

DAILY MIRROR

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Balochistan to launch 'Peoples Air Ambulance' service to transform emergency healthcare

By Rakhshanda Saba

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Thursday announced that the 'Peoples Air Ambulance' service is fully operational and ready for launch, with its formal inauguration to be performed soon by Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

In a message posted on social media platform X, the chief minister termed the initiative a "landmark and transformative step" in the province's healthcare sector, noting that it marks the first such service in Balochistan's history. He said the project reflects the government's resolve to address long-standing gaps in emergency medical access, particularly in far-flung and underserved regions.



Mr Bugti said the air ambulance service would ensure rapid evacuation of critically ill and severely injured patients to tertiary care hospitals in major cities, significantly reducing delays in life-saving treatment.

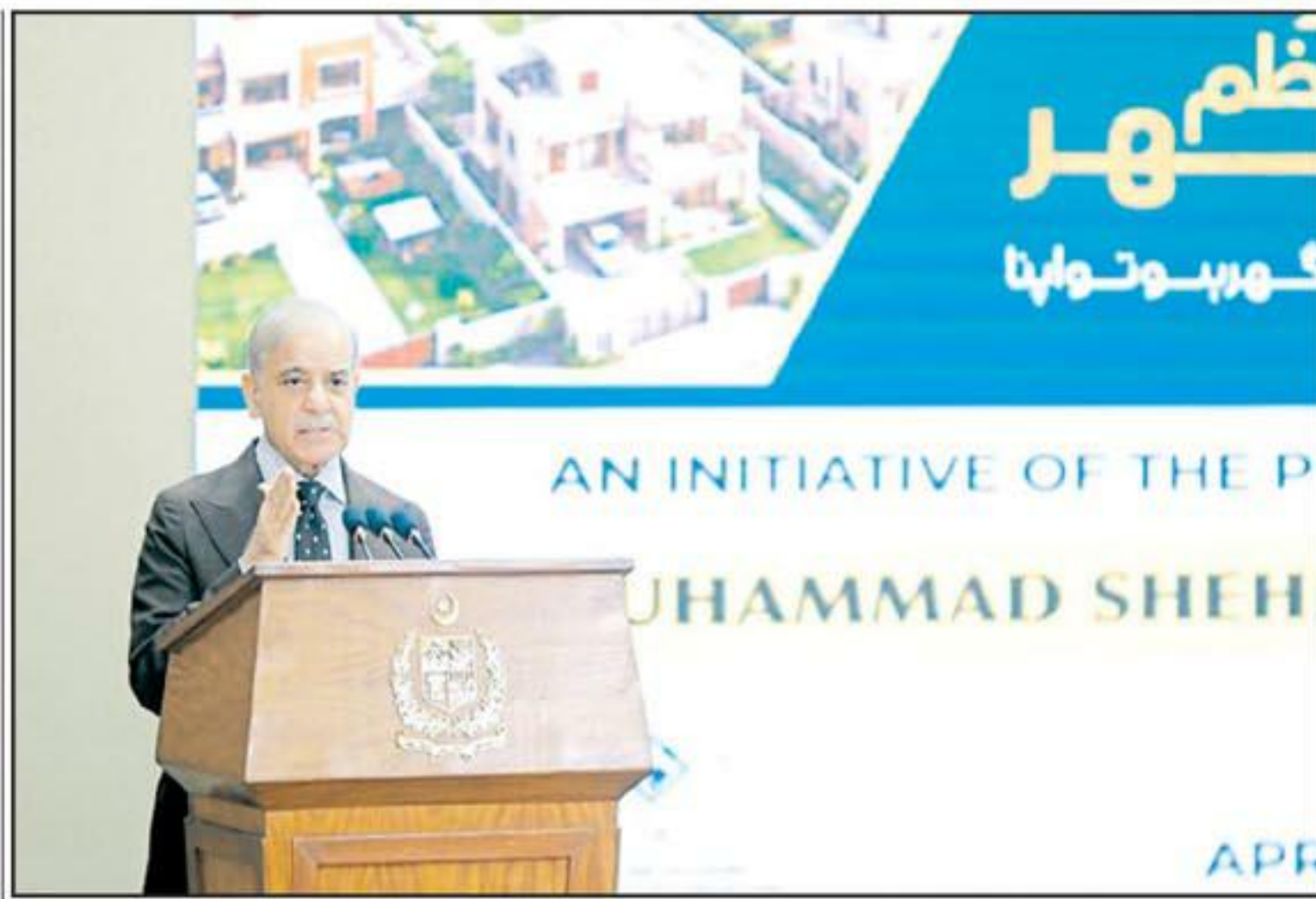
"Timely medical intervention can make the difference between life and death, and this service is

designed precisely to meet that need," he added.

He further said the initiative would substantially enhance the province's emergency response capacity in the event of road accidents, natural disasters and other crises, enabling a quicker and more coordinated response.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to healthcare reforms, the chief minister said efforts were underway to modernise the sector and expand access to quality medical services across Balochistan.

He described the 'Peoples Air Ambulance' as a tangible expression of a welfare-driven governance model, expressing confidence that it would usher in a new era of efficient and timely healthcare delivery in the province.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif addressing the program's launch ceremony of Wazir-e-Azam Apna Ghar Program.

Governor urges graduating officers to move forward with determination, as world needs your passion

Quetta: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhel on Thursday urged the graduating officers to move forward with courage and determination, knowing that the world needs your passion, knowledge and action.

He said these views while addressing the participants of the graduation ceremony organized by the University of Balochistan with the support of the European Union.

On this occasion, Provincial Minister Mir Asim Kurd Gelu, Senator Saad-ul-Hassan Mandokhel, Member of Provincial Assembly Zark Khan Mandokhel, Provincial Secretary Hashim Khan Ghilzai, Vice Chancellor of the University of Balochistan Dr. Zahoor Ahmed Bazi, Team Leader Balochistan Water Resource Program Mr. Yelle, Dr. Muhammad Irfan Khan, Professor Dr. Shazia and Director of the University of Balochistan Training and Development Center Noor-ul-Amin Kakar, along with trainee officers from eight different departments were present.

The Governor said that it is necessary to demand significant funds from the federal government to strengthen water resource management in Balochistan, the largest province in terms of area. He said that the effects of climate change can be reduced in the entire province by constructing new dams and properly managing water resources. There is an important relationship between man and nature. Now, raise the collective sense of restoration of the ecosystem and improvement of the environment among other youth of the society because you have to play the role of protectors of nature.

Jaffar Khan Mandokhel said that the officers of the graduation ceremony have been given scientific thinking and approach by the relevant experts during the three-month training, after which it is now your national responsibility to play your part in protecting nature.

Finance Minister reaffirms commitment to economic growth

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has reaffirmed the government's commitment to fostering a collaborative and consultative environment with the business community to support sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

He was talking to President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh and Chairman Policy Advisory Board Zahid Hussain in Islamabad today.

The Finance Minister appreciated the continued engagement of the business community and acknowledged the constructive role of FPCCI in providing policy input and facilitating dialogue between the Government and the private sector. He emphasized the importance of sustained consultation to ensure that reforms remain responsive to industry needs and support long-term economic stability.

