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Major Omar Nasir Minhas, Havildar Muhammad Adnan Martyred in Nushki; Funeral Prayers Offered in Rawalpindi

NEWS DESK:

RAWALPINDI : The funeral prayers of Major Omar Nasir Minhas Shaheed and Havildar Muhammad Adnan Khan Shaheed, who embraced martyrdom near Nushki district of Balochistan on November 14, were offered at Chaklala Garrison, Rawalpindi, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Sunday.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), the Minister for Information and Broadcasting, senior civil and military officials, and relatives of the fallen soldiers attended the funeral prayers.

The Pakistan Armed Forces and the entire nation paid tribute to Major Omar Nasir Minhas and Havildar Muhammad Adnan Khan for their supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

The ISPR said the courage, dedication and unwavering commitment of the two soldiers to the defence of the country would remain a source of pride for the nation.



Photo News Desk: The funeral prayers of Major Omar Nasir Minhas Shaheed and Havildar Muhammad Adnan Khan Shaheed

The armed forces reiterated their tribute to the martyrs, whose sacrifice came while serving the country in Balochistan.

According to the ISPR, Major Omar Nasir Minhas Shaheed and Havildar Muhammad Adnan Khan Shaheed will be laid to rest in their respective native towns with full military honours.

The funeral in Rawalpindi was attended by senior state and military officials, reflecting the nation's respect for the sacrifices rendered by personnel of the Pakistan Armed Forces.

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Parliament's nod deemed a must for referendum

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Islamabad gears up for ECO moot as Turkish, Azeri, Kazakh officials arrive

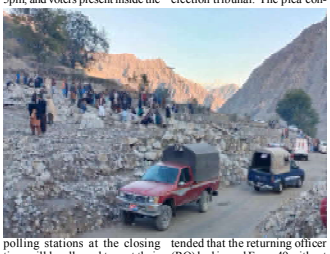
PPP's Shah, IPP's Malik face off again as voting under way for Diamer seat at 3 polling stations

NEWS DESK:

PPP's Attaullah Shah and Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party's (IPP) Imam Malik are again vying for the GBA-16 (Diamer-II) seat in Gilgit as repolling is under way at three stations.

A total of 2,780 registered voters are eligible to cast their votes.

Voting will continue until 5pm, and voters present inside the polling stations at the closing time will be allowed to cast their ballots.



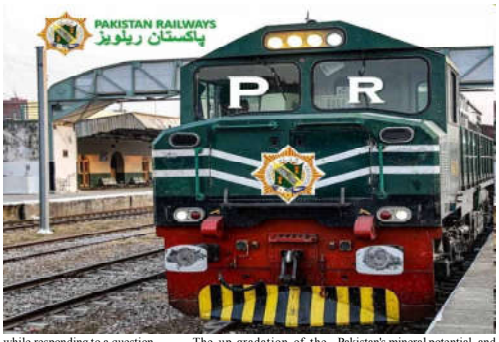
Among the two candidates, Malik had contested the June elections in Gilgit-Baltistan as an independent candidate, but had later joined the IPP.

Initially, the Election Commission had declared him the returned candidate for GBA-16 (Diamer-II),

but his membership was suspended in September after Shah filed a petition before an election tribunal. The plea contended that the returning officer (RO) had issued Form-49 without counting the postal ballots.

Govt defers ML-3 for third time

NEWS DESK:



The government has deferred the approval of a $1 billion Mainline-3 rehabilitation project of Pakistan Railways, which has been conceived to transport minerals from Reko Diq mines, due to funding constraints and a possible change in minerals' transportation port from Karachi to Gwadar.

The Central Development Working Party (CDWP), for the third time in the past five months, deferred approval of the Rs278 billion, or $1 billion, up-gradation of ML-3 track from Nokhandi to Rohri this month, according to the Ministry of Planning officials.

The 996-kilometre-long track has outlived its life, and trains are crawling at an average speed of 30 km per hour. It requires a complete rehabilitation to make it viable for heavy cargo of minerals to be extracted from the Reko Diq mines.

Government officials said that the project's approval had been postponed due to funding constraints and the possibility that the Reko Diq Mining Company, being run by Barrick Gold, could use Gwadar Port for the transportation of minerals.

The project was deferred for more information and details about bridge financing with Barrick Gold, said Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning, while responding to a question.

The government had already approved to take a $390 million loan from Reko Diq Mining Co at an estimated rate of 6% per annum as bridge financing to complete the ML-3 track. The official said that in case of any change in the plan to use Gwadar Port instead of Karachi Port, fresh commitments were also needed from the mining company on whether it would extend the loan.

The up-gradation of the track had been proposed to transport minerals through the Nokhandi-Quetta-Rohri and Karachi rail track. Sources said that there was a possibility that the minerals might now be transported through Gwadar Port, which would require making fully functional the Nokhandi-Panjgur and Gwadar road link.

