

**Fazl meets Bugti**  
**F.P. Report**  
QUEETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, held an extensive meeting with Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Chief, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, in Quetta. The discussion focused on the law and order situation and the overall circumstances in Province. Bugti underscored the importance of collaboration among all stakeholders to ensure lasting peace and development in Balochistan.

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# Turks vow to protest on even as Erdogan says ‘show’ will end

ISTANBUL (Reuters): Many Turkish anti-government protesters said they were bracing for a long-term standoff after six nights of action and scattered clashes with police over the jailing of Istanbul's mayor, rejecting President Tayyip Erdogan's claim their "show" will fizzle out.

The largest protests in a decade began last week when Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu — Erdogan's main rival — was detained in what protesters, opposition parties, European leaders and rights groups called a politicised and anti-democratic move.

Each evening since, hundreds of thousands of people have gathered in squares, streets and university campuses nationwide chanting anti-Erdogan slogans and calling not only for Imamoglu's release but for justice and rights. The gatherings are banned but have nonetheless carried on — almost entirely peacefully until the late hours when police have used clubs and pepper spray in response to projectiles to make more than 1,000 arrests in total.

At the main protest in Istanbul's Sarachane park, between city hall and a towering Roman aqueduct, most people have cheered speeches by opposition leaders while others, some 650 feet away, have chanted and faced off with hundreds of white-helmeted riot police. "I think it will continue for a long time depending on

how the people, police and the government react," said one university student there. "I'll try to come as much as I can... because the government has left us no justice."

"I was scared when I first came, thinking we might get arrested. But I'm not scared now," she said. Others told Reuters they expect to continue daily protests, even as the main opposition Republic People's Party (CHP) has said that Tuesday will mark the last day of planned events at Sarachane.

The continued protests pose a potential bind for Erdogan, who has called them "street terrorism". He has tolerated little criticism from the streets since authorities violently shut down the sprawling anti-government Gezi Park protests in 2013. After a cabinet meeting in Ankara on Monday, the president accused the CHP of provoking citizens and predicted they would feel ashamed for the "evil" done to the country once their "show" fades away.

The government has rejected claims of political influence and says the judiciary is independent. The hitherto more reserved CHP has in recent days repeatedly urged people out to the streets, echoing a call on Sunday by the mayor Imamoglu before he was jailed pending a trial on corruption charges that he denies.

CHP Chairman Ozgur Ozel, who

has given hoarse-voiced speeches from atop a bus at Sarachane park each evening, has said the last event there on Tuesday would be both "a great end and big kick off" to new rallies elsewhere, vowing to fight on. He gave no details on the plans, but said he will keep overnighting at city hall until the CHP-majority council there elects an acting mayor on Wednesday.

On Monday at Sarachane, a physician said he hoped in coming days to also attend demonstrations at Silivri prison where the mayor is behind bars just outside the city. "I hope it never stops," he said of the rallies. "We are here because of justice and democracy and because we don't believe that we are living in a democratic country."

Elsewhere in Istanbul on Monday evening a sit-in protest briefly blocked all traffic at the 19th-century Galata Bridge crossing the Golden Horn waterway. Students have driven much of the civil disobedience and many have boycotted university classes since Monday. Academics in many universities observed a one-day protest strike on Tuesday.

The Council of Europe's human rights commissioner, Michael O'Flaherty, on Monday called on Turkish authorities to immediately release protesters who were detained "for the legitimate exercise of their human rights."

## Mother of Army Chief passes away

**F.P. Report**

RAWALPINDI: Mother of Chief of the Army Staff Gen Syed Asim Munir has passed away, President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have expressed condolences on the death of the mother of Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir.

In their separate statements, they expressed deep sorrow and grief on the death of the mother of the Army Chief, saying their sympathies are with the bereaved family.

President Zardari expressed his deep sorrow, emphasizing his solidarity with the bereaved family during this challenging period. He offered his heartfelt sympathies and prayed for the elevation of the deceased's soul, along with patience and strength for the family. Prime Minister Sharif echoed these sentiments, sharing in the family's grief and praying for the soul's elevation. He also wished the family strength and patience to cope with their significant loss.

Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, has expressed deep sorrow over the passing of the mother of Chief of Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir. In his condolence message, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that losing a mother is one of the most profound sorrows in life. He extended his heartfelt sympathies to General Asim Munir and his family, praying that Allah grants them strength and patience in this difficult time. Chairman PPP also prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and for the bereaved family to find solace and resilience in the face of this irreparable loss.

## Glacier collapse damages houses, hotels & turbines

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: A glacier collapsed onto houses and hotels in the tourist destination of Naran in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa however, fortunately no casualties were reported as the area was uninhabited at the time of the incident.

Local admin and police said on Tuesday the glacier collapse affected two turbines and caused partial damage to five houses and three hotels. It is worth noting that the Naran road has been closed for the last couple of months to prevent potential losses due to such glacier-related incidents.

## Pakistan, EU to hold joint business forum in May

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the European Union are set to strengthen their economic ties through the first-ever high-level EU-Pakistan Business Forum, scheduled to take place on May 14-15 in Islamabad, according to a joint statement by the government and EU delegation on Tuesday.

The EU is the largest single market in the world and the largest destination for Pakistani exports. The EU is also the world's largest foreign investor representing 42% of outward foreign direct investment globally.

"With a rapidly growing market of over 240 million people, competitive labour costs, strategic geographical access to Central and South Asia and a preferential trade access to the EU, Pakistan offers immense business opportunities," the statement read.

To enhance economic cooperation between the EU and Pakistan, the forum will bring together high-level policy makers — including the prime minister, ministers for finance and commerce — business leaders and CEOs from Pakistan and Europe, financial institutions such as the European Investment Bank, investors and other key stakeholders. During the two days of the business forum, Pakistan's potential, innovation and best practices in key sectors, including agribusiness, energy and renewables, green logistics, pharma-

ceuticals, IT and textiles, will be showcased.

The forum will foster dialogue between the government and the private sector to improve the regulatory framework and facilitate trade while promoting sustainable business practices. The event will also present the EU's Global Gateway strategy, its largest investment programme outside of the EU that aims to leverage EUR 300 billion of investments worldwide until 2027.

EU Ambassador Dr Riina Kionka said, "European companies are recognising Pakistan as a potential business destination. This forum serves as a vital platform to strengthen collaboration between European and Pakistani businesses, deepens bilateral trade, and explores new avenues for economic partnership."

"It also is an opportunity for Pakistan to benefit from the opportunities of Global Gateway". Besides dedicated Business-to-Business and Business-to-Government meetings, engaging discussions, dedicated exhibitions, the forum will also mark the launch of the EU-Pakistan Business Network — which will group together the 300+ European companies active in Pakistan. "The forum marks a crucial step in reinforcing the economic ties between Pakistan and the European Union in the spirit of Stronger Together, paving the way for enhanced collaboration and mutual prosperity," the statement concluded.

## PIA to remain on UK's air safety list

**F.P. Report**

LONDON: The UK Department for Transport confirmed on Tuesday that Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) would remain on the air safety list.

In a statement, a spokesperson for the department said that the UK Civil Aviation Authority was in contact with Pakistani authorities regarding the issue. "Airlines must go through a rigorous procedure to have restrictions lifted," the spokesperson added.

The UK Air Safety List is the published list of countries and airlines that are subject to an operating ban on safety grounds and so cannot fly planes to, from or within the UK. All air carriers certified by the authorities with responsibility for regulatory oversight of Pakistan are banned from operating commercial air services to, from, and within the United Kingdom, stated an official UK government website.

Meanwhile, Pakistan government sources told media that the UK air safety authority has postponed its decision regarding the lifting of restrictions on Pakistan's national carrier. The authority was expected to announce its verdict on March 20 following an audit but later rescheduled

## Federal govt decides to privatize PIA

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to privatize Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), approving the sale of 51 percent to 100 percent of its shares. The decision was made during a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Privatization, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar in Islamabad, here on Tuesday.

According to Ishaq Dar, the privatization of PIA will reduce the financial burden on the national treasury. He emphasized that the government aims to unlock the full potential of the airline. Following privatization, administrative control of PIA will also be transferred. The deputy prime minister stated that the decision has been taken in the national interest to ensure the airline's long-term sustainability.

it to March 25. However, the decision has now been further delayed.

The government insiders added that the postponement was linked to an incident involving a PIA aircraft, where a tire detached mid-flight. The World Air Safety authorities and Airbus were investigating the matter. The decision would remain on hold until the probe is completed, they added.

