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Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

25,000 Federal Jobs Announced for Balochistan; Candidates Protested against Alleged Mismanagement in Interviews



Chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti addressing the assembly session on Friday, photo provided by DGPR Balochistan.



Candidates protesting against the alleged mismanagement of interviews in front of BUITEMS, photo: Daily Quetta Voice.

SYED ALI SHAH, ALI HAMZA:

QUETTA: Speaking in the Balochistan Assembly, Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti said recruitment against the 25,000 vacancies would continue, with jobs distributed among districts according to population to ensure fair representation across the province.

Bugti said he had been part of meetings regarding the employment initiative from the outset and thanked President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir for their efforts to provide employment opportunities to the people of Balochistan.

He said the initiative would provide unemployed youth with opportunities to secure government jobs and move away from risky and informal livelihoods, including transporting Iranian fuel through Zambad vehicles.

The chief minister expressed hope that the employment initiative would help address unemployment and open new avenues for the youth of Balochistan.

Candidates Protesting against Alleged Mismanagement in the Interviews

Hundreds of candidates protested outside BUITEMS in Quetta on Friday against alleged irregularities in interviews for vacancies in QESCO and WAPDA. The protesting candidates alleged mismanagement in the interview process and demanded transparent recruitment on merit, raising concerns over the selection procedure for the federal government vacancies. "We want a fair and transparent selection process. Candidates should be selected purely on merit rather than through favoritism," one of the protesters said.

Another protester urged the authorities to investigate the alleged irregularities and address the concerns of candidates. "Our future is at stake. The authorities should ensure justice for all candidates and make the recruitment process transparent," he said.

Bilawal urges political parties to set aside differences, focus on economic crisis

NEWS DESK:

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Friday called for national unity to tackle the country's economic crisis, urging political parties to set aside their differences and support Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in addressing inflation, unemployment and poverty.

Addressing the Sindh Wheat Growers Support Programme 2026 in Karachi, Bilawal said no political issue should take precedence over the economic difficulties facing ordinary citizens, adding that the prime minister should be given the opportunity to focus on the economy and formulate a plan to provide relief to the public.



He criticised government ministers for diverting the prime minister's attention whenever he attempted to introduce an economic agenda by raising separate political issues. He said he wanted to strengthen Shehbaz's position rather than create difficulties for his government, as had traditionally been the practice among Pakistani politicians.

"I want Shehbaz Sharif to be the first prime minister of this country to complete a full five-year term," he said, adding that his support stemmed from the challenges Pakistan was facing and the need for political stability.

The PPP chairman said the country was going through a historic economic crisis, further aggravated by the conflict involving Iran, Israel and the United States.

He said ordinary citizens were bearing its economic consequences through rising petrol, diesel, electricity and food prices.

Bilawal acknowledged that the government had managed to avert the threat of default and stabilise key economic indicators, with the next stage being to achieve economic growth, generate employment and strengthen the economy.

On North Waziristan visit, CDF Munir vows to eliminate terrorism, preserve peace in KP

NEWS DESK:

Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir reaffirmed on Friday the security force's "unwavering resolve" to decisively eliminate terrorism and preserve peace and stability of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in close coordination with law enforcement agencies (LEAs).

The CDF said this during a visit to Miranshah in KP's North Waziristan, the military media wing said in a statement.

"He reaffirmed the unwavering resolve of the Security Forces, in close coordination with law enforcement agencies, to decisively eliminate the menace of terrorism and preserve the hard-earned peace and stability of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," the statement by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) quoted him as saying.

He also appreciated the "brave police force" in KP and expressed pride in its resilience and sacrifices against terrorism and Fitna-al-Khawarij — a term the state uses for the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan.

During the visit, the CDF was given a comprehensive briefing on "the prevailing security situation, ongoing intelligence-based operations and measures being undertaken to consolidate the gains achieved through sustained counter terrorism efforts and ensure lasting peace and stability in the area", the ISPR statement said. It added that CDF Munir also interacted with officers and troops and appreciated their "high level of preparedness, professionalism and unwavering commitment to the defence and security of the motherland".



Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir visits Miranshah, North Wziristan on Friday

Upon his arrival in Miranshah, the CDF was received by the Peshawar Corps commander and later laid a floral wreath at Yadgar-i-Shuhada to pay homage to the "supreme sacrifices of the shuhada (martyrs) of the Pakistan Army", the statement said.

