



Balochistan Plans Modern Farming Push to Save Water...



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## Balochistan CM Orders Performance-Based Reforms in Government Departments

By Our Correspondent:

Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has called for measurable performance targets, greater accountability and efficient use of public resources as the provincial government reviews departmental restructuring to improve governance and public service delivery.

Chairing the second day of a high-level review meeting in Quetta on Thursday, Bugti said the effectiveness of government departments should be assessed through tangible results and the quality of services provided to citizens.

Chief Secretary Shakil Qadir Khan briefed the meeting on the administrative performance, operational capacity and existing structures of additional provincial departments. Participants examined proposals to improve departmental efficiency, streamline administrative functions and strengthen the delivery of public services.

The chief minister stressed that government reforms must translate into practical improvements rather than remain limited to policy decisions. He said every department should fulfil its responsibilities effectively, with performance linked to clearly defined and measurable outcomes. Bugti said the restructuring process should prioritise administrative efficiency, institutional



CM Orders Performance-Based Reforms in Government Departments

capacity and public interest. He added that better utilisation of government resources was essential for improving governance across the province.

He also called for stronger coordination among provincial departments and the removal of unnecessary administrative hurdles that delay official work.

Clearly defining departmental responsibilities and areas of authority, he said, would help improve efficiency and prevent overlapping functions.

The chief minister emphasised that transparency and accountability must remain central to the reform process, with the ultimate objective of making

government institutions more responsive and ensuring timely, quality services for the public.

The meeting continued its review of departmental performance and administrative structures, considering proposals to make provincial government operations more effective and results-oriented.

## Rakshan Division Commissioner Asad Kakar Reportedly Kidnapped Near Barshonki

From Our Correspondent:

Rakshan Division Commissioner Mr. Asad Kakar was reportedly abducted by unidentified armed men while travelling from Quetta to Kharan, according to sources.



However, no official confirmation has been issued by government or security authorities so far.

According to sources within the Rakshan Division, Commissioner Asad Kakar was en route to Kharan when unknown terrorists intercepted

his vehicle near the Barshonki area.

The armed assailants forcibly took him away and were seen moving toward the Lijay area. Local law enforcement agencies and administration officials have not yet officially

confirmed the incident or issued an official statement regarding his status.

Further details are awaited as authorities look into the reports.

Note: This story will be updated as soon as an official statement or further details emerge.

## Five Terrorists Killed in Washuk Security Operation: Shahid Rind

NEWS DESK:

Security forces killed five terrorists and destroyed their hideout in Balochistan's Washuk district, recovering weapons, ammunition and explosives, Chief Minister's Adviser on Information Shahid Rind said on Thursday.

Rind described the operation as a significant success in the fight against terrorism, alleging that the killed individuals were backed by India. In a statement, he praised security forces and law enforcement agencies for their sacrifices and professional capabilities in maintaining peace and security across Balochistan.

He said continued clearance operations were necessary to eliminate terrorist elements from the area and prevent further security threats.

The adviser also stressed the importance of counterterrorism operations under the government's Azm-e-Istehkam initiative, saying sustained efforts were essential to protecting national security and combating terrorism allegedly supported from



Security forces killed five terrorists and destroyed their hideout in Balochistan

abroad. Rind said Pakistan's resolve to eliminate external

backed terrorism remained firm. However, the statement did not provide further details

about the timing of the operation or the identities of those killed.

## Balochistan Plans Modern Farming Push to Save Water, Boost Output

News Desk:

Balochistan is focusing on modern farming techniques, water conservation and improved agricultural productivity to address water shortages and strengthen food security, Planning and Development Minister Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi said on Thursday.

He stressed the need to reduce water wastage, protect rapidly declining groundwater reserves and introduce advanced agricultural technologies to help farmers increase production.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the first Balochistan Food Exhibition 2026 at the Balochistan Agriculture College

on Balesi Road in Quetta, Buledi said efficient water management and the construction of water reservoirs were essential for agricultural development in the largely arid province.