The development came in the middle of renewed focus on Pakistan's mineral potential, and this week the executives of three companies, Barrick Gold, Ivanhoe Atlantic and Minmetals, addressed the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum.

Also, a delegation of Barrick Gold Company met with Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal this week and sought details of the road project that could be constructed, according to people privy to the discussions.

Balochistan Chief Minister (CM) Vows No Safe Haven for Terrorists, Hails Killing of Eight in Kolpur Operation

NEWS DESK:

QUETTA : Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said that no safe haven will remain for terrorist elements working against peace and stability in the province, reaffirming the government's resolve to eliminate terrorism through an effective and coordinated strategy.

The chief minister termed the killing of eight terrorists affiliated with what the government described as the India-backed Fitna al-Hindustan during a security operation in the Kolpur area a significant success in the fight against terrorism.



Bugti said no attempt to spread unrest, intimidate citizens or disrupt normal life on national highways would be allowed to succeed.

He highlighted ongoing intelligence-based operations in Kolpur, Kirdgap and Nushki, along with enhanced security measures on the Quetta-Taftan National Highway, aimed at protecting citizens and ensuring uninterrupted movement.

The chief minister also expressed deep sorrow over the martyrdom of Major Umar Minhas Nasir and Havaldar Muhammad Adnan Khan, who were martyred in a terrorist attack.

He paid tribute to their sacrifices and offered condolences to their families.

Bugti said terrorist groups were increasingly using modern technologies, including drones and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), to pursue their objectives. However, he maintained that such tactics would not weaken the state's resolve.

He said security institutions were continuously adapting their strategies and capabilities in response to changing terrorist tactics.

According to the chief minister, sustainable peace in Balochistan is directly linked to economic activity, investment and the protection of citizens' normal lives. He vowed that attempts to derail the province's development through terrorism would be defeated.

Bugti further said the Azm-e-Istehkam vision approved by the federal Apex Committee under the National Action Plan reflected the state's collective strategy against terrorism. He reiterated that the Balochistan government would continue its full cooperation with security and law-enforcement institutions to ensure peace and protect the people.

QUETTA VOICE
Editor: Asim Khan

Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The Growing Need for Real Connections in Balochistan

By Ali Hamza Khan:
Social media has become a central part of modern life, particularly for young people. From checking notifications after waking up to scrolling through TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat before going to sleep, digital platforms increasingly shape how young people communicate, study, form relationships and perceive themselves.

Although social media offers opportunities for learning, networking and entertainment, its excessive use can also raise concerns about mental health, loneliness, anxiety and declining self-esteem. Behind the attractive photographs, trending videos and carefully edited lifestyles lies an important question: are young people becoming more connected digitally while growing more isolated in their real lives?

For the youth of Balochistan, this question deserves particular attention as digital platforms become an increasingly important source of communication, entertainment and social acceptance.

Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The Loneliness Paradox

Social media promised to bring people closer together by removing geographical barriers. Today, a student in Quetta can communicate instantly with someone in Canada, exchange ideas and develop friendships across cultures. These platforms have made information and communication more accessible than ever before.

However, online connectivity does not always provide the emotional support that people need.

Young people may have hundreds or thousands of followers but still struggle to find someone who will listen when they experience academic failure, family difficulties, heartbreak or emotional distress. An online audience does not necessarily translate into a dependable support network.

Face-to-face communication offers forms of connection that digital interaction may not fully reproduce, including body language, personal presence, empathy and the reassurance of being genuinely heard.

This does not mean online friendships are meaningless. Rather, it highlights the importance of balancing digital relationships with meaningful interaction in everyday life.

Social Media Comparison and Low Self-Esteem

One of the major concerns surrounding social media and youth mental health is the pressure to compare personal lives with the carefully selected experiences of others.

Instagram feeds and short-form videos often showcase expensive clothes, successful careers, university achievements, holidays in Ziarat and apparently perfect lifestyles. The financial difficulties, disappointments and personal struggles behind these images are much less visible.

When young people in Balochistan compare their everyday circumstances with these idealised portrayals, they may begin to feel unsuccessful, unattractive or left behind.

This comparison can contribute to low self-esteem and the fear of missing out, commonly known as FOMO. Young users may feel that other people are enjoying better lives, achieving greater success and building stronger relationships.

The pressure to appear attractive, wealthy, popular or constantly happy can make social media emotionally exhausting. Some users begin to judge their worth by the number of likes, comments and shares their posts receive. A post that attracts little attention may lead to disappointment, embarrassment or self-doubt.

When external approval becomes the main measure of personal value, confidence can become dependent on the reactions of strangers rather than individual abilities, character and achievements.

Young people need to understand that social media displays selected moments, not the complete reality of someone's life.



Social Media Addiction, Sleep and Concentration

Excessive social media use can become a difficult habit to control. Features such as endless scrolling, personalised recommendations, frequent notifications and unpredictable feedback encourage users to return to their screens repeatedly.

Likes, comments and other forms of digital recognition can activate the brain's reward system, reinforcing the desire to check notifications and seek further engagement. For some users, this pattern can interfere with everyday responsibilities.