His visit to Miranshah comes a day after he visited Turbat in Balochistan, where, too, he was briefed on the prevailing security environment .

, operational preparedness and ongoing operations against externally sponsored terrorism.

Security forces continue to carry out counterterrorism action in KP and Balochistan, the two provinces that have been particularly affected by terrorism in Pakistan.

On Saturday, ISPR said four troops, including a major, were martyred while 24 terrorists were killed in IBOs in Balochistan and KP's North Waziristan. Furthermore, last week, 74 terrorists were killed in IBOs in KP and Balochistan.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS), an Islamabad-based independent think tank monitoring conflict and security developments, has reported encouraging trends in the two provinces in its monthly assessment for October.

Pakistan overall witnessed a significant decline in terrorism-related violence during October, with attacks falling by 37 per cent, deaths resulting from these attacks declining by 57pc, and injuries decreasing by 71pc compared to September, the report said.

It added that the improvement was particularly pronounced in Balochistan and mainland KP.

"Balochistan recorded a substantial reduction in militant violence, with attacks declining by

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Artificial Intelligence Just Taking Baby Steps

Syed Muhammad Qaseem:

Artificial Intelligence(AI) is the simulation of human intelligence in computer systems. In simple words, AI enables machines to perform tasks that require human intelligence. Those tasks can be learning from past experiences, solving problems, and making predictions based on provided data. Until now, AI has just started taking baby steps but it is growing at a much rapid rate.

Every invention had various positive and negative impacts on human civilization. According to Google's CEO, Sundar Pichai "AI will have a more profound impact on human beings than fire, electricity, and the internet". This innovation also has both positive and negative impacts on human beings. If it is left unchecked it will have adverse impacts on human creativity, the job market, and the flow of information. However, the positive use of AI will bring major advancements in medical science, education, agriculture, etc. In the following paragraphs, the impacts of AI on humans are described.

Negative Impacts of AI:

AI is a technological tool and its use can be both positive and negative, although, it is in the hands of human beings on how to use it. Following are some negative impacts of AI on humans.

Deep Fakes Through Generative AI:

In the age of information technology, misinformation is a major issue.

The introduction of generative AI into public space has further worsened the predicament of information flow. Through generative AI, deep fakes are generated.

These deep fakes are difficult to judge, as original or fake, for a person who has no knowledge of AI.

The deep fakes can be an image, a video, or a voice note. Recently, in Slovakia's 2023 elections, a fake voice of a party's leader and a journalist was shared on social media, in which they were talking about purchasing votes from the poor population. This voice badly reduced the vote bank of that party during elections.

Another example of the deep fakes that created uncertainty was pictures of the former US president, Donald Trump's arrest, which provoked his supporter's sentiments against the state. Therefore, if the use of generative AI is left unchecked, bad actors in society will use it for their own purposes and spread wrong information.

AI's use in War

Using AI for the purpose of AI will have ferocious results. Because AI unlike humans has no fear, doesn't commit mistakes, doesn't get tired, and has no mercy. So, it can fight much better than a soldier.

Thus, Countries are trying to develop AI fighters, robots, and drones for the maximization of power. This will attract the attention of their rival countries to build AI war machines for the balance of power. Hence, like nuclear weapons, AI will further worsen security dilemmas if used for the purpose of war.

AI is a Major Threat to Human Creativity

Creativity is a unique characteristic of human beings due to which they bring development, prosperity, modernization, and easiness in their lives. But man-made intelligence is growing so rapidly that



it has posed a grave threat to the creativity of God's humankind. With only a few clicks and in some seconds, an AI program can write a book, a novel, a poem, an assignment and an article. Furthermore, it can sing a song, draw a painting, solve a problem, and make a prediction. On the other side, it takes much effort and time for a human to do all these tasks. Due to the lazy and comfort-seeking nature of human beings, now they mostly rely on AI to perform these tasks. With the passage of time AI is learning more skills and human's reliance on AI is further increasing. This increase in reliance on AI will cause the death of creativity in humans.

AI and Job Market

" AI is coming to take your job", this news was seen on many news platforms when ChatGPT was launched in Nov 2022. As stated earlier, AI is efficient and less time-consuming in performing a task. Therefore, it has made millions of people jobless in almost every field, whether they are hotel waiters, drivers, journalists, software engineers and content writers etc.