He said several areas of Balochistan had considerable agricultural potential despite low rainfall.

While ongoing development projects aimed to increase production and create better opportunities for farmers and landowners.

The minister also highlighted opportunities in livestock and fisheries, citing the province's substantial livestock population and extensive coastline. He stressed the need to prevent ille-



gal fishing and ensure the sustainable use of marine resources. Buledi called for cooperation with international organisations and non-governmental organisations to equip farmers

with modern techniques and raise awareness about the conservation of agricultural and water resources.

He also emphasised the importance of providing safe, pure and quality food, saying modern technology and agricultural development were key to improving food standards.

The two-day exhibition, running from October 15 to 16, has been organised by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) under the Balochistan River Basins Water Resources Programme (RWRP).

FAO representative Waleed Mehdi said the event aimed to provide farmers, small agricul-

tural businesses and entrepreneurs with opportunities to display their products, improve access to markets and develop business partnerships.

Buledi inaugurated the exhibition by cutting a ribbon and visited stalls showcasing agricultural products. Other speakers, including Asadi Batool and chief organiser Qadir Agha, also addressed the ceremony.

Representatives of government departments and agriculture-sector stakeholders attended the event, highlighting the potential of such exhibitions to promote local products, support small businesses and strengthen Balochistan's agricultural economy.

# QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

## AI and Balochistan's Youth: How Universities Can Shape the Province's Digital Future

By Syed Dara Shikoh Amir:

For Balochistan, the conversation around Artificial Intelligence is no longer about a distant future. AI is already changing education, healthcare, agriculture, industry, finance and governance. The real question is whether Balochistan's universities and young people will be prepared to participate in this transformation.

When Governor Balochistan and Chancellor of the province's public-sector universities, Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, addressed the Youth and AI Summit at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, his message carried significance beyond a discussion on technology. It placed Balochistan's youth, universities and technological ambitions within a global conversation about the future.

For a province with a predominantly young population, this is an opportunity that cannot be ignored. Balochistan's greatest advantage may not simply be its geography or natural resources, but the potential of its young people.

AI Is Already Changing the Landscape

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly becoming part of almost every major sector. For Balochistan, this transformation could offer practical solutions to some of its most persistent challenges.

AI and Data Science can support better healthcare decisions, improve agricultural monitoring, assist in analysing geological information, strengthen public services and contribute to more efficient use of resources.

But technology cannot transform a society on its own. It needs people who understand it, institutions that can develop it and universities capable of turning knowledge into practice.



cal solutions.

This makes higher education central to Balochistan's digital future.

BUTITEMS and the Beginning of a Shift  
Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUTITEMS) has introduced programmes in Artificial Intelligence and Data Science while incorporating emerging technologies and data-focused learning into different academic disciplines.

This development is significant because AI should not be treated as a field restricted to computer science.

A mining engineer who understands data analytics can better interpret geological information. An agricultural researcher can use AI to monitor crops. A healthcare professional can use data to identify trends and improve decisions.

cision-making.

The real potential of Artificial Intelligence lies in its ability to strengthen almost every profession.

For Balochistan, the goal should therefore be to develop an academic environment where technology is used not simply to teach students, but to address real problems.

From Degree-Holders to Problem-Solvers  
For decades, universities have largely focused on producing graduates for established professions. But the pace of technological change is making that approach increasingly inadequate.

Students entering the workforce today may encounter technologies, processes and even job roles that did not exist when they began their studies. Universities must therefore teach more than professional knowledge. They must teach

students how to learn, adapt, think critically, innovate and solve problems.

This is where AI and Data Science can become powerful tools.

The objective should not simply be to produce graduates who know how to operate new technologies. It should be to develop young people capable of looking at a problem in their community and asking how technology, research and innovation can help solve it.