Last week, it was reported that the ban on the national carrier on flying to Britain is likely to be lifted soon as the British Air Safety Committee concluded an important meeting on the matter. The ban was enforced in July 2020 by the UK and European avia-

tion authorities following the fake pilot licence scandal. However, Pakistani authorities remained hopeful that the restrictions would be lifted following tomorrow's review.

Eying UK operations, PIA spokesperson Abdullah Hafeez Khan said that once cleared by the DfT, London, Manchester, and Birmingham would be the most sought-after destinations. PIA has 23% of Pakistan's domestic aviation market, but its 34-plane fleet cannot compete with Middle Eastern carriers, which have 60%, due to a lack of direct flights, despite having agreements with 87 countries and key landing slots. — Agencies

## PTI workers punished for love with Imran: Saif

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, has strongly condemned the crackdown on PTI workers in Punjab for celebrating Pakistan Day.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, he said that the fake CM Punjab is issuing orders from Saudi Arabia to arrest PTI workers. He claimed that last night, even workers were taken from mosques and thrown into jails. He criticized Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, stating that she continues her fascist tactics even during Ramazan.

Barrister Dr. Saif stated that innocent PTI workers are being punished simply for their love for Pakistan and Imran Khan. He added that the massive PTI rallies on Pakistan Day have instilled fear in the so-called government. According to him, the overwhelming public turnout on Pakistan Day has confirmed the illegitimacy of the current administration.

He further said that the people have renewed their pledge for true freedom and have given a clear referendum against the fake government. From Khyber to Karachi, massive crowds have reminded the Form 47 mafia of their true status. He concluded that if the illegitimate government has even an ounce of shame left, it should immediately resign.

## CJP stresses judicial reforms

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: In an effort to improve service delivery and expand access to justice, the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), Justice Yahya Afridi conducted an interactive session with the heads of various sections of the Supreme Court here on Tuesday.

The session was attended by the Registrar Supreme Court Muhammad Salim Khan, prominent development expert Sher Shah, Director General Federal Judicial Academy Hayat Ali Shah and Secretary, Law and Justice Commission (LJCP) Syeda Tanzeela Sabahat.

During the session, the Chief Justice reviewed the ongoing reforms, emphasizing the digitalization of court processes, enhanced accessibility, streamlined procedures, accountability, and increased transparency in the judicial operations.

He noted that the reforms aim not only to reduce case pendency but also to ensure that litigants receive timely and effective justice. He stressed that litigants, as the core stakeholders of the justice system, deserve the utmost respect, reinforcing the institution's commitment to justice and its positive public image.

According to a Supreme Court's statement, the session highlighted significant milestones achieved to date, including the successful implementation of the E-Filing system. In addition, the IT Directorate presented progress updates on the integration of digital technologies and the establishment of mechanisms designed to further enhance the accessibility and transparency of the judicial process.

## Govt withdraws notification

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Only a day after Abdul Khaliq Sheikh was appointed as the FIA DG in place of Jan Muhammad, who was removed from the post, the Interior Ministry on Tuesday withdrew the notification for Sheikh's appointment.

The ministry issued the office order for the purpose. Sheikh will now serve only as DG National Police Bureau.



ISLAMABAD: Wafaqi Mohtasib Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi presenting his institution's annual report for the year 2024 to President, Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr. According to the report, the Federal Ombudsman received record 226,000 complaints in 2024 which is 17 percent more than the year 2023.

## Redressal of financial crises KP govt to develop plan for universities

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has decided to develop a 10-year strategy (2025-35) aimed at transforming the province's public sector universities. As the newly appointed Chancellor of Public Universities, the chief minister is spearheading an initiative to modernize higher education institutions academically, administratively, and in research.

This comprehensive strategy will also provide a roadmap for universities to overcome financial crises and move towards self-sufficiency. The Chief Minister Secretariat has issued a letter to Higher Education Department to draft a detailed policy document within 21 days, which will then be presented to the provincial cabinet for approval. The document is

## KP CM finalizes Provincial Action Plan

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: A high level meeting held here on Tuesday with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur in the chair, has finalized Provincial Action Plan to eliminate terrorism and improve law and order in the province. Senior officials, including, Advisor to CM on Information Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif, Chief Secretary, Inspector General of Police, Additional Chief Secretaries, Divisional Commissioners, and Regional Police Officers, attended the session.

The action plan is structured around seven key pillars including counterterrorism measures, political and social initiatives, legal reforms, good governance, general administrative measures, monitoring, and public awareness campaigns. It outlines 84 specific actions across 18 thematic areas, assigning responsibilities to relevant provincial departments and federal agencies with defined timelines.

expected to include clear, actionable objectives, defined timelines, and an effective monitoring mechanism.

The directive emphasizes the need for legal, administrative, and finan-

## President hosts Iftar for orphaned children

**F.P. Report**

use for educational purposes. "I urge all children to use these tablets, being gifted on First Lady Aseefa Bhutto Zardari's suggestion, for learning and personal growth," he added. The President said the children were as dear to him as his own and encouraged them to pursue education with dedication.

The President expressed these views during an Iftar Dinner hosted by him for the orphaned children being cared for by the Pakistan Orphan Care Forum, at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Tuesday. During the ceremony, the President also distributed computer tablets to the children, emphasizing their

## Russia, Ukraine agree to halt Black Sea strikes: US

WASHINGTON (Reuters): The United States said on Tuesday it has reached separate agreements with Ukraine and Russia to ensure safe navigation in the Black Sea and to implement a ban on attacks by the two countries on each other's energy facilities. The agreements, if implemented, would represent the clearest progress yet towards a wider ceasefire that Washington sees as a stepping stone towards peace talks to bring an end to Russia's three-year-old war in Ukraine. Russia, however, said it could not trust Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and it could therefore only sign a Black Sea deal if Washington issued an "order" to him to respect it.

"We will need clear guarantees. And given the sad experience of agreements with just Kyiv, the guarantees can only be the result of an order from Washington to Zelensky and his team to do one thing and not the other," Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in televised comments. It was not immediately clear whether Moscow's demand risked derailing the deal. Zelensky has previously said Russian President Vladimir Putin, who sent his army into Ukraine in February 2022, is not to be trusted over peace moves. Zelensky said a truce covering the Black Sea and energy infrastructure was effective immediately and that he would seek more weapons and sanctions on Russia from Donald Trump if Moscow broke the deals. "If the Russians violate this, then I have a direct question for President Trump. If they violate, here is the evidence

## KP Governor writes to PM

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: KP Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Tuesday officially written to Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, stressing the need for the reconstruction and renaming of the 'Shah Esa' mini-interchange on the Hakla to D I Khan CPEC Road. In his letter, Governor Kundi highlighted that renaming the interchange holds deep cultural and historical value for the residents of Dera Ismail Khan.



## Pakistan honors Air Marshal Raja Shahid Hamid with Nishan-e-Imtiaz

Sajjad Muhammad Khan

PESHAWAR:In a ceremony held recently, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan conferred the prestigious Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Order of Excellence) posthumously upon Air Marshal (Retd) Raja Shahid Hamid. This esteemed honor recognizes Air Marshal Hamid's invaluable contributions to the field of aerospace engineering and his selfless services to the nation. In 1992, Air Marshal Hamid envisioned the establishment of a scientific institution to achieve self-reliance at the national level. Through his unwavering determination, relentless efforts, and intellectual capabilities, he successfully brought this project to completion, overcoming numerous challenges and limited resources. Air Marshal Hamid's contributions to Pakistan's aerospace engineering sector have been immense. His leadership and vision played a crucial role in initiating a vital program for the country. Even after his retirement, he continued to serve the nation, engaging in research on alternative energy sources and providing social services. The Nishan-e-Imtiaz award, received by his widow Mrs. Noreen Shahid, is a testament to Air Marshal Hamid's dedication and commitment to Pakistan's progress. His legacy will continue to inspire future generations, and his contributions to the nation will always be remembered.

