

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Monday, December 02, 2024.

dquettavoice@gmail.com



Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti talking to a girl student after the provision of a scooter to her. Photo provided by DGPR

Two Bodies Found in Awaran's Kolwah Area

From Our Correspondent:

AWARAN: The Levies Force discovered two unidentified bodies in the Kolwah area of Awaran district on Sunday morning.

According to Levies sources, the bodies were found in a remote location and were shifted to a nearby hospital for post-mortem examinations. The identities of the deceased have yet to be determined, and investigations are ongoing.



The discovery has raised concerns in the area, prompting authorities to enhance security measures. No further details have been released at this time.

Govt dismisses internet disruptions as users report nationwide outages again

NEWS DESK: Users across the country once again reported internet disruptions on Sunday, as the government downplayed the outages, dismissing concerns about the firewall situation as "blown out of proportion." Screenshot taken from X. In recent months, users have experienced sluggish speeds, difficulty downloading media on WhatsApp, and intermittent connectivity issues.

Digital analysts say the government has been testing a "firewall" that monitors some platforms and gives the power to block content, like photos or videos of rallies shared on WhatsApp.

The country started facing internet disruption again last week after the government restricted access to mobile services in light of PTI's final call rally.

According to DownDetector, an internet outage tracking website, several websites reported outages early today.

While speaking to Geo News today, Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecom Shaza Fatima Khawaja said that the situation with the firewall was "blown out of proportion and a web management system has been operating in the country for 10 years."

"There is nothing controversial about a country working on its cyber security," she said, adding that the entire world used different cyber security mechanisms.

Empowering Women in Balochistan: A Roadmap for Sustainable Development

Syed Ali Shah Analysis:

QUETTA: The distribution of 50 pink scooters to female students of Government Girls Post Graduate Degree College, Quetta, by the Balochistan government marks a commendable step toward empowering women in a province where gender inequality remains deeply entrenched. This initiative, supported by Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti and Education Minister Rahila Hameed Khan Durani, reflects the growing recognition of women's critical role in driving social and economic development. While such programs symbolize progress, they should serve as the foundation for more comprehensive measures to address the core challenges faced by women in Balochistan.

Among these are the acute lack of basic facilities in educational institutions. Shockingly, over 1,700 girls' schools across the province lack functional washrooms. This fundamental oversight discourages attendance and exacerbates the dropout rate among female students. Resolving this issue must be a priority for the

government. In addition, access to quality education, safe and reliable transportation, and job opportunities for women remain limited. The provision of scooters is a positive step, but more sustainable solutions, such as expanding public transport services for women, must be introduced to ensure long-term impact. Similarly, creating incentives for girls to pursue higher education, coupled with scholarships and skills development programs, can open new doors for empowerment. The Chief Minister's announcement of appointing five female deputy commissioners is a milestone for gender equality in administration. However, broader employment opportunities in both public and private sectors are needed to enable women to participate meaningfully in the workforce. Without these systemic changes, initiatives like scooter distributions, while inspiring, may have limited reach. The government must also prioritize combating deep-seated societal barriers, including early

marriages, cultural taboos, and gender discrimination, which continue to hinder women's progress.

To counter these challenges, community awareness campaigns should promote the importance of women's education and their role in fostering a prosperous Balochistan.

Empowering women is not a symbolic act but a multifaceted effort that requires addressing structural inequalities. The government must deliver on its promises with concrete action plans, adequate funding, and transparent monitoring of outcomes.

Only then can initiatives like these serve as the building blocks for a future where women in Balochistan thrive as equal contributors to the province's progress. By investing in education, employment, and infrastructure, Balochistan can unlock its full potential and ensure that no girl is left behind.

The vision for a prosperous province lies in its ability to empower all its citizens—men and women alike.