Balochistan's Challenges Can Become Research Opportunities  
The province itself provides a vast field for meaningful research.

Water scarcity, mineral resources, agriculture, renewable energy, healthcare access, environmental change, urban planning and education all offer opportunities for technology-driven research.

Perhaps universities should therefore ask

a different question.

Instead of asking only, "What degree programmes should we offer?", they should also ask, "What problems can we help solve?"

That change in thinking could redefine higher education in Balochistan.

Students of Artificial Intelligence and Data Science could work alongside engineers, doctors, economists, environmental scientists and social researchers. Universities could collaborate with government departments, industries, businesses and local communities.

Such partnerships would allow academic knowledge to move beyond classrooms and become practical solutions for society.

Digital Transformation Requires More Than Technology

The call for digital transformation across Balochistan's public-sector universities is im-

portant, but introducing AI programmes is only the beginning.

A genuinely AI-ready university requires trained faculty, modern laboratories, computing facilities, updated curricula, research funding and stronger links with industry and international institutions.

The same applies to the idea of a paperless university.

Digitalisation should not simply mean replacing paper files with computer screens. It should improve teaching, research, administration, information management and decision-making.

The ultimate goal should be universities that are digitally enabled, research-driven and connected to national and international networks.

Connecting Balochistan's Youth to the World

The Governor's

where.

Turning Vision into a Long-Term Strategy

The real challenge begins after the speeches and international headlines.

Balochistan now needs a sustained strategy for AI education, Data Science, research, innovation and digital transformation.

Its universities should work more closely with government, industry and communities. Students should be given opportunities to work on real-world problems, develop startups and turn research ideas into practical projects.

The progress already visible at BUTITEMS demonstrates that this direction is achievable and can contribute to a broader movement towards technology-driven higher education across the province.

Balochistan's Greatest Resource

Balochistan is frequently discussed in terms of its natural resources and vast geography. But its greatest long-term resource may ultimately be its people.

The province has a young population and talent of international engagement.

Around the world, universities are working to develop AI skills, expand research, create technology partnerships and prepare young people for the digital economy.

Balochistan's youth should have access to those opportunities.

International research collaborations, scholarships, technology partnerships, entrepreneurship programmes and knowledge networks can give students exposure beyond traditional academic boundaries.

The province's next frontier may not be found only beneath its soil.

It may be found in its classrooms, laboratories, research centres and, above all, in the minds of its young people.

## 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 region.

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 agricultural loans, and recovery support for affected communities.



and local representatives are also demanding restoration of damaged irrigation systems and the introduction of crop insurance mechanisms to help rural communities cover from climate-sector.

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.

## Balochistan Governor Addresses First Convocation of General Musa Postgraduate College, Congratulates 62 Graduates

QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffer Khan Mandokhail has said that the province's higher education sector is advancing rapidly, supported by 11 public-sector universities, 140 colleges and approximately 1,200 high schools.

Addressing the first convocation of Government General Muhammad Musa Postgraduate College in Quetta, the governor described the graduation of 62 students as a matter of pride and called the institution a valuable educational asset for the province.

He acknowledged the significant role played by prominent members of the education community in developing the college from its early beginnings into an established educational institution.

He also appreciated the contributions of Major Nadir Hazara, an incumbent Member of the Provincial Assembly.

Zarak Khan Mandokhail, MPA Zarak Khan Mandokhail announced



the provision of a solar energy system to meet the college's electricity requirements.

Governor Mandokhail recalled that when the college was established around four decades ago, opportunities for higher education in Balochistan were limited.

He said the historic convocation reflected the graduates' academic achievements, sustained hard work, determination and aspirations for a brighter future.

He congratulated the college administration

tion, faculty members and the University of Balochistan on organizing the convocation and recognizing the accomplishments of the graduating students.

Emphasizing the importance of education, the governor said it forms the foundation of a developed, peaceful and prosperous society. Education enables individuals to think critically, make informed decisions, challenge outdated traditions and contribute meaningfully to national development.