Air Marshal Hamid hailed from the notable Gakhar Kayani family of Shakarparian, Islamabad, known for its deep-rooted legacy of leadership and service. His forefather, Raja Gulab Khan, was a prominent chieftain of Shakarparian and a respected Gakhar elder. His father, Raja Hamid Mukhtar, served as a Deputy Commissioner and held several high-ranking positions in Pakistan's civil bureaucracy, continuing the family's longstanding tradition of public service. Born in 1949 in Jhelum, Pakistan, Air Marshal Raja Shahid Hamid joined the Pakistan Air Force in 1966. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Engineering (Avionics) from the College of Aeronautical Engineering and also completed a BSc in Strategic Studies. A significant part of his career was dedicated to research and development, where he made pioneering contributions to Pakistan's defense technology. He was the founder of the Advanced Engineering Research Organization (AERO), Pakistan's most respected R&D institutions. His technical foresight and innovative leadership played a vital role in elevating Pakistan's defense capabilities. He is remembered as one of the heroes who devoted their lives to the strength and sovereignty of Pakistan. After retiring from the Air Force in 2003 as an Air Marshal, he continued his mission of national development by establishing the Alternative Energy



Development Board (AEDB). Founded in May 2003 under the Federal Government, the AEDB aimed to promote renewable energy across the country. As its first Chairman, he spearheaded the creation of Pakistan's first-ever renewable energy policy, which was approved in 2006. This landmark policy attracted 98 international investors, each committing to develop a 50-megawatt wind farm in Pakistan. Air Marshal Raja Shahid Hamid also represented Pakistan on international platforms by presenting research papers on renewable energy in global forums across the United States, China, Germany, India, Turkey, and other countries. *Throughout his distinguished career, he held several prominent public service roles, including: Chairman of LTE (Optical Fiber Manufacturing Facilities) Chairman of ICS (Integrated Circuit Manufacturing Facility) Member, Board of Directors, Pakistan Steel Member, Board of Directors, Engineering Development Board Vice President, World Wind Energy AssociationIn addition to the Nishan-e-Imtiaz, Air Marshal Raja Shahid Hamid was the recipient of several other national honors, including: Sitara-e-Imtiaz Sitara-e-Basalat Tamgha-e-Imtiaz.* He also served as the Vice Chairman of Khyber TV Network, contributing to the media sector with his strategic vision and leadership. Air Marshal Raja Shahid Hamid was not only a visionary leader and a decorated officer but also a patriot who dedicated his life to the service of Pakistan. His legacy is a powerful symbol of integrity, innovation, and national commitment, and he continues to inspire future generations. The nation salutes Air Marshal Raja Shahid Hamid for his outstanding services, and we honor his memory by recognizing his achievements.

## CM launches 1,000 free tractors scheme for wheat farmers

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif formally launched 1,000 free tractors scheme for the wheat farmers under 'CM Punjab Wheat Incentive Program'. The CM held a digital balloting for the 'wheat cultivation prize scheme' by pressing a button of free tractors program for the farmers, here on Tuesday. The first tractor in the wheat cultivation drive was given to a female farmer from Bahawalnagar named Kausar Parveen. The CM personally called and congratulated the successful farmers on getting free tractors. She also personally called Muhammad

Iqbal belonging to Jhang and congratulated him on getting a free tractor under the digital balloting program on which the farmer expressed gratitude to CM Punjab for personally calling him. CM Maryam Nawaz called Salman Ahmed, a farmer belonging to Mandi Bahauddin, and told him about winning a free tractor in the wheat cultivation balloting program. She said, "The Punjab government has launched multiple projects for the uplift of farmers including Green Tractor, Kisan Card, and Super Seeder." She added, "By the grace of Allah Almighty, wheat cultivation will yield bumper crop, I

pray for the well-being and prosperity of my farmer brothers." The CM was informed in a briefing that 57,733 farmers with more than 12.5 acres of land applied for the free tractor scheme in the "Wheat Cultivation" drive. After undergoing scrutiny and verification process, 21,496 farmers were found eligible to apply for the balloting process. 55 horsepower tractors will be given free of cost to 1,000 successful farmers in the balloting process. All the farmers will be provided tractors within three months. It was further apprised in the briefing that wheat was cultivated on 560,000 acres of land in Punjab.

### Sindh govt employees to enjoy more Eid holidays

KARACHI (INP): Government employees in Sindh are set to enjoy extended Eidul Fitr 2025 holidays as the provincial government has announced April as a public holiday. According to a notification issued on Tuesday, the Sindh government has declared Eidul Fitr holidays from March 31 to April 2, in alignment with the federal government's decision. Additionally, April 4 will be observed as a public holiday to mark the death anniversary of former Prime Minister Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. With weekends falling on March 29-30 and April 5-6, government offices will remain closed for a total of eight days. Eidul Fitr 2025 is expected to be observed across Pakistan on Monday, March 31, 2025, following the completion of 29 days of Ramadan.

### Mayor inaugurates various development projects

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab, while inaugurating various development projects in Federal B Area here on Tuesday, stated that development work is being carried out across Karachi without discrimination, and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) is fulfilling its promises to the people. During the inauguration, Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad, Deputy Parliamentary Leader Dil Muhammad, PPP leader Sardar Muhammad, Chief Engineer Works Tariq Mughal, Superintendent Engineer Central Engineer Abro, and local PPP leaders were also present. The mayor pointed out that the internal streets of this area were previously in poor condition, but they have now been significantly improved.

A total of 125,000 feet of road has been carpeted, 188,000 paver blocks have been installed, and development work worth Rs. 100 million has been completed in Blocks 13 and 17 of Federal B Area. He highlighted that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) is responsible for 106 major roads, while working in streets and alleys is not KMC's primary responsibility. However, considering public hardships, efforts are being made to improve inner streets as well. He further stated that KMC provides Rs. 1.2 million per month to each Union Council Chairman, ensuring that all chairmen receive this amount without any discrimination. He assured that Bhutto Road will soon be completed, with the section

up to Quaidabad being finalized after Eid, and the entire road reaching Kathore by December 31. This project is being developed by PPP. Additionally, a new bridge is being constructed at Murghi Khana in Malir, and the reconstruction of Jam Sadiq Bridge will be completed by March 31. Work is also ongoing at Korangi Causeway, while the pace of work on Meena Bazaar Underpass has been accelerated. Similarly, development projects are underway at Manzoor Chowrangi and Baloch Colony Expressway. Mayor Murtaza Wahab concluded by stating that the people of Karachi have placed their trust in PPP, and the party will honor that trust. "In two years, you will see a transformed and developed Karachi," he promised.

## CM Murad meets Türkiye's CG to discuss bilateral relations

KARACHI (PPI): The Chief Minister of Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah, met with Türkiye's Consul General, Mr. Cemal Sangu, accompanied by TIKA's Program Coordinator, Halil Ibrahim Basaran. During the meeting, discussions were held on bilateral relations and matters of mutual interest. The Chief Minister stated that Sindh and Türkiye's organization TIKA are working together in the fields of education, agriculture, and culture. Consul General Cemal

Sangu mentioned that various Turkish projects are ongoing in these sectors. Murad Ali Shah revealed that an agricultural research center is being established at Tando Jam Agriculture University, and a research center is being set up at Sindh Madressatul Islam University. A two-story building is also being constructed for the Hasan Ali Affandi Research Center at Sindh Madressatul Islam University. Consul General Cemal Sangu

stated that Türkiye is also working on the Makli Tombs in Thatta. Türkiye is providing medical facilities, including hearing aids, in various hospitals. The Sindh government and Türkiye have agreed to further collaborate in the field of education. TIKA's head, Halil Ibrahim, has completed his tenure and provided a briefing on the projects undertaken in Sindh during his term. Syed Murad Ali Shah appreciated Halil Ibrahim's services.

## Haleem decry deadly traffic accident that took lives of three

KARACHI (PPI): Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Sindh Haleem Adil Sheikh today decryed the deteriorating traffic conditions in Karachi and said that the traffic system has collapsed. Reckless tankers and heavy vehicles continue to kill innocent citizens, while the Sindh government and traffic police remain silent spectators," he said in a statement.

He informed a devastating accident at Malir Halt claimed the lives of a motorcyclist, his wife, and their infant child after a speeding tanker struck them. Funeral prayers were held in Shah Faisal Colony, attended by a large gathering of local residents and political figures, including PTI Sindh President Haleem Adil Sheikh, PTI Karachi President Raja Azhar, General Secretary Aarsalan

Khalid, MPA Chaudhry Owais, and several other party leaders. Speaking to the media, Haleem Adil Sheikh condemned the deteriorating traffic conditions in Karachi. "The traffic system has collapsed. Reckless tankers and heavy vehicles continue to kill innocent citizens, while the Sindh government and traffic police remain silent spectators," he said.