Students are particularly vulnerable when social media begins to affect their sleep, academic concentration and family relationships.

Using a phone late at night can delay bedtime and disrupt healthy sleep routines. Frequent interruptions from notifications can make it harder to concentrate on lectures, assignments and examination preparation.

A student who repeatedly switches between studying and social media may struggle to maintain focus, while excessive screen time can reduce opportunities for physical activity and in-person interaction.

The impact extends beyond academic performance. Families may spend time together in the same room while remaining absorbed in separate digital conversations. As a result, opportunities for meaningful discussion and emotional support can diminish.

Healthy digital habits are therefore essential to maintaining a balance between technology, education, rest and personal relationships.

Why Young People in Balochistan Seek Belonging Online

At the heart of social media use lies a basic human need: belonging.

Every young person wants to feel accepted, respected and valued. Young people also need opportunities to express themselves, explore their interests and develop a sense of identity.

In many communities across Balochistan, opportunities for organised recreational activities, youth clubs, cultural programmes and accessible mental health services may be limited. Some young people also find it difficult to discuss emotional challenges openly with parents, teachers or other adults.

When meaningful support is difficult to find at home, in universities or within local communities, online platforms can become an alternative source of companionship and acceptance.

Digital communities can offer genuine benefits. They allow young people to share creative work, learn new skills, discuss common interests and connect with others who understand their experiences.

However, not every online community promotes healthy relationships. Some expose young users to cyberbullying, hateful content, unrealistic beauty standards and harmful social pressures.

Addressing this challenge requires more than asking young people to spend less time on their phones. It also requires creating supportive environments where they can find friendship, recognition and purpose in real life.

How to Improve Digital Well-Being Among Young People

Reducing the harmful effects of social media does not require abandoning technology altogether. Digital platforms can support education, professional development, social awareness and creative expression when used responsibly.

The priority should be to promote digital well-being and help young people develop healthier relationships with technology.

What Young People Can DoYoung users can begin by setting realistic screen-time limits, switching off unnecessary notifications and avoiding excessive phone use before bedtime. They should also review the accounts they follow and prioritise content that supports learning, creativity and personal growth.

Taking regular breaks from social media can provide more time for studying, exercise, reading and spending time with friends and family.

Joining a sports team, participating in a literary society, learning a practical skill or meeting friends without constantly checking a phone can help strengthen real-world relationships.

Young people should also remember that their personal worth cannot be accurately measured through followers, likes or online popularity.

The Role of Parents and Teachers

Parents and teachers have an important role in protecting youth mental health. However, criticism, punishment or comparisons with other children may discourage young people from discussing their difficulties.

Instead, adults should encourage open conversations, listen without immediately passing judgement and take emotional distress seriously.

Changes in behaviour, persistent withdrawal or signs of anxiety should prompt a supportive conversation rather than automatic criticism. Where emotional difficulties persist, professional mental health support may be appropriate.

Schools and colleges should also help students understand responsible social media use, online privacy, cyberbullying and the importance of seeking help when they feel overwhelmed.

Creating an environment in which young people can talk openly about loneliness and emotional distress is an important step towards reducing stigma around mental health.

What Universities in Balochistan Should Do.Universities, including the University of Balochistan, can play a constructive role in promoting student mental health and digital awareness.

Educational institutions should work towards providing accessible and confidential counselling services, organising regular awareness sessions on digital well-being and offering guidance on managing online pressure.

Universities can also strengthen campus life by expanding opportunities for sports, debates, literary activities, cultural events, student societies and community service.

These activities can help students develop friendships, discover their interests and feel connected to a wider community.

For students who struggle with isolation, a supportive campus environment can provide opportunities to build confidence and relationships beyond the digital world.

The Responsibility of Society and Policymakers

Promoting youth mental health is not solely the responsibility of individuals and their families. Educational institutions, community organisations, technology companies and policymakers also have a role to play.

Digital platforms should take concerns such as cyberbullying, harmful content and excessive engagement seriously. Communities and public institutions should also invest in recreational facilities, youth development programmes and accessible mental health support.In Balochistan, where young people represent an important source of future social and economic progress, investing in their well-being is an investment in the province itself.

Conclusion: Real Relationships Matter More Than Online Likes

The youth of Balochistan possess talent, creativity and the ability to contribute meaningfully to society. Their value does not depend on their appearance in filtered photographs, the number of followers they attract or the popularity of their online posts.

Social media can be a useful tool, but it should not become the principal measure of happiness, success or self-worth.

Young people need genuine friendships, emotional support, opportunities to develop their abilities and environments in which they can express themselves without fear of rejection. These needs cannot always be fulfilled through a screen.

Families, universities and communities must work together to ensure that digital connectivity complements rather than replaces human relationships.

The real measure of connection is not how many people follow us online, but whether we have someone who listens when we are struggling, protect their mental health and build meaningful relationships in their everyday lives.

