

# DAILY MIRROR

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## Balochistan expands Quetta's infrastructure: CM Sarfraz Bugti inaugurates blacktop road project

APP

Quetta: Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, has reaffirmed his government's commitment to providing quality infrastructure and timely completion of development projects, despite limited resources. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Chaman Phatak to Koila Phatak Blacktop Road Project, he emphasized transparency, efficiency, and high standards as guiding principles of governance. During the briefing, Secretary Communications and Works, Babar Khan, informed that the 1.02-kilometre-long road was completed in just 76 days. The project was originally estimated at Rs. 338.36 million, but was completed at a cost of Rs. 308.63 million, resulting in savings of nearly Rs. 29.73 million.

Officials highlighted that the new road will benefit thousands of residents in Airport Road, Shahbaz Town, Model Town, and adjoining areas, significantly reducing traffic congestion. Constructed to modern standards, the road will provide safer and more efficient travel for citizens. Chief Minister Bugti praised the project as a clear example of effective planning and institutional performance.

He announced that the Koila Phatak to Chaman Phatak Road will be doubled to meet the growing needs of Quetta's citizens. He also assured that adjacent roads, including one previously closed due to a terrorist attack near Model Town, will be completed and reopened within 70 days.

Addressing the media, Sarfraz Bugti commended the Communications and Works Department for their performance under tight deadlines. He noted that while law and order has improved in the province, a comprehensive strategy is being developed to curb rising street crime. He stressed that public funds will not be wasted and transparency will be ensured in all projects. Sarfraz Bugti further stated that the government is determined to continue welfare-oriented projects for the common people, ensuring that every rupee is spent for public benefit. He highlighted that last year's development budget was fully utilized on time, and the same momentum will be maintained this year. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Provincial Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langove, Secretary Communications and Works Babar Khan, and Inspector General of Police Balochistan Muhammad Tahir Khan.



ISLAMABAD: Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

## Trump says peace talks 'possible' on Friday, Iran seizes 2 vessels, demands end to Hormuz blockade

Iran's ambassador Amir Saeid Irvani says Tehran receives signals that Washington is willing to end the blockade

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump tells The New York Post that peace talks with Iran may be coming as soon as Friday.

Asked about this possibility by The NY Post, Trump, in a text message, has replied: "It's possible! President DJT."

Meanwhile, sources in Islamabad told The NY Post about "positive mediation efforts with Tehran, renewing the possibility of more peace talks within the next '36 to 72 hours'".

Earlier, Iranian forces targeted three container ships on Wednesday, seizing two and firing on a third, global security monitors and the country's Revolutionary Guards said, the latest incidents to threaten a crucial trade route in the Middle East war.

British maritime security agency UKMTO said an Iranian gunboat fired at a container ship off the coast of Oman Wednesday, while a ship off Iran was also fired upon.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said on Wednesday that their naval forces stopped two ships attempting

to cross the Strait of Hormuz and directed them to the territorial waters of the Islamic Republic.

The seizures come as Iranian ports remain under a naval blockade by the United States, imposed on April 13 days after a ceasefire was announced that paused its war with Iran.

"The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps naval force this morning identified and stopped in the Strait of Hormuz two violating ships," the Guards said in a statement.

"The two offending ships... were seized by the IRGC's naval forces and directed to the Iranian coast," it added, although it was not immediately clear if the Guards boarded them.

They identified one ship as "MSC-FRANCESCA", which they said belonged "to the Zionist regime" in reference to Israel, and the other as "EPAMINONDAS", which they said was "tampering with navigation systems and jeopardising maritime security."

The Guards further warned against any action against the regulations imposed by the Islamic republic in the strait, "as well as activities contrary to the safe passage" through the waterway.

## Pakistan moves to modernize airports with unified security system

APP

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi chaired a high-level meeting in Islamabad aimed at developing a joint strategy between the ministries of defence and interior to improve airport operations and public convenience.

Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry, Interior Secretary Muhammad Khuram Agha, Defence Secretary Lt Gen (R) Muhammad Ali, Additional Interior Secretary Maj Gen Noor Wali Khan, Additional Defence Secretary Maj Gen Qaiser Suleman, DG Anti-Narcotics Force Maj Gen Abdul Mueed, and DG FIA Dr Usman Anwar attended the session.

The meeting reviewed joint measures to enhance passenger facilitation at

Islamabad and other airports and decided to ensure stronger coordination among all relevant agencies. Officials approved the installation of advanced screening machinery to improve the checking system.

It was further agreed that joint counters would be established, introducing a single-point checking mechanism to reduce delays. Progress on installing e-gates was also assessed.

Interior Minister Naqvi emphasized providing passengers with faster clearance and easier travel

procedures. "A unified checking system on a single scanner will save significant time," he noted, adding that better coordination among institutions is essential to reduce crowding and long queues at airports.



Quetta: Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti inauguration ceremony of the Chaman Phatak to Koila Phatak Blacktop Road Project.

## We made historic decision to start MPhil programs for ensuring best performance in medical education: Governor

APP

Quetta: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhel on Wednesday said that we took a historic decision to start MPhil programs in various fields to ensure best performance in medical education, as a result of which the said university would soon start producing professional experts in modern medical fields.

He said this while chairing the sixth Senate meeting of Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences.

Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Justice Gul Hassan Tareen of the Balochistan High Court, Vice Chancellor Dr. Shabbir Ahmed Lehari, Principal Secretary to the Governor of Balochistan Abdul Nasir Dotani, Additional Secretary Education Jahanzeb Mandokhel, Higher Education Commission representative Professor Dr. Zahoor Bazai and

Registrar Bolan Medical University Aurangzeb Kasi were present in the Senate meeting, along with all the members of the Senate.

The Governor emphasized that the "Senate" has the same authority in the higher education sector as the "Cabinet" has in the government, at the university level, when the Senate takes a decision, then that decision remains final.

He said that we have been keeping a close eye on all public sector universities from day one to improve their ranking and scoring saying that at the same time, we have never interfered in the responsibilities of any Vice Chancellor, all Vice Chancellors of public sector universities hold the highest standards of position and performance. He said that in view of the balance of powers and institutional autonomy, Bolan Medical University is moving towards a bright and modern future like other universities.