Surge in AIDS Cases in Balochistan: Over 9,000 Affected Amid Rising Concerns

Hafizullah Sherani:

QUETTA: The spread of HIV/AIDS in Balochistan is becoming a significant public health crisis, with an alarming increase in reported cases this year. According to the Balochistan AIDS Control Program, over 462 new cases have been registered in 2024, bringing the estimated total of affected individuals to between 7,000 and 9,000. Buy vitamins and supplements. This was revealed by Dr. Zulfiqar Baloch, the Balochistan Coordinator of the AIDS program while addressing a press conference. The alarming number of patients prompted the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti to take notice and he directed the health department to double their efforts for the prevention of the disease.

Alarming Rise in Cases

In 2023, the program recorded 3,200 cases, but the numbers have surged this year, highlighting a worrying trend. Unsafe surgical instruments, contaminated syringes, and unprotected sexual contact are the leading causes of transmission in the province.

High-Risk Districts

Health experts have identified Quetta, Gwadar, Turbat, Hub, Naseerabad, Zohab, and Sherani as high-risk areas for HIV/AIDS. The stigma surrounding the disease often discourages individuals from seeking timely testing

and treatment. Civil rights activist Shams Mandokhail emphasized, "People with AIDS often avoid testing due to social stigma. This not only risks their health but endangers their families as well."

Available Treatment and Expansions

The Bolan Medical Complex in Quetta remains a central hub for HIV/AIDS treatment, also serving patients from neighboring Afghanistan. The program operates five treatment centers across the province, with plans to establish new centers in Khuzdar, Zohab, Sibi, and Kharan to meet the growing demand.

Dr. Dawood Achakzai, Assistant Head of the Balochistan AIDS Control Program, explained, "With timely medication, patients can suppress the virus, restore immunity, and lead normal lives."

Urgent Need for Awareness

Health authorities and activists stress the importance of awareness campaigns and widespread testing to curb the spread. In 2023 alone, over 100,000 free HIV/AIDS tests were conducted across Balochistan.

As the province battles this growing epidemic, public health officials are urging timely interventions, expanded healthcare facilities, and an end to the stigma surrounding the disease.



Dr. Rubaba Buledi Calls for Accelerated Efforts to Empower Women in Balochistan

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan for Women Development, has urged swift and coordinated action to promote women's rights and empowerment in the province. She highlighted that empowering women is essential to building a democratic and socially strong Balochistan.

Speaking at a workshop organized by the Women Development Department in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Buledi stressed the importance of policy-level interventions to enhance women's participation in social, economic, and political spheres.

"Gender equality is the foundation of sustainable development. Without providing women their

rights and opportunities, we cannot establish a progressive society," she said. Buy vitamins and supplements. Dr. Buledi also underscored the need for gender-sensitive governance, ensuring that women's voices are heard and their needs are addressed across all sectors. She praised the partnership between WHO and the Women Development Department, describing the workshop as a significant step toward fostering gender equality and empowering women in Balochistan. The workshop focused on improving the status of women and enhancing their role in decision-making processes. Dr. Buledi reiterated that strengthening women's rights is crucial for Balochistan's development and prosperity.



Two soldiers martyred, 8 terrorists killed in two separate operations in KP's Khyber, Bannu districts: ISPR

NEWS DESK: Eight terrorists were killed in two separate engagements with security forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Khyber and Bannu districts, the military's media wing said on Sunday.

A statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that an intelligence-based operation was conducted in the Baka Khel area of the Bannu district on the reported presence of terrorists (Khwari).

"During the conduct of the operation, troops effectively engaged with the terrorists' location and consequently killed five khawari, while nine others were injured," the ISPR said.

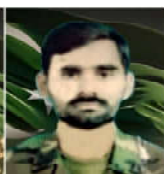
However, Sepoy Iftikhar Hussain (29), having fought gallantly, embraced martyrdom, the statement added.

In a separate operation conducted in the general area of Shagai in Khyber district, three terrorists were killed while two others were apprehended by the security forces, it said. "Captain Muhammad Zohaibud



Din (25), who led the troops from the front, fought bravely, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced martyrdom," the ISPR said.