He noted that

Balochistan's young population was among the province's most valuable assets, making investment in education not merely a social responsibility but an essential investment in the collective future.

The governor also highlighted the transformative impact of artificial intelligence, digital technologies, scientific innovation and changes in the global economy.

At the conclusion of the convocation, Governor Mandokhail distributed gold medals and degrees among the graduates.

still evolving. Mandokhail stressed the importance of preparing graduates to meet emerging challenges and take advantage of new opportunities in a rapidly changing world.

He extended his heartfelt congratulations to the graduating students, their proud parents, teachers and the college administration on the historic occasion.

Provincial Minister Mir Asim Kurd Gailo, MPA Zarak Khan Mandokhail, Secretary Higher Education Hashim Khan Mandokhail, Lasbela University Vice-Chancellor Dr. Abdul Malik Tareen, former Additional Chief Secretary Major Nadir Hazara, Director of Colleges Professor Muhammad Hussain Baloch and college Principal Professor Manzoor Ahmad were also present.

The meeting was attended by Member of the Provincial Assembly Engineer Zamrak Khan Achakzai, Additional Home Secretary Hamza

## Balochistan Home Minister Chairs Meeting to Review Law and Order in Qilla Abdullah

QUETTA: Balochistan Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langove chaired an important meeting in Quetta to review the law and order situation in Qilla Abdullah district and discuss measures to maintain peace and security.



The meeting was attended by Member of the Provincial Assembly Engineer Zamrak Khan Achakzai, Additional Home Secretary Hamza

Shafqat, the Inspector General of Prisons, the Deputy Commissioner of Qilla Abdullah, Pishin District Police Officer Khalil Bugti, and other relevant officials. Participants received a detailed briefing on the law and order situation in the district, with a focus on security conditions and measures to maintain peace.

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compromise would be made on maintaining law and order. He stressed that eliminating drugs and ensuring peace and security for the public were the government's responsibilities. The minister under-



scored the importance of coordinated efforts by the relevant departments to address security challenges and improve public safety in Qilla Abdullah.

## Sibi Commissioner Reviews Power Supply, Load-Shedding and Sibi-Talli Road Project

SIBI: Commissioner Sibi Division Irfanullah Khan chaired a meeting in which a Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESC) executive engineer briefed participants on electricity supply, load-shedding schedules and other related

Road. The Director of Development and Deputy Project Director updated the commissioner on construction progress, implementation matters and other aspects of the project.

Commissioner

road was essential to improving travel facilities for the public.

The commissioner also said a formal letter would be sent to the relevant senior authorities regarding the release of funds required for the project.

The meeting reviewed the current power supply situation and discussed problems faced by residents along with issues related to electricity provision. Participants were briefed on the major development project for the Sibi-Talli

Irfanullah Khan directed the concerned authorities to ensure that construction quality was not compromised under any circumstances and that all necessary measures were taken to complete the project within the stipulated timeframe.

He stressed that timely completion of the

enabling the timely availability of resources and accelerating construction work. The Balochistan government continues to take measures to improve public facilities, develop infrastructure and ensure the timely completion of ongoing development projects.

He stressed that timely completion of the

## Quetta West Administration Directs Vendors to Keep Sariab Road Clear for Traffic

QUETTA: On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Quetta along one side of the road to avoid obstructing traffic and causing

continue their businesses while positioning their carts properly along one side of the road to avoid obstructing traffic and causing



Kashif Umar visited Sariab Road to review the placement of roadside vending carts and assess traffic flow.

During the visit, the assistant commissioner met with street vendors and advised them to

inconvenience to commuters. He said the district administration aimed to maintain smooth traffic flow and keep roads accessible without disrupting the livelihoods of street vendors. Umar

He urged the vendors to comply with the administration's instructions and cooperate with the authorities to improve traffic management, maintain order and ensure public convenience across the city.