The goal is not to disconnect from the digital world, but to reconnect with ourselves and the people around us.

Kashmir, Palestine and the Search for Humanity

Zeeshan Khan
Day and night pass, generations come and go, yet the bloodshed continues. For ordinary people, every day brings another story of death: a soldier, a police officer, a worker, a child or an innocent civilian. Violence has become so familiar that society sometimes watches it as if it were an unavoidable part of life.
But the real question is: when did human life become less important than political interests?

This question becomes even more painful when we look at the long-standing conflicts in Kashmir and Palestine. Both have remained unresolved for decades, while countless people have lost their lives and generations have grown up amid fear, displacement and uncertainty.

The Kashmir dispute has continued for decades, while the Palestinian people have also endured prolonged conflict, occupation, displacement and violence.

The tragedy is not merely that these conflicts exist.

It is that the world has repeatedly failed to resolve them despite decades of diplomacy, negotiations and international institutions.

Governments and diplomats have often approached these disputes through the lens of national security, strategic interests, political alliances and geopolitical calculations.

Humanity, meanwhile, has remained somewhere in the background.

Perhaps this is where we need to reconsider our understanding of diplomacy.

A truly meaningful peace process cannot be built solely around national interests.



It must begin with the recognition that the people living in conflict zones are human beings before they are Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Pakistanis, Indians, Palestinians or Israelis.

Their lives, dignity, security and future should not become secondary to political calculations.

The international community has produced numerous resolutions, negotiations and diplomatic initiatives, yet the fundamental problems remain.

The United Nations was established to help prevent conflict and promote peace, but even this institution operates within a world divided by competing national interests and political alliances.

This does not mean that national interests are irrelevant. Every state has legitimate security concerns. However, when national interest becomes an absolute principle, it can become a barrier to justice.

If every government asks only what benefits its own side, who will speak for the ordinary human being caught in the middle?

Kashmir and Palestine therefore demand more than another round of diplomatic statements.

They require a new moral approach—one that places human life at the centre of negotiations.

The world has no shortage of intellectuals, scholars, writers, philosophers and diplomats.

What it needs is the courage to look beyond political labels and recognize a common humanity.

Peace will not come simply because powerful countries decide that it is strategically convenient.

It will come when leaders begin asking a different question: What solution protects human beings rather than merely protecting political interests?

Until that question becomes central to diplomacy, Kashmir and Palestine will remain symbols of humanity's unfinished struggle for justice and peace.

The greatest challenge before the world is therefore not merely resolving two territorial disputes.

It is freeing diplomacy itself from the chains of hatred, prejudice and narrow national interest—and allowing humanity to become the foundation

Balochistan Governor Condoles Martyrdom of Major Umar Nasir Minhas and Havaldar Muhammad Adnan Khan

QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of Major Umar Nasir Minhas and Havaldar Muhammad Adnan Khan following terrorist attacks in the Girdgap and surrounding areas of Kolpur in Balochistan.



In a condemnation statement, the governor said the sacrifices of the brave soldiers who laid down their lives defending the motherland and protecting the lives and property of the people would never go in vain.

He urged law enforcement agencies to take concrete measures to completely eliminate terrorism, sabotage and all forms of destructive activities from the country.

Governor Mandokhail said terrorism was not merely an act of violence but reflected a mindset based on fear and brutality, which could only be eliminated through collective efforts by the government and the public.

Expressing solidarity with the bereaved families, he said the entire nation stood with them during this difficult time and shared their grief over the irreparable loss. The governor also prayed that Almighty Allah grant the martyrs the highest ranks in Jannah and give their families the strength, patience and courage to bear this immense loss.

Balochistan Investment Board Signs MoUs with Business Chambers Ahead of BITE 2026 Expo

QUETTA: Vice Chairman of the Balochistan Board of Investment and Trade (BBoIT), Bilal Khan Kakar, has said that Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti envisions transforming the province into a hub for national and international investment by promoting investment and commercial activities.



He said the Balochistan government and the Investment Board were taking various initiatives to achieve this objective.

He expressed these views while addressing signing ceremonies of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between the Balochistan Board of Investment and Trade and various trade and business organizations in connection with the upcoming Balochistan Investment and Trade Expo (BITE 2026).

The MoUs were signed with the Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Quetta Chamber of Small Industries, Women Chamber of Commerce and the Pakistan-Iran Joint Chamber of Commerce.

BBoIT CEO Abdul Mannan, Senior Vice President of the Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mirza Khan Khilji, former president Haji Ayub Marriani, Patron-in-Chief of the Quetta Chamber of Small Industries Haji Wali Muhammad, former FPCCI president Haji Daru Khan Achakzai, Women Chamber representative Farzana Karim Baloch and other business leaders were also present on the occasion.

Bilal Khan Kakar said that the Balochistan Investment and Trade Expo (BITE 2026), scheduled to be held in Quetta on November 18 and 19, would serve as an important platform to showcase investment and business opportunities in the province.