According to the statement, the terrorists were involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as innocent civilians. Sanitisation operations were being conducted to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area, it said, adding that security forces were determined to wipe out the menace of terror-



ism and "such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthened our resolve."

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif praised the security forces for their successful operations in the districts, commending their bravery for eliminating terrorists in two separate operations. The president and prime minister paid tributes to Captain Zohaibuddin and soldier Hussain and acknowledged their sacrifices, President Secretariat Press Wing and PM Office.

Khan Shaheed Abdul Samad Achakzai: A Legacy of Nonviolence and Democracy

Continued to page 2

Climate Tides and Raising Injustices: The Climate-Gender Violence Nexus in Balochistan

Continued to page 2

'PCB, BCCI agree on hybrid model for Champions Trophy and future ICC tournaments'

Continued to page 4

Delhi police condemned for targeting rights activist Nadeem Khan in Bangalore

BANGALORE (INP): India-based human rights organization, People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCIL), has strongly condemned the Delhi police for the targeted harassment of Nadeem Khan, a prominent human rights activist for been vocal in its advocacy against hate crimes and mob lynchings in India.

The statement read that four police officers, including the Station House Officer (SHO) from the Shaheen Bagh police station in Delhi, arrived at Khan's residence without a warrant or prior notice, demanding that he accompany them back to Delhi for questioning.



QUETTA: DG Health Services, Dr. Amin Khan Mandokhail, under the chairmanship of MNCH program coordinator, Dr. Gul Sabih Ghorizai and other are present in the meeting.

14th Pakistan Mountain Festival commences with cleanup drive at Margalla Hills Trails-5

ISLAMABAD (INP): The 14th Pakistan Mountain Festival, organized annually by Devoom-Pakistan to celebrate International Mountain Day, commenced with a successful cleanup drive at Margalla Hills Trails-5 on Sunday.

Mountains cover 22 percent of the planet's land surface and provide vital resources, including freshwater for half of humanity. The day also serves to draw attention to the challenges facing mountain regions, including climate change, habitat loss, and the struggles of mountain communities.

Awareness seminar on World AIDS Day in Nawabshah

NAWABSHAH (INP): District Administration, Health Department of Shaheed Benazirabad and CDC HIV/AIDS Center organized an awareness seminar on the occasion of World AIDS Day at the Darbar Hall of the DC Office.

AIDS Treatment Center Dr. Gulam Qadir Rajput and others said that World AIDS Day is being celebrated today with the aim of making the public aware of the precautionary measures to prevent AIDS. He added that HIV/AIDS is a curable disease which can be prevented from causing further harm by getting regular treatment.

'KP govt's resources used without restraint in PTI; violent protests in Islamabad'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Interior Ministry has said on Sunday that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's resources were used without restraint in violent protests in Islamabad.

Spokesman clarified that armed guards and miscreants among protesters opened indiscriminate fire. "The military troops were deployed to ensure security of key installations.



ISLAMABAD: Mr. Attaullah Tarar Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage, addressed a Press Conference.

Legal dimensions of Kashmir dispute discussed at Muzaffarabad workshop

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): The Kashmir Policy Research Institute (KPRI) organized the first workshop of its "Youth Dialogue Program" as part of the Kashmir Conflict series in Muzaffarabad.

Khan, Director of KPRI, delivered lectures on various aspects of the conflict, followed by a Q&A session with the participants. Justice Gilani discussed the legal dimensions of the Kashmir issue, emphasizing that the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India was not legally valid.

Power theft: Pakistan recovers over Rs133 billion from defaulters

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Power Division has recovered over Rs133 billion during a nationwide power theft crackdown from September 2023 to date.

power theft ends across the country. On September 6, last year, the then caretaker federal government announced plans to launch a crackdown across the country on electricity theft in a bid to reduce the ballooning circular debt in the power sector.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Bakht Mohammad Kakar, Member of the Provincial Assembly Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch, Senator Abdul Qudus Bezenjo, Special Secretary of Health Shahak Baloch, father are condoling and reciting Fatiha.