AI-driven cars neither cross the speed limit nor have sleep problems, consequently, companies are manufacturing AI-driven cars to avoid road accidents. Journalists and content writers demand huge salaries for their work, while, ChatGPT is a free AI app that can do the same tasks freely and quickly.

More interestingly, AI will replace its own founders(Software Engineers) who developed AI, as AI can write code and find errors in it. To sum up, AI has much potential to replace the human workforce.

Positive Impacts of AI

Along with negative impacts, AI can also be advantageous for humans if used for welfare purposes. In the following paragraphs, some advantages of AI are described if AI is used positively.

AI can Revolutionize the Medical Field

AI along with synthetic biology can transform the world shaped until now. AI and synthetic biology can eradicate debilitating diseases, and find treatments for pandemics, thus providing health benefits. AI has also made a lot of achievements in the field of surgery. Last year, an AI robot performed a successful egg surgery in which the inner layer of an egg was stitched. Additionally, an AI Chatbot can also prescribe medicines and treatment for a disease based on the provided symptoms. In the coming years, AI will further advance itself in the medical field and people will take numerous benefits from it.

Prediction Based on Provided Data

Humans remain curious to predict things or the outcome of events. If data is fed to an AI, it can find patterns in that data, and based on those patterns it can give predictions. For example:

AI can predict election results, market demand for a product, predict weather etc. In the US 2020 presidential elections, an AI model was trained to predict the outcome of elections.

Tweets and Facebook posts were fed to the model from which AI separated positive and negative sentiments about former US President Trump and current US President Joe Biden. Based on the high number of positive sentiments, the AI model predicted that Trump would win the elections, and he won. So, humans can take advantage of this feature of AI and can reap its benefits.

Boosting Agriculture Through AI

Pakistan is an agriculture-based country, and enhancing the agriculture sector will boost the country's economic performance.

AI can increase agricultural production by predicting the best time to cultivate and harvest a crop.

It is also capable of identifying soil conditions, plant diseases, weather forecasts, and when plants need to be irrigated. Moreover,

AI can analyze the market's supply and demand chain. AI will be efficient in saving the loss of water during irrigation. Secondly, it will provide a suitable environment for the plants to grow through maintaining soil fertility and water needs.

To sum up, equipping agriculture with AI systems will boost agricultural production and prevent heavy water losses.

Recommendations for the Pakistani Government

The world has entered into the race of AI development. Fortunately, Pakistan has a huge human resource, but making them skilful in the field of AI is a hard task to do. All provincial governments should include AI in the school curriculum.

There should be an AI portal for students, from where they can get updates about AI developments around the globe and jobs announced by the government. Furthermore, universities must be directed to increase practical work in AI rather than theoretical.

Conclusion

In conclusion, AI nevertheless advantageous, poses a grave threat to human civilization. If AI is left unchecked, it can spread misinformation through deep fakes, worsen the status quo of security dilemmas, cause the death of human creativity, and take jobs. So, all countries should sit on a single platform and form laws to control the development and introduction of AI tools in public space. In addition,

AI companies should include a watermark to the content generated through AI to cope with misinformation. In the end,

AI will be more hazardous if it gets conscious and moves physically freely without being dependant on humans.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mir Ali Madad Jattak Assigned Agriculture Portfolio in Balochistan



NEWS DESK:

QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Ali Madad Jattak has been assigned the Agriculture and Co-operatives portfolio by the Balochistan government, according to an official notification issued on Friday.

The notification, issued by the Cabinet Section of the Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD), said Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti had assigned the portfolio under Rule 3(5) of the Balochistan Government Rules of Business, 2012.

The assignment takes effect immediately, the notification stated.

Balochistan Assembly Speaker Reviews Sehat Dehleez Digital Healthcare Initiative Offering Free 24/7 Medical Services at Home



QUETTA: A detailed briefing on the Sehat Dehleez digital healthcare initiative, aimed at providing free medical consultations and healthcare services to people at their doorsteps, was held under the chairmanship of the Speaker of the Balochistan Provincial Assembly and Acting Governor of Balochistan at the Committee Room of the Balochistan Assembly Secretariat.

The initiative is being launched under the People's Primary Healthcare Initiative (PPHI) Balochistan to improve access to quality healthcare through a modern digital health system.

Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Members of the Provincial Assembly Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch, Zafar Ali Agha, Abdul Majeed Badini, Liaquat Ali Lehri, Kulsoom Niaz Baloch, Zarak Khan Mandokhail, Dr. Ashok Kumar and Muhammad Khan Lehri, along with Assembly Secretary Tahir Shah Kakar, attended the meeting.