He said various chambers of commerce had been brought on board as partners for the expo to ensure active participation from the business community and bring local industrialists, traders and investors closer together.

The vice chairman highlighted that Balochistan offered vast investment opportunities in several sectors, including minerals, agriculture, livestock, fisheries, energy, tourism and other industries.

He added that the Investment Board was working in collaboration with the business community, trade organizations and relevant institutions to turn these opportunities into practical investment projects.

Kakar further explained that the MoUs signed with different chambers aimed to strengthen mutual cooperation, establish stronger business connections, expand commercial activities and facilitate access for Balochistan's products to national and international markets.

He reaffirmed that the Balochistan Board of Investment and Trade would continue working alongside the private sector and business community to promote investment, strengthen economic activities and advance the provincial government's vision for sustainable economic development.

University of Turbat Students Visit Teaching Hospital's Microbiology Laboratory for Practical Training

TURBAT: Students of BS Biochemistry and BS Biotechnology programmes at the Department of Natural and Basic Sciences, University of Turbat, visited the Microbiology Laboratory of Teaching Hospital Turbat on separate days to gain practical knowledge of clinical microbiology and modern disease diagnostic techniques.



The visits were conducted under the supervision of faculty members Mehnaz and Jaeind Baloch.

The primary objective of these educational visits was to familiarise students with clinical microbiology procedures and laboratory-based diagnostic techniques, enabling them to complement their theoretical knowledge with practical experience.

During the visits, Dr. Asma Baloch, a faculty member at Makran Medical College, delivered a technical briefing to the students and provided insights into various laboratory procedures and diagnostic practices.

According to a spokesperson for the University of Turbat, the university administration expressed its gratitude to the management of Teaching Hospital Turbat for its cooperation and support in facilitating the educational visits.

The initiative reflects the university's efforts to strengthen practical learning opportunities and enhance students' understanding of laboratory practices and clinical diagnostic procedures.

Kalat Sports Gala 2026 Continues with Enthusiasm, Featuring Young Athletes from Across the District

KALAT: The Kalat Sports Gala 2026, organized under the supervision and with the cooperation of the District Administration Kalat and the Balochistan Sports Department, is continuing with great enthusiasm and excitement.

The mega sporting event, which began on November 5, 2026, will continue until November 20, 2026. Young athletes from schools and local sports clubs across the district are showcasing their skills and sporting talents in various competitions.

The primary objective of the sports gala is to promote healthy activities, provide positive recreational opportunities for young people and discover emerging sporting talent in Kalat district.

A large number of sports enthusiasts are visiting the playing fields daily to watch the competitions and encourage participating athletes.

Various Sporting Competitions Underway

The sports gala features a wide range of competitions across different categories to encourage participation from athletes of all ages and backgrounds.

Field Sports: Exciting competitions in cricket, football, tug-of-war and marathon running are attracting considerable attention from spectators.

Indoor Sports: Badminton and table tennis competitions for both male and female participants,

along with carrom board matches, are also underway. Female students are participating enthusiastically alongside male athletes.

Various inter-school sporting competitions are also being held to promote teamwork, discipline and a healthy spirit of competition among students.

Officials of the Sports Department and the district administration are providing facilities to participating athletes to ensure that all competitions are conducted in a peaceful, fair and well-organized environment.

The successful organization of the event has received appreciation from local residents and social circles,

who have welcomed the initiative for providing young people with opportunities to demonstrate their sporting abilities.

The closing ceremony of the Kalat Sports Gala 2026 will be held on November 20, when prizes will be distributed among outstanding athletes and winning teams in recognition of their performances.

Assistant Commissioner Reviews BISP Payments in Usta Muhammad, Warns Against Illegal Deductions

USTA MUHAMMAD: Assistant Commissioner Usta Muhammad, Maria Shamoon, visited various payment centres to inspect the distribution of financial assistance to deserving women under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), following special instructions from Deputy Commissioner Usta Muhammad, Muhammad Ramzan Palal. During the visit, the assistant commissioner reviewed the payment procedures, transparency measures and difficulties faced by beneficiaries at different payment centres.



She personally interacted with women receiving financial assistance and inquired whether they were being paid the full amount of Rs. 14,200, as fixed by the Government of Pakistan, without any deductions.

She also sought feedback regarding problems faced during the payment process, unnecessary delays, long waiting times and other complaints.

On the occasion, Maria Shamoon strictly directed payment agents and relevant staff to ensure that all eligible and deserving women receive their full financial assistance of Rs. 14,200 in a transparent manner.

She made it clear that illegal deductions, additional charges or any unauthorized collection of money from beneficiaries would not be tolerated under any circumstances.

The assistant commissioner warned that strict legal and departmental action would be taken against anyone found involved in corruption, illegal deductions from beneficiaries' payments or misuse of official authority.