## PM directs to accelerate measures for promotion of EVs

INP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed to accelerate ongoing measures to promote electric vehicles (EVs) in the country.

Chairing a meeting in Islamabad today, he noted that considering the current regional situation and future needs, the promotion of EVs will not only reduce the burden of fuel imports, but is also crucial for environmental protection and energy security.

Shehbaz Sharif said under the National EV Policy, transparency should be ensured in the subsidies provided for electric motorcycles for low-income individuals, and the implementation of this scheme should be accelerated.

The meeting was briefed on the ongoing measures to promote EVs nationwide.

It was informed that seventy two manufacturing certificates have so far been issued for electric motorcycles and rickshaws, and four for electric cars. A total of one hundred and twenty three applications have been received for the establishment of EV charging stations.

It was informed that the country plans to have thirty percent of the vehicles running on electricity over the next five years. This is expected to save about 4.5 billion dollars in fuel cost.

The meeting was informed that electric bikes will be provided on easy installments to government employees up to grade sixteen.

## Iranian envoy meets PM Shehbaz, discusses regional situation

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Ambassador Reza Amiri Moghadam called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday and discussed the ongoing regional situation following the extension of the ceasefire between the United States and Iran.

Last night, US President Donald Trump announced an extension of the ongoing ceasefire with Iran at the request of PM Shehbaz and Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, Field Marshal Asim Munir. In a post on Truth Social, Trump said the truce, which was set to expire within hours, would remain in place until Iran submits a comprehensive plan and negotiations reach a definitive outcome.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, during

today's meeting, the discussion focused on the ongoing regional situation and peace efforts.

A day earlier, Moghadam met with Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi. Both sides emphasised the need for a sustainable solution through diplomatic and negotiation channels to reduce regional tensions.

Pakistan emerged as a central facilitator in the sensitive diplomatic track, positioning itself as an "honest broker" amid sharply polarised positions between Washington and Tehran. After 40 days of airstrikes, US and Iranian negotiators opened talks in Islamabad earlier this month following a two-week ceasefire brokered by PM Shehbaz.

Since the start of the war, multiple meetings have been held between the Pakistani and Iranian leadership, during which both sides discussed negotiations and regional peace.



Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar Speaking to media.

## No evidence after one year: Tarar slams India over Pahalgam false flag operation

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday reiterated that the Pahalgam incident was a false flag operation, stating India has failed to substantiate its allegations against Pakistan even after one year.

Speaking to media on the completion of one year since India's 2025 Pahalgam false flag operation, the minister said April 22 marks its anniversary, as a reflection of a hollow and illogical mindset driven by false ego, arrogance, and greed.

He said India's problem is that it presents its internal matters as external ones and its external matters as internal issues. As an example, terrorism is an internal matter for India, yet it is portrayed as an external one.

Similarly, the minister stated that the Kashmir issue is an international and global matter, but India presents it as an internal issue.

He said India's hollow thinking and deception are exposed due to its history of false flag operations, carried out through slogans in a clumsy manner. India has been a promoter of terrorism, while Pakistan has been a victim of it.

Therefore, Attaullah Tarar said, "We express our sympathy and sorrow for the citizens who became victims of Indian terrorism in Pahalgam." He added that the Prime Minister of Pakistan openly called for an impartial and independent inquiry into the incident. "Our intentions were clear, and our resolve was firm. That is why Pakistan, with complete clarity, offered a neutral and fair inquiry at the international level."

The minister said India's refusal to accept such an inquiry proved that it was a false flag operation and that India has no response. To this day, India has been unable to provide any proof or evidence regarding the incident.

Attaullah Tarar said many questions were raised about the Pahalgam incident. For instance, an FIR was registered within 10 minutes of the event. "This implies that the text of the FIR was already prepared," he said, adding that the police station was quite far from the site, making the timing surprising.

He noted that not only international media but also Indian civil society, politicians, and think tanks questioned how the incident occurred without security, yet an FIR was registered so quickly.

He said Pakistan was blamed immediately without proof, evidence, inquiry, or investigation, and when Pakistan called for an inquiry, India had no response.

The minister said it is difficult to sustain false, baseless, and fabricated propaganda following such incidents. India failed to build a convincing narrative because the operation was false, fake and lacked evidence.

He added that the world is now asking questions while India has no answers.

The federal minister also criticized Indian media that had created a war-like atmosphere through propaganda, exaggeration, and misinformation.

Attaullah Tarar further said it is unfortunate that, India's institutions have become politicized and influenced by Hindutva ideology. The minorities were being deprived of their rights and that Muslims in India were being targeted and denied

basic rights.

The minister reiterated that Pakistan maintains that India uses terrorism as a policy and has been involved in incidents internationally. He referenced cases involving Sikhs' killing in countries such as Canada and the UK, and evidence of transnational repression.

He noted Indian involvement with groups such as the TTP 'Fitna al-Khawarij', and in incidents within Pakistan, including the Jaffer Express train incident and the Khuzdar bus incident. He said Pakistan regularly shares such evidence with the international community and media.

He stated that Pakistan has submitted evidence of India's state-sponsored terrorism to the United Nations and other international organizations and remains committed to eliminating terrorism.

The minister emphasized that Pakistan will not compromise on its honor or dignity and will take all necessary steps to eradicate terrorism.

Referring to remarks by Indian military leadership regarding "Operation Sindoor," he said such statements amount to an admission of defeat.

He warned that any misadventure by India would be met with a firm, decisive, and swift response.

He said Pakistan had dealt India a humiliating defeat during the Marka-e-Haq in Operation Bunyan-Un-Marsoos, adding that the country takes pride in this achievement.

He said the nation stands united with the Pakistan Armed Forces and reaffirmed country's commitment to defending itself.

## Balochistan Chief Minister offered job to youth after 45 applications

APP

QUETTA: In a remarkable and human-centered initiative, Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, personally announced a government job for a young man who had applied 45 times across different departments without success.

The announcement was made during a briefing on the newly introduced digital dashboard and publications system by the Planning and Development Department, which presented detailed data on vacant government posts and applicants.