Chief Executive Officer PPHI Balochistan Dr. M.B. Raja Dahrijo gave a detailed presentation on the objectives, operational mechanism and healthcare services to be provided under the initiative. Sehat Dehleez to Offer Free 24/7 Telemedicine Services

During the briefing, officials explained that Sehat Dehleez is a modern, public-friendly digital healthcare system designed to provide citizens with free, round-the-clock telemedicine services and remote access to qualified doctors and medical specialists without having to leave their homes.

The initiative has four major components:

Access to doctors at patients' doorsteps.

Medical consultations and issuance of digital prescriptions.

Referral of patients to hospitals whenever necessary. Provision of prescribed medicines.

Officials described the initiative as a unique step towards improving healthcare access, particularly for people living in remote and rural areas where medical facilities and specialist services are often difficult to access. Satellite Connectivity for Areas Without Internet

CEO PPHI Balochistan Dr. M.B. Raja Dahrijo also informed participants that a ProMetrics-based recruitment system had been introduced to ensure merit and transparency in the organization's recruitment process, minimizing human intervention.

He further explained that satellite connectivity arrangements had been made for areas without internet access, enabling patients to communicate with doctors and receive medical consultations despite limited digital infrastructure.

Health Minister Highlights Importance of Initiative for Rural Communities

Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar said the initiative was particularly important for residents of rural and remote areas, where access to healthcare facilities remains a major challenge.

He explained that the project had initially been launched on a pilot basis and would be further strengthened and improved in light of practical experience and the results achieved during its implementation.

Assembly Speaker Stresses Effective Patient Referral System

During the meeting, the Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly and Acting Governor reviewed different aspects of the initiative and particularly emphasized the need to establish an effective and reliable patient referral mechanism.

He said the success of a digital healthcare system should not be measured merely by providing medical consultations or issuing digital prescriptions. Instead, it must ensure timely and effective treatment, appropriate hospital referrals and the availability of prescribed medicines whenever required.

Giving an example, he observed that simply prescribing a Panadol tablet to a patient and considering the responsibility fulfilled would defeat the actual purpose of the healthcare initiative.

He stressed that the referral mechanism must be strengthened and properly coordinated to ensure that patients receive quality medical education, and develop a skilled healthcare workforce, Director General Health Balochistan Dr. Amin Khan Mandokhail visited the Community Midwifery School in Gwadar.

During the visit, Dr. Mandokhail inspected various sections of the institution, reviewed its teaching and training facilities, and assessed ongoing academic and practical training activities.

Principal Suman welcomed the Director General Health, while District Health Officer Gwadar Dr. Yasir Tahir was also present during the visit.

The DG Health examined the education and practical training being provided to students in maternal and child healthcare, safe childbirth, and primary healthcare services. He also reviewed progress regarding the commencement of admissions and regular academic classes following the upgradation of the Community Midwifery School to a Nursing College.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mandokhail said that providing quality medical education and producing a skilled healthcare workforce were key components of the provincial government's public health policy.

He highlighted the vital role of community midwives in ensuring safe deliveries, protecting maternal and child health, and providing essential primary healthcare services. He emphasized the need to equip midwives with and training capacity, ensuring the effective utilization of available resources, and expediting the launch of academic activities at the Nursing College.

He said these measures would create better opportunities for young people in Gwadar and other parts of Balochistan to pursue medical education while contributing to improved healthcare services for the public.

The visit reflects the provincial government's commitment to strengthening healthcare education, promoting maternal and child health, and expanding access to quality medical training across Balochistan.

Balochistan Information Department Hosts Farewell Ceremony in Honour of Transferred Information Secretary Imran Khan



QUETTA: The Directorate General of Public Relations (DGPR), Balochistan, organized a dignified farewell ceremony in honour of Secretary Information Balochistan Imran Khan on the occasion of his transfer.

The ceremony was attended by Director General Public Relations Askar Khan, Director Public Relations Saeed Ahmed Shahwani, and officers and staff members of the Information Department.

During the event, Secretary Information Imran Khan and DGPR Askar Khan held a cordial discussion on the overall performance of the department, mutual cooperation,

effective execution of official responsibilities, and ways to further strengthen the Information and Public Relations sector.

Speaking on the occasion, DGPR Askar Khan appreciated Secretary Information Imran Khan's departmental services, professional guidance, administrative support, and keen interest in the affairs of the department.