She further stated that complaints from deserving women would be taken seriously and addressed promptly to ensure that government financial assistance reaches its rightful recipients in full. Maria Shamoon reaffirmed that the Usta Muhammad district administration would continue monitoring BISP payment centres to maintain transparency, prevent irregularities and ensure that beneficiaries receive their legitimate financial assistance without deductions or unnecessary difficulties.

Balochistan's Komak Programme Begins Delivering Benefits to Persons with Disabilities in Lasbela

UTHAL: The benefits of the Balochistan government's Komak Programme, launched to support persons with disabilities and help them become dignified and independent members of society, have begun reaching deserving beneficiaries in Lasbela district.

Under the programme, the first instalment of financial assistance has started being distributed to 20 deserving persons with disabilities in the district, with each eligible adult receiving Rs. 8,000 and children receiving Rs. 6,000. Meanwhile, the process of providing three-wheeled motorcycles to approximately 11 persons with disabilities has also begun. According to details, officials and staff of the Social Welfare Department played an important role in completing the registration process, preparing application forms and fulfilling the required documentation for persons with disabilities under the Komak Programme.

Social Welfare Officer Lasbela Abdul Samad Roonjho, officials Muhammad Ismail and Aqeel Qamar, Social Welfare Officer Bela Khalid Pervaiz, and officials Pervaiz Sheikh and Shabbir Roonjho provided guidance and assistance to applicants. Their efforts helped complete applications and advance the process of enrolling eligible beneficiaries in the programme. Approximately 180 applications from persons with disabilities have been submitted from Lasbela district under the Komak Programme. In the first phase, 20 deserving beneficiaries have started receiving their initial financial assistance instalments, while other registered applicants are expected to benefit in the upcoming phases. In addition, the distribution process for approximately 11 three-wheeled motorcycles has commenced. The vehicles are expected to provide greater mobility and help persons with disabilities achieve independence in their daily lives.

Komak Programme Director Munir Ahmed Qambrani and Additional Deputy Commissioner General Siraj Ahmed Baloch also played an important role in ensuring the effective implementation of the initiative in Lasbela district and facilitating access to government assistance for deserving individuals.

Public and social circles appreciated the provincial government's welfare initiative, stating that persons with disabilities are an important part of society and that providing them with financial assistance, transportation facilities and other basic necessities is an important government responsibility.

They expressed hope that the remaining registered beneficiaries in Lasbela would also receive assistance at the earliest during the second phase of the Komak Programme.

Balochistan Government to Enforce Ban on Single-Use Plastics, Launch Province-Wide Tree Plantation Campaign

QUETTA: Balochistan Provincial Adviser on Environment and Climate Change, Naseem-ur-Rehman Khan Malakhail, has described environmental pollution as a serious and silent threat to future generations, stressing that urgent and comprehensive measures are essential to address the growing challenge.

He expressed these views while speaking to various delegations at his office in Quetta.

The provincial adviser said the government must strictly implement the law banning single-use plastics and plastic shopping bags across Balochistan to protect the environment and ensure cleaner surroundings.

He added that the provincial government has adopted a firm stance on enforcing the ban.

He further announced that a province-wide tree plantation campaign is being launched to combat environmental pollution and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change. The campaign will actively involve the public, particularly young people, to promote environmental awareness and encourage community participation.

Malakhail said industrial units and factories would be required to adopt environmentally friendly technologies and ensure that toxic emissions and industrial waste are not released without proper scientific treatment and disposal.

He warned that strict legal action would be taken, without discrimination, against individuals and organizations responsible for polluting air, water and land under existing environmental protection laws.

Emphasizing collective responsibility, the provincial adviser said protecting the environment was not solely the government's responsibility but also a national and moral duty of every citizen.

He urged people to work together to keep their surroundings clean and green and play an active role in protecting natural resources for future generations.

During the meeting, representatives of various delegations briefed the provincial adviser on environmental and other public issues in their respective areas. Malakhail assured them that their concerns would be addressed promptly.

Parliament's nod deemed a must for referendum

NEWS DESK: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday agreed to "strictly adhere to constitutional provisions" governing the creation of new provinces or administrative units, with any proposed referendum on the contentious issue also requiring parliamentary approval.

Official sources privy to the development told Dawn that the understanding was reached during a meeting between the two leaders at the prime minister's Model Town residence, amid a fresh debate over the creation of additional provinces and a proposal by the interior minister to seek public opinion through a referendum.

President Zardari, who was accompanied by former prime minister Raja Pervez Ashraf and Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, made it clear that the PPP's position remained aligned with the Sindh Assembly's resolution opposing the creation of new provinces.

He stressed that any move in this direction must strictly follow the procedure prescribed by the Constitution, a position endorsed by PM Shehbaz, the sources said.

PM's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq and the prime minister's sons Hamza and Suleman were also present at the meeting.



The discussion came two days after Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi floated the idea of holding a referendum to gauge public opinion on the creation of new provinces or administrative units, arguing that the exercise could settle the debate once and for all.He had also assured political parties that they would be taken on board before any decision was finalised.However, the PPP leadership appears unwilling to soften its position, particularly on Sindh.The party has consistently invoked a unanimous resolution passed by the Sindh Assembly opposing the province's division, maintaining that it reinforces its position against any such move.

PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and other senior party leaders have repeatedly declared that the division of Sindh is neither legally nor politically acceptable to the party.

The two leaders also agreed that parliament could not be bypassed in deciding whether a referendum should be held and what questions should be put to the public, according to the sources."The majority in parliament will decide whether a referendum is to be held and what its question(s) should be. Without consensus, the matter cannot move an inch. Parliament cannot be bypassed," an official source quoted the meeting as agreeing.

The debate has also highlighted differing positions within the ruling coalition.Defence Minister Khawaja Asif recently argued that Pakistan could have as many as 12 provinces if the exercise was guided by administrative requirements rather than linguistic, ethnic or political considerations.

He maintained that the country's growing population necessitated smaller administrative units capable of delivering public services more efficiently.

Islamabad gears up for ECO moot as Turkish, Azeri, Kazakh officials arrive

NEWS DESK: Foreign dignitaries continue to arrive in Islamabad as the capital gears up to host the two-day 30th meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) Council of Ministers starting today.

Among the visiting dignitaries is Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Musa Kulaklikaya, who was received by Foreign Office (FO) officials upon his arrival, the FO said on Sunday.

Azeri Deputy Foreign Minister Elnur Mammadov, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Deputy Secretary General Ahmad Saidmurodzoda, Kazakh Deputy Foreign Minister Arman Issagaliyev and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Secretary General Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed are also among those who have reached Islamabad for the meeting.

On Saturday, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Tahsin Ertugruloglu also arrived in Islamabad to participate in the meeting.

The ECO's ministerial meeting will be chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and attended by foreign ministers and heads of delegations from ECO member states, along with representatives of the organisation's secretariat and subsidiary bodies.



It will be preceded by a gathering of senior officials from ECO member states, who will review the organisation's activities and programmes, assess the work of its subsidiary bodies and finalise the agenda and draft outcome documents for consideration by the ministers.Pakistan, which holds the ECO chairmanship for 2026-27, will seek to advance the organisation's objectives under the theme "Reviving Regionalism for a Resilient ECO", the FO said in a statement on Saturday.

It said Pakistan's chairmanship would focus on strengthening regional connectivity and integration, deepening partnerships and promoting collective efforts for economic prosperity and sustainable development.

The chairmanship would also provide an opportunity to strengthen the ECO's role as a platform for regional cooperation, dialogue and economic collaboration, it added.

According to the FO, Pakistan also aims to position itself as a regional connectivity hub, facilitate logistics supply chains and help shape the agenda for regional trade.

The efforts would help unlock the region's economic potential and translate the benefits of regional cooperation into tangible improvements in the lives of people in ECO member states, the statement said.

Currently, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Iran, Turkiye, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan are part of the ECO.

Supreme Court settles conflicting rulings on inheritance rights

NEWS DESK: Resolving conflicting jurisprudence on inheritance rights, the Supreme Court has affirmed that an inheritance-share suit becomes time-barred only if the defendant proves that the claimant knew or should reasonably have known about the denial of an heir's share more than six years before filing the claim.

Likewise, if the heir is instead trying to cancel a document he himself was party to, the suit is late only if the defendant proves the heir knew of the grounds to cancel it more than three years before filing, says the SC while affirming that limitation in inheritance suits begins only when an heir learns of an overt act repudiating their title, not from the date of an incorrect revenue mutation or mere silence or passage of time.

"Time does not run against the heir; it runs against the heir's knowledge of a wrong. The right of an heir, vested at the moment of death, never lapses with time," observed Justice Shahid Waheed in a 106-page judgement authored by him.

Orders safeguards to protect heirs, particularly women, from inheritance deprivation

Justice Waheed headed a five-judge larger bench, which also comprised Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan, Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi, Justice Shakeel Ahmad and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb.

The unanimous verdict, which was pronounced on Friday, answered nine questions of law referred to the bench amid conflicting rulings by high courts on whether the Limitation Act, 1908, applies to inheritance claims.



The judgement explained that the appeals and petitions arose from suits seeking declarations, joint possession and partition, in which plaintiffs claimed shares in the estates of their predecessors. The defendants had pleaded limitation. The courts below, following different strands of the SC's precedents, had reached opposing conclusions on materially similar facts.

The judgement also recommended to the lawmakers as well as the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP) to consider amending the law to make it a requirement that if an heir gives up, settles, or exits (takharuj) their share in an inheritance, that should only be done through a formal written document that is registered, and it should be signed only after the heir has been told what their share actually is.

Invoking Article 187 of the Constitution, which empowers it to do complete justice, the SC directed all provincial revenue authorities to ensure that no inheritance mutation is attested without a family registration record issued by the National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra), or equivalent proof identifying all heirs.

It further ordered that written notices be issued to every heir listed in the record, including female heirs, at their respective addresses.