During the briefing, it was revealed that a matriculation-qualified youth from Mastung, Muhammad Ayaz, had persistently submitted applications to 45 different departments in pursuit of employment. Impressed by his determination and perseverance, the Chief Minister directed officials to contact the young man immediately to encourage him.

In an extraordinary gesture, Chief Minister Bugti personally spoke to Ayaz over the phone, inquiring about his well-being and commending his relentless efforts. He then surprised him with the announcement of a government job.

The unexpected call and assurance of employment left Muhammad Ayaz overjoyed, and he expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Chief Minister for recognizing his struggle and rewarding his persistence.

This initiative highlighted the provincial government's commitment to merit, transparency, and encouragement of hardworking individuals, while also showcasing the role of digital reforms in identifying and addressing citizens' needs more effectively.

## DPM chairs meeting on regional developments, int'l engagements

APP

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired a meeting in Islamabad today to review evolving regional developments and upcoming international engagements.

The Deputy Prime Minister discussed emerging global and regional developments with the participants of the meeting.

He underscored the importance of proactive engagement on key foreign policy priorities with clarity of purpose, strategic foresight and a strong focus on results.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Secretary Ambassador Anna Baloch and senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## PM reiterates resolve to eliminate polio from Pakistan

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has reaffirmed government's commitment to completely eliminate polio from the country.

He expressed the commitment while chairing a review meeting on polio eradication in Islamabad today.

The Prime Minister appreciated the tireless efforts of polio teams and emphasized sustained action to achieve a polio-free Pakistan.

The meeting was informed that only one polio case has been reported so far in 2026, from District Sujawal of Sindh, compared to 74 cases in 2024 and 31 in 2025 in the country.

It was informed that no cases have been reported this year from Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Islamabad, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Officials highlighted that number of affected districts dropped from 67 in early 2025 to 23 in 2026, while nationwide campaign coverage remained at 98 percent.

The meeting was further informed that a strategy is being developed to integrate Expanded Program on Immunization and Polio Eradication Initiative at both federal and provincial levels, while efforts are also underway to link and condition initiatives of the Benazir Income Support Programme with polio eradication.

## Aleem Khan welcomes ADB-NHA agreement for M6 Motorway, terms it key to economic growth

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan on Wednesday welcomed the signing of a strategic agreement between the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the National Highway Authority (NHA) for the construction of the M6 Motorway, connecting Karachi to Sukkur.

In a statement, the minister congratulating the nation on this landmark achievement, termed the project as a vital gateway to Pakistan's future development and a decisive step toward economic prosperity. Khan highlighted that by the grace of Allah Almighty, the Government has successfully initiated a project that remained stalled for over 30 years achieving this breakthrough within a mere two years of dedicated effort.

He emphasized that the M6 Motorway represents the "missing economic link" of the country's North-South corridor, making its completion an absolute necessity

for sustainable national growth.

The Minister noted that this Motorway was among the most critical infrastructure assets in Pakistan, designed to serve as a backbone for the country's future trade and logistics.

The completion of this missing link would revolutionize Pakistan's transport network by allowing traffic from Karachi Port to travel seamlessly to Peshawar and Gilgit via a continuous motorway system, he added.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that 306-kilometer-long, six-lane project would be equipped with modern tolling and safety systems, featuring 15 interchanges and 10 state-of-the-art service areas to facilitate travelers and commercial transporters alike. He said that the project structure included two key sections from Hyderabad to Nawabshah which would be developed under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model to ensure transparency and attract private sector investment.



Quetta: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti chairing a meeting with digital dashboard and publications of the Bureau of Statistics under the Planning and Development Department.

## Punjab provides over Rs17b free treatment under Special Health Programs: Minister Salman

By Maqsood Khalid

LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique on Wednesday said that historic and fundamental steps are being taken in the health sector, adding that free treatment facilities worth more than Rs17 billion have so far been provided to patients under various special programs at approved hospitals.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting at the Department of Specialized Health Care and Medical Education regarding the Chief Minister Adult Cardiac Surgery Program and the Chief Minister Children's Heart Surgery Program.

During the meeting, the minister



was briefed on the monitoring framework of different health projects, service delivery, and measures taken to facilitate patients. Khawaja Salman Rafique stressed the need to ensure transparency in flagship programs, improve service quality, and strengthen monitoring mechanisms

for the convenience of patients.

He said that under the Chief Minister's Adult Cardiac Surgery Program, free treatment worth over Rs3 billion is being provided annually to heart patients. According to NADRA records, all permanent residents of Punjab are eligible for the program, with annual coverage of up to Rs1 million per patient.

Highlighting achievements of the children's program, the minister said that more than 12,000 children have undergone completely free heart surgeries at a cost of billions of rupees across the province.

## Rubina Khalid calls for stronger coordination to boost economic growth and women's empowerment

APP

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, Wednesday, emphasized that strengthened coordination and institutional linkages are crucial for achieving sustainable economic growth and advancing women's empowerment.

She was addressing the Agricultural Conference 2026 held in Muzaffarabad on the invitation of Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Chaudhry Faisal Mumtaz Rathore. The conference, organized by the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, was attended by Prime Minister, Faisal Rathore as chief guest, along with senior officials and a large number of experts from the agriculture sector.

## PTI utilizing KP's public funds for futile gatherings: Muqam

APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON, Amir Muqam on Wednesday criticized Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for allegedly using public funds of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for futile and flop political gatherings across the province.

In a statement, the President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) KP said the PTI leadership convened a session of the KP Assembly in a stadium, terming it a "political drama" and a misuse of public resources.

He added that PTI has already faced failure in public gatherings in Kohat, Hayatabad, and Mardan, which reflects the party's decline in public and worker support.

Muqam unveiled that over the past 13 years, PTI has failed to effectively address key issues such as terrorism.

## Mushaal pleads global powers to take steps for Yasin Malik's health

APP

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick, wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Mohammad Yasin Malik, appealed to global powers and institutions to step in hearing of his husband's case to be proceeded in an Indian court, warning that it might risk he being "unjustly murdered" which urgently needed international intervention.

In a deeply emotional video message in Urdu, Mullick called upon the United Nations, United States, China, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, and

Pakistan's Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir to step in and help save her husband's life, as he was facing a "critical hanging case hearing" in Indian court terming it "kangaroo courts".