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## All 23 Environmental Samples Test Negative for Polio in Balochistan

QUETTA: Balochistan has reported encouraging progress in its efforts to eradicate polio, with all 23 environmental samples collected to detect the presence of the poliovirus testing negative.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar welcomed the development and reaffirmed the relevant authorities to further strengthen ongoing anti-polio measures and ensure their continuity.

Chief Minister Bugti said the progress against polio reflected sustained efforts, effective strategies and coordinated action.

He emphasized that the campaign would continue with full commitment until the disease was completely eradicated, adding that all available resources would be utilized to protect children from the debilitating disease.

The chief minister

also paid tribute to security personnel and polio workers who had sacrificed their lives while performing their duties during anti-polio campaigns.

He described their sacrifices as a shining example of national service and reaffirmed the government's determination to make Balochistan polio-free through sustained efforts and practical measures. Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar said the negative results of all 23 environmental samples reflected three years of continuous efforts, tireless work and effective interventions to combat polio.

He attributed the progress to the government's reform agenda, policy continuity and consistent monitoring of the anti-polio programme. He also acknowledged the key role

played by Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and the chief secretary through their continued oversight and support. Kakar praised health department officials, polio workers and parents for their collective efforts.

He said frontline workers had continued to reach children despite terrorism-related threats, difficult terrain, extreme weather conditions and shortages of basic facilities. He also highlighted the determination of polio workers who had continued performing their duties despite incidents involving threats, injuries and abductions. Paying tribute to those who lost their lives during vaccination campaigns, he said their sacrifices would always be remembered. The health minister reaffirmed that the Balochistan government stood firmly with polio workers and valued their services, dedication and sacrifices.

## Balochistan Minister Orders Merit-Based Recruitment Under Deceased Employees' Quota, Reviews A-1 Roads Budget

QUETTA: Balochistan Minister for Communications and Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa has directed that recruitment under the deceased employees' quota in the Communications and Works Department be completed strictly on merit, with full transparency and in accordance with prescribed rules and regulations.

He made the remarks while chairing a review meeting on recruitment under the quota and the A-1 Roads budget. Secretary Communications and Works Babar Khan, chief engineers and other relevant officials attended the meeting.

The participants received a detailed brief on the recruitment process and the allocation and utilization of the A-1 Roads budget. Minister Khosa



made it clear that recommendations, pressure or directives in letter and spirit, while scrutiny of documents submitted by applicants was underway.

He stressed that every stage must follow a clear procedure, leaving no room for ambiguity, irregularities or complaints.

Secretary Babar Khan informed the meeting that measures had been taken to make recruitment organized, effective and impartial. He said the department was implementing

the Supreme Court's judgment and relevant directives in letter and spirit, while scrutiny of documents submitted by applicants was underway.

He reaffirmed that merit and transparency would be ensured and all candidates would be treated equally and fairly. Briefing the minister on the A-1 Roads budget, the secretary said the funds would be utilized effectively to accelerate the completion of smaller infrastructure works across the province.

The minister directed the chief engineers to form committees under their respective supervision to identify suitable projects and ensure the funds were spent

where they were most needed.

Khosa instructed officials to continuously monitor the recruitment process and promptly resolve any issues or complaints in accordance with the applicable rules.

Participants were reiterated that recruitment under the deceased employees' quota must meet all legal requirements and comply with the directives of the superior judiciary, ensuring fairness and transparency throughout the process.

## Nasirabad DC Reviews Prison Facilities, Pledges Solar Power System and Improved Medical Care

NASIRABAD: Deputy Commissioner Nasirabad Virender Lal visited the District Jail Nasirabad to review basic facilities, healthcare arrangements, sanitation and issues faced by inmates, assuring steps to improve electricity supply and medical services.

District Jail Superintendent Muhammad Ali welcomed the deputy commissioner and accompanied him during an inspection of various sections of the facility.