He said that the department had made progress on several important matters under his supervision and guidance.

He emphasized that mutual trust, teamwork, and institutional coordination played a vital role in the success and effective functioning of any government department.

Secretary Information Imran Khan also appreciated the professional services, dedication, hard work, and cooperation of the officers and staff of the Directorate General of Public Relations.

He expressed his best wishes for the department and observed that effective coordination, a strong sense of responsibility, and teamwork were essential for improving the performance of government institutions.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, DGPR Askar Khan presented a commemorative gift and a shield to Secretary Information Imran Khan in recognition of his services.

The participants extended their best wishes to him for success, progress, and achievements in his future assignments and responsibilities.

Quetta West Administration Reviews Public Issues and Revenue Matters in Barori



QUETTA: On the directives of Deputy Commissioner Quetta West Munir Ahmed Durrani, an important meeting was held under the chairmanship of Assistant Commissioner Barori Zopash Agha to review administrative affairs and address public grievances in Tehsil Barori. The meeting was attended by the Tehsildar, Qanungo, and Patwaris. Participants reviewed the overall situation in the area, revenue-related matters, and various issues faced by local residents.

During the meeting, Assistant Commissioner Barori Zopash Agha directed the concerned officers and staff to ensure the prompt and effective resolution of public complaints and avoid unnecessary delays in official matters.

She instructed all relevant officials to perform their duties with dedication, honesty, and professionalism to ensure better public service delivery and provide relief to citizens. The Assistant Commissioner emphasized that serving the public and resolving citizens' problems in a timely manner remained among the administration's top priorities. She further made it clear that negligence or carelessness in official responsibilities would not be tolerated and urged all concerned officials to ensure efficient administrative services and timely action on public complaints.

Chaman DEO Conducts Surprise School Inspections, Orders Action Over Absenteeism and Poor Administration

CHAMAN: District Education Officer (DEO) Chaman Ashok Kumar Rajput conducted surprise visits to various educational institutions across the district to inspect academic activities, teachers' attendance, classroom teaching, cleanliness, and overall administrative arrangements.

During the inspection, Government Girls Primary School Haji Habibullah Shadizai was found closed, with its main entrance locked. Expressing serious displeasure over the situation, the DEO directed both female teachers posted at the school to submit written explanations. He also decided to forward the case to higher authorities for further departmental action. During his visit to Government Middle School Killi Saifullah Khan, the DEO inspected different classrooms and reviewed students' academic activities, teaching standards, and learning progress. He also checked teachers' attendance and expressed serious concern over poor cleanliness and the overall administrative condition of the school.



The school's Headmaster, Mr. Abdul Nasir, was also found absent during the inspection and was issued a notice seeking an explanation.

Inquiry Committee Formed to Investigate School Performance

Furthermore, an inquiry committee headed by Deputy District Education Officer Qari Abdul Abad has been constituted to investigate the overall condition, administrative affairs, and academic performance of Government Middle School Killi Saifullah Khan.

The committee has been directed to conduct a comprehensive review of all relevant matters and submit its findings within one week.

Speaking on the occasion, District Education Officer Ashok Kumar Rajput made it clear that no compromise would be tolerated regarding teachers' punctuality.

DG Health Balochistan Reviews Community Midwifery School in Gwadar, Assesses Nursing College Launch



GWADAR: In line with the vision of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and the provincial government's efforts to improve public healthcare facilities, pro-

Duki DC Chairs District Coordination Committee Meeting to Review Development Projects, Law and Order

DUKI: Deputy Commissioner Duki Fazal ur Rehman Kabadani chaired an important meeting of the District Coordination Committee (DCC) to review ongoing development projects, law and order, public safety, and administrative matters across the district.



The meeting was attended by Duki Superintendent of Police (SP) Muhammad Younis Raza, heads of various district departments, and representatives of different law enforcement agencies.

During the meeting, participants conducted a detailed review of ongoing development projects, particularly schemes being implemented under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) and the Balochistan Special Development Initiative (BSDI). Discussions focused on the progress of construction work, quality standards, and timely completion of development schemes.

The meeting also discussed ways to strengthen coordination among government departments and address administrative challenges affecting the implementation of public sector initiatives.

Special attention was given to the safety and security of coal miners working in the district's coal mines. Participants reviewed the availability of essential safety equipment and measures required to protect miners' lives and property. Matters relating to the clearance of outstanding electricity dues, power-related issues, and other associated concerns were also discussed.