She said Mohammad Yasin Malik, already serving two life sentences, was facing increasing threats to his life in custody, while his health continues to deteriorate. Mushaal Hussein Mullick maintained that her husband had renounced armed struggle and adopted a peaceful political path under international assurances, yet remained imprisoned, bearing the consequences of that decision.



QUETTA: A view birds bathing in accumulated rain water on the roof top of the building in provincial capital.



QUETTA: A view of rainy weather in provincial capital.



## PCB investigates all-rounder Mohammad Nawaz for alleged recreational drug use

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Wednesday began an investigation into the alleged use of recreational drugs by spin-all-rounder Mohammad Nawaz.

A spokesperson for the cricket board said that after completing an investigation, it would inform the International Cricket Council (ICC) about the player's medical history.

He added that until then, Nawaz would continue to represent Multan Sultans in the ongoing HBL Pakistan Super League.

Meanwhile, ESPNcricinfo reported a PCB spokesperson as saying that the results of this process would be communicated to the ICC on Wednesday. It also alleged that the player had tested positive for recreational drug use.

"ESPNcricinfo has learned that the positive result comes from testing during the T20 World Cup earlier this year,"



the report added. It further added that Nawaz's deal to join Surrey for the T20 Blast — set to run from May 26 to July 18 — in England had fallen through as a result.

The report added that Surrey and ICC declined to comment on the matter.

The ICC has not issued a public statement on the case. Reports indicate that the sample in question was taken during the global tournament, where Nawaz played all seven matches for Pakistan.

He scored 15 runs and claimed seven wickets as Pakistan exited the competition at the Super Eight stage. The investigation comes as Nawaz continues to feature in PSL 2025,

raising questions over his immediate availability depending on the outcome of the inquiry.

The development has also affected Nawaz's planned participation in England's T20 Blast. His proposed deal with Surrey County Cricket Club has reportedly been cancelled following the positive test.

Nawaz had earlier secured a No-Objection Certificate (NOC) from the PCB and was expected to feature in the tournament,

scheduled from late May to mid-July. However, Surrey opted not to proceed with the signing. The county has declined to comment.

The case places Nawaz under scrutiny at a crucial time in the PSL 11 season, with the PCB's findings likely to determine any further action.



PAKISTAN'S Zehmena Malik heads the ball during the FIFA Series match against Mauritania at the Alassane Ouattara Stadium.

## Pakistan coach Adeel calls for more international matches after FIFA Series

SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: Pakistan women's team head coach Adeel Rizki has called for regular camps and increased international fixtures as the only path to sustained progress, days after his side finished third in their maiden FIFA Series campaign in Ivory Coast.

"The most important thing is continuity — regular camps and international matches," Adeel said. "The players need consistent time together to build understanding, improve fitness levels and develop cohesion as a team. Without that continuity, progress becomes very difficult. If we can ensure that, you'll see clear and measurable improvement."

His words echoed those of forwards Nadia Khan and Aqsa Mushtaq, who earlier pointed to the same fundamental obstacle: Pakistan women play too few games.

Aqsa noted it had been "a whole year" since the team last played Indonesia before this tournament, while Nadia called for regular mini-camps for local players to bridge the gap with diaspora team-mates who have club training abroad.

When asked what he had learned about the squad during the tournament, Adeel highlighted their mental strength.

"One of the biggest things I've learned about this group is their resilience and willingness to grow," he mentioned. "In a short space of time, they showed an ability to absorb new ideas, adapt to different levels of opposition and stay committed even in difficult moments."

That mentality is something you can't always measure before a tournament, but it's a very strong foundation for us moving forward."

The Mauritania loss — a game Pakistan dominated in chances but lost to a single opposition attack — raised

questions about whether the record 8-0 win had led to overconfidence.

Players previously rejected that notion, with Nadia saying the team was "confident but not arrogant."

Adeel offered a coach's perspective, emphasising process over any single result.

"It's about creating the right culture and standards within the team," he said. "After a big win, the focus immediately shifts back to process rather than outcome. We review honestly, highlight areas we still need to improve and reinforce that at international level, every game demands maximum respect for the opponent. Consistency in mindset is something we're building and moments like that are part of the learning curve for a developing team."

On closing the gap with higher-ranked sides — Ivory Coast sit 72 places above Pakistan in the FIFA rankings — Adeel acknowledged there were no shortcuts.

"There's no shortcut for consistent exposure to high-level matches, that's the reality," said Adeel, who has been leading the team since 2022.

"However, we can still make progress through structured camps, targeted training and better preparation in key areas like physical conditioning and game management. At the same time, increasing the number of international fixtures and improving the domestic environment will be crucial."

Closing the gap is a process, but with the right support and planning, it's absolutely achievable."

Asked to name the most underrated player in his squad, the coach declined to single out an individual. "Every team has players who don't always get the headlines but are vital to how the team functions," he said. "For us, we have a few who bring balance and discipline to the side. I prefer not to single one out, because their value is in how they contribute to the team as a whole."

## Smith guides Sultans to comfortable victory as Rawalpindiz stay winless

SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: Steve Smith's composed half-century guided Multan Sultans to a comfortable six-wicket victory over Rawalpindiz in the HBL Pakistan Super League at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi on Tuesday night.

The win was Sultans' sixth in eight matches, keeping them firmly on course for the playoffs, while Rawalpindiz remained winless in their debut season after eight defeats.

Smith struck 56 off 31 balls, including five fours and three sixes, anchoring the chase of 167 with authority. He added a brisk 69-run partnership for the second wicket with Josh Philippe (17 off 19), stabilising the innings after an early breakthrough and setting a platform for the finishers.

Philippe's dismissal in the 11th over triggered a brief wobble as Smith fell soon after for 56, caught behind off Saad Masood, leaving Sultans at 100 for three in the 12th over. Shan Masood (20 off 22) and captain Ashton Turner then steadied the ship. Turner, in particular, accelerated brilliantly, remaining unbeaten on 37 off 21 balls with three fours and a six.

The pair added crucial runs before a short-lived scare when Asif Afridi and Saad Masood claimed quick wickets in the middle phase — Sahibzada Farhan bowled for 20 and Philippe caught at cow corner.