During the visit, Virender Lal inspected the male and female prisoners' wards, the prison dispensary and other relevant areas.

He also interacted with inmates to inquire about the facilities available to them, their concerns and their needs.

The deputy commissioner further inspected the food prepared for prisoners to assess its quality and the arrangements for meal preparation.

Briefing the deputy commissioner, Superintendent Muhammad Ali highlighted the jail's ad-



ministrative challenges and infrastructure requirements. He said prolonged power outages during summer caused considerable hardship for inmates and disrupted routine operations, making the installation of a solar power system an important requirement.

He also explained that although a dispensary was available at the jail, additional healthcare facilities were needed, including an outpatient department (OPD) room and a laboratory for essential medical tests.

These facilities

would help improve medical examinations, enable timely diagnosis of illnesses and support better treatment for inmates.

The superintendent also informed the deputy commissioner about other administrative and basic infrastructure issues facing the jail.

Virender Lal said improving prisoners' basic facilities, maintaining proper sanitation and providing adequate healthcare were among the district administration's priorities. He emphasized that inmates were entitled to basic human necessities

and appropriate medical care, adding that their difficulties needed to be addressed.

Considering the challenges caused by prolonged power outages, the deputy commissioner said efforts would initially be made to install a solar power system at the district jail under the Balochistan Special Development Initiative (BSDI).

The proposed system is intended to improve electricity availability and support the smooth functioning of routine prison operations. He also assured officials that the require-

ments for improved medical facilities, construction of an OPD room, establishment of a laboratory and other essential improvements would be assessed. Necessary steps would be pursued through available resources and coordination with the relevant departments.

The deputy commissioner directed Superintendent to submit a comprehensive written report to his office detailing the jail's problems, essential requirements and proposed development works.

The report would be presented to the relevant higher authorities to facilitate appropriate action.

Virender Lal reaffirmed that the district administration would continue working with the concerned departments to improve basic facilities, strengthen healthcare arrangements and address the difficulties faced by inmates at District Jail Nasirabad.

## Quetta DC Reviews Hanaa Urak Issues, Compensation for Victims' Families and Development Projects

QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehruallah Badini chaired a review meeting of the Hanaa Urak Committee to discuss local issues, compensation for the families of those killed and injured in recent incidents, and ongoing development needs in the area.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Hafiz Muhammad Tariq, representatives of the Hanaa Urak Committee, and family members of those killed or injured in the recent incidents.



Participants held detailed discussions on the challenges facing local residents, compensation matters concerning affected families, the difficulties encountered by those impacted by the incidents, and develop-

ment work in Hanaa Urak. Representatives and family members shared their concerns and views regarding the area's problems and the needs of affected households.

The meeting reviewed the relevant matters and discussed possible steps to address local grievances, resolve compensation-related issues and advance development projects in the area.

He also acknowledged the key role

## Joint parliamentary session debates resolutions on emergency, governor's rule in KP

**NEWS DESK:** A joint session of the Parliament is currently discussing two resolutions regarding the imposition of governor's rule and emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The joint session of the National Assembly and the Senate is taking place a day after both Houses of Parliament, in separate sittings, passed resolutions endorsing the imposition of emergency in KP.

According to Article 232, if the president acts on his own, the Proclamation of Emergency shall be placed before both Houses of the Parliament for approval by each House within 10 days.

Meanwhile, a proclamation for governor's rule issued under Article 234 shall be laid before a joint sitting and shall cease to be in force at the expiration of two months, unless a joint sitting approves its extension. However, such a measure shall not remain in force for more than six months.

The Centre imposed governor's rule and emergency in KP on Oct 11, citing the provincial



government's "deliberate disengagement" from the fight against terrorism.

The move followed weeks of political tensions between the Centre and the PTI after the latter announced a long march to Islamabad to demand the release of its jailed founder, Imran Khan.