The committee reviewed measures to ensure effective action against encroachments on public and private land, illegal petrol pumps, electricity theft, non-custom-paid (NCP) vehicles, drug-related activities, and illegal settlements across the district.

Participants emphasized the need for a coordinated strategy and joint efforts among relevant departments and law enforcement agencies to prevent illegal activities and ensure the effective enforcement of the law.

The meeting also assessed progress on decisions taken during open courts (Khuli Kacheris) to address public grievances. Relevant departments were directed to ensure the timely resolution of public complaints and strict implementation of official instructions.

Addressing the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Fazal ur Rehman Kabadani said that effective coordination among district departments, timely completion of development projects, protection of coal miners, prompt resolution of public issues, and enforcement of law were among the key priorities of the district administration.

He directed all concerned officers to perform their responsibilities with dedication and professionalism and ensure practical measures to deliver the benefits of government initiatives to the public.

The meeting concluded with an emphasis on improved interdepartmental coordination, accountability, public service delivery, and the effective implementation of government policies across Duki district.

DPM Dar says Pakistan's natural resources could be worth up to $10 trillion

NEWS DESK: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said Pakistan's natural resources, including minerals, hydrocarbons and gemstones, were conservatively estimated to be worth between $8 trillion and $10 trillion, as he welcomed a Turkish seismic research vessel at Karachi Port on Friday.

Addressing a ceremony marking the arrival of the Turkish vessel Oruç Reis ??????in Karachi, DPM Dar said, "Sometimes people talk about Pakistan being a heavily indebted country or a debt-trap country. I always negate [that]. The total debt of Pakistan, the Government of Pakistan, is about $100 billion. If you include the liabilities in foreign exchange of private companies and public sector enterprises, the total amount is $130 billion."

"The most conservative estimate of the things I counted — the mines and minerals, natural resources, hydrocarbons, gemstones and other God-gifted natural resources in this country — is anything between $8 trillion and $10 trillion."

The deputy prime minister said the arrival of the vessel marked "a new chapter of scientific exploration and strategic cooperation" between Pakistan and Turkey, built on the two countries' longstanding friendship.

"On behalf of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, our government and the people of Pakistan, I convey our deepest gratitude to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and to my brother, Foreign Minister of Turkey, Mr Hakan Fidan, for their personal commitment to strengthening relations between Pakistan and Turkey," he said.



He also welcomed Turkey's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Alparslan Bayraktar, and thanked the Turkish government and people for standing alongside Pakistan.

"The bond between Pakistan and Turkey predates the establishment of Pakistan itself, with roots in the solidarity extended by the Muslims of South Asia to the Turkish people during defining moments in their history," Dar said.

"Since then, our peoples have stood together through tough times of trial and triumph. The highest tribute we can pay to our shared past is to convert that spirit into opportunities for our peoples," the deputy prime minister added.

The Oruç Reis will bring together Turkish scientific expertise and the experience of Pakistan's national energy companies to conduct advanced exploration in the country's offshore domain, he said.

"Every successful journey of exploration begins with knowledge. The data gathered by this vessel may deepen our understanding of the geological structures beneath the seabed and provide a stronger basis for Pakistan's future exploration plans," Dar said.

He acknowledged the uncertainty involved in offshore exploration, saying: "Offshore exploration is complex, capital-intensive and inherently uncertain. A seismic survey cannot guarantee a commercial discovery, but no discovery can be made without seismic and exploration."

Govt, Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) complete talks on petroleum relief package

NEWS DESK: Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and the federal government have completed negotiations at the technical committee level, with both sides finalising draft proposals on public relief measures, JI Naib Emir Liaqat Baloch said on Thursday.

Speaking to the media, Mr Baloch, who heads the JI negotiating committee, said the government had prepared a plan for further reduction in the petroleum levy.

He added that the final relief package would be announced after a meeting between PM Shehbaz Sharif and JI Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, scheduled for Nov 24 or 25.

The development followed more than two months of negotiations between the government and JI over the party's demand for abolition of the petroleum levy and relief for consumers affected by rising fuel prices.

The two sides agreed in early September to constitute committees to examine proposals for reducing the levy and providing relief to the public.

During the 10th round of talks on Nov 10, the government and JI agreed on the broad outlines of a proposed agreement, with a final decision to be taken at a subsequent meeting between the prime minister and the party chief.