However, Turner and the incoming Arafat Minhas dealt the finishing blow with composure. Arafat smashed a boundary off Razaullah as Sultans crossed the line in eight balls to spare.

Sultans' chase began cautiously but gained momentum through Smith's elegant strokeplay. Opening with Sahibzada (20 off 17), who fell to Asif Afridi, Smith took charge after the powerplay.

He punished loose bowling from young pacer Razaullah Khan, smashing three sixes in one over — including an audacious ramp over the keeper and a powerful pull — to race to his fifty off just 27 balls.

His timing and placement, especially against pace and spin, exemplified class under pressure. Philippe rotated the strike efficiently, though Rawalpindiz's spinners, led by Asif (2-28) and Saad (1-27), created some discomfort.

The middle overs saw Rawalpindiz fight back briefly. Asif removed Philippe with a top-edged slog sweep, and Saad induced an edge from Smith that Billings pounced smartly.



MULTAN Sultans opener Steve Smith plays a shot during the Pakistan Super League match against Rawalpindiz at the National Bank Stadium.

Member APNS

## Daily Mirror

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By Nadeem ul Haque/ Shahid Kardar

## Rethinking black money

**I**N Pakistan, 'black money' is frequently mentioned as a problem that must be eliminated. Politicians, officials and talk shows describe it as money that is illegal, untaxed or linked to crime. However, this way of thinking is too simple and hides the real issue. When very different kinds of money are grouped together, it leads to poor policies. These policies create confusion, unfair treatment, and slow economic growth. Because of this mindset, many people choose to hide their wealth instead of using it productively. Money remains stored in cash, gold or property instead of being invested in businesses. The government's failure to understand the differences between types of wealth is one of the reasons Pakistan struggles to grow and depends heavily on foreign aid.

To fix this, we must first understand that 'black money' is not just one thing. It comes from three different sources, and each requires a different response. The first type is money earned through criminal activities. This includes drug trafficking, smuggling, illegal gambling and bribery. This money should be investigated and punished through strict enforcement. The second type is money earned legally but hidden to avoid taxes, by reporting less income on sale of goods and services or by faking expenses to reduce taxes owed. This money is not criminal in origin, but the act of hiding it makes it illegal. It should be brought into the tax system with appropriate penalties. The third type is the most common and important. This is money that is neither criminal nor always deliberately hidden. It simply exists outside the formal system because that system is complicated, unreliable or unfair. Many people earn in cash, save informally, or hold assets in someone else's name because dealing with official systems is difficult or risky.

Most of what is called 'black money' actually falls into this third category. This does not mean avoiding taxes is acceptable, but it does mean we must understand why people stay outside the system. When the government treats all

wealth as suspicious, it does not make it disappear but pushes it further into hiding.

Pakistan cannot grow if it continues to treat its own savings as suspicious. Another common misunderstanding is that the formal economy and the informal economy are separate. In reality, they are closely connected. Informal businesses buy from formal companies, and formal companies sell to informal ones. Money flows between them constantly. For example, in property deals, it is common to conceal part of the payment even in an otherwise legal transaction. This creates an unfair burden on formal businesses. They must follow strict rules, pay taxes and keep records, while competing with businesses that do not face the same requirements. As a result, the system discourages compliance.

When people feel their wealth is always under suspicion, they lose trust in the system. They prioritise safety over growth. Instead of investing in businesses or banks, they store wealth in cash, gold or real estate. These options are not very productive, but they feel safer. This leads to a larger economic problem. For a country to grow, savings must be turned into investment. Banks and financial systems help move money from savers to businesses. But when wealth stays outside the system, this process breaks down. Businesses cannot get loans easily, investment slows and growth suffers.

Pakistan's dependence on foreign loans and aid is closely linked to this issue. A large amount of domestic wealth exists, but it is not being used effectively because it remains outside the formal system. Government policies have often made things worse. Informal channels allow money to leave the country and return as 'foreign investment' or remittances, gaining legal status at low cost. Tax amnesty schemes also send the wrong signal by suggesting that tax evasion may eventually be forgiven at a discount. At the same time, unpredictable enforcement discourages people from becoming formal. If individuals fear harassment, unfair taxation or sudden penalties, they prefer to stay informal. In many

cases, remaining outside the system seems safer than complying. Calling all this money 'black' and trying to exclude it from the economy is not only inaccurate but also harmful. No successful country has grown by rejecting its own wealth. The goal should not be exclusion, but inclusion.

This does not mean all wealth should be accepted without question. Criminal income must be dealt with firmly through investigation, punishment and confiscation. But money earned legally, even if untaxed, should be brought into the system through normal tax rules, with reasonable penalties, not fear.

A deeper problem is that the government lacks clear information about who owns what, where income comes from, and how assets are transferred. Land records are incomplete, and business ownership is often unclear. Because of this weakness, the term 'black money' is used as a vague label instead of solving real administrative problems. At the same time, businesses and individuals face too many rules, approvals and delays. Court cases can take years, and land is often poorly managed. These issues act like hidden taxes because they reduce profits and increase uncertainty. When the system already feels unfair, people are less willing to pay taxes honestly.

A better approach would start by abandoning the vague term 'black money' and replacing it with clear categories. Criminal income, untaxed income and undocumented wealth should each be treated differently. Untaxed but legal income should be integrated into the tax system through consistent rules. Hidden or proxy-held assets should be made transparent, with proper penalties where needed. Criminal wealth should be handled strictly under the law. At the same time, the government must make it easier and safer to be part of the formal system.

Taxes should be simple, rules clear, and records digitised.

Most importantly, people should see real benefits from being formal, such as access to finance, legal protection and business opportunities. Being part of the system should feel like an advantage, not a risk.

By Mehrin Shah

## Lesson interrupted

**J**UST a few weeks ago, my colleagues at work were complaining about the challenge of managing their children at home — again — as some children returned to school following their long winter break in parts of the country. On March 9, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had announced a two-week break for schools and a shift to online classes for all higher education institutions. Along with many others, these measures were taken to manage the skyrocketing fuel prices triggered by the US-Israel war on Iran.