## Edhi Foundation funds \$4 Million for breast radiation bay at JPMC

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Edhi Foundation, the country's one of the largest relief agencies, is funding equipment worth 4 million dollars for "Bilquis & Abdul Sattar Edhi - Breast Radiation Bay" at Radiation Oncology, Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Center (JPMC) Karachi. The Radiation Bay, which is set to begin its services in April next year, will be jointly operated under by Patients Aid Foundation (PAF-JPMC) and the Sindh government, said Dr. Tariq Mahmood, Professor Emeritus, Radiation Oncology, Patients' Aid Foundation, in a statement on Tuesday. Every day, 160 breast cancer patients will get free of charge treatment on state of the art Helix Tomotherapy units. These units will also have a new technology of fan beam CT scanners for an accurate localization of lesion and deliver radiation in a helical mode from 360 degree and also have the SGRT/DIBH facility with zero risk of unnecessary radiation to heart. The Sindh government



has also pledged to provide funds needed for repair and maintenance of the equipment after expiry of its annual warranty, in order to ensure smooth and efficient operations, the statement added. Breast cancer is a leading cause of death in females. Around 30,000 new breast cancer cases are diagnosed every year in Pakistan. Almost all cases of malignant breast cancer, the statement further said, require surgery, chemo, and radiation. Surgery and chemo facilities are widely available in the public and private sectors, but slots for radiation therapy

are not available for timely management of cancer due to the lack of availability of linear accelerators in the country. Most of the Centers in Pakistan, which are offering breast radiotherapy are treating breast cancers with 2D/3D CRT, whereas the updated worldwide standard of care demands IMRT/VMAT radiotherapy and that is available at very few Centers but the cost of treatment is beyond the reach of a common man, it added. To deliver radiation at an accurate site, a new technology has been introduced in the world, Surface

Guided Radiotherapy (SGRT) and Deep Inhalation Breath Hold (DIBH) to avoid unnecessary radiation exposure to healthy critical structures. To date, this SGRT/DIBH is not available in Pakistan. SGRT&DIBH saves women's hearts from unnecessary exposure, and it is of extreme importance, especially in younger aged breast cancer patients. PAF-JPMC is working in public private partnership with GOS, so far enhanced JPMC bed capacity from 1,100 to 2,208 beds by constructing new buildings for various wards as outfitting them with the latest equipment and machine and ensuring continuous maintenance of the same. Further 600 bedded new projects are under completion. Radiation Oncology at JPMC is the only Centre on the planet that offers absolutely free of charge cancer treatment with cutting-edge technologies like Cyberknife & Tomotherapy irrespective of nationality, religion and ethnicity. So far, patients from 167 cities of Pakistan and 15 countries have availed this free facility.

PAKISTAN AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (PAA)

پاکستان ایئر پورٹس اتھارٹی

CORRIGENDUM (EXTENSION OF DATE & TIME)

INVITATION TO BID

It is notified for the information of all concerned that the bid submission date and time alongwith following details for the subject case have been extended as mentioned below:-

Description & Bid No.	Bid Submission Date/Time	Bid Opening Date/Time/Place
PROCUREMENT OF HIGH POWER HF TRANSCEIVERS SYSTEM FOR JIAP KARACHI & AIAP LAHORE (WITH TESTING, INSTALLATION & COMMISSIONING) HQPAA/1992/201/XXLN	07-04-2025 1100 Hours	07-4-2025 1130 Hours Log. Center (S) (Log. ANS Branch)

All other clauses would remain the same. This corrigendum is also available on PPRA website and [www.ppra.org.pk](http://www.ppra.org.pk) and PAA website [www.paa.gov.pk](http://www.paa.gov.pk).

ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR LOGISTICS (ANS)  
HQs Pakistan Airports Authority  
Phone: 021-99072265 Fax: 021-99242675

PID-K-2961/24

[www.paa.gov.pk](http://www.paa.gov.pk)

HBL

Public Notice

This is to inform the public and our valued customers that effective 26<sup>th</sup> April 2025, operations and business activities of the branches that are mentioned below will be transferred to their respective acquiring branches:

S.#	CLOSING BRANCH DETAILS	ACQUIRING BRANCH DETAILS
1	SARSAWA BRANCH Branch Code: 2461 Address: Khasra No. 527, Main Sehnsa-Baluch Road, Sarsawa, Tehsil & District Kotli, AJK.	PANJERA BRANCH Branch Code: 1737 Address: 2646 Tehsil Sehnsa District Kotli. Contact Number: 05826-430984
2	ANGHAPUR BRANCH Branch Code: 0358 Address: Khasra No. 772, Khewat No. 26, Khatooni No. 70, Village Anghapur, Tehsil Daggar, District Buner.	SOWARI BRANCH Branch Code: 0932 Address: Khasra No. 3251, Main Bazar Sowari, District Buner. Contact Number: 0939-555050
3	TOGH SERAI BRANCH Branch Code: 0347 Address: Togh Serai Tehsil & District Hangu.	MAIN BAZAR BRANCH Branch Code: 0234 Address: Altaf Khan Market, Near GPO, Main Bazar, Hangu. Contact Number: 0925-621524
4	KING GATE BRANCH Branch Code: 1330 Address: O/S King Gate KCB-III 29-32, District Kohat.	PAF BASE BRANCH Branch Code: 1782 Address: PAF Base Cantt. Kohat. Contact Number: 0922-866415
5	MIRANSHAH BRANCH Branch Code: 1746 Address: Datakhel Road, Tribale Area, North Waziristan Agency.	PREEDY GATE BRANCH Branch Code: 0216 Address: Plot No. 15/18, Panel Welfare Shopping Plaza, Regal Cinema Road, Outside Preedy Gate, Near Municipal Corporation, Bannu. Contact Number: 0928-623112
6	MIR ALI BRANCH Branch Code: 1806 Address: Mir Ali, North Waziristan Agency, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.	PREEDY GATE BRANCH Branch Code: 0216 Address: Plot No. 15/18, Panel Welfare Shopping Plaza, Regal Cinema Road, Outside Preedy Gate, Near Municipal Corporation, Bannu. Contact Number: 0928-623112
7	WANA BRANCH Branch Code: 2559 Address: Dubai Plaza, Adda Bazar, Wana Tehsil Wana & District South Waziristan.	EIDGAH KALAN BRANCH Branch Code: 0231 Address: 3301/B, Eidgah Kalan, North Circular Road, D.I. Khan. Contact Number: 0966-718409
8	BANK SQUARE BRANCH Branch Code: 0417 Address: Bank Square, Chowk Yadgar 3-4, Peshawar.	CITY BRANCH Branch Code: 0223 Address: 153-Chowk Abrasham Garan Peshawar. Contact Number: 091-2210579



# Cabinet committee discuss DHQ Wana Public-Private Partnership Hospital



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A meeting of the Cabinet Supervisory Committee regarding the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Hospital at DHQ Wana was held under the chairmanship of Health Advisor Ihtisham Ali. The meeting issued immediate directives for the release of funds to the hospital, emphasizing that issues from the caretaker government period still remain unresolved. It was noted that other PPP hospitals

have already received their funds, with instructions to ensure no such delays occur in the future. The meeting was attended by Minister for Agriculture Major (R) Sajjad Barakwal, Minister for Excise, Taxation & Narcotics Control Mian Khaliq-ur-Rehman, MPA Ajab Gul, Secretary Health Shahidullah Khan, Special Secretary Health Habibullah, DG Health Dr. Muhammad Saleem Khan, MD Health Foundation Dr. Adnan Taj, along with rep-

resentatives from Finance, Anti-Corruption Establishment, PPP Hospital Shah Miran, and other relevant officials. During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on the release of funds to the DHQ Wana hospital operating under the Public-Private Partnership model. It was also decided that the salaries of civil servants working in the hospital would be adjusted from the allocated funds. The meeting was informed that 121 civil ser-

vants had been transferred from DHQ Wana Hospital, and their salaries would no longer be deducted from the IP partner's funds. However, 81 civil servants currently serving at the hospital would continue to receive their salaries during the fund release process. The committee unanimously approved the immediate release of Rs. 153,946,234 for the period of July to December 2024 for DHQ Wana. The meeting stressed the timely release of funds to avoid further delays. In his remarks, Health Advisor Ihtisham Ali noted that other PPP hospitals had already received their funds to prevent future disbursement issues. He highlighted that during the caretaker government, delays in fund disbursement caused a financial crisis in these hospitals, which has now been largely resolved. He assured that going forward, funds for all hospitals would be released regularly as per routine.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah presenting shield to Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pakistan, Samuel Rizk.