Muhammad Aurangzeb emphasized that the Government remains focused on creating an enabling environment that encourages investment, supports enterprise growth, and strengthens overall economic resilience.

Workers are the Backbone of Society: CM Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti

By Staff Reporter

Quetta: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, in his message on the occasion of



International Workers' Day, said that the true strength of any society lies in its hard-working class, which silently strengthens the foundations of progress through dedication, perseverance, and resilience. He noted that despite difficult circumstances, limited resources, and persistent

challenges, the labour community continues to perform its duties with remarkable determination, reflecting the true spirit of progress. The Chief Minister stated that the labour force of Balochistan has always played a vital role in the development of the province, and their sacrifices cannot be ignored. He emphasized that safeguarding the dignity, rights, and welfare of workers is a shared responsibility, and practical steps are being taken in this regard.

He further said that for the first time, under a structured vision, opportunities are being provided to the children of labourers to study in the country's top educational institutions. This initiative aims to help them move beyond deprivation towards a dignified and brighter future. "The child of a labourer is not destined to remain a labourer but has the potential, through education and hard work, to achieve a higher status in society," he remarked.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti added that the government is expanding technical education and skill development programs to enable youth to utilize their abilities, secure better employment opportunities, and improve the living standards of their families.

Concluding his message, he paid rich tribute to all workers on Labour Day, saying that their struggle in difficult conditions remains the real driving force of societal development.

Dr Rababa Khan Baloch welcomes launch of 'Peoples Air Ambulance' service

By Zubair Sheikh

QUETTA: Adviser to the Chief Minister on Women Development Department Dr Rababa Khan Baloch has welcomed the launch of the 'Peoples Air Ambulance' service, terming it a landmark initiative that would significantly improve access to emergency healthcare across Balochistan.

In a statement issued on Thursday, Dr Baloch said the introduction of the air ambulance service reflects the provincial government's commitment to strengthening healthcare delivery, particularly for women and vulnerable populations living in remote and underserved areas. She noted that timely access to medical facilities remains one of the biggest challenges faced by expectant mothers and critically ill patients in far-flung districts. "The availability of an air ambulance service will help ensure that women facing complications during pregnancy and childbirth can be transported swiftly to specialised medical centres," she said, adding that the initiative would play a

crucial role in reducing maternal and infant mortality rates in the province.

Dr Baloch appreciated the leadership of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti for prioritising public welfare and introducing innovative solutions in the health sector. She also acknowledged the role of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in supporting initiatives aimed at improving social services and public wellbeing.

She further said that the service would strengthen the province's emergency response mechanism in situations such as road accidents, natural disasters and other medical emergencies.

"This initiative is not only a step towards modernising healthcare but also a reflection of a people-centric governance approach," she added.

The adviser expressed hope that the 'Peoples Air Ambulance' would prove to be a lifeline for those in need and mark a new chapter in the provision of timely and quality healthcare services in Balochistan.

DGPR chairs meeting to ensure transparent, merit-based recruitment in Balochistan Information Department

By Staff Reporter

QUETTA: Director General Public Relations Balochistan and Chairman of the Recruitment Committee Askar Khan on Thursday chaired a key meeting to review the recruitment process in the provincial Information Department, with a focus on ensuring



transparency, fairness and merit. The meeting was attended by Additional Secretary Information Asad Magsi, Deputy Secretary S&GAD Babar, Director Public Relations Saeed Shahwani and Deputy Director Admin Najeebullah

Lango, among others.

Participants conducted a detailed review of the recruitment process and deliberated on various administrative matters aimed at ensuring that all stages are carried out in a transparent and rules-based manner. It was agreed that the entire process would strictly adhere to merit to ensure that deserving

and competent candidates are selected. Addressing the meeting, Mr Khan emphasised that merit, transparency and fairness would remain the guiding principles throughout the recruitment process.

The meeting reaffirmed its commitment to completing all recruitment stages in an impartial manner, aiming to further build public trust in the process.

process. He said all appointments would be made strictly on the basis of competence and eligibility in line with the directives of the Government of Balochistan.

He further noted that the Public Relations Department plays a vital role and that induction of highly skilled professionals would help strengthen the institution's performance and effectiveness.

The meeting reaffirmed its commitment to completing all recruitment stages in an impartial manner, aiming to further build public trust in the process.

PM Shehbaz extends fuel subsidy for transport sector by one month

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday extended the fuel subsidy for motorcycles, public transport and goods transport by another month as he announced the continuation of measures aimed at providing relief to the public amid the prevailing economic situation.

According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office, the premier directed the relevant authorities to ensure that any increase in passenger fares and freight charges was prevented at all costs.

He stressed the need for effective monitoring of relief measures so that their benefits reached deserving individuals directly.

"The government would continue to extend maximum possible relief to the public, with facilitating the common citizen remaining its top priority," the prime minister said, adding that people would not be left alone under any circumstances.

PM Shehbaz said the federal government, in collaboration with the provinces, had provided a national relief package worth billions of rupees for the common man during difficult times. He also expressed hope that the regional situation would improve soon, enabling stability in petroleum product prices.

The US and Israel launched an attack on Iran in February, after which Tehran retaliated with strikes and closed the Strait of Hormuz, disrupting global oil supplies and prompting a surge in international oil prices. Amid rising oil prices, the government, in the first week of March, increased petroleum product prices

twice, noting that the hikes exceeded the surge in the international market. However, the most significant increase was witnessed in April this year.

Earlier this month, the government raised the petrol price by Rs137 per litre, taking it to a record Rs458.4. However, a few days later, the prime minister, in a televised address, announced a Rs80 per litre reduction in the petroleum levy on petrol, bringing its price down to Rs378 per litre.

As part of the relief measures, a subsidy of Rs100 per litre was announced for motorcycle users, while goods transport operators were offered financial assistance for one month: Rs70,000 for small trucks, Rs80,000 for large trucks, and Rs100,000 for public transport buses.

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President expresses Pakistan's interest in expanding cooperation with China in agriculture, port development, fisheries

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has expressed Pakistan's interest in expanding cooperation with China, particularly with Hainan province in tropical agriculture, port development, seed technology and fisheries.

He was talking to Party Secretary of Hainan Mr. Feng Fei in Sanya, China today.

The President emphasized greater engagement between Hainan's enterprises and Pakistan's industrial and export sectors to enhance bilateral trade. He also highlighted the importance of people-to-people contacts, noting the participation of Pakistani athletes in the Sixth Asian Beach Games in Sanya as a positive step in this direction.

The President appreciated the warm welcome and hospitality extended by the Government of Hainan and noted the province's transformation into a gateway for international trade and investment.

Balochistan, PACA sign MoU to strengthen anti-corruption framework and institutional coordination

By Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: In a significant step towards curbing corruption and enhancing institutional coordination, the Government of Balochistan, under the directives of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Pakistan Anti-Corruption Academy (PACA) and the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Balochistan.

The agreement, signed in Islamabad, is being viewed as a key milestone in strengthening the national anti-corruption framework and aligning it with modern investigative standards. The MoU was formally signed by Director General PACA Ghulam Safdar Shah and Director General ACE Balochistan Naseebullah Kakar.