Mr Baloch said the government had cited its commitments to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as constraints during the negotiations. However, a plan had been prepared to gradually reduce the petroleum levy before the next budget to the level from which it had originally been increased.

The petroleum levy remains a major source of federal revenue. The government has budgeted approximately Rs1.677 trillion in receipts from the

levy during the current fiscal year against a revised estimate of Rs1.498tr for 2025-26.

Mr Baloch claimed that Jamaat-i-Islami's campaign had secured relief of Rs146 per litre on petrol and more than Rs200 per litre on diesel. He said Rs16.36 per litre in relief had also been provided through petroleum levy arrangements.

Earlier this month, the government announced an arrangement under which oil refineries would contribute a cumulative Rs15bn towards the petroleum levy over 30 days, providing temporary support to the fuel-pricing mechanism.

Mr Baloch said the government had agreed to expand the prime minister's fuel-relief programme to include owners of vehicles with engine capacities of up to 1,000cc, while farmers owning up to 12.5 acres would receive relief on fuel used in tractors. He added that separate rates would apply to locally produced and imported petroleum products. The JI leader said the government had accepted the party's position on windfall profits earned by oil companies. However, he opposed replacing the petroleum levy with general sales tax, questioning why consumers should be burdened when the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

Musadik Malik arrives in New Delhi to lead Pakistan delegation at SCO forum

NEWS DESK: Climate Change Minister Musadik Malik arrived in New Delhi on Friday to lead Pakistan's delegation at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Civilisational Dialogue Forum, the Pakistan High Commission in India said.

In a post on X, the high commission said Malik "arrived in New Delhi today" and was received at the airport by Chargé d'Affaires Saad Ahmad Warraich.

It added that the minister would "lead the Pakistani delegation at the forum," scheduled to be held from November 20 to 22. The event will bring together representatives of SCO member states to discuss civilisational dialogue and cultural understanding. India has invited all ten member states to the inaugural gathering.

The visit will be the first by a Pakistani federal minister to India since May 2023, when then foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari travelled to Goa to attend the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers meeting. It will also be the first such visit since the military confrontation between the two nuclear-armed neighbours in May last year.

The proposed visit has already generated considerable interest and debate on both sides of the border, with India's opposition Congress party questioning the Narendra Modi government's decision to invite a Pakistani minister despite the continued strain in bilateral relations. In a statement, the Foreign Office said Dar reaffirmed that Pakistan, as the current chair of the SCO Council of Heads of State, remained committed to advancing cooperation among member states, promoting cultural exchanges and strengthening people-to-people contacts.



The meeting assumes significance as Pakistan and India continue to remain locked in a diplomatic stalemate following their four-day military confrontation in May 2025. Although a ceasefire has held since the conflict, there has been little progress towards normalising relations or resuming a formal dialogue process.

India downgraded diplomatic ties, suspended the Indus Waters Treaty and halted several bilateral engagements following the April 2025 Pahalgam attack, which New Delhi blamed on Pakistan. Islamabad rejected the allegations and responded with a series of countermeasures, including suspending bilateral trade and closing its airspace to Indian airlines.

Pakistan calls for 'universal realisation' of right to self-determination

NEWS DESK: Pakistan called for the "universal realisation" of the right to self-determination, saying the aspirations of people living under foreign occupation remained unfulfilled despite the principle being enshrined in international law.

According to a press release shared on X by the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations on Friday, Ambassador Syed Haider Shah said, "The universal recognition and exercise of this right has transformed the course of history. Millions of people have exercised their right to self-determination, liberating themselves from foreign subjugation and establishing sovereign states as equal members of this Assembly.

In a statement shared on X, Shah introduced the draft resolution A/C.3/81/L.47, titled "Universal Realization of the Right of Peoples to Self-Determination", on behalf of Pakistan and its co-sponsors at the UN General Assembly's Third Committee.

He said the right to self-determination was "one of the most fundamental principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter".

"Article 1(2) of the Charter calls for the development of friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination," he said.

He noted that the principle was also codified in Common Article 1 of the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, while the Declaration on Principles of International Law and General Assembly Resolution 1514 also recognised it as a cornerstone of international law.



"The vast majority of Member States represented in this Assembly achieved independence through the exercise of this inalienable right," Shah said. "Yet, the promise of self-determination remains unfulfilled for many peoples still living under foreign occupation," he added.