## Govt to name Journalism Dept after Arshad Sharif

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has decided to name the journalism department of one of its universities after the martyred journalist Arshad Sharif, to honor his memory. In this regard, the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has officially directed the Higher Education Department to take necessary steps. Announcing these directives on Tuesday, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Minister for Higher Education, Archives, and Libraries, Meena Khan Afridi, stated that the government will ensure the implementation of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's instructions to commemorate Arshad Sharif. He confirmed that the journalism and mass communication department of a university will be named after the late journalist. The provincial minister further elaborated that the Chief Minister had issued these directives during a

## KhUJ says by renaming govt ignores sacrifices of KP journalists

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Union of Journalists (KUJ) has strongly condemned the provincial government's decision to rename the Journalism Department of Peshawar University after Arshad Sharif while ignoring journalists from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who were victims of terrorism. The union has demanded an immediate reversal of this decision. In a statement issued from the KUJ office, the union's President Kashifuddin Syed, General Secretary Irshad Ali, and other office-bearers termed the decision unfair and unacceptable. They stated that if the provincial minister has a deep admiration for Arshad Sharif, he should establish a new institution in his name, which journalists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would welcome and support for its success. The KUJ leadership made it clear that they would resist the provincial minister's announcement at every level and would not allow the renaming to proceed under any circumstances. The union officials highlighted that over 50 journalists from various parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had been martyred due to terrorism. They argued that if Minister Meena Khan Afridi genuinely respects the sacrifices and contributions of journalists, teachers, and educationists, the Journalism Department should be named after one of these local heroes instead. The KUJ further urged the provincial government to focus on the development of the province and improving the quality of life for the people instead of merely changing names of institutions. The union has demanded the immediate withdrawal of the decision and warned that if the government fails to do so, they will launch a vigorous protest movement against it. television show, and in accordance with these instructions, the Journalism and Mass Communication Department at the University of Peshawar will be renamed in Arshad Sharif's honor. Sharing further details, Afridi emphasized that work on this initiative has begun on an emergency basis, following the Chief Minister's instructions, as Pakistan

## Mardan to have art museum and cultural complex: Toru

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Food Zahir Shah Toru, has directed the concerned authorities to accelerate efforts for the construction of the state-of-the-art Science Museum and Cultural Complex in Mardan. He emphasized that no negligence would be tolerated in this regard. The minister stated that these landmark projects would not only promote educational and cultural activities in Mardan but also contribute to revenue generation. These directives were

issued during a high-level review meeting chaired by the minister in Peshawar. The meeting was attended by Director General of Science and Information Technology, Sajid Hussain, senior officials from the Culture Authority, and other relevant officers. During the session, the minister was briefed on the progress of both projects. DG Science and Information Technology Sajid Hussain, informed the meeting that the Science Museum is the first of its kind in the country. He highlighted that the project's feasibility

study, land acquisition, and designing were completed during the tenure of the previous Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. However, the practical execution of the project has yet to commence. The meeting discussed the roadmap for resuming work on the project. Minister Zahir Shah Toru was also briefed on the Cultural Complex project, where officials reported that efforts were underway to finalize the land acquisition process. Toru directed the relevant authorities to expedite land acquisition to ensure

the early initiation of construction work. Speaking on the occasion, Minister said that the Science Museum would play a pivotal role in encouraging the younger generation towards scientific research and modern technology, while the Cultural Complex would serve as a hub for promoting local culture and heritage. He further stated that these projects have the potential to transform Mardan into a prominent educational, cultural, and tourist center. "No hurdle will be tolerated in the timely completion of these initiatives," he added.

## Progress on Peshawar Valley Housing Scheme reviewed

PESHAWAR (APP): Secretary Housing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mehmood Aslam Wazir here Tuesday visited site of Peshawar Valley Housing Scheme and reviewed progress on the project. He was accompanied by

Director General Housing Authority, Imran Wazir and concerned officials. He also met with locals and inquired about their issues and problems. Speaking on the occasion, he said that a site office would be estab-

lished at Peshawar Valley Project that would help addressing problems of people. He also issued directives to solve problems being confronted by area people. He said that developing

best residential schemes and providing people quality living lifestyle is among priority of government adding steps have been taken for availability of all the basic amenities of life in these residential schemes.

## Shahab reviews performance of UPPU and LUBCA

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary KP, Shahab Ali Shah, chaired a high-level meeting to review the performance of the Urban Policy and Planning Unit (UPPU) and the Land Use and Building Control Authority (LUBCA). The meeting focused on the province's master plan projects and the progress of land use planning initiatives. A comprehensive briefing was presented on the UPPU

and LUBCA, highlighting key developments. The meeting was attended by Secretary Local Government, Executive Director of UPPU, Director General of LUBCA, and other senior officials. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary stressed the need for formulating master plans and land use policies for key tourist destinations, including Nathiagali, Kumrat, and Takht Bhai. Officials provided updates on the status of master plans for urban centers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,

revealing that 16 master plans have been completed, four are in progress, and 12 are in the pipeline. Furthermore, land use plans for six major districts—Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi, Abbottabad, and Charsadda—have been approved. The meeting was also informed that master plans for 16 cities, including Mardan, Nowshera, Charsadda, Khar, Ghalanai, Kalaya, Parachinar, Wana, Miranshah, Mirali, Peshawar, Abbottabad, Chitral,

Mingora Saidu Sharif, Jamrud, and Landi Kotal, have been finalized. Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah emphasized the importance of strengthening the Land Use and Building Control Authority and ensuring the strict implementation of approved master plans. He highlighted that these plans have been developed in consultation with urban development experts, incorporating modern planning principles and the future needs of growing cities.

## Annual ceremony held at St. Mary's High School KP govt to invest in human development, says Minister



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister Syed Qasim Ali Shah stated the government's commitment to human development for global market competitiveness. He pledged to renovate and reconstruct St. Mary's High School after Eidul Fitr to benefit students. He stated that education is the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government's top priority, emphasizing human development as crucial in today's globalized information age. This he said while addressing to a ceremony at St. Mary's High School as it arranged an annual parent's day to award position holder students from Class-Prep to 8th class of



gets shield from honourable guests. Sardar Raza Ullah (class 8) received the top position shield and a certificate for regular student of the year, as was Sardar Zarak Ikram with a certificate for regular student of the year. Chief Minister Focal Person Wazirzada appreciated St. Mary's High School role in the field of quality education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He added that the institution is an emblem of Interfaith



harmony in the province which is providing equal opportunities to everyone irrespective creed and race. In conclusion, St. Mary's High School Principal Father Zeeshan thanked the chief guests and parents, congratulated the students, and reiterated the administration's commitment to student support and improved educational standards. The students actively participated

2024-25 session, on Tuesday. The event aimed to promote culture of competition and cooperation among students. Provincial Minister for Social Welfare & Women Development and Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa focal person Wazirzada were the chief guests of the annual day function. St. Mary's High School Principal, Father Zeeshan brief participants on school's performance and congratulates parents and students. He added that the school is committed to uphold its tradition of quality education. He claimed that the school's alumni working in every walk of life and a pride for the institution.



The chief guests awarded more than hundred students with shields. The position holders for class Prep to Class 8th including 1st, 2nd and 3rd in and enjoyed the ceremony. These events build confidence and foster a competitive spirit among students, encouraging them to excel.



PESHAWAR: Group photo of the Senior Journalists with Andleeb Aslam, Director of Communication and Sustainability, at the Ifar Dinner organized in honor of media representatives under Zong 4G.





## In brief

Drive against encroachments  
F.P. Report

D I KHAN: District administration Tank is taking effective steps to facilitate citizens in view of the upcoming Eid ul Fitr. As part of efforts, an operation has been launched to remove encroachments from markets across the district. District administration along with TMA officials have removed illegal encroachments at several places to ensure smooth flow of traffic besides and move consumers in markets conveniently to citizens. It says that no one would be allowed to take law into his own hands by erecting encroachments on footpaths and roads. The administration assured that no inconvenience would be caused to the public, and proper arrangements would be made to ease access to the markets.

Four killed in DG Khan mishap  
F.P. Report

D G KHAN: Four killed, one injured on Tuesday in a road accident near Ghazi Ghat Toll Plaza Multan road, DG Khan. According to a private news channel and police, a truck had lost control due to brake failure and crashed into a motorcycle carrying five people. According to Rescue officials, an emergency call was received after which the Rescue 1122 control room dispatched an ambulance from Ghazi Ghat and two additional ambulances from Chowk Chorhatta to the accident site. The rescue personnel found that two individuals died on the spot, while two others succumbed to their injuries while shifting to the hospital.