During Thursday's joint sitting, opposition members turned up carrying placards inscribed with slogans, such as emergency na manzoor (emergency is unacceptable).

At the outset of the proceedings, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Faraz Chaudhry presented a motion under Rule 232 of the Parliament (Joint Sitting) Rules 1973 to suspend certain sub-rules so he could move the resolutions.

As loud noises echoed and opposition members chanted "emergency na manzoor", NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq again put the motion to a vote by asking the members to stand up, which was then adopted

with 214-56 votes.

Subsequently, Chaudhry moved two resolutions before the joint sitting — one for the Proclamation of Emergency under Article 232 and the second for the proclamation of governor's rule under Article 234.

Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar then opened the discussion on the two resolutions.

Noting that a resolution regarding the imposition of emergency also required to be passed by a joint sitting

## TIAP says 'no talks' with govt until meeting with Imran Khan is arranged, health details are provided

**NEWS DESK:** The Tehreek-i-Talaf-e-Azadi-i-Pakistan (TIAP) on Thursday announced that it was suspending all negotiations with the government, saying there would be "no talks" until a meeting with PTI founder Imran Khan was arranged and information about his health was provided.

The alliance, in a statement, said all negotiating authority would rest solely with its chairman, Mehmood Khan Achakzai.

The announcement was made at a leadership meeting held at Achakzai's residence, where the political situation arising from the imposition of governor's rule and an emergency in KP, as well as the situation in the province, was reviewed in detail.

In the days preceding the development, political tensions between the federal government and the opposition, mainly the PTI, had remained high after the party announced a long march to demand the release of its jailed founder, Imran Khan. However, the march, initially planned for Islamabad, remained confined to KP until it fizzled out with the imposition of governor's rule in the province. The alliance strongly opposed

the imposition of governor's rule and an emergency in KP, describing the move as a "robbery" and a mid-night assault on the Constitution and the people's mandate.

It demanded that the decision be withdrawn immediately, saying the step was not an insult to the people of one province but to those of all provinces. The statement added that the alliance would also file a petition

against the decision in the Peshawar High Court (PHC).

The TTAP also condemned all forms of terrorism, including state terrorism against the public, actions by state institutions against political parties, and violence by one

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## Punjab proposes holding local government elections in three phases in April

**NEWS DESK:** The Punjab government appears set to delay the long-awaited local government elections in the province once again, despite the polling schedule proposed by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), it emerged on Thursday. Earlier this month, the electoral body proposed holding local government elections in Punjab on December 14 and sent a draft of the suggested schedule to the Punjab chief secretary for consultation.

The Punjab cabinet has instead proposed holding the elections in three phases on April 4, 11 and 18, following recommendations by a ministerial committee formed to consult the ECP on the conduct of local government elections in the province. In this regard, the Punjab Local Government and Community Development Department wrote to the ECP on Wednesday.

The letter, which con-

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veyed the ministerial committee's decision, cited smog, dense fog and adverse winter weather conditions expected during December and January, followed by the commencement of Ramadan in February, as reasons for not holding elections as scheduled.

The letter said the cabinet's ministerial committee had held its second meeting on October 5, during which it

deliberated at length on the ECP's draft election schedule. The committee discussed scenarios arising from the likely tough weather conditions and Ramadan, the letter stated.

It proposed holding the local government elections in three phases to facilitate the effective deployment of election staff and security personnel, the efficient transportation of polling materials, better admin-

## Pakistan worst hit by hunger in South Asia

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan recorded the highest score in South Asia on the 2026 Global Hunger Index released on Wednesday, reflecting a worsening food security crisis driven by economic instability, climate shocks and global conflicts.

Published jointly by Walthamstow, the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict at Ruhr University Bochum, and the Swiss organisation Helvetas under the theme "No Security Without Food Security", the report reveals that progress in South Asia has largely stagnated,

with conditions in Pakistan and Afghanistan deteriorating since 2018.