He said that in several situations, the legitimate aspirations of such people continued to be met with "military oppression, excessive use of force, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, restrictions on fundamental freedoms and attempts at demographic engineering". "Such practices constitute grave violations of international law, undermine the credibility of the international legal order and pose a serious challenge to the principles of justice and human dignity," he said. Shah said the resolution reaffirmed the universality and indivisibility of the right to self-determination.

"It expresses solidarity with peoples whose fundamental rights and freedoms remain denied and underscores the international community's collective responsibility to uphold this foundational principle of international law," he said.

Two Pakistani schools earn global recognition at World's Best School Prizes 2026

NEWS DESK: Two Pakistani schools — a private institution in Lahore and a government-run high school in Hyderabad — have earned international recognition after being named among the leading institutions in their respective categories at the World's Best School Prizes 2026, organised by T4 Education.

T4 Education is an international organisation that recognises outstanding educational institutions from around the world. The World's Best School Prizes are regarded as among the most prestigious global awards in education. The prizes recognise schools across five categories: Community Collaboration, Environmental Action, Innovation, Overcoming Adversity and Supporting Healthy Lives.

This year, thousands of public and private schools from around the world submitted applications. Following an extensive evaluation process, an international panel of experts selected the winners in each category.



Pakistan was represented by two schools in the global competition: TNS Beaconhouse in Lahore, and Govt Girls High School Tando Mir Ghulam Hussain in Hyderabad.

The TNS Beaconhouse was announced as the winner of the "Supporting Healthy Lives" category.

The school has more than 1,100 students across kindergarten, primary and secondary levels and was recognised for its approach to supporting neurodivergent learners. "TNS Beaconhouse, an independent kindergarten, primary and secondary school in Lahore, Pakistan, is challenging one of the country's most deeply rooted educational barriers by reimagining how mainstream schools include neurodivergent learners through a wellbeing-led design that puts confidence, inclusion and agency first," said the organisation.

The United Kingdom's Swiss Cottage School, Development and Research Centre, won the "Community Collaboration" category, while Hyderabad's Govt Girls High School Tando Mir Ghulam Hussain secured a place among the world's top three schools in the same category.

On its website, T4 Education recognised the Hyderabad girls' school for "spearheading a revolutionary learning model that empowers vulnerable and working girls who are unable to attend full school hours to continue learning without stepping away from the social realities that shape their lives".

It said that the school was located in an underprivileged area where access to education was limited and girls were expected to contribute to household income or take on household responsibilities.

Pakistan calls Houthi attack on Riyadh tower 'grave violation' of Saudi sovereignty

NEWS DESK: Pakistan on Friday condemned a Houthi attack on a tower in Riyadh's King Abdullah Financial District (KAFD), calling it a "grave violation" of Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and urging an immediate halt to such attacks.

In a statement issued by the Foreign Office (FO), Pakistan said it "unequivocally condemns the attack by the Houthi militia on a tower at the King Abdullah Financial District (KAFD) in Riyadh".

"This act of aggression constitutes a grave violation of the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," the FO said.

It warned that the continued targeting of civilian infrastructure and economic facilities endangered innocent lives and posed a serious threat to regional peace and security.

"Such reprehensible attacks must cease forthwith," it added.

The FO said Pakistan stood firmly with the Saudi government and people, adding that it supported the kingdom's "legitimate right to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity and to safeguard its citizens and residents".

"Pakistan has been and would continue to make all efforts for achieving lasting peace and stability in the region," the statement concluded.



Riyadh's tallest skyscraper, headquarters of the Saudi sovereign wealth fund, was struck on ?Thursday by a suspected Houthi missile in the latest blow in the Iran-backed Yemeni group's war with the kingdom.

The strike blew out ?windows across seven to eight floors of PIF Tower, bending parts of its metal facade. It was the second time in less than two weeks that a Houthi attack damaged a landmark in Riyadh's financial district, with state oil giant Aramco's building hit in a November 8 attack.

Entrances to the King Abdullah Financial District (KAFD) were closed and people were being evacuated, ?while ambulances and fire trucks were on the scene. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Three sources familiar with the matter said the ?building had been struck by an incoming Houthi missile. The Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis said it had "dealt with a ?missile threat" launched by the Houthis towards Riyadh, and that its initial assessment showed debris had fallen and material damage had been reported.

PIF, which stands ?for the Saudi Public Investment Fund, acknowledged receiving a Reuters request for comment.