## Road accidents claim lives of six

KHAIRPUR (INP): Six persons have died in four road accidents reported from different parts of the country. A man and his nephew were killed when a truck ramed into the motorcycle they were travelling on at Khairpur Nathan Shah. Police said the bodies of the deceased, who were identified as Naeem Sheikh and Jani Sheikh, were shifted to the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital. Similarly in Arifwala, two youths were killed while one was seriously wounded in two different accidents. A youth died when his motorcycle crashed into a tractor trolley on City Road. In the second incident, a man died while another was seriously wounded in a collision between two speeding motorcycles on Burewala Road. Rescue 1122 shifted the dead as well as the injured to a local hospital. Likewise in Renala Khurd, a man and his wife, travelling on a motorbike, were killed when they were overrun by a speeding bus, belonging to a private company, on the National Highway. However, the bus driver managed to escape following the incident. The dead were identified as 45-year-old Hidayatullah and his wife, residents of Shaukatabad.

Drug dealers convicted  
F.P. Report

MULTAN: Two drug dealers were convicted and awarded longer jail terms here Tuesday with heavy fines on charge of recovery of nearly 23 kilogram of illegal substances in 2023. An Additional District and Sessions Judge (AD&SJ) awarded life imprisonment to an accused, Muhammad Akram, and imposed Rs 800,000 fine on him. PS Qutub Pur police sub inspector Muhammad Umar Farooq Javed had arrested him and recovered 13.8 kg of Hashish, two (2) kilogram ICE, and 500 grams of opium from his possession in 2023.

## Three target killings in Hangu within two weeks

Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR: In the past two weeks, three separate incidents of target killings have occurred in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Hangu district, resulting in the deaths of a police sepoy and two civilians.

On Tuesday, unidentified armed men opened fire on a police sepoy in Hangu, killing him on the spot. The slain sepoy was on duty at the Bilyamina police station. Police have launched an investigation, but the attackers managed to escape.

Similarly, in the Doaba area of Hangu, unidentified individuals shot and killed a civilian named Noor Hassan. A banned organization has claimed responsibility for the attack. The victim's family has demanded justice and the immediate arrest of those responsible.

Two weeks ago, in another incident on Warasta Road, unknown gunmen targeted a businessman, Fazal Badshah, as he was heading to the market from his home. No progress has been made in the investigation,

and the perpetrators remain at large.

These incidents have created fear and uncertainty among the residents of Hangu. Law enforcement agencies have intensified their efforts to apprehend the culprits. Meanwhile, local communities are urging the government to take immediate steps to restore peace and security in the region. The funeral prayer of the martyred sepoy was offered, attended by the RPO kohat Deputy Commissioner of Hangu and the DPO.

## Eid gifts distributed among special children

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Eid gifts are being distributed for first time in the history of the province to include children with disability in the joys of Eid among special children studying in special education schools by the Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif across the province including district Hafizabad whereas Eid gifts are distributed among students in the district.

DC gave away Eid gifts to students in government special education school Hafizabad by the Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, on Saturday. Principal government special education school Madam Raheela was also present on this occasion. He said that on the whole more than 530 Eid gifts were distributed among students studying in special education schools Hafizabad, Pindi Bhattian and slow learners school Hafizabad.

DC said that special children were deserved our special attention because they were studying despite of their disability while a large number of educated persons with disability

were serving in different sectors and bring credit name of the country across the world. DC also planted sapling in the lawn of the school in connection with tree plantation campaign.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner has said that office of the Excise and Taxation will be shifted in district complex and a plat has been allotted already for convenience of people. He directed the offices of Excise and Taxation department to finalised all necessary arrangements for constructing new office in the district complex at the earliest so that people could get rid of difficulties to confront for reaching rented office.

He was presiding over a meeting held to review progress of Excise and Taxation department. ADCG Hamad Ullah, Excise and Taxation Officer Abdul Hayy, DVA Ashraf Awan, and Incharge Motor Branch Imran Khan also attended the meeting.

**Youth to play crucial role in democratic institution:** District Election Commissioner Hafizabad Khalid Rasheed said that the role of youth is vital for strengthening democratic process in the country and

right use of their votes through fair, free and impartial elections can be played pivotal role for progress and prosperity of the country.

He expressed these views while addressing youth seminar held to registration of vote. Election Officer Arifa Asghar and others also addressed the seminar. Officers of different departments, representatives of social organisations and a large number of youth voters attended the seminar.

Addressing the seminar, speakers said that large numbers of youth were eligible for vote but due to lake of interest in registration of vote by the youth, turnout in some constituencies remained less than other constituencies.

They urged the youth to understand importance of their vote use their vote in elections so that such government could be made which come up on the aspiration of the youth. They said that election commission of Pakistan was holding seminars, walks and other programmes to create awareness among women and youth about importance of their votes in formation of government.

## ISD elects Pastor Khurram as CEO

F.P. Report

KHYBER: Pastor Khurram was officially elected as the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Initiative for Sustainable Development (ISD) organization in Landi Kotal last day. In a press release issued here stated that the election took place on March 19, 2025, in Landi Kotal with full support from ISD members, who unanimously voted to entrust Pastor Khuram with this leadership role.

The election ceremony was attended by distinguished guests, including Tehsil Chairman Shah Khalid, and other local government officials, signifying strong collaboration between ISD and public institutions.

In his message the Pastor Khuram thanked the voters



to elect him as Chairman/CEO of ISD and said that the responsibility is a calling to serve. Collectively and with support of local and international partners, we aim to create a lasting impact in Pakistan, he added.

It is to be stated here that ISD's focuses on: Healthcare Access: Establishing medical centers to provide quality healthcare services, particularly in underserved areas

of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). Education & Youth Empowerment: Developing educational programs to equip the next generation with knowledge and skills.

Economic Uplift: Implementing sustainable development projects to improve livelihoods through vocational training and microfinance support. Relief & Humanitarian Aid: Providing aid to communities affected by natural disasters and crises.

## Residents hold protest against missing of boy

Allah Dad Chandio

LARKANA: The relatives of 5-year-old boy Allahdino Bhuati, resident of Noor Colony, Larkana city, who went missing two weeks ago, his relatives took a holy book and protested in front of the press club on Tuesday.

The minor came to Lahori Mohalla of the city along with his grandmother from where he went missing who could not be found

till now when the boy's disappearance was reported at the civil line police station where they have filed a report but still no trace of the innocent boy has been found.

**Six alleged culprits arrested:** Police conducted a search and raid operation against the Bhangwar gang in the limits of the police station Bakhsapur of Kashmore - Kandhkot districts in order to bring the criminal professionals into

the grip of the law.

During the exchange, the hideouts of the robbers were burnt to ashes while the police detained 6 suspects on the spot. It should be noted that all SHOs, CIA, auxiliary fighters and rapid response teams of the Larkana range are also participating in the search and raid operation, while the arrested 06 suspects were transferred to different police stations of the range for further investigation.

## Jirga key for sustainable peace

F.P. Report

KARAK: Commissioner Kohat said that the continuation of joint Jirgas of the administration, law enforcement agencies, elected representatives, political and local elders and religious and social leaders in all the districts of Kohat division have greatly strengthened the efforts to establish mutual unity, consensus and peace and order, on Tuesday.

These Jirga will definitely have a very positive impact on the entire region, he added. Talking to the media after the successful holding of the Grand Jirga in Karak district, he said that such strong national unity and continuous coordinated efforts are the guarantee of lasting peace and national security.

Commissioner Kohat Syed Mustasm Billah further said that these

Jirgas will prove to be a ray of hope and an exemplary step towards peace and stability not only for the specific district but also for the entire region. He maintained, if we work collectively, then the solution to any challenge is assured in a very amicable manner. He prayed for the protection, security and survival of Pakistan, and for the spirit of serving the nation with devotion and dedication.



ABBOTTABAD: Participants of training session in a group photo at civil courts.

Curfew imposes in Waziristan  
F.P. Report

WANA: A curfew has been imposed in multiple areas of South Waziristan from 6 AM to 6 PM due to security concerns. Authorities have urged residents to remain indoors and avoid unnecessary movement during this period to ensure public safety, on Tuesday.

According to sources, a curfew has been enforced along the main highway from Azizabad Chowk to Kavar Fort in Tank. Security forces will be deployed throughout the area to maintain order, and violations of the curfew may result in legal consequences. The route from Asman Manza to Ladha Makin will be completely closed to all types of traffic.

Commuters and transporters are advised to use alternative routes, as security operations are expected to take place in the region. The curfew restrictions will also impact several key connecting roads, including those from Makin to Bibi Raghza, Sararogha, Kotkai, and Jandola. Residents are urged to cooperate with security personnel and refrain from travel unless absolutely necessary. Additionally, the road from Barward to Mola Khan Sarai will remain closed from 6 AM to 6 PM. Authorities have advised the public to stay informed through official channels and strictly adhere to all security guidelines during the curfew hours.

