

## 2 dead, 17 injured in blast near police vehicle in Quetta market

Quetta(News Desk) Two people were killed and 17 others injured after an explosion occurred near a police vehicle in the Barech Market area on Quetta's Double Road, officials said. Confirming the deaths, Balochistan's health department spokesperson Dr Waseem Baig said, "The injured have been moved to the trauma centre at Civil Hospital." Civil Hospital Medical Superintendent Dr Abdul Hadi Kakar told Dawn.com that the condition of four wounded people is critical. Balochistan Government

Spokesperson Shahid Rind said in a statement that the explosion occurred near a police vehicle, adding that the nature of the blast was being determined. Video footage circulating on social media, verified by Dawn.com, showed a crowd of people gathering at the scene of the blast, with the flaming wreckage of a motorcycle next to a charred police pickup truck. A damaged Suzuki Alto can also be seen in the frame. A man was also seen pulling the burning wreckage of the motorcycle away from the vehicle in the video, while sirens could

be heard in the background. No group has so far claimed responsibility for the blast. Last week, a member of the Anti-Terrorist Force (ATF) was martyred and six others were injured — three of them critically — when a roadside bomb targeted a police vehicle on Quetta's Brewery Road. The security situation in Balochistan has deteriorated over the last few months, with separatist militants frequently attacking police and armed forces personnel. The outlawed Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA),

in particular, has adopted new tactics to cause higher casualties and directly target Pakistani security forces. Last year, the Interior Ministry noted a "significant rise in terrorism incidents and evolving terrorism patterns" since the Afghan Taliban seized control of Kabul in August 2021, especially in the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan's activities in KP, the Baloch nationalist insurgency in Balochistan, and ethno-nationalist violence in Sindh. This is a developing story that is being updated as the situation evolves.



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with high achievers and beneficiaries of different initiatives under PM's Youth Programme at the launching ceremony of Prime Ministers Digital Youth Club Islamabad .

## Perturbed at delays, Imran moves IHC for early decisions

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) Former Prime Minister Imran Khan has approached the Islamabad High Court (IHC) over repeated delays in cases against him, including the Toshakhana case, expressing concerns over the prolonged adjournments. His legal team, comprising Barrister Salman Safdar, Qausain Faisal Mufti and Arshad Tabrez, filed a petition questioning the repeated postponements. They argued that hearings could not be cancelled without legal justification and that the accused must be present in court. The petition noted that the Toshakhana case, concerning allegations of unlawfully retaining and selling state gifts — including an expensive Bulgari jewellery set — was set to be heard at Adiala Jail but was unexpectedly moved to the Judicial Complex in Islamabad. The hearing was then adjourned until April 14 without any proceedings.

### Public Accounts Committee perturbed by HEC's failure to recover Rs1.5bn from defaulters



ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The Auditor General's office on Wednesday raised alarm over the Higher Education Commission's failure to recover more than Rs1.5 billion from scholarship defaulters. Calling it a critical matter, the issue was raised after audit officials reported that 5,321 students had received foreign scholarships under nine different projects. While 96 individuals had defaulted, approximately Rs0.8 billion had already been recovered. The principal accounting officer of the Higher Education Commission (HEC), Ziaul Qayyum, informed the committee that 36 cases were currently under trial. This observation was made when the PAC convened under the chairmanship of MNA Junaid Akbar Khan to review audit objections concerning the Higher Education Commission (HEC). The members expressed concerns over scholars who had failed to return to Pakistan after completing their studies. QAU VC tells apex committee demarcation issue with CDA remains unresolved Junaid Akbar Khan urged authorities to file FIRs against them, while Senator Afnanullah Khan called the situation "shameful." Shahida Akhtar Ali questioned whether their passports could be revoked. In response, the committee chairman directed NADRA to cancel the passports and national identity cards of defaulters. "This is a grave issue," remarked Shazia Marri, emphasising the need for stricter measures. Senator Khan suggested publicly naming and shaming the defaulters in newspapers.

## Islamabad IGP seeks two weeks' time to recover missing brothers of journalist Ahmad Noorani

Islamabad(News Desk) The Islamabad Inspector General of Police (IGP) on Thursday told the Islamabad High Court (IHC) that he would need fourteen days to recover the two missing brothers of journalist Ahmad Noorani. The US-based Noorani, who works for a news outlet called FactFocus, recently published an investigative report regarding a serving high-ranking military official and his relatives. Noorani's two brothers, Muhammad Saifur Rehman Haider and Muhammad Ali, went missing

from their residence on March 19. Noorani's mother Amina Bashir had filed a plea with the IHC for the recovery of his two brothers. On Tuesday, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) demanded the immediate release of Noorani's brothers, calling it a "clear reprisal to intimidate and silence [Noorani]." Today's hearing was heard by Justice Inam Ameen Minhas, while Advocate Imaan Mazari-Hazir, representing the petitioner, appeared before the court along with Noorani's mother and sister. At the outset of the hearing, Justice Minhas asked

IGP Ali Nasir Rizvi how much time he would need to recover the two brothers, to which the IGP replied that he'd need two weeks. "Take one year," Noorani's mother cried out as she appeared on the rostrum. Justice Minhas said to the IGP: "I had asked the station house officer to inquire and tell us." The IGP responded that he was supervising the matter and had formed a special investigation team under the supervision of the senior superintendent of police operations. "We have done geofencing and also obtained CDR

(Call Detail Records). No one in 27 police stations or CTD has information [on the brothers' whereabouts]," he told the court. "We have contacted all IGP's and prisons across the country, but such information is not available anywhere," he said. "We have been in contact with the IGP's of all provinces and sought information." IGP Rizvi said that the Intelligence Bureau (IB) has been informed and a reply is awaited from the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). "No one with these names has gone abroad," the IGP told the court.