Heavy snowfall leads to closure of Kaghan Valley for tourists

KAGHAN (INP): The entry of tourists in Kaghan Valley was banned on Sunday following heavy snowfall in Mansehra district.

CONTRACTUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. Applications are invited from Qualified individuals for contract positions in Project Management Unit. Chief Minister Package for Quetta Development' based in Quetta. The applicants must be professionally sound and possess requisite qualification, relevant work experience as given below:

PUBLIC NOTICE. Application for recruitment for the post of Traffic Sergeant. The applicant must be a male citizen of Pakistan, aged between 18 to 35 years, and must possess a minimum of 12 years of experience in a traffic law enforcement agency.

PUBLIC NOTICE. Application for recruitment for the post of Constable. The applicant must be a male citizen of Pakistan, aged between 18 to 35 years, and must possess a minimum of 05 years of experience in a traffic law enforcement agency.

'Desi Food Fever' grips Punjab cities as winters approaches

ISLAMABAD (INP): As the winter months continue, Desi breakfast shops across the country are expected to remain hubs of joy and tradition, serving up delicious, warming meals that bring families and friends together especially on weekends.

A report aired by a Private news channel with the winter season sets in, breakfast shops across Punjab cities are cashing in on the Desi food craze.

The shops are witnessing a surge in demand for traditional Pakistani breakfast

dishes such as Saag, halwa puri, nihari, and Siri Paye, keema paratha.

The owners of these shops are attributing the increased demand to the cold weather, which is making people crave warm and comforting food, the report added.

"It is a winter tradition that we look forward to every year," said a regular customer at a popular Desi breakfast shop in Rawalpindi.

There is nothing like a warm, delicious breakfast to bring the family together on a

cold winter's morning," said a customer in Lahore. "I love the smell of saag and halwa puri wafting through the air," said Muhammad Ahmed, a student at Punjab University.

Shopkeepers are also thrilled with the surge in demand for Desi breakfast dishes during the winter months. "Winter is our busiest season," said the owner of a popular Desi breakfast shop in Lahore and added, "People come from all over to enjoy our traditional breakfast dishes, and we are happy to oblige."



Islamabad: Ambassador of Azerbaijan H.E. Khazar Farhadov called on Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization & Communications Abdul Azeem Khan.

Petrol price hike sparks criticism across major Pakistani cities

FAISALABAD (INP): Common people belonging to Faisalabad, Lahore, and Karachi expressed their serious concerns over the recent hike in petroleum products in Pakistan.

Talking with media in Islamabad, they expressed their resentment over the increase in petroleum prices and said that after the hike in POL products, inflation in Pakistan will further increase.

In Lahore, people rejected enhancements in petroleum prices and said that this would bring a new wave of inflation.

People in Karachi said that an increase of Rs3.73 in petrol price and a hike of Rs4.29 per litre in the price of

high-speed diesel (HSD) is totally unjustified and without any solid reason.

They said that common people have to spend a large amount on purchasing petrol from their nominal income.

They appealed to the government to immediately withdraw the sudden increase in petroleum prices in the best interest of the people.

Earlier on November 30, 2024, the federal government announced revised prices of petroleum products for the upcoming fortnight.

According to the Finance Division, the petrol price went up by Rs 3.72 per litre.

With effect from December 1, it added that the petrol

price has been set at Rs 252.10 per litre for the next two weeks. The high-speed diesel (HSD) price has surged by Rs 3.39 per litre, and the new price is Rs 258.43 per litre.

The new price of Light Speed Diesel is Rs 151.73 per litre, and kerosene is Rs 164.98 per litre.

The notification states: "Ogra has worked out the consumer prices of petroleum products as per variation in the oil price in the international market."

"It has accordingly been decided that the prices of petroleum products for the next fortnight starting from Dec 1, 2024, would be slightly revised."

