

# Independent

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## Oath taking to be on 1st working day after Eid: Balochistan cabinet to be formed soon after Eidul Fitr: GoB spokesman

**Independent Report**  
 QUETTA: The spokesman, Government of Balochistan, Shahid Rind has announced that the provincial cabinet would be formed soon after Eidul Fitr.

In an official announcement made here on Sunday, the spokesman of provincial government said that the oath taking ceremony of the provincial cabinet would be held on first working day after Eid vaccinations.

Shahid Rind said that there is consensus on the formula of formulation of provincial cabinet.

The ceremony of cabinet's oath taking had been decided some days ago,

the spokesman informed.

However, the Chief Minister had to leave abroad on emergency basis due to medical check up of his brother.

The provincial cabinet would now be formed soon after Eidul Fitr's vaccinations, the spokesman added.

It may be mentioned here that the formation of provincial cabinet was delayed for over a month.

Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti was sworn in as the Chief Minister Balochistan on March 2.

In interaction with media, the Chief Minister had announced that the cabinet would be formed by April 4, 2024.



MAKKAH MUKARAMAH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is being received by Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, Nawaf Al Saeed Al Maliki.

## Two killed, five injured in Khuzdar blast

**KHUZDAR (Agencies):** At least two were killed and five injured including a woman in a blast near Umar Umar Farooq Chowk in Khuzdar.

Khuzdar Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan said that the bomb was planted in a motorcycle parked in the middle of a commercial centre.

The bodies and the injured were moved to the

nearby hospital, he added.

Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti condemned the blast, saying that the targeting of innocent citizens was a cowardly attack.

CM Sarfraz Bugti vowed to punish the perpetrators of the bombing, saying that security forces with the help of Pakistanis will end the scourge of terrorism in the country.

## PM constitutes body to review climate change governance, funds

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** The Prime Minister has constituted a high-level committee to review Climate Change Governance and Mechanisms to access Climate Funds and nominated Climate Change Minister, Romina Khurshid Alam and Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Dr Abid Suleri as its members along with other senior members.

The Minister of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination has issued a detailed notification explaining the context, mandate, terms of reference (TORs) and list of the members of the Committee. The committee will be chaired by the Deputy Chairman Planning Commission that comprised of government officials, parliamentarians, representatives from civil society and environment NGOs, private sector, research institutes, and expert/advisors with knowledge on specific topics.

The members are

Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan (chair), Coordinator to PM on Climate Change, Roinina Khurshid Alam, Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq, MNA Bilal Kiyani, Executive Director, SDPI, Dr Abid Suleri, Kashmala Kakakhel Climate Finance Expert, Rizwan Mehboob, Climate Expert, Ali Tauqir Sheikh Climate Expert, Ahsan Kamran Climate Finance Expert, Nadia Rehman, Member CC PC, Secretary MoCC&EC (Secretary of the Committee), Secretary Ministry of Commerce, Secretary MoPDSI and Secretary Ministry of EA and Additional Secretary (EF) Ministry of Finance.

The Committee will suggest approach that involves mainstreaming climate considerations across all government organizations and operations, as well as integrating them into the development agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



MAKKAH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman at Al-Safa Palace

## Islamabad starts work to complete 80-km section of Pak-Iran gas pipeline

**Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi expected to visit Pakistan on Apr 22; Islamabad faces penalty of \$18bn for failure to complete project; 80-km section to be completed in 24 months at cost of Rs44bn.**

**ISLAMABAD (INP):** With Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's expected visit to Pakistan on April 22, authorities have commenced the work to begin the construction of the 80-kilometre section of the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline from Gwadar to a point where it can be connected with the Iranian section of the project, reported an English daily on Sunday.

As per the publication, citing a senior official of the Energy Ministry, the Interstate Gas Company (ISGS) has already issued tenders seeking the much-delayed re-valuation of survey and Front-End Engineering Design (FEED) by consultants.

The development comes amid the United States' explicit opposition

to the bilateral project, coupled with warnings of potential sanctions, which has faced a nearly decade-long delay as it was set to be completed in December 2014 followed by its operationalisation in January 2015.

Over the years, Pakistan maintained that it could not materialise the project in its territory because of the US sanctions imposed on Iran, a view which authorities in Tehran have never subscribed, saying the US sanctions are not justified.

However, in January, Tehran issued the last notice to Islamabad seeking the completion of its side of the pipeline by February-March 2024 or face a \$18 billion penalty under the

## Khawaja Asif says: Pakistan stands firm to defend its sovereignty

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Saturday asserted that Pakistan was fully prepared to provide a comprehensive response if India takes any aggressive action.

Talking to a private news channel, he emphasized Pakistan's readiness to defend itself against any potential threat, stating, "If India takes any action, it will receive a full reply."

"We are prepared, and if anything occurs, we will not hold back", he said.

The minister highlighted Pakistan's unwavering commitment to safeguarding its sovereignty against any form of aggression.



QUETTA: Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola and MPA Raheela Hameed Durrani attending a programme on "reflections and way forward for gender equality and women empowerment policy 2020-2024 organized by the Women Development Department in collaboration with the UN-Women."

## "Way forward for gender equality & women empowerment policy: Govt. determined to take measures for women empowerment in all sectors: Deputy Speaker BA

**Independent Report**  
 QUETTA: The Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Ms. Ghazala Gola Begum has stated that the provincial government is determined to take necessary measures for making women empowered in all sectors besides making legislation for protection of their equal rights.