This is not the only instance in which the government decided to shut down schools. If one reviews the news archives, one can find reports of repeated closures of educational institutions for reasons ranging from security risks to the Covid-19 pandemic, crises driven by climate change and smog. The school closure announcement was just one instance in a recurring pattern. Despite schools having reopened, there is no guarantee that it will not happen again.

But what about the implications of this persistent cycle? For a country where, according to the latest report released by the Pakistan Institute of Education, 77 per cent of 10-year-olds are not able to read and comprehend a simple text, the education system is already mired in a deep learning crisis. When children who struggle with basic literacy keep on missing school, it compounds the learning crisis and further widens the existing gaps.

In 2023-24, a climate change-driven crisis resulted in the loss of 97 school

days for students in Pakistan, which works out to around 54pc of the normal academic year. When the Covid-19 pandemic forced countries to shut down schools, Pakistan was among the first countries in the world to do so. According to a World Bank estimate, school closures due to the pandemic in the country resulted in an estimated loss of between 0.3 to 0.8 years of learning for the average student. Over 26 million students dropped out of schools in Pakistan during the first wave of the pandemic, with only 50pc returning. Most of the students who dropped out were girls.

The impact of school closures goes beyond learning outcomes.

If we look deeper, the impact of school closures goes beyond learning outcomes; it also has a gendered aspect, with particularly heavy consequences for girls, especially in underprivileged settings. For many students, schools provide a safe space against child marriage and child labour. When schools close, that safe space is taken away, thereby increasing the risk of school dropouts and early marriages among young girls. Moreover, while boys often spend their time playing outdoor sports, girls are mostly occupied with household chores, leaving them at heightened risk of mental distress and social isolation.

One may argue that remote learning can be presented as an alternative in such scenarios; however, this method of learning is not accessible to all students across the country. Factors such as household distractions that hinder a child's cognitive engagement, lack of familial support in understanding

instructional content, limited understanding of the language used for classroom instructions, and lack of access to the internet and modern gadgets are among the key barriers to remote learning. One of my colleagues stated that schools had instructed parents to teach topics at home and once the students returned to school, those lessons would not be covered by the teacher. One might ask, who was going to teach those children not fortunate enough to have literate family members at home? Another colleague said she and her husband were in office all day, which left their son unattended at home, where he played video games all day and did not take any interest in virtual learning.

An already strained education system should not be further tested through this shutdown practice. However, if such measures are deemed necessary and unavoidable, the education system must be seriously supported to protect student learning.

Collective efforts are required at all levels of the education ecosystem — from top offices to classrooms. This includes the development of contextualised policies, provision of equitable access to remote learning, and support for teachers to foster immediate catch-up of the learning losses, with each effort tailored to the diverse educational needs of the country.

Such measures are important not only for improving educational outcomes but also for preventing the widening of gender disparities in a country that is already grappling with severe gender inequality.

## Moment of truth

**I**SLAMABAD is all set to host the second round of US-Iran talks. But the million-dollar question is: will they go ahead?

At the time of writing, uncertainty about the fate of the parleys continued, with no confirmation of Iranian participation. It appears that until the US lifts the blockade of Iranian ports, Tehran's representatives are unlikely to get on a plane to Pakistan.

However, there were no indications that the American administration was seeking to bring down the temperature and signal its willingness to talk in good faith by lifting the blockade. Instead, President Donald Trump said his military was "ready to go". It is in this context that Iranian officials have said they will not negotiate "under the shadow of threats".

While the Iranian blockade of the Strait of Hormuz has caused massive global economic turbulence, and the entire international community seeks to have the key maritime passage reopened at the earliest, it was the US and Israel that initiated hostilities. As such, it is their responsibility — particularly of the US — to end it, even if it means swallowing a bitter pill.

Though the current American leadership is unlikely to admit to its hubris in launching this 'war of choice' and rocking the global order in the process, it must now, for the sake of regional and indeed world peace, shed its rigid posture and lift the blockade of Iranian ports. Tehran should reciprocate by allowing free passage through the Strait of Hormuz. Short of this step, and the complete cessation of Israeli attacks in Lebanon, it may not be possible to save the peace process.

There are two options: either both parties agree to make compromises, extend the ceasefire and come to Islamabad to work out the bare bones of an agreement. Or return to war. There seem to be no other alternatives.

The US has been trumpeting the Iranian nuclear issue.

But it should not be forgotten that this issue was largely resolved by the JCPOA, which Mr Trump, in his first term, jettisoned without much thought.

Even more recently, there was significant progress on nuclear talks before Washington and Tel Aviv launched the war. Therefore, if the US wants to resolve the nuclear question peacefully, it is very much possible. But if it would rather keep on threatening Iran and changing the goalposts, Tehran will continue to respond in the same coin.

Practically the entire international community — except for Israel and the religious right in the US — is hoping for a peaceful resolution to this crisis. Mr Trump must do the right thing by showing Iran that the US is willing to accommodate and compromise.

If he chooses to indulge in more bellicosity and threats, he will be mainly responsible for the chaos that ensues.

# DAILY MIRROR

## Discos found purchasing power outside national grid at exorbitant rates

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Amid public outcry over expensive power and excessive loadshedding, the government on Wednesday announced that it had unearthed expensive power purchases by distribution companies (Discos) outside the national grid at exorbitant rates in violation of the economic merit order.

According to an official statement, the Discos were purchasing electricity from small power producers (SPPs) and captive power plants (CPPs) through bilateral contracts at higher rates than the national tariff, bypassing the national grid and the Independent System and Market Operator (ISMO).

It added that the names of the Discos and the quantum of power purchasing were not disclosed to allow an independent inquiry to take its course.

The statement said that Power Minister Awaiz Leghari took notice regarding the off-take of power from SPPs by Discos, exceeding the national merit order and ordered the initiation of an independent probe.

"The matter was revealed during the stock-taking of Discos and ISMO," it said.

Per the statement, the power minister directed to discontinue the practice and bring it in accordance with the provisions of the National Electric Power

Regulatory Authority's (Nepra) grid code, distribution code and directions, immediately.

Leghari also directed to coordinate with ISMO for the inclusion of SPPs/CPPs to ensure the least cost for the consumer in the dispatch of power plants on the basis of economic merit order principles, it stated.