Under the agreement, both institutions will collaborate in areas of professional training, advanced investigative techniques, forensic analysis and effective handling of financial crime cases. The partnership is expected to significantly enhance the capacity of officers, enabling more robust and efficient anti-

corruption operations. Officials said the initiative reflects the provincial government's commitment to strengthening accountability mechanisms and promoting transparency in governance. The move also underscores efforts to improve coordination between institutions working against corruption at both provincial and national levels.

Following the signing ceremony, the DG ACE Balochistan visited various departments of PACA, where he was briefed on the academy's modern training facilities.

Further noting that the university is taking additional measures to strengthen their academic foundations and enhance their standards so they can confidently pursue studies in any discipline at

PM Shehbaz launches 'PM's Apna Ghar Programme'

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has launched 'Prime Minister's Apna Ghar Programme' to provide affordable loans to low and middle-income groups to own their homes.

Addressing the launching ceremony in Islamabad today, he stated that loans of up to ten million rupees will be made available under this programme, with a repayment period of twenty years.

He said for the first ten years, the markup rate will be five percent, after which standard market rates will apply for the remaining period.

The Prime Minister said the target of fifty thousand homes has been set for the first year, with a financing allocation of 321 billion rupees.

He said over the next four years, the target is to build five hundred thousand homes. He said the people can construct homes of up to ten marla under this programme.

Shehbaz Sharif expressed the confidence that this housing programme will give impetus to the industries and the economy, and open the doors for prosperity.

MoU Signed for Launch of Reko Diq Scholarship Program 2025

Sukkur: Sukkur IBA University and Reko Diq Mining Company signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formally launch the Reko Diq Scholarship Program 2025, a transformative initiative aimed at expanding access to quality higher education for the talented youth of District Chaghi, Balochistan.

While briefing the audience, Prof. Dr. Asif Ahmed Shaikh, Vice Chancellor Sukkur IBA University, highlighted the history and development of the university, including its establishment and the pivotal role played by the founding Vice Chancellor, Prof. Nisar Ahmed Siddiqui, and provided a comprehensive overview of its academic programs, facilities, accreditations, and national as well

as international standing; he also appraised the delegation of the university's recent initiatives in collaboration with the Government of Sindh and its ongoing contributions to community service, and while discussing the Reko Diq Scholarship Program, appreciated the company's initiative to promote quality education among deserving students from Balochistan, emphasizing that such efforts are essential for ensuring equal educational opportunities and enabling students from the region to compete alongside their peers nationwide.

Further noting that the university is taking additional measures to strengthen their academic foundations and enhance their standards so they can confidently pursue studies in any discipline at

universities across the country. Ryan Mitchell - General Manager, Reko Diq Mining Company said in his remarks that "partnership with Sukkur IBA University is very important for us. Sukkur IBA is a prestigious institution with a strong reputation for academic excellence and leadership development.

By working together, we are adding another important dimension to the development of local talent from Chaghi, ensuring that students have access to quality education that prepares them for real-world challenges." The Reko Diq Scholarship Program 2025 promotes access to higher education, inclusivity with a focus on female participation, and long-term academic pathways for youth.

DC Kalat for administering polio drops to children to save them from polio virus

APP

Quetta: Deputy Commissioner Kalat Munir Ahmad Durrani on Thursday said that polio is a deadly disease and it is very important to administer polio drops to children to protect them from this illness.

He said this while chairing a meeting regarding the district polio campaign.

The meeting was attended by DSP Mahiwal, District Health Officer Dr. Anjum Baloch.

District Polio Officer W.H.O. Dr. Mujtabi Bajoi, heads of the Kalat Health Department and all other departments, and WHO representatives.

The meeting discussed the upcoming polio campaign. WHO DPO Dr. Mujtabi Bajoi, while giving a detailed briefing on the polio campaign.

said that the polio campaign would start from May 18 and continue for four days, May 21, 2026.

In this polio campaign, 40,269 children will be administered polio drops in 19 union councils of two tehsils of Kalat dis-

trict. In this campaign, polio teams in all union councils in Kalat district will administer polio drops to children from birth to five years of age. Deputy Commissioner Munir Ahmad Durrani said that children must be healthy to form a healthy society.

to form a polio-free society, we all have to fight against a disease like polio together, for which we have to raise awareness among the people.

He said that it is the responsibility of the local preachers, scholars, journalists, poets and writers to raise awareness among the people about polio so that our society could become a polio-free society, it is the task of the monitoring teams to play their full role in carrying out the polio campaign seriously so that no child is left without receiving the drops in this campaign.

He said that during the polio campaign, a district administrative officer made it clear that any negligence or carelessness on this issue at any level would not be acceptable.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail in a meeting with Provincial Secretary PHA Hashim Khan Ghilzai.

CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif announces Rs23 billion development package for katcha areas

By Maqsood Khalid

Lahore: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has announced a historic development package worth Rs23 billion for the katcha areas, aimed at improving infrastructure, security and socio-economic conditions.

The chief minister also announced the launch of the "Apna Khet, Apna Rozgar" initiative and directed that 14,500 acres of state land be allotted to residents of the katcha belt. She further ordered the initiation of NADRA registration services in the area, along with the deployment of transport facilities, mobile clinics, mobile veterinary hospitals and laboratories.

According to the plan, Rs7.1 billion will be spent on law and order, Rs13.9 billion on social infrastructure, and Rs1.7 billion on other sectors. A total of 108 kilometres of solving and 27 road schemes spanning 144 kilometres will be completed. Additionally, 65 schools will be upgraded, 16 new schools established and two girls' colleges constructed. For the first time, modern solar-powered drone surveillance has been introduced in the katcha areas. Safe City monitoring will also be implemented at police stations and check-posts, while advanced armoured personnel carriers (APCs) and police vehicles will be equipped with surveillance cameras.

The chief minister approved the



launch of a model village project in the katcha belt, along with skills development programmes worth Rs125 million. She also approved a hard area allowance for personnel performing duties in the region and imposed a ban on cultivating tall crops along main roads for security purposes.

Ulema, Mashaikh felicitate nation on completion of one year of Pakistan's victory in Marka-e-Haq, Bunyan-ul-Marsoos

ISLAMABAD: Ulema and Mashaikh associated with the National Paigham-e-Aman Committee (NPAC) on Thursday felicitated the nation on the completion of one year of Pakistan's victory in Marka-e-Haq, Bunyan-ul-Marsoos, while announcing that Friday sermons across the country would focus on unity, brotherhood, and national cohesion.

The announcement was made during a seminar held at Jamia Masjid Marhaba in Rawalpindi, where Prime Minister's Coordinator for NPAC, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, addressed participants and highlighted key national developments.

Accompanying with Hafiz Tariq

Mehmood, Mufti Zahid Mansoor, Maulana Tahir Aqeel, Maulana Nauman Hashir, Maulana Shahbaz Ahmed, Maulana Hafeez-ur-Rehman, Maulana Atif Tanveer, Maulana Qasim Qasmi, Maulana Afzal Shah, and Maulana Zulfikar, Ashrafi underscored the importance of a strong defence, stating that the response of the Pakistan Army to its arch-rival India had enhanced Pakistan's global standing and dignity. He alleged that the adversary attempted to malign Pakistan through a false flag operation in Pahalgam without credible evidence, adding that Pakistan effectively countered such narratives on all fronts, particularly through diplomatic engagement.