This was stated by the Deputy Speaker while addressing the programme on "reflections and way forward for gender equality and women empowerment policy 2020-2024 orga-

nized by the Women Development Department in collaboration with the UN-Women here at a local hotel the other day.

Also participated in the programme was by the former Speaker and current Member of Provincial Assembly, Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, Secretary Women Development, Sardar Khan Bugti, head of UN-Women in Balochistan, Ms. Ayesha Wadood, representatives of the civil society and other concerned.

Ms. Ghazala Gola

## Toshakhana case Info minister rebuts Imran's fabricated, baseless allegations

**ISLAMABAD (Agencies):** Information Minister Attaullah Tarar on Sunday rebutted former prime minister Imran Khan's allegations against the senior military leadership in connection with the Toshakhana case, saying they were "false, fabricated and baseless".

The former premier had alleged that the senior military leadership "implicated" him and his wife Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana reference "in an attempt to stifle my spirits".

Imran and his spouse

were sentenced to 14 years in jail in the case in January, days before the February 8 general elections.

Last week, the Islamabad High Court suspended the sentences. However, appeals against the convictions in the case are still pending.

A post shared on Imran's official account on X gave a transcript of his conversation with reporters at Adiala Jail — where he is currently incarcerated — on Saturday. Imran claimed that the senior military leadership was "driving the state affairs".

## MBS hosts Iftar PM Shehbaz, Saudi Crown Prince discuss bilateral relations

*Matters in connection with trade and investment between the two countries also discussed*

**Monitoring Desk**  
 MAKKAH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who is on three-day visit to Saudi Arabia, on Sunday attended Iftar hosted by Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman at Al-Safa Palace in Makkah.

"Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman hosts an Iftar at Al-Safa Palace in Makkah, attended by the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Crown Prince of Bahrain, where they all broke their fast together," reported Saudi Gazette.

According to details, the Saudi crown prince welcomed the premier and his delegation. Both the leaders had discussed the bilateral relations between two brotherly countries.

The premier and MBS discussed the matters in connection with trade and investment between the two countries.

A statement issued by the PM Office said that the crown prince had extended special invitation to PM Shehbaz-led delegation for an Iftar.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and members of the federal cabinet were also invited to the Iftar, as per the statement.

PM Shehbaz landed in Saudi Arabia on Saturday on a three-day visit from April 6 to 8. He is accompanied by federal ministers including Ishaq Dar, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Abdul Aleem Khan, Attaullah Tarar, and Ahmad Khan Cheema.

## President Zardari calls for strengthening bilateral ties with Turkiye

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** President Asif Ali Zardari and President of Turkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday called for further strengthening of bilateral relations between the two countries in various fields.

The two leaders spoke over the phone and discussed matters of mutual interest, a post on President of Pakistan X account said.

President Zardari felicitated the Turkish President on the forthcoming Eid-ul-Fitr and invited him to visit Pakistan, besides expressing his best wishes for him and the people of Turkiye, another related X post said.

## Shangla attack: Report reveals vehicle carrying Chinese nationals was not bullet, bomb-proof

**PESHAWAR (INP) -** The preliminary investigation of Besham suicide attack on Chinese nationals show that neither their vehicle was bullet nor bombproof.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police sent second report of the tragic incident to federal government.

The report revealed that a woman engineer was also among the deceased.

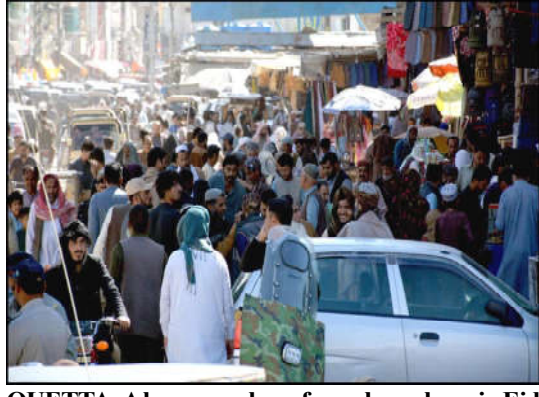
Five Chinese nationals were killed when the vehicle they were travelling by was attacked near Besham — a town located in Shangla district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

A suicide bomber had rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into the convoy of Chinese engineers which was on its way from Islamabad to their camp in Dasu.

According to report, the bus of Chinese nationals plunged into a 300-foot deep ditch after the suicide blast.

The Besham police station was just 6 KM away from the site of incident while Dasu dam was at the distance of 77 KM.

The report added that the CCTV cameras were installed in all the buses of Chinese convoy.



QUETTA: A large number of people are busy in Eid shopping at Liaquat Bazar.

## Health deptt decides to conduct inquiry into funds released for scholarships of doctors

**Independent Report**  
 QUETTA: The Health Department, Government of Balochistan has decided to conduct inquiry into the public funds released for the scholarships of postgraduate and house officer doctors in the province.

An official letter has been sent to the Director General Audit by the Health Department on directives of the Secretary Health, Abdullah Khan.

As per the sources, the DG Audit has been requested to conduct audit of the funds released on account of the scholarships of the postgraduate doctors and house officers for last five years.

In this regard, the audit of the approval and payment of the scholarships would be scrutinized, it was learnt.

According to the sources, alleged irregularities were reported in the funds allocated for payment of the scholarships of the postgraduate and house officer doctors serving in the province.



QUETTA: Members of Civil Society Balochistan are holding protest demonstration against Israeli cruel and inhumane acts and express unity with the innocent people of Palestine, at Quetta press club.