"In compliance with the power minister's directions, the Power Division has issued instructions to all Discos to ensure that no off-merit procurement from SPPs shall be undertaken under any circumstances without obtaining prior explicit approval from ISMO," the statement said.

The off-take of electricity from SPPs shall be strictly limited to cases where such power falls within the prevailing national merit order, determined on the basis of incremental cost of generation by following the prescribed mechanism, the Power Division said.

The Power Division further said that despite challenging global conditions, the country's power generation remained stable, adding that the system was capable of meeting electricity demand as required.

It said the situation was being closely monitored under the direct supervision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

"The government has directed that electricity prices must not increase

sharply. Even if the use of furnace oil leads to some increase, all possible steps are being taken to keep it to a minimum," it said.

It added that in line with these directions, 80mmcf of local gas had been provided to power plants, which had helped avoid an increase of about 80 paise per unit and also reduced the need for additional load management.

It said that the limited load management of 2.25 hours during peak times was intended to prevent an increase of around Rs 3 per unit.

"Even with restricted use of furnace oil, there may still be an increase of about Rs1.5 per unit.

Without these measures, the increase could have reached Rs5 to Rs6 per unit," the Power Division said.

It went on to say that distribution companies had been directed to share feeder-wise outage schedules with consumers at all levels to ensure that consumers were aware of outage timings.

"No unscheduled outages will be allowed. In case of local faults, the concerned offices will inform consumers accordingly," it said.

It asserted that the government was making every effort to minimise the impact of international conditions on the public and all possible measures were being taken to provide relief to consumers.



British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott, called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar in Islamabad

### British HC reiterates support for Pakistan's facilitative role in Iran-US talks

APP

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday received British High Commissioner Jane Marriott and discussed the evolving regional situation.

The deputy prime minister/foreign minister underscored Pakistan's ongoing efforts to facilitate engagement and emphasised the importance of dialogue and diplomacy in peaceful resolution of disputes.

The British high commissioner appreciated and supported Pakistan's facilitative role in bringing the U.S. and Iran on the negotiating table, a press statement issued by the foreign office spokesperson said.

### Sherry urges collective action to tackle climate crisis

INP

ISLAMABAD: Vice President of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Senator Sherry Rehman Wednesday said climate change had emerged as a serious challenge for Pakistan and the entire world, urging immediate and collective action to protect the planet.

In her message on World Earth Day, she said Pakistan was among the countries most severely affected by climate change and was suffering annual economic losses equivalent to six to nine percent of its GDP due to environmental disasters and related impacts.

She said the devastating floods of 2022 affected 33 million people and claimed 1,700 lives, while in 2025 around 800 people lost their lives and two million were displaced because of climate-related calamities.

Sherry expressed concern over the dangerous rise in temperatures and the rapid melting of glaciers, warning that Pakistan remained among the top ten countries most vulnerable to climate change.

She said unchecked human activities, excessive use of plastic, deforestation and destruction of mountains and forests were major causes behind worsening environmental conditions.

Sherry Rehman said forest cover in Pakistan had declined to only

five percent, while the Air Quality Index in major cities had crossed 300, posing serious health risks to citizens.

Highlighting progress in clean energy, she said the share of renewable energy had increased to 53 percent, adding that Pakistan was expected to achieve 12 gigawatts of off-grid and six gigawatts of net-metered solar capacity by the end of 2026.

### Registration of all madrassas being ensured for improvement of education: DC Harani

APP

Quetta: Deputy Commissioner Harnai Arshad Hussain Jamali on Wednesday said that as per the instructions of the Balochistan government, the registration of all madrassas is being ensured so that transparency, improvement and uniformity could be brought in the education system.

He shared these views while chairing a meeting regarding the registration of madrassas, in which a representative delegation of madrasas from across the district and relevant authorities participated.

He said that the main objective of the meeting was to streamline the process of registration of madrasas and bring them within the legal framework.

He emphasized that madrasas are not only an important source of religious education but also play a key role in the intellectual and moral training of the society.

The representatives of the madrasas present in the meeting were informed that it is mandatory to be registered under the Balochistan Charity Regulatory Authority (BCRA).

In this regard, details were also given about the registration procedure, required documents and the deadline for registration before April 30, 2026.

The Deputy Commissioner further said that all madrasas should complete their registration within the stipulated time so that any legal complications could be avoided, the district administration would fully cooperate with the madrasas in this process and immediate guidance to be provided in case of any issue.

At the end of the meeting, the scholars appreciated the government's steps and assured that they would fully cooperate in the registration process and get their madrasas registered as per the legal requirements.

### Pakistan will safeguard sovereignty, national interests with full resolve: Gilani

APP

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, on Wednesday, strongly reaffirmed Pakistan's principled stance, while condemning India's reckless conduct, escalation-driven policies, and persistent attempts to distort facts and shift responsibility for regional instability. On the completion of one year of the Pahalgam incident, he reiterated that Pakistan exercised maximum restraint despite grave provocations, while remaining fully prepared to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

He emphasised that Pakistan's response during the Pakistan-India standoff was measured, responsible, and fully in line with international law.

He paid tribute to the professionalism and resolve of the Pakistan Armed Forces, stating that their readiness and deterrent capability have decisively safeguarded national sovereignty and neutralised hostile designs in a volatile environment. The Chairman of the Senate recalled that Pakistan had immediately offered a neutral and transparent investigation into the incident, stressing that only a credible, evidence-based inquiry can establish the facts and prevent escalation.

He added that responsible states do not resort to unilateral judgments or the politicisation of tragic events.

He strongly condemned India's unilateral and adventurist actions, including "Operation Sindoor," terming them reckless and destabilising, and warning that such conduct threatens regional peace and strategic balance.

He further expressed serious concern over continued interference and alleged support to hostile elements operating against Pakistan, describing such actions as a direct violation of sovereignty and international norms.

He also cautioned against attempts to undermine the Indus Waters Treaty, stating that such coercive measures amount to dangerous escalation and pose risks to regional stability and resource security.

Reaffirming Pakistan's position, he stressed that while the country remains committed to peace, it will respond firmly, proportionately, and decisively to any aggression or adventurism.

He said Pakistan will continue to safeguard its sovereignty and national interests with full resolve and will firmly counter any attempt to destabilise the region or misrepresent facts at the international level.