PTI violent protests caused Rs192b daily losses to economy: Interior Ministry

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's recent violent protests caused 192 billion rupees indirect losses per day to the country's economy.

According to a press release issued by the Interior Ministry, the PTI and its social media propagandists are bent upon to create divisions and confusion within the society.

Such elements, whether inside the country or abroad, will surely be held accountable under relevant laws and no one will be allowed to sow divisions, hatred and propagating fake news.

The press release said that the people of Pakistan including the proud people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reject this kind of violent and extremist streak of politics.

They also reject the baseless allegations and malicious designs behind the vicious propaganda and complete nation wholeheartedly stands firm with peace and stability in the country. The press release pointed out that on 26 November, protesting miscreants

reached Red Zone violating the lawful orders of the Islamabad High Court and directly lashed multiple times with LEAs using fire arms, tear gas shells, stun grenades, steel sling shots and nail studded batons.

It said that it is deplorable that Chief Minister of KP made baseless inflammatory statements against institutions, using KP Assembly as a platform to distort facts and spread blatant lies, rather than being shameful of inciting innocent youth of KP for such undesirable activities.

It said that it is concerning to note that 39 lethal weapons including 18 automatic weapons have been recovered from the violent protesters and that amongst the apprehended offenders there are more than three dozen paid aliens.

With regards to material losses incurred during the violent protests, initial estimates suggest damages to the tune of hundreds of million. Besides, 11 vehicles of LEAs were damaged including prison vans set ablaze.

PM vows to strengthen national HIV response

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has stated that Pakistan stands united with the global community in reaffirming its firm commitment to strengthen the national HIV response.

In his message on World AIDS Day being observed, he said upholding the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and promoting the inclusion of all communities are essential for eradicating AIDS as a public health threat.

The Prime Minister said healthcare is a fundamental right and through collective efforts, this fundamental right can be in an equitable manner.

He said the HIV epidemic in Pakistan continues to grow, which underscores the need for bold, innovative and sustainable interventions. He said a future free from AIDS can only be achieved through collective action that upholds human dignity, equity and inclusion.

The Prime Minister stressed the need for a decisive and compassionate action to empower the most affected by HIV.



KARACHI: Large number of people wearing traditional dress during the celebrations of Sindh Cultural Day.



QUETTA: President National Party former chief minister Dr. Abdul Malik addressing during a ceremony hosted by member Central Committee National Party Ramzan Hazara.

'PCB, BCCI agree on hybrid model for Champions Trophy and future ICC tournaments'

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan Cricket Board and the Board of Control for Cricket in India have retracted from their earlier stance, agreeing to play their future matches in ICC tournaments on a hybrid model and easing the way for next year's Champions Trophy to be held.

The two boards held dialogue on Saturday after the International Cricket Council had convened a meeting on Friday and came to a consensus on a hybrid model for the Feb 19-March 9 Champions Trophy after the Indian government refused to allow its team to travel to Pakistan but the PCB has stressed that it will also like the same model to be applied for its team when tournaments are held on the other side of the border in the next three years.

The final approval to the plan will have to be given by the ICC Board to ensure it is implemented fully.

The PCB had been sticking to its stance of not accepting the hybrid model after the Pakistan team went to India for

last year's ODI World Cup. It expected India to do the same for the Champions Trophy — the first ICC tournament in Pakistan since it co-hosted the 1996 ODI World Cup — but has now sounded the BCCI not to expect any future favours.

"Yes the past experience is bitter for Pakistan and the ICC has to give a solid guarantee that the hybrid model will be implemented in letter and spirit in future and no Pakistan team will go to India to play any matches of the ICC events and on the same pattern the Indian team will not come to Pakistan but the PCB has stressed that it will also like the same model to be applied for its team when tournaments are held on the other side of the border in the next three years.

The source added that the ICC had asked the two cricket boards to reach at a decision with mutual understanding, before its Board takes any decision.

The ICC had convened a meeting online in Dubai on Friday but it was postponed for Saturday. On Saturday it was again not held because the two cricket boards were in discussion.