QUETTA: : A labour busy in work local bricks kilns on the eve of International Labor Day on 1 May.

Karim pays tribute to workers for their struggle on occasion of International Workers' Day

APP

Quetta: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Central Senior Leader Chaudhry Naem Karim on Thursday paid tribute to the workers for their courageous and commendable struggle for basic rights on the occasion of International Workers' Day.

In his statement, he said that this day not only reminds us of the struggle of the workers but also reflects the recognition of their role in national development and prosperity.

He said that the purpose of celebrating this day is to raise the voice of justice for the workers of the whole world, including Pakistan.

Chaudhry Naem Karim said that the workers of Chicago created a historical chapter in the labor movements around the world by sacrificing their precious lives. Today, thanks to the sacrifices of these great people, the heads of the workers are proudly raised and the workers of the whole

world have adopted the blood of the great martyrs of Chicago as their identity. He said that the martyrs of Chicago gave this to the workers of the world through their blood, eternal sacrifices and conscious struggle.

He gave the message that the exploitative system should be abolished and a workers' regime to be established and he challenged the imperialist rulers, mill owners, factory owners, capitalist industrialists of that time and declared that they should also give us the right to live, set our working hours, increase our salaries, and give us employment.

Naem Karim said that the great workers and their sincere leadership, by sacrificing their lives, determined a path for the oppressed and oppressed classes of the world - workers, farmers, cultivators and farm laborers - whose goal was the establishment of a society based on dignity, freedom and fair distribution of capital free from class contradictions, so that the working class.

Pakistan, Iran agree to promote multifaceted cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Iran have agreed to promote multifaceted cooperation in different sectors.

The understanding to this effect was reached during a meeting between Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervez Malik and Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Reza Amir Moghadam in Islamabad today. Matters related to bilateral relations and mutual interest also came under discussion during the meeting. In his remarks, the Iranian Ambassador expressed gratitude to Pakistan's role in promoting peace and stability in the region saying that Iran is grateful to their Pakistani brothers. He said Pakistan's efforts for peace are also commendable. Speaking on the occasion, Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervez Malik said Pakistan is committed to promoting peace in the region.



Usman Khan, Maaz Sadaqat star to take Kingsmen into second Eliminator as Sultans falter

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Half-centuries by Usman Khan and Maaz Sadaqat powered Hyderabad Kingsmen into the second Eliminator of the HBL Pakistan Super League as they cruised past Multan Sultans at the Gaddafi Stadium on Wednesday night, capping a collectively disciplined bowling performance that had earlier restricted their opponents to a modest total.

The comprehensive victory marked a continuation of Hyderabad's remarkable turnaround this season. After losing their first four matches, the Kingsmen stormed into the playoffs by winning five of their last six league fixtures — a surge that has now carried them into Eliminator 2, where they will face Islamabad United on Friday.

For Multan Sultans, the defeat brought an abrupt end to a campaign that had promised much. They had finished second on the points table with six wins in the league stage but faltered when it mattered most.

Chasing 160, Hyderabad suffered an early setback when captain Marnus Labuschagne was dismissed for 11, edging a cut to Sahibzada Farhan off Mohammad Ismail. At 18-1, the fixture briefly hinted at a contest, but what followed was a decisive shift orchestrated by Usman and Maaz.

The pair stitched together a blistering 102-run partnership off just 53 balls, effectively taking the game away from the Sultans.

Maaz set the tone early, launching pacer Imran Randhawa over covers for four and then lifting Australian fast bowler Peter Siddle over midwicket for a six that underlined his intent. He was particularly severe on anything short, rocking back to dispatch spinner Faisal Akram to the boundary and confidently stepping down the track to clear the ropes.

At the other end, Usman complemented him with equal authority. He unfurled a series of crisp strokes, including a powerful pull off Ismail and a flowing drive through covers off Siddle.

His assault on Mohammad Nawaz's left-arm spin proved decisive — a 19-run over featuring two boundaries and a towering six straight down the ground brought up his half-century and reduced the chase to a formality.

Usman's innings of 64 off 35 balls ended when he miscued a slog-sweep off Steven Smith to long-on, but by then the required rate had dipped below five an over.

Maaz, who reached his fifty soon after, ensured there were no late hiccups. He finished unbeaten on 64, sealing the victory alongside Saim Ayub, who played a composed supporting role with 15 not out as Hyderabad completed the chase in just over 15 overs.

Earlier, Sultans had endured a stuttering innings after being put into bat. Despite a promising start from Sahibzada, who struck two early boundaries, Hyderabad's bowlers quickly seized control. Pacer Mohammad Ali removed Steven Smith with a well-directed short-of-length delivery, before his fast-bowling partner Akif Javed dismissed Sahibzada with a leading edge.

The collapse gathered pace as Hunain Shah trapped Josh Philippe lbw, and Saim accounted for Sultans captain Ashton Turner. When Glenn Maxwell had Arafat Minhas adjudged leg-before, Sultans were reeling at 52-5 inside eight overs.



PSG'S Ousmane Dembele scores from the penalty spot past Bayern Munich goalkeeper Manuel Neuer during their Champions League semi-final first leg at the Parc des Princes Stadium.

Enrique predicts more thrills in return leg after PSG beat Bayern in classic

SPORTS DESK

PARIS: Paris St-Germain coach Luis Enrique admitted his team will likely need to score several more goals away to Bayern Munich next week to be sure of reaching another Champions League final after a remarkable 5-4 victory in the first leg of their semi-final.

In a match that will go down as a classic, PSG came from a goal down to lead 5-2 with two goals from Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Ousmane Dembele before Bayern struck twice in three minutes just before the hour to improve their chances for next week's return leg in Munich.

The match pitted the most attacking Champions League teams of the season against each other and it quickly lived up to its billing with a relentless pace and with Bayern coach Vincent Kompany in the stands, serving out a suspension, and his assistant Aaron Danks in the dugout.

"I just asked my staff how many goals they thought we would need next week and we all think we will need to score at least three," said the Spaniard, who masterminded PSG's 5-0 triumph over Inter Milan in last season's final.

That allowed them to win the Champions League for the first time in their history and next Wednesday's semi-final second leg will be their first visit to the Allianz Arena since then.

"Bayern will of course be in their stadium and will be even stronger with their fans behind them but going back there will bring back beautiful memories for us. We want to have the same mentality and will go out to try to win the game."

Tuesday's thriller was the high-scoring semi-final match in the modern Champions League era — you have to go back to 1960 to find the last game as prolific as this

stage of the European Cup.

That was a 6-3 win for Eintracht Frankfurt away to Rangers, before the Germans lost 7-3 in the final to Alfredo Di Stefano's Real Madrid.

"The intensity of the game throughout was exceptional," said Enrique.

"We won it and we are very pleased, but at 5-2 we thought we could have had a better result.

"We deserved to win, but we also deserved to draw and lose!"