### DC vows to provide facilities to educational institutions for improving quality of education in Quetta

APP

Quetta: Deputy Commissioner Quetta Mehrullah Badini on Wednesday presided over a meeting of the District Education Committee to provide facilities to educational institutions for improving quality of education.

The meeting was attended by DEO Male/Female, District Finance Officer and other concerned officers. Various important decisions were taken in the meeting for the improvement of the education system of Quetta.

The number of newly admitted children and the facilities provided to them were considered in detail.

while data related to functional and non-functional schools was also presented. In addition, a review was also made regarding absent staff in government schools.

On this occasion, a report of the government schools visited by the RTCM

was presented, in which absent staff was identified.

The Deputy Commissioner Quetta directed that the details of the government schools whose buildings do not exist should be collected immediately so that the government could make it possible to construct buildings there.

Similarly, complete details of the schools in which there is a shortage of classrooms

should also be provided as soon as possible so that the construction of new classrooms can be implemented.

It was also decided in the meeting that water tankers, washrooms and other basic facilities would be provided in various government schools so that the students could get a better educational environment.

The Deputy Commissioner Quetta said that no child should be deprived of education and all possible facilities will be provided to all children.

### CM Bugti inaugurates digital dashboard & publications to promote information-based policy making in Balochistan

APP

Quetta: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Thursday inaugurated the digital dashboard and publications of the Bureau of Statistics under the Planning and Development Department here, with the aim of promoting information-based policy-making in the province and modernizing development planning.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by provincial ministers, members of the provincial assembly, Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development Zahid Saleem and other senior officials.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister was given a detailed briefing about the digital dashboard and related publications, in which it was informed that the said digital dashboard has included comprehensive and integrated data related to 17 different sectors of the province, which will also contain complete details of development projects.

In the briefing said that this system will make the policy-making and decision-making process more effective and transparent. The briefing stated that two new data-related reports would be added every year in the future to further strengthen the information system.

The meeting also highlighted the

overall development and growth trends in various sectors since 2010. Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti termed this initiative as an important milestone and said that on the basis of available data, the government could formulate more effective and better policies in the public interest.

He said that development depends on timely and correct planning and the Balochistan government believes in the equal development of all sectors, data related to government vacancies and the people who applied for them was also presented during the meeting.

On this occasion, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti contacted a person mentioned in the database who had applied for 45 different vacancies and announced that he would be given a job.

The Chief Minister Balochistan congratulated Provincial Minister Mir Zahoar Ahmed Buledi, Additional Chief Secretary P&D and his team on this important development and decided to give appreciation certificates and cash awards to the concerned team for their outstanding performance in collecting data and preparing the dashboard.

He also announced that the Balochistan government would further accelerate the development process by promoting transparency, merit and effective use of modern technology so as to ensure provision.



Quetta: Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhel he said this while chairing the sixth Senate meeting of Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences.

### Adviser congratulates entire nation on successful test of Taimoor air-launched cruise missile

APP

Quetta: Adviser to Chief Minister on Climate Change and Environment Naseem-ur-Rehman Khan Mulakhel on Thursday congratulated to the entire nation on the successful test of the "Taimoor" air-launched cruise missile by the Pakistan Navy.

In his congratulatory statement, Naseem-ur-Rehman Khan Mulakhel said that the successful test of the "Taimoor" missile is a clear proof of Pakistan's defense self-reliance and the development of modern military technology at the local level.

He said that the successful test of this locally developed anti-ship cruise missile is a brilliant achievement of the scientists and engineers of the Pakistan Navy which shows the great success of

Pakistan in the field of defense.

The Provincial adviser said that the locally developed anti-ship system would not only further strengthen the naval defense system but would also protect Pakistan's maritime borders to an extraordinary extent.

He said that the hard work and dedication of Pakistani scientists, engineers and technical experts have played a key role in making the defense of the homeland strong, modern and impregnable.

He said that the entire nation is proud of the professionalism, modern strategy and self-reliance in defense technology of the Pakistan Navy and such successful experiences further strengthen the confidence in Pakistan's defense capabilities and prove that the Pakistan Navy is fully committed and ready to protect its maritime borders.

### NDMA holds first National Rescue exercises to boost disaster preparedness

APP

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Wednesday conducted Pakistan's first ever Integrated National Search and Rescue multi hazard simulation exercise at its headquarters, bringing together federal, provincial, and humanitarian stakeholders to test coordinated disaster response mechanisms, improve early warning systems, and strengthen preparedness against multiple high risk scenarios.

Held at the National Emergencies Operation Centre, the exercise was designed to enhance integration and centralised coordination of search and rescue resources, officials said in a press release issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

The simulation was driven by risk projections developed by NDMA's NEOC, incorporating advanced weather forecasting, satellite data, and real time monitoring to create predictive hazard scenarios, signalling a strategic shift from reactive response to anticipatory disaster management.

Conducted under the Integrated National Search and Rescue framework, the exercise brought together Provincial Disaster Management Authorities, State Disaster Management Authority, Gilgit-Baltistan Disaster Management

Authority, Rescue 1122, Civil Defence, armed forces, federal and provincial departments, humanitarian organisations, and trained community volunteers.

The exercise simulated multiple concurrent disasters, including glacial lake outburst floods in Gilgit Baltistan, widespread flooding across several provinces, and a major earthquake affecting Islamabad and Muzaffarabad.

These scenarios are developed using NEOC's Disaster Early Warning system and hazard modelling tools to demonstrate the capacity for forecasting risks and issuing timely advisories.

Participants engaged in coordinated response drills across multiple search and rescue teams, focusing on real time information sharing, early warning response linkage, unified command structures, and effective last mile communication.

Community volunteers were identified as critical force multipliers during emergency situations.

Chairman NDMA Inam Haider Malik emphasised that integrating predictive analytics with response systems is vital to minimising disaster impacts, underscoring the role of NEOC in hazard forecasting and early warning dissemination.

Participants appreciated the initiative, citing valuable lessons to further strengthen preparedness and coordination frameworks.



Senior Superintendent of Police Traffic Quetta Mirza Bilal Hassan Holds Khuli Kachehri to Address Public Grievances in Quetta.