## Only drinking water available amid unprecedented shortage

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) With Kharif season starting in a few days, fears of an unprecedented water shortage are making it difficult for irrigation experts to plan water supplies for the entire season. "There is no water in dams, river flows have plunged and fewer snow deposits on mountains are not promising improved flows," an official told Dawn. This will have very serious repercussions for crop output, he said. As a consequence, a meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Indus River System Authority (Irsa) decided on Wednesday to make only "drinking supplies" for one month, April, and then review the situation. This is a very rare event that water regulator has started water discharge parameters on a monthly basis, although past precedents are there for water allocations in three parts during a season. The meeting noted that because of no storage in any of the three storages, water discharges at rim-stations stood at 51pc shortfall and went beyond 60pc while reaching provincial canal heads.

## Senate panel takes up National Commission for Minorities Bill

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The National Commission for Minorities Bill 2025 was under active review on Wednesday as the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights subcommittee deliberated its key provisions. With strong backing from government officials and lawmakers, the bill aimed to establish a national body dedicated to protecting and promoting the rights of minority communities in Pakistan. During the meeting, the chairman of the committee, Senator Syed Ali Zafar, stressed the importance of ensuring the bill reflected the diverse needs of minorities while maintaining transparency and fairness. "A law passed today will shape the future for years to come, so careful deliberation is essential," he stated. A statement issued here said that in response to a proposal by Farhatullah Babar, Syed Ali Zafar endorsed a rotational system for the chairperson, ensuring representation from all provinces. "This will prevent any region from being overlooked in the leadership selection process," he noted.

## BNP-M demands release of Mahrang, other BYC leaders

QUETTA: (News Desk) Workers and supporters of the Balochistan National Party-Mengal on Wednesday staged protest rallies and sit-in in Quetta and other towns and cities of the province against the arrest of Dr Mahrang Baloch and other central leaders of Baloch Yakjehti Committee and the crackdown on their protests. The BNP leaders and workers gathered in front of press clubs carrying placards and banners inscribed with their demands. They chanted slogans against the provincial government and demanded immediate release of Dr Mahrang Baloch, Sammi Deen Baloch, Bebow Baloch and other BYC leaders, workers and supporters. The acting president of BNP-M, Sajid Tareen, Abdul Wali Kakar, Akhtar Hussain Langove, Ghulam Nabi Marri, Sana Baloch, Musa Baloch, Agha Hassan Baloch, Naseer Shahwani, Maqbool Lehrri, provincial President of ANP Asghar Achakzai and National Party Democratic provincial president Muhammad Jan addressed the protest sit-in. They said that Balochistan has been subjected to oppression and coercion from the very beginning and the people are now being denied their right to hold peaceful protest rallies to seek justice and their rights guaranteed by Constitution. Leaders say people are being denied the right to hold peaceful rallies, to seek justice and rights guaranteed by Constitution. The speakers further said people across the province are protesting, but they are not being allowed to express their dissent. Those participating in protests have been arrested in various areas due to crackdowns by security forces and police, they said.



Image collage showing a burning motorcycle with passerbys gathered around it on Thursday, March 27, 2025, at Quetta's Double Road

## President, PM condemn killing of 5 passengers in Gwadar's Kalmat area

Islamabad(News Desk) President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday strongly condemned the overnight killing of five passengers in a firing incident in the Kalmat area of Balochistan's Gwadar district. Militants in Balochistan have recently intensified their attacks, with the

banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) emerging as a key perpetrator of terrorist violence in Pakistan in 2024. Five people were killed by armed men who blocked the highway late last night, while three long-body trailers carrying urea from Gwadar port were set on fire in the Tajaban area, according

to Highway Police Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Hafeez Baloch. Officials said four people were killed in the Kalmat area between Pasni and Ormara after being offloaded from a Karachi-bound passenger bus. "Armed men killed four passengers after checking their ID cards and took away three others," an

official of the local administration said, adding that they belonged to Punjab. Security forces had moved towards the area where militants had blocked highways, with operations to clear the roads underway. The president and prime minister, in separate statements, prayed for peace for the departed souls.

## Council of Islamic Ideology comes out against SC verdict in polygamy case

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) has ruled that the Supreme Court's decision related to polygamy is not valid as per the norms of Sharia. "It is un-Islamic to grant the first wife the right to annul the marriage as a result of solemnising second marriage [by her husband] without her permission," said the CII ruling. The Council reached the decision at its 241st meeting presided over

by CII Chairman Dr Raghib Hussain Naeemi on March 25-26. The CII discussed the Oct 23, 2024 Supreme Court's decision, concerning a marriage dispute and the violation of Muslim Family Laws Ordinance 1961. The Working Paper presented before the CII read that the case in the Supreme Court involved a husband who had entered into a second marriage without obtaining permission from his previous wife, which was a

violation of 1961 Muslim Family Law. The first wife sought dissolution of the marriage (faskh-i-nikah) based on this violation. The Working Paper noted that the apex court had upheld the wife's plea based on her husband's violation of the 1961 Ordinance regarding polygamy. The SC had stated that the violation itself is grounds for dissolving the marriage. However, the CII observed that in ordinary circumstances there are

only two options for dissolution of marriage for Muslims — khula and talaq. The apex court, however, had emphasised in its verdict the importance of adhering to legal procedures in marriage, particularly those concerning polygamy. It had noted that the 1961 Law protects the wife's right to seek dissolution of marriage in case of such violations while ensuring that her other rights are also safeguarded. The CII members also



recalled some earlier decisions of the Council that males do not need the permission of the existing wife or wives for subsequent marriages as per the principles.

of Sharia. It also noted that the 1961 Law was contrary to Sharia and the males can enter into four marriages at one time, without being answerable to previous wives or any person.