Taliban and BLA  
Aimal Khan

OVER the last two decades Pakistan has seen an escalation in terror attacks in KPK and Baluchistan. These two provinces bordering Afghanistan are suffering from the menace of terrorism.

The problem with this chaotic scenario is that Pakistan is failing to address the grievances of the involved players. BLA designated as terror outfit by Pakistan is working for the so called Baluch liberation and rights.

Recently on 11 March they hijacked Jaffar express en route to Peshawar from Quetta. The armed forces tackled the attack but seven civilian lives were lost. Pakistan has strong evidence of BLA being supported by Afghanistan and expressed its concerns to Afghan administration but Afghanistan current set up is peeved at Pakistani air strikes inside Khost Province which they consider to be a grievous violation of Afghanistan sovereignty by Pakistan.

Unless and Until governments of both Pakistan and Afghanistan are not negotiating the specter of Terrorism then there are slim chances of controlling these terrorist outfits working across the border and destabilising law and order situation in the region. And for Pakistan it is high time to reflect upon their foreign policies and confrontational actions against terror outfits because we are just behind Burkina Faso in terror index.

**Aimal Khan a student of 1st year from Nowshera district.**

## Medicines provided to Dir hospitals: DHO

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: District Health Officer (DHO) Dr. Muhammad Nisar Khan Tarkalani has launched urgent reforms to improve healthcare facilities in Lower Dir. Briefing local journalists at his office here on Monday, he highlighted that 33 Basic Health Units (BHUs), 4 Rural Health Centers (RHCs), 23 Civil Dispensaries, and 9 Mother and Child Healthcare (MCH) centers were being provided with medicines worth Rs. 800 million, half of which had been already delivered.

The DHO said that medical centers have been set up at District Courts Timergara, Adenzai, and District Jail Timergara. He

said that so far up to 30 ghost employees of the health department had been forced to perform their duties. To ensure transparency, hospital revenue will now be deposited directly into respective hospital accounts instead of DHO office, with 90% to be reinvested in patient care.

Dr. Nisar assured that emergency and routine medicines are available in all hospitals. Routine medical tests will be conducted in-house, with medicines provided from hospital stores. Several hospitals' laboratories have been digitized, while RHC Khall now has an ultrasound machine. Advanced laboratory equipment has also been installed, reducing the need for external diagnoses.

The DHO said that special biochemistry analyzers have been introduced in Lal Qila and Samarbagh hospitals, while RHC Gulabad's laboratory has been made fully operational. An X-ray machine there will soon be functional. "Over Rs. 200 million is being invested in hospital renovations and solarization to address electricity issues and improve efficiency," he added.

To enhance public access, a WhatsApp complaint desk has been launched for immediate action. Dr. Nisar concluded that these initiatives have led to a 300% increase in hospital revenue, ensuring better healthcare services for the people of Lower Dir.

## Admn acts against embezzlement in package

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Deputy Commissioner Kohat and Hangu took immediate action on the complaints of deduction of money from the deserving people of the Ramadan package, they sent the district administration officers to the spot to verify the complaints, on which several shopkeepers were arrested as per the procedure and their shops were sealed, on Tuesday.

On this occasion, it was declared to the public that

the provincial government is giving Rs. 10,000/- each to the deserving people without any charges under the Ramadan package. Strict action will be taken against any shopkeeper who receives extra money.

The administration officers also visited other Jazz Cash centers located in different Bazaars of their respective districts and ensured uninterrupted distribution of money to the deserving people. They asked the people to immediately report the deduction of money from the Ramadan Package to the Deputy Commissioner's offices so that strict legal action can be taken against the violators.

It may be recalled that the beneficiaries of the said Package will get the full amount of Rs. 10,000/- as the shopkeeper has already been paid separately for each transaction, so the shopkeeper who deducts money from the beneficiaries will not be entitled to any concession.

## 6,000 cops deployed in Hazara during Eid

F.P. Report

ABBOTTABAD: The Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Police Hazara Division Nasir Mahmood Satti on Tuesday deployed over 6,000 police personnel to ensure security during the Eidul Fitr in the Division.

These police personnel include operational staff, traffic wardens, elite force, SSU, ladies police, special branch and CTD personnel. The DIG reviewed the security plan of all districts in detail. Announcing the security plan, the DIG Police Hazara Division directed all the District Police Officers (DPOs) to monitor and ensure the Eid security plan by themselves. He said it is the duty of police to ensure life safety and safe travel to all the people, particularly the visiting tourists.

The DIG also directed the DPOs to ensure safety and security of the Chinese working on the development projects and important places should be made more secure. He said Hazara Police is always ready to deal with any emergency situation. A traffic plan has also been prepared to make the traffic flow efficient.

The DIG further directed that the DPOs must monitor

the Eid security plan in their respective districts and patrolling in the cities' thickly populated bazaars must be increased with deployment of plain clothes police staff and extra ladies staff. He said CTD and Special Branch officers and personnel should keep a close watch on suspects and Schedule IV persons. He said traffic staff should adopt the best strategy to maintain traffic flow and should not harass or fine any driver unnecessarily.

However, vehicles coming from other districts should be checked thoroughly and the passengers aboard should be treated with good manners. The DIG directed that strict legal action should be taken against those engage in aerial firing, fireworks, drifting and one-wheeling on the occasion of 'Moon Night' and Eid and they should be arrested. He said police officers should go to the personnel on duty at police stations, checkpoints and other places on the occasion of Eid, to encourage them.

**KP govt launches financial assistance programs for widows & orphans:** The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has introduced two major welfare programs aimed at providing financial assistance to widowed women

and orphaned children.

Under the Roshan Mustaqbil Card initiative, orphaned children aged 5 to 16 years will receive PKR 10,000 per month in financial aid, benefiting approximately 9,000 children across the province.

Meanwhile, the Sahara Card program has been launched to support widowed women aged 45 years and above, providing them with a monthly stipend of PKR 10,000. This initiative is expected to assist 15,000 widowed women in need. Welcoming the initiative, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Divisional Labour Wing Zakir Rehman termed it a significant

He stated that such programs reflect the government's commitment to social justice and economic uplift of vulnerable communities. "Providing financial support to widows and orphaned children is a crucial responsibility, and this initiative will help improve their standard of living," the spokesperson added. These programs are part of the government's broader efforts to improve the welfare and living conditions of marginalized communities, reaffirming its dedication to social support and economic relief for those in need.

## Millions lost as fire guts oil mill, cotton warehouse

HAROONABAD (INP): A fire broke out in an oil mill and a cotton warehouse due to short-circuit in Haroonabad. According to rescue sources, fire brigades have been called from across the district which participated in rescue process.

Rescue sources said firefighters from across the district are busy extinguishing the fire. Losses worth mil-

lions of rupees are feared, rescue sources said. According to updated report, fire has been brought under control and cooling process is underway.

Meanwhile, a fire broke out in a house in Wazirabad area of ??Lucky Ghulam Shah in Shikarpur. According to residents of area, the fire broke out in the house of a labourer

Shahnawaz Memon. The fire broke out in the house due to an electrical short circuit, residents of the area said.

The dowry and other belongings in the house were burnt to ashes due to the fire. The residents of the house managed to escape from the house. Residents of the area are busy controlling the fire with their own help.





# Japan, China, and SK agree to promote peace, cooperation

TOKYO (AFP): Japan, South Korea and China agreed that peace on the Korean peninsula was a shared responsibility, Seoul's foreign minister said, in a meeting of the three countries' top diplomats in which they pledged to promote cooperation.

The talks in Tokyo followed a rare summit in May in Seoul where the three neighbours -- riven by historical and territorial disputes -- agreed to deepen trade ties and restated their goal of a denuclearised Korean peninsula. But they come as US tariffs loom over the region, and as concerns mount over North Korea's weapons tests and its deployment of troops to support Russia's war against Ukraine.

"We reaffirmed that maintaining peace and stability on the Korean peninsula is a shared interest and responsibility of the three countries," South Korea's Cho Tae-yul told reporters after the trilateral meeting. Seoul and Tokyo typically take a stronger line against North Korea than China, which remains one of Pyongyang's most important allies and economic benefactors.

Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya said he, Cho, and China's Wang Yi "had a frank exchange of views on

trilateral cooperation and regional international affairs... and confirmed that we will promote future-oriented cooperation".

