock between the Presidency and the PML-N government.

The Punjab prosecution department had argued in its review petition that, in cases of sexual violence, delay in reporting the crime and the absence of marks of violence did not carry significant weight.

Citing the 2011 Mukhtar Mai case, the review petition recalled that the SC had held that delay in reporting rape was natural due to trauma, fear and so-

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The approvals followed a meeting between the two legal teams, with sources describing the matter as

de-escalate tensions in the region through mediation during the US-Israeli war on Iran.

The FO stated that the visit would provide an opportunity to "further strengthen the longstanding and cordial relations between Pakistan and Norway."

During his visit to Norway in May, FM Dar also had a meeting with Norwegian deputy foreign minister and discussed the regional situation with him.

During the visit, the FO said that Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and his Norwegian counterpart would hold delegation-level talks covering the

full spectrum of Pakistan-Norway relations. "The two sides will discuss avenues for further expanding bilateral cooperation, particularly in trade and investment, climate change, renewable energy, education

and people-to-people contacts. "They will also exchange views on important regional and international developments," it added.

FM Fide has appreciated and acknowledged Pakistan's efforts to

de-escalate tensions in the region through mediation during the US-Israeli war on Iran.

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