Tehreek-i-Insaf warns against federal control of KP's minerals

NEWS DESK: The Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter on Saturday warned against placing the province's mineral resources under federal or other external authority or control during the current emergency and governor's rule, insisting that no such move could be made without the approval or oversight of the elected provincial representatives.

In a statement issued here, PTI KP general secretary Ali Asghar Khan said that the province's mineral wealth was not the property of an "imposed administration to bargain away".



"Major mining concessions, long-term agreements or other arrangements that undermine provincial powers or the rights of local communities are unacceptable. Decisions concerning rare earth elements, critical minerals and other valuable resources cannot be made behind closed doors," he said.

Says it will challenge any such move at constitutional, legal forums

Mr Khan said that the party would not recognise such agreements and would challenge them at constitutional and legal forums.

He also warned investors and others against making agreements with the current provincial administration."Following the restoration of the elected government and provincial assembly, we [the PTI] will demand a comprehensive review of these agreements. We expect other political parties in the province to take a clear stand in defence of provincial rights," he said.

The PTI leader said that the party did not oppose mineral development, domestic or foreign investment or the use of natural resources for the province's economic growth. He said the mineral sector should create local jobs, strengthen industry and technical capabilities and increase provincial revenues.

"The central questions are who makes these decisions, on what terms and what lasting benefits the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa receive from their own resources," he said.Mr Khan said that the party had adopted that position well before the current political and administrative crisis emerged in the province.

Following the provincial cabinet's approval of the Mines and Minerals Bill in February last year, the PTI reviewed its implications. Also, PTI founder Imran Khan declared that the legislation would not proceed without a full briefing to him and his approval.The review committee was headed by PTI provincial general secretary Ali Asghar Khan, with MNA Arbab Sher Ali Khan and Dr Amjad Ali Khan as members. The committee consulted experts, industry representatives.

Authorities ban political gatherings in KP's Bajaur for 30 days, citing law and order situation

NEWS DESK: The district administration on Sunday imposed a ban on all kinds of political gatherings, "hate speech" against the state and the display of arms and weapons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bajaur for 30 days, invoking Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) owing to the prevailing law and order situation.

The notification formalising the restriction, seen by Dawn, said Bajaur Deputy Commissioner Adnan Farid Afridi approved the restrictions in view of the prevailing law and order situation,

citing the need for additional measures to safeguard public life and property and maintain peace in the district.

The notification further stated that law enforcement agencies were required to remain more vigilant to avert any "unpleasant mishaps" while also enhancing security at the district's entry and exit points and discouraging and disallowing "unauthorised gatherings" in public places.



"Sufficient grounds exist to believe that immediate preventive measures are required to be taken," the notification added.

The notification stated that the order would come into force on Sunday (November 15) and remain in effect until December 15, unless modified or withdrawn. It warned that anyone found violating the order would be punished under Section 188 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

In October, authorities banned pillion riding in Bajaur for 10 days, citing the security situation back then as well.

KP, including Bajaur, has been witnessing terrorist attacks and security challenges for a long time.

Last month, a police officer was martyred after terrorists attacked a police post in KP's Bajaur.

Creating new smaller provinces a 'national necessity': Kamal

NEWS DESK: Senior Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader and Federal Health Minister Syed Mustafa Kamal on Saturday called the creation of smaller provinces "a national necessity" and not a "political desire", arguing that the existing four-province administrative structure has failed to deliver and that the formation of new provinces is essential for the effective functioning of the state.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony of the Sindh regional office of the Allied Health Professionals Council (AHPC), the minister said Pakistan's provinces were exceptionally large compared with those of many countries worldwide.

He said Punjab alone had a larger population than 180 countries, while the other three provinces were also more populous than many countries.

Referring to dozens of provinces Iran, Afghanistan and India have, he highlighted the difference between Pakistan's administrative structure and those of other countries in the region.

The minister said that 57.5 per cent of the divisible federal revenue pool was allocated to the provinces, which had received a combined Rs8,844 billion during the current financial year. However, he regretted that the funds were not reaching villages and grassroots communities because provinces had failed to devolve resources and authority further down the administrative hierarchy.



MQM-P leader rejects concerns over national unity; likens new provinces to building additional rooms in a house to accommodate expanding family

"The biggest problem is that the provinces have not devolved resources to the grassroots level. The money is being allocated to the provinces but unfortunately not reaching the villages," he added.

Describing Karachi as Pakistan's economic engine, he said the city's economic potential remained largely untapped, and it could play a pivotal role in pulling the country out of its economic difficulties.

"Even 10pc of Karachi's potential has not been tapped yet. The IMF cannot pull Pakistan out of this economic quagmire, but Karachi can," he said.He explained that creating smaller provinces should not be seen as a threat to national unity. He gave an example of an expanding family that needed additional rooms to accommodate its growing members.

"When a family grows, a new room has to be built. It does not mean that the house is being broken up or divided," he said.