"FOOTBALL IS LIKE RELIGION"

A crazy first-half at the Parc des Princes saw Harry Kane give Bayern the lead with an early penalty, and become the first English player to net in six successive Champions League fixtures.

"You saw two high-level teams in attacking play and transition. Overall, we look at their goals, the penalty was harsh but we could have killed the game earlier on," Kane told the UK's Amazon Prime.

"We fought and we clawed and we're back in the tie... We go to the Allianz with nothing to lose, we're at our best when we're

intense and physical. It'll be who takes their moments next week, with the crowd behind us, we hope that can push us over the line."

Kvaratskhelia and Joao Neves strike for the hosts and Michael Olise then make it 2-2, only for a Dembele penalty to put PSG back ahead at the interval.

Kvaratskhelia and Dembele then both scored for PSG before the hour mark, leaving them seemingly out of sight at 5-2, but Dayot Upamecano and Luis Diaz pulled goals back for Bayern.

That ensures it will be game on next week, and there is a strong chance this tie could become the most prolific ever in the Champions League.

Babar rises above the noise with match-winning statement

By Maqsood Khalid

KARACHI: For Babar Azam, the roar that echoed around the National Bank Stadium on Tuesday night was more than just an ovation for a match-winning century. It was a release — of pressure, of scrutiny, and perhaps most of all, of a phase that had tested both his game and his resolve.

Standing at the centre of Peshawar Zalmi's emphatic 70-run victory over Islamabad United in the HBL Pakistan Super League Qualifier, Babar cut a composed figure in the post-match press conference. But beneath the calm exterior was a quiet acknowledgement of the significance of the moment.

"I can definitely say it is quite different in the sense that it was a semi-final of sorts for us," he said. "That's why it's very special for me."

"Performing in such a big match, the team needed me to stay out there as long as possible, and I think that's exactly what was required."

It was an innings that seemed to encapsulate both his past struggles and his renewed clarity. The century — his fourth in PSL history — not only propelled Zalmi into their first final in five years but also took him to the summit of the batting charts this season. With 588 runs, he now equals Fakhar Zaman's record for the most runs in a single PSL campaign, with one match still to play.

Yet, the numbers tell only part of the story.

For nearly two years leading into this tournament, Babar had end-ured what, by his own lofty standards, could only be described as a lean patch. Questions were raised, criticisms grew louder — particularly around his strike rate — and the burden of expectation weighed heavier with each passing innings.

Rather than deflecting that scrutiny, Babar chose introspection.

"Time teaches you everything," he reflected. "With time and experience, you keep learning."



PESHAWAR Zalmi captain Babar Azam smiles after the win against Islamabad United in the Pakistan Super League Qualifier at the National Bank Stadium.

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A lifeline in the skies for Balochistan

Balochistan has long stood at the intersection of vast geography and limited access to essential public services. Among the most pressing of these challenges has been healthcare, where distance often determines survival. For decades, residents of remote districts have faced an unforgiving reality. When a medical emergency strikes, the nearest equipped hospital may lie hundreds of kilometres away, connected by difficult terrain and inadequate road infrastructure. In such a setting, time is not just critical, it is often decisive.

The announcement of the 'Peoples Air Ambulance' service by Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, with its formal inauguration expected to be carried out by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, signals an important shift in how the province intends to confront this long-standing challenge. If implemented with seriousness and sustained commitment, this initiative has the potential to redefine emergency medical response in Balochistan.

At its core, the concept is simple yet powerful. In medical emergencies, speed saves lives. Whether it is a road accident in a remote tehsil, a complicated childbirth in a rural settlement, or a critical illness requiring specialised care, the ability to transport patients quickly to advanced healthcare facilities can make the difference between recovery and tragedy. An air ambulance service directly addresses this gap by overcoming the barriers of distance and terrain that have historically hindered timely intervention.

Yet, the significance of this initiative extends beyond the immediate benefit of rapid transport. It reflects an evolving understanding within the provincial leadership that healthcare delivery cannot remain confined to static facilities alone. Hospitals, no matter how well equipped, serve little purpose if patients cannot reach them in time. By investing in mobility and response systems, the government is signalling a shift toward a more integrated and responsive healthcare model.

For a province like Balochistan, this is particularly relevant. The scattered nature of its population, combined with infrastructural constraints, has often resulted in uneven access to services. Urban centres such as Quetta have seen gradual improvements in healthcare capacity, but rural and far-flung areas continue to lag behind. Bridging this divide requires innovative approaches, and the introduction of an air ambulance service is a step in that direction.

However, the success of this initiative will depend not merely on its launch but on its sustainability. Around the world, emergency air services are resource intensive. They require trained personnel, reliable aircraft, maintenance systems, coordination protocols and, above all, consistent funding. Without these elements, even the most well intentioned projects risk becoming symbolic gestures rather than functional solutions.

There is also the question of integration. An air ambulance service cannot operate in isolation. It must be linked to a broader emergency response network that includes ground ambulances, local health centres, communication systems and referral mechanisms. Clear protocols will be needed to determine when and how the service is deployed, ensuring that it reaches those who need it most without delay or misuse. Transparency in operations will be equally important in building public trust.

Another critical dimension is accessibility. The service must not become an exclusive facility available only to a select few. Its true value lies in its ability to serve the most vulnerable segments of society, particularly those in remote and underserved regions who have historically been deprived of timely medical care. Ensuring equitable access will require careful planning, oversight and a commitment to public welfare that goes beyond political messaging.

It is also worth recognising the broader symbolic importance of this initiative. Public confidence in governance is often shaped by the state's ability to respond effectively in moments of crisis. When citizens see that help can reach them even in the most remote corners of the province, it strengthens their sense of inclusion and trust in public institutions. In this sense, the air ambulance service is not just a healthcare intervention, it is also a statement about the state's presence and responsibility.

At the same time, it would be unrealistic to view this initiative as a complete solution to the province's healthcare challenges. Balochistan still requires sustained investment in hospitals, medical education, primary healthcare and preventive services. Issues such as shortages of trained doctors, limited diagnostic facilities and gaps in rural healthcare infrastructure remain pressing concerns. The air ambulance service should therefore be seen as a complementary measure, not a substitute for broader systemic reforms.

The coming months will be crucial. As the service moves from announcement to implementation, the focus must shift from rhetoric to results. Operational readiness, staff training, maintenance planning and interdepartmental coordination will all need to be addressed with urgency and precision. Equally important will be the establishment of accountability mechanisms to ensure that the service remains effective and transparent over time.

In many ways, the skies over Balochistan have long symbolised distance and isolation. If managed well, this initiative could transform them into pathways of hope and survival. It offers a chance to rewrite a narrative where geography no longer dictates destiny, and where access to life saving care is not determined by location.

The idea is promising. The intent, at least on the surface, appears aligned with public need. What remains to be seen is whether execution can match ambition. If it does, the 'Peoples Air Ambulance' may well become one of the most consequential public health interventions in the province's recent history.