"As there will be holidays

in the UAE till Tuesday due to the country's national day, the meeting could be held at any time to announce the decision," the source informed.

The PCB had asked the BCCI to show a letter from the Indian government in which it had disallowed its team from touring Pakistan due to security reasons and the source informed that no such letter was shown.

"Indirectly, in the backdoor channels, the BCCI had been warned that as it has no letter from its government and had also agreed with the PCB's Master Security Plan for the Champions Trophy, presented in the ICC's meeting on Oct 21, it would have a weak case if the PCB was to approach the Court for Arbitration in Sport."

India remains the most influential member of the ICC, earning a lion's share from the income of cricket's governing body, and the source added that Pakistan could ask for a greater share as the bulk of the earning comes from matches involving the two rivals.

Punjab expands grants for religious minorities, including Hindus and Sikhs

LAHORE (INP): The Punjab government has decided to allocate Rs150 million as a Christmas grant for deserving Christian families, increasing the amount per family to Rs15,000.

According to media reports, the grant budget was raised from Rs50 million to Rs150 million, enabling 10,000 families to benefit from this initiative.

Chief Minister Punjab has instructed district administrations to ensure the smooth dis-

tribution of grants to eligible Christian families.

The process will commence following the Punjab Cabinet's approval, with district administrations verifying data and sending it to the Cabinet for finalisation.

Highlighting the government's inclusive approach, Minorities Leader Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora shared that, for the first time in history, the Punjab government distributed Rs15,000 per family among 1,400 Hindu families during Diwali, with a

total grant of Rs21 million.

This marked a departure from previous years when no grants were allocated for Diwali. The initiative followed special instructions from Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

Arora also revealed that the grant for Sikh families on Baba Guru Nanak's birth anniversary has been increased. Previously, grants were provided to 500 families, but now the number has risen to 800, with each family receiving Rs15,000.



FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Quisar Ahmed Sheikh, awarding the Gold Medals to the Students during the Convocation ceremony at National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, Chiniot Campus.

Sindh Culture Day celebrated

HYDERABAD (INP): Sindh Culture Day was celebrated on Sunday with zeal and zest across the province and elsewhere in the country.

The day is celebrated on the first Sunday of every December.

On this occasion, various cultural, government, and non-government organizations organized seminars, rallies and conferences to highlight the centuries-old culture of Sindh valley.

Donning cultural dresses with Sindh topi and ajrak, the traditional block printed shawls to spotlight the centuries-old rich culture of Sindh.

A large number of people including political workers, leaders, NGOs, students, laborers, villagers, associations, and workers purchased the traditional Topi and Ajrak to mark the day.

As the demand for Topi and Ajrak was soaring, the shopkeepers also raised the prices.

The Chief Minister's message extended his greetings to "the heirs of the great Sindh civilization living all over the world."

He emphasized that nations are recognized by their culture, and Sindh's identity is rooted in peace, love, and brotherhood. Shah expressed pride in being born on the land of Sufis, highlighting Sindh's unbreakable tradition of hospitality and its legacy of tolerance.

Murad Ali Shah reflected on his family's history of service to Sindh, calling it an honor, and vowed to work towards making Sindh a cradle of peace and a modern leader in cultural and developmental excellence.

Lahore remains the world's most polluted city

LAHORE (INP): The provincial capital of Lahore has once again topped the list of the world's most polluted cities.

Data revealed that the AQI reached 318 on MM Alam Road, only place in the city with AQI higher than 300 while at most of the city localities it was below 300. The environmental experts said the average AQI of the city was 230.

They said PM2.5 concentration in Lahore was currently 31 times the WHO annual air quality guideline value.

The AQI of other important city areas included DHA Phase 8 (287), CERP Office (250), Polo Ground Cantt (288), University of Central Punjab (263) and Ghazi Road Interchange (231).

According to the Meteorological Department, Lahore's minimum temperature is expected to drop to 12°C, while the maximum temperature may reach 23°C.