In Pakistan, economic instability and sharp food price inflation have eroded households' purchasing power and constrained access to food. Undernourishment in the country has climbed from low in 2018 to medium, while child wasting has risen toward the high threshold.

Across South Asia, the situation remains serious with a regional score of 23.5. Although the region's score has fallen substantially from



an alarming 37.5 in 2000, most of that progress occurred before 2018.

While Pakistan and Afghanistan have moved from the alarming to the serious category since 2000, child stunting remains very high.

Pakistan's stunting rate continues to fall, whereas Afghanistan's has edged up since 2018. Child mortality rates in both nations have declined from very high levels in 2000 to medium levels today.

The report warned that high levels of acute food insecurity will per-

sist across the region. Heavy rains and flooding caused localised crop losses in parts of Pakistan and Bangladesh, while below-average rainfall and above-average temperatures negatively affected

Afghanistan's 2026 cereal-growing season. According to Food and Agriculture Organisation estimates, 218 million people in South Asia, including Iran, were undernourished between 2023 and 2025, representing roughly one-third of the global total.

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According to Food and Agriculture Organisation estimates, 218 million people in South Asia, including Iran, were undernourished between 2023 and 2025, representing roughly one-third of the global total.

Globally, hunger is rising again after nearly two decades of progress. The 2026 global score stands at 18.1, worsening from 17.6 in 2018.

Hunger has increased in 32 countries since 2018, and 57 countries are on track to miss achieving even low hunger levels by 2030. Three of the index's four indicators — undernourishment, child stunting and child wasting — have worsened, while only child mortality has continued to decline slightly.

## Lahore ATC extends physical remand of PTI's Hammad Azhar

**NEWS DESK:** An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Thursday extended the physical remand of PTI leader Hammad Azhar by 12 days in the Jinnah House attack case related to the May 9 riots.

Sarwar Road police had booked several PTI leaders and workers on charges of attacking and vandalising Jinnah House during the protests against the arrest of former prime minister Imran Khan.

ATC Judge Sardar Muhammad Akram heard the case. During the hearing, the investigating officer (IO) sought an extension in the physical remand, saying the police wanted to conduct a polygraph test on the suspect.

The IO alleged that Hammad was among those who led the attack.

Opposing the request for an extension in remand, defence counsel Sikandar Zulqarnain argued that the IO had changed his stance on the recovery of evidence from his client.

At the previous

hearing, the police had claimed that a baton and other items had been recovered. However, the IO was now saying that the items were yet to be recovered, the counsel said.

He questioned what further recoveries the police wanted to make when, according to the first information report (FIR), Hammad was not present at the alleged occurrence.

The counsel also questioned why the in-

vestigation had not been completed despite 37 days of physical remand.

He asked the court to send his client to jail on judicial remand, arguing that further physical remand was unnecessary if the investigation had made no progress.

The state prosecutor, however, argued that the FIR did not state that Hammad was absent from the scene.

He said the complainant might not have seen the suspect be-

cause he could have been standing at a distance. Addressing the court, Hammad alleged that anti-terrorism laws were being used for political victimisation and added that the dignity of the court must be upheld.

He alleged that the police had changed their statements, first claiming that he was not present at the scene and later saying that a baton and petrol bombs had been recovered from him.

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## Student's suicide case: Islamabad court grants interim bail to co-suspect

**NEWS DESK:** Additional District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka on Thursday granted interim bail until Oct 20 to a co-suspect in a case pertaining to the alleged suicide of a 20-year-old student, who was allegedly defrauded of millions.

Laiba Ijaz, a student at International Islamic University, is said to have been defrauded of Rs5 million, which she had paid to move to the United States for further studies.

An agent is said to have handed her the travel documents that were later found to be

fake. The main suspect in the case has been arrested and remanded in police custody.

On Thursday, a co-suspect, linked to the alleged suicide of a 20-year-old student, who was allegedly defrauded of millions.

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