By Hina Naseem

A Lifeline Beyond Roads: Reimagining Emergency Care in Balochistan

Balochistan, Pakistan's largest province by land area, has long struggled with a fundamental challenge that continues to shape the lives of its people: distance. Vast landscapes, scattered populations and limited infrastructure have collectively created barriers to timely access to healthcare. For many residents, particularly those living in remote and underdeveloped regions, a medical emergency is not just a test of survival but also a race against geography.

In this context, the announcement of the 'Peoples Air Ambulance' service by Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti represents a significant and much needed shift in thinking. With its formal inauguration expected to be carried out by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the initiative promises to introduce a new dimension to emergency healthcare in the province. It is not merely a project. It is a response to a long-standing gap that has cost countless lives.

For years, the reality in many parts of Balochistan has been stark. Patients in critical condition often have to travel for hours, sometimes even longer, to reach hospitals equipped to handle emergencies. In cases of trauma, cardiac events or complicated childbirth, such delays can prove fatal. The absence of a rapid response system has meant that survival often depends less on the severity of illness and more on proximity to urban centres.

The introduction of an air ambulance service directly addresses this imbalance. By enabling the swift transfer of critically ill and injured patients to major healthcare facilities, it has the potential to dramatically reduce response times. More importantly, it introduces a sense of possibility where previously there was only limitation.

The idea that help can arrive from the skies, bypassing difficult terrain and broken roads, carries both practical and symbolic weight.

However, the true significance of this initiative lies not only in its immediate benefits but also in what it represents for the future of public service delivery. It reflects a growing recognition that traditional approaches are no longer sufficient to meet the needs of a geographically complex province like Balochistan. Healthcare, in particular, requires innovation, adaptability and a willingness to invest in systems that prioritise speed and accessibility.

At the same time, it is important to approach this development with a sense of realism. Air ambulance services, while transformative, are inherently resource intensive. They require skilled personnel, continuous maintenance, operational funding and a well coordinated support system on the ground. Without these elements, the service risks becoming underutilised or unsustainable.

Integration will be key. The air ambulance must function as part of a broader emergency response framework that includes local health centres, ground ambulances and communication networks. Clear protocols will be essential to ensure that the service is deployed efficiently and reaches those who need it most. Equally important will be transparency in its operation, as public trust is vital for the long term success of any such initiative.

Another critical consideration is equity. The true measure of success for the 'Peoples Air Ambulance' will not lie in its existence but in its accessibility. It must serve the people of Balochistan without discrimination, particularly those in the most remote and underserved areas. If implemented effective-

ly, it could help bridge the long-standing gap between urban and rural healthcare access.

There is also a deeper, more intangible impact to consider. In regions where the state's presence has often felt distant, the ability to respond swiftly in moments of crisis can reshape public perception. It sends a message that the lives of citizens matter, regardless of where they live. In this sense, the air ambulance service is not just a healthcare intervention but also an expression of governance and responsibility. Yet, it is crucial not to lose sight of the broader challenges facing the healthcare sector in Balochistan. The province continues to grapple with shortages of medical professionals, limited hospital infrastructure and gaps in primary healthcare services. While the air ambulance can play a vital role in emergency response, it cannot replace the need for comprehensive and sustained investment in the health system as a whole.

Ultimately, the success of this initiative will depend on execution. Announcements generate hope, but delivery builds credibility. The coming months will reveal whether the vision behind the 'Peoples Air Ambulance' can be translated into a reliable and effective service. If managed well, it could mark the beginning of a new chapter in Balochistan's healthcare journey.

For a province where distance has so often defined destiny, this initiative offers a chance to rewrite that narrative. It is an opportunity to ensure that access to life saving care is not determined by geography but guaranteed as a basic right.

The skies, once a symbol of separation, may yet become a pathway to survival and hope.

By F.S. Aijazuddin

Aquacide

ONE is familiar with the terms 'suicide', 'fratricide', even sadly 'matriicide' and 'patricide'. 'Aquacide' is a new one. It is usually applied to an herbicide used to control weeds. The social scientist Roman Krznaric has given aquacide a different meaning — national suicide by dehydration. He warns in his compelling book *History for Tomorrow (2024)*, that "water makes and breaks civilisations". The only place, he says, one can find an abundance of water now is in history.

Our planet seen from space looks startlingly blue, saturated by oceans. They cover 70 per cent of the earth's surface. In reality, only 2.5pc of that water is fresh, and even 99pc of that is trapped in glaciers and underground aquifers.

Throughout history, water as a life-giving resource has been taken for granted, except by the Chinese. Apparently, the Chinese character for the word 'govern' comes from 'water control' or 'harnessing the rivers'. While Europe luxuriated in the Holy Roman empire and Great Britain gorged on its imperial surpluses, millions of Chinese laboured to make theirs a 'hydraulic civilisation'.

Over millennia, from 2,000 BCE onwards, they built canals and dykes to control and regulate the often dangerous flow of its rivers. Today, the Chinese Grand Canal — "the world's longest manmade waterway" — links five river basins, from Beijing in the north to Hangzhou in the south.

The next Indo-Pak war could well be over 'white oil'.

Geography has made water a resource common to more than one country. Ancient Romans coined a word for such multiple users —

'rivalis' (rival) — 'someone who uses water from the same river as another'. In Africa, today 11 countries are dependent on the Nile, 10 on the Congo River, and in East Asia, six draw on the Mekong that flows from China to Vietnam.

Such dependence can be fraught with hazards, inflame arguments, even start wars. Mature nations, though, have developed mechanisms for sharing water equitably. For example, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (conceived in 1856) still works for 19 Euro-pean countries, while the Great Lakes Commission in the Americas connects five states in the US with Canada (unless President Donald Trump decides otherwise).

In 1947, after the provincial partitions of Punjab and Bengal, both India and Pakistan needed to find a system of 'equitable apportionment' of common waters. In 1960, they signed the Indus Waters Treaty, brokered by the World Bank which stood guarantor of their performance. It gave Pakistan a dowry in dams — Tarbela and Mangla, and the Chashma barrage. Meetings of the Pakistani and Indian IWT commissioners were held regularly until May 2022. None since. In 2016, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi damaged the treaty by declaring that "blood and water could not flow together". Tempers flared which have not subsided. Pakistan has hinted that Indian violations of the IWT could lead to war. The next war between India and Pakistan will conceivably not be over a false-flag incident in occupied Jammu & Kashmir, but over 'white oil' — water. Interestingly, World Bank president Ajay Banga, during his recent visit to India and Pakistan, emphasised job

creation and other social imperatives, but sidestepped the bank's responsibilities under the IWT.

Water and war, it has been said, are destined to become "deadly accomplices in a thirsty world". The Six-Day war in June 1967 between Israel and the Arab states more than expanded the land area of Israel. It also increased its strategic water reserves. Israel gained large aquifers that lay under the West Bank and also control of the headwaters of the Jordan River in the Golan Heights.

If the scramble for oil and gas reserves has dominated the first half of this century, the second half will predictably be devoted to two common, undervalued resources — the air we breathe and the water that sustains our lives. The world has ignored the warnings of humanists including former US vice-president Al Gore, the British zoologist David Attenborough, and the French oceanographer Jacques Cousteau. "Water and air," Cousteau cautioned, "the two essential fluids on which all life depends, have become global garbage cans." Pakistan is an agro-based economy with a burgeoning population. Water and clean air are, and will remain of critical significance. The UN projects that Pakistan's present population of 243m is expected to reach 511m by 2100. Over 90pc of Pakistan's water is used for agriculture. Bottled water cannot irrigate sere fields nor satiate a parched population. In January 2026,

the government convened the first meeting of the Task Force on National Water Security in Islamabad. Pious platitudes were poured into five-star sands.

A stronger message of official resolve to ensure water security might have been conveyed had the deliberations been held in the arid Thar desert.

DAILY MIRROR

Governor Mandokhail highlights digital literacy as laptops distributed among SBK Women's University students

By Staff Reporter

QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail on Thursday said the provincial government had increased the budget of all public sector universities to Rs8 billion, emphasising that the focus must now shift from stabilisation to performance and results.

He was addressing a laptop distribution ceremony held under the Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme at Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University. The event was attended by Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Durrani, parliamentary representatives, senior officials, faculty members and a large number of students. The governor said that during the initial phase, the government had worked to resolve key challenges faced by public sector universities and ensure institutional stability. "Now it is the responsibility of vice chancellors and their teams to deliver results and demonstrate improved performance," he remarked. He expressed satisfaction that all public sector universities had shown improvement in both

rankings and scoring, noting with pride that SBK Women's University had crossed the 80 per cent score mark, calling it an encouraging milestone.

Mr Mandokhail thanked Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan for facilitating the provision of laptops to female students. He termed the initiative a step towards empowering youth through access to technology and knowledge resources.

Highlighting the importance of modern education, the governor urged universities to focus on skill development aligned with market needs. He said institutions must introduce diploma and IT courses to equip students with practical skills that enable them to secure employment quickly and achieve economic independence.

"Parents have entrusted universities with the future of their daughters. It is now the responsibility of these institutions to meet those expectations by providing quality education," he said. Mr Mandokhail underscored that the world was rapidly transitioning into an era driven by arti-

ficial intelligence and robotics, where traditional concepts of literacy were being redefined. "Being educated today is no longer limited to reading and writing. Digital literacy has become the true measure of education and the ability to effectively use technology," he observed. He noted that in the fast-evolving digital age, access to online academic and research material had become a fundamental necessity. Students now had opportunities to conduct research, engage in online businesses and broaden their intellectual horizons through science and philosophy. He particularly highlighted the importance of such initiatives for talented students from underprivileged backgrounds who previously lacked access to these resources.



Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb Meets with Atif Ikram Sheikh, President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and Zahid Hussain, Chairman Policy Advisory Board (FPCCI) to Discuss Business Climate and Reform Priorities in Islamabad.

Two-Day Training Workshop Held in Barkhan to Enhance Capacity of Education Officers and Cluster Heads

Barkhan: A two-day training workshop for Cluster Heads and District Education Officers was organized in Barkhan on April 29-30, 2026, under the Education Department. The aim was to enhance professional skills, strengthen school governance, and improve institutional performance. Master Trainers Wali Khan and Muhammad Akram delivered detailed sessions on modern teaching methods, educational planning, monitoring systems, and institutional development. Divisional Director Education Schools Loralai Division, Dr. Muhammad Saleem Zarkoon, visited the workshop, appreciated the training activities, and said such initiatives are essential for improving educational standards.

12.5 Acres Government Land Retrieved in Barkhan, Agriculture Department Regains Possession

Barkhan: On the instructions of the Deputy Commissioner Barkhan and under the supervision of the Assistant Commissioner, a revenue team along with the Deputy Director Agriculture carried out a major operation regarding government land demarcation and retrieval. The team completed the identification, measurement, and demarcation of 12.5 acres of government land based on official records and formally handed it over to the Agriculture Department after completing legal formalities. The district administration reiterated that protection of government land and action against illegal occupation remain top priorities. It was clearly stated that encroachments will not be tolerated and strict action will continue without discrimination. The public appreciated the operation and expressed hope for continued transparent administrative actions in the future.

Developed World Preparing for Third Industrial Revolution, Urgent Climate Action Needed: Nasim-ur-Rehman Khan Malkhail

Quetta: Provincial Advisor for Environment and Climate Change, Nasim-ur-Rehman Khan Malkhail, has said that the developed world is preparing for the third industrial revolution and is actively taking measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change. He stressed that Pakistan must also adopt urgent measures to protect itself from future climate-related challenges.

He expressed these views while speaking to various delegations in his office. The Advisor stated that human-induced climate change has created a severe global crisis,

and most of the current public issues are, in fact, linked to environmental and climatic impacts.

He further said that the stance of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti on climate change is very clear, and both are actively pursuing initiatives in this regard.

He remarked that sooner or later the

current fossil-fuel-based industrial system will come to an end, and therefore focus must be shifted towards exploring and adopting alternative energy sources.

He added that the Environment Department of Balochistan is utilizing all available resources to address these challenges and improve environmental conditions across the province.

He emphasized the need for urgent and coordinated efforts at both federal and provincial levels to minimize climate impacts.

Nasim-ur-Rehman Khan Malkhail also stressed that public participation and community engagement are essential in environmental protection efforts,

as without public cooperation, it is not possible to effectively address this critical issue.

He further said that public interest projects should be prioritized in the upcoming Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) so that the maximum benefit can be passed on to the people.

False Propaganda Regarding Bolan Dam Funds Shifted to Bakker: Yar Muhammad Rind's Statements Baseless and Fabricated - Mir Farid Raisani

Kachhi: Pakistan Peoples Party's central leader and prominent tribal figure of Balochistan, Mir Farid Raisani, has strongly rejected the statements made by Yar Muhammad Rind regarding the alleged shifting of Bolan Dam funds to Bakker, terming them false and part of a fabricated propaganda campaign.



In a media interaction, Mir Farid Raisani stated that these baseless allegations have no connection with reality and are merely the outcome of political frustration. He clarified that he personally verified the matter with the Planning and Development Department, which categorically denied any such fund diversion or related activity. He further said that the same individual had allegedly misappropriated

hundreds of millions of rupees in the name of Bolan Dam in the past and is now attempting to divert public attention to escape accountability. He added that after being rejected by the public in the 2024 general elections, Yar Muhammad Rind is attempting to regain political relevance through false narratives, but the people are fully aware of his true face.

Mir Farid Raisani also lauded the leadership of Chief Minister Balochistan

Mir Sarfraz Bugti, stating that the provincial government is taking serious and practical steps for the development, stability, and promotion of a strong state narrative in the province. He said that positive outcomes of government policies are clearly visible in the sectors of education, health, law and order, and employment. He further highlighted that ongoing development projects in Kachhi, particularly the Bhagh to Bakhtiarabad road project, are a practical step towards transforming the region's future and improving connectivity and economic opportunities.

In strong words, he said that Yar Muhammad Rind failed to resolve public issues even during his time in power and is now trying to hide his failures through a politics of allegations and protests.

Deputy Commissioner Barkhan Reviews FA/FSc Examination Arrangements, Emphasizes Transparency and Merit

Barkhan: Deputy Commissioner Barkhan, Saedur Rehman Kakar, visited the examination center established at Government Boys Degree College Barkhan for FA and FSc examinations. During the visit, he thoroughly reviewed the examination process and inspected all administrative arrangements.

The Deputy Commissioner examined examination halls, security arrangements, seating arrangements for male and female students, cleanliness, and other facilities. He directed the concerned staff to ensure transparency, discipline, and merit at all costs in the conduct of examinations.

He also met the students present at the center and advised them to appear in a peaceful and conducive environment. He stated that strict measures would be taken to prevent unfair means in order to protect the rights of hard-working and talented students.

He further added that the district administration is taking all possible steps to establish a fair and standardized examination system to provide a better educational environment for the youth.

Secretary Forests Launches "Green Tunnel - Green Chaman" Initiative, Massive Plantation Drive Begins

Chaman District: Secretary Forests Balochistan, Imran Gachki, visited the Chaman Tunnel area where he, along with Deputy Commissioner Chaman Habib Ahmed Bangulzai, planted saplings and formally launched the "Green Tunnel - Green Chaman" initiative.

During the visit, plantation activity was carried out on both

sides of the tunnel, including various plants and wild medicinal herbs.

He stated that the Forest Department Balochistan will provide saplings, seeds, and plants to the district administration Chaman to promote

greenery and reduce environmental pollution. He stressed that joint efforts would help create a healthier and oxygen-rich environment.

The Deputy Commissioner briefed him on plantation plans across government departments, playgrounds, and rural and urban areas, and appreciated his support for a greener Chaman.

Govt taking priority steps to secure children's future: PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said the government is taking priority measures to secure the future of the nation's children.

He was talking to a delegation of Partnership for Lead Free Future and UNICEF that called on him in Islamabad today.

The delegation included UNICEF Representative in Pakistan Pernille Ironside, Director of the Lead-Free Future Secretariat Abdullah Fazil, as well as experts from Stanford University School of Medicine, Jenna Forsyth and Thomas Hird.

Shehbaz Sharif reiterated that Pakistan considers polio eradication a top priority and is determined to eliminate the disease from the country soon.

He highlighted that exposure to lead causes serious mental and physical developmental issues in children, terming it a major challenge. He affirmed that the government, in collaboration with its international partners, is

committed to taking all possible measures to prevent the harmful effects of lead.

The delegation members thanked the Prime Minister and briefed him on their recent survey conducted during their visit to Pakistan. They appreciated the government's efforts under his leadership to protect children from polio and other diseases.

They also expressed satisfaction over the measures being taken to prevent diseases

among children and to address threats to their development. They further commended the government's initiatives in the fields of health, education, youth training, and information technology.

The delegation also briefed the Prime Minister on the adverse health impacts of lead, identified affected areas in Pakistan, and emphasized the importance of raising public awareness about its harmful effects.

Khuzdar Town Development Initiative: Important Meeting Held Under Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shuaib Noshervani

Kharan: An important meeting regarding the Kharan Town Development Initiative was held under the chairmanship of Provincial Minister for Finance and

carefully heard and noted. On the occasion, Provincial Minister Mir Shuaib Noshervani assured that if any shop, kiosk, hut, or any form of property belonging to

security in the district, and strict, indiscriminate action will be taken against criminal elements by the administration.

He further stated that he is fully aware of public



Mines, Mir Shuaib Noshervani. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Kharan Munir Ahmed Somro, relevant officials, and representatives of the trader community.

During the briefing, officials provided a detailed update on the nature of the proposed development project and its expected progress based on the survey conducted among traders.

Trader representatives also presented their suggestions, which were

affected during the development process, full compensation will be provided in accordance with law and regulations. He emphasized that the government will ensure the protection of public rights at all costs and no injustice will be tolerated.

Meanwhile, the Provincial Finance Minister also convened an All Parties Jirga on the law and order situation in Kharan. He made it clear that there will be no compromise on peace and

concerns and that positive changes will soon become visible. The Government of Balochistan is taking all possible measures to ensure peace and stability in Kharan.

At the conclusion of the meeting, it was unanimously resolved that continuous liaison with the trader community will be maintained, and all issues will be resolved through mutual consultation to ensure that the development process is not hindered in any way.

FO says in contact with Somalia over hijacked tanker, hostage Pakistani sailors

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) on Thursday said that it was in contact with the Somali government over the hostage crisis involving Pakistani sailors aboard a hijacked oil tanker, adding that it believed the crew members were safe and secure.

During a weekly briefing, FO Spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said the oil tanker "Honor 25" was hijacked by pirates near the southeastern coast of Somalia on April 21 while carrying oil to the Puntland region. The vessel had 17 crew members on board, including 10 Pakistanis.

The FO said Pakistan's embassy in Djibouti had approached Somali authorities, including their foreign ministry, and was informed that the vessel was anchored off the coast of Eyl in Puntland, a semi-autonomous region of Somalia.

"We have fair reason to believe that our crew members are safe and secure," the FO said, adding that the Somali Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been "very cooperative" and was closely monitoring the situation.

According to the statement, Somali authorities had assured Pakistan that any updates regarding the vessel and the safety of the crew would be shared promptly. "They are trying their best to ensure that the safety and well-being of our detained Pakistanis and all crew members are taken care of," it said, noting that local authorities and the ship's owner were in contact with the pirates.

The FO highlighted Pakistan's diplomatic efforts regarding the broader regional situation, saying engagement between concerned parties had continued following a ceasefire initiative.

"Let me underscore that these talks started after the call for a ceasefire by Pakistan, by our prime minister, that was very graciously accepted by both parties," the statement said. "The ceasefire basically opened a window for substantive diplomacy, including dialogue between the two sides."

It said the ceasefire had halted hostilities in the Gulf region, preventing further loss of life and damage to infrastruc-

ture. "This paved the way for the talks," it added, noting that discussions held in Islamabad were followed by continued diplomatic engagement.

"The clock on diplomacy has not stopped. We remain hopeful of a negotiated settlement of this issue and will continue our sincere efforts for the cause of peace and prosperity in the region and beyond," the FO said.

Commenting on the situation in the Strait of Hormuz, the FO described it as a matter of global concern, emphasising its importance as a key international shipping route for goods and energy.

"Pakistan has called for the security of ships and crew members, and the swift and safe passage of civilian vessels, and the restoration of normal transit through the strait," the statement said.

It added that the current situation was adversely affecting countries worldwide, including Pakistan, with significant implications for regional and global economies.

"Normalisation of the situation is an important issue for all of us, particularly for the littoral states of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of

Hormuz," the FO said, adding that Pakistan supported the legitimate interests of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries in this regard.

Separately, Andrabi said Pakistan was maintaining "sustained engagement" with both Washington and Tehran to support de-escalation and ceasefire efforts. He said Pakistan's approach reflected its commitment to "constructive diplomatic engagement" aimed at promoting regional stability.

"Pakistan remains committed to regional stability and international peace, reflecting our preference for principled, dialogue-oriented diplomacy," he said.

He added that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, and Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir were engaged with key stakeholders, maintaining "open channels of communication" with both sides.



QUETTA: Daily wages laborers sitting on Bacha Khan Chowk with their work tools looking some work on the eve of International Labor Day on 1 May.