"The international situation has become increasingly severe, and it is no exaggeration to say that we are at a turning point in history," Iwaya said at the start of meeting. This makes it "more important than ever to make efforts to overcome division and confrontation", he added. Wang noted this year marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, saying "only by sincerely reflecting on history can we better build the future".

At two-way talks between Iwaya and Wang, the Japanese minister said he had "frankly conveyed our country's thoughts and concerns" on disputed islands, detained Japanese nationals and the situation in Taiwan and the South China Sea, among other contentious issues. Ukraine was also on the agenda, with Iwaya warning "any attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force will not be tolerated anywhere in the world". Climate change and ageing populations were among the broad topics officials had said would be discussed, as well as working together on disaster relief

and science and technology. Iwaya said the trio had "agreed to accelerate coordination for the next summit" between the countries' leaders.

China and to a lesser extent South Korea and Japan have been hit by tariffs put in place by US President Donald Trump in recent weeks. Japan and China held their first so-called "high-level economic dialogue" in six years. "The global economy is facing serious changes. Unilateralism and protectionism are spreading", Wang told reporters, according to Japan's public broadcaster NHK. "China and Japan, as major economies, should pursue development and cooperation together with innovative thinking and bring stability to a world full of uncertainty," Wang said.

Patricia M. Kim, a foreign policy fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, said that while "trilateral dialogues have been ongoing for over a decade", this round "carries heightened significance" due to the new US position. Beijing "has been working actively to improve relations with other major and middle powers amid growing frictions with the United States", she said.

## Van accident kills 12 people, sparks forest fire

MEXICO CITY (Reuters): Twelve people died and another four were injured in northern Mexico after a van crashed into a ravine and caught fire, sparking a blaze in the surrounding forest, state authorities said. The accident occurred in the northern state of Nuevo Leon that borders the US., a short drive away from Monterrey, the state's capital.

David de la Pena, the mayor of the municipality of Santiago, said in a short video message the accident appeared to have been caused by a mechanical failure in the vehicle. The van, which fell nearly 120 meters (394 feet) into the ravine, was carrying 16 people, state authorities said. There was no immediate information on where the passengers were from and whether the number of people included the driver. While some people died at the scene, others were transported to the hospital where they later died.

Images shared by authorities showed smoke rising from a dry forest, where the fire had spread rapidly, and a helicopter working to extinguish the fire. State authorities estimated that about two hectares were scorched before the fire was controlled. The accident is the latest in a number of road accidents with high death tolls. Earlier this month, eleven people died in southern Mexico after a bus flipped over. Last month, 41 people died also in southern Mexico after a bus collided with a truck. Late last year, 19 people died in a bus crash in central Mexico.

## Australia to speed up \$1b in defence spending

AVAILON (Reuters): Australia will bring forward A\$1 billion in defence spending in federal budget to boost its military capability, including guided weapons manufacture, an AUKUS submarine base and a frigate program, Defence Minister Richard Marles said. Australia and other United States security allies are under pressure from United States President Donald Trump to increase defence spending.

Marles said the federal budget would contain an increase of A\$10.6 billion (US\$6.66 billion) for defence over the next four years, part of a previously announced A\$50 billion boost over a decade, which he said was the most significant increase in defence spending since the end of the Second World War. "Part of the A\$10.6 billion sees bringing forward an additional billion dollars and that is because of the need to accelerate Australia's capability and development," Marles said at the Avalon Air Show in Victoria.

"This will see us have ready HMAS Stirling, the Henderson Defence Precinct for the establishment of the Submarine Rotational Force West. This will see us move forward at a faster pace in establishing the Guided Weapons and Explosives Enterprise," he added. Up to four United States and one British-commanded nuclear-powered submarines will rotate through Australia's biggest naval base, HMAS Stirling in Western Australia, from 2027 under AUKUS.

The earlier spending will also accelerate the purchase of a frigate into the service fleet this decade, he said. Australia said it had received the first two of 42 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) launcher vehicles ordered from Lockheed Martin, while the manufacture of guided multiple launch rocket systems (GMLRS) would begin in Australia this year. Australia is focused on acquiring long-range strike capability and the HIMARS gives its defence force mobility to project into the region, Marles said.

The truck-mounted system was used in the war in Ukraine, and can be moved by ship or Australia's C-17 and C-130 aircraft, "so they are easily deployable across the region" for coastal operations, said Brigadier Nick Wilson. Australia will take delivery of the Precision Strike Missile, with a range of 500 kilometres, for use in HIMARS this year, said Defence Industry Minister Pat Conroy.



GAZA: Palestinians waiting in line for food from a charity kitchen in the Nuseirat refugee camp in Deir el-Balah.

# Fear, anger mount as ‘battle for soul of Romanian democracy’ looms

BUCHAREST (BBC): The Romanian village of Poeni has a couple of shops, a kebab grill and a pack of stray dogs. It also has a fair few voters who wanted a far-right candidate to become president. Poeni, just over an hour's drive from the capital, is not alone in that.

Last November, Calin Georgescu - who admires Vladimir Putin and is no fan of Nato - came from the extremist fringe to win the first round of Romania's presidential election with 23% of the vote. In Poeni he did even better, with 24%.

Then the constitutional court scrapped the entire election in an unprecedented move, citing intelligence that Georgescu's online campaign had been boosted by Russia. In Poeni, a young voter called those claims "lies", angry at the cancelled vote. "They should have let him run to see what happens," Maria argues. A new ballot will be held in May but Georgescu has been barred from participating.

In Bucharest, supporters who took to the streets yelled that the judges were destroying democracy. A handful clashed briefly with police, who used tear gas. Now nationalist politician George Simion has stepped into the race and is polling strongly instead.

Many Romanians fear their country's core European values, and its global alliances, are still in danger. "We are in the middle of a battle of ideas. We don't have options here," is how one democracy activist describes the mood. "The fight is now." In

Poeni village there's less talk of values and of Russian meddling, more about the money in their pockets. Or rather the lack of it.

By the side of the main road, where the traffic alternates between heavy trucks and horses and carts, men buy charred chunks of kebab and pensioners chat on dusty benches. A metal public phone box is bent out of shape, its sign dangling as it probably has for years. Incomes here are small, prices are climbing and life is tough as in much of Romania. "I want Georgescu to straighten everyone out. They tricked us. They promised us more pension money," a middle-aged woman speaks quietly at first, then becomes bolder. "The others have done nothing for us here!" In the village store, Ionela is just as disenchanted.

"Young people finish college here and can't get work, so they go abroad. That isn't normal. We need our young people to have places here to work," she complains from behind the shop counter. Millions of Romanians work elsewhere in the EU and send money home to their families. In Poeni you can see where some of that ends up, in all the half-done new homes. Ionela's whole family voted for Georgescu. He promised to cut taxes, she thinks, but she doesn't seem to have registered his far-right ideology. A man who's praised extremist figures from Romania's past, he's now under investigation for suspected links to a group with "fascist, racist or xenophobic characteristics". Emerging after questioning, the

politician was filmed giving a fascist-style salute. Other villagers in Poeni did see that and do know all about the murky characters Georgescu has been linked to. On hearing his name, one pensioner grabs her crutch and wields it like a machine gun, shouting that he is dangerous.

Another told me people were suspicious of someone who surged to prominence from nowhere and of his focus on sovereignty over economic sense. "He tells us we don't need Europe to help us with money. So how are we going to live? Let's face it: Europe feeds us!" she says. Romania's vote has become the topic of talk far beyond the streets of Poeni, or even Bucharest. When US Vice President JD Vance shocked Europe with a speech in Munich, claiming that the EU's greatest threat came from within and not from Russia, he cited Romania several times.

He declared that the country's election had been cancelled on "flimsy suspicions" under "enormous pressure" from the EU. Then Elon Musk slammed the court's move as "crazy" on X. Moscow would have enjoyed that. Russia's external intelligence agency came out in full agreement with the US that the "liberal mainstream" in Europe was suppressing dissent. This from an authoritarian regime. "It's the new world we are living in. It's Maga ideology. They try to find partners and their partners are far-right parties in all Europe," is how journalist Ion Ionita sees the US-Russia alignment.

# Trump looms over Canada’s election as campaign begins

OTTAWA (BBC): Canada's newly appointed Prime Minister Mark Carney has called a snap election, sending the country to the polls on 28 April. The election comes as Canada faces a trade war with the US and calls from President Donald Trump for it to become the 51st American state, issues which are expected to be top of mind for voters.

It also comes nine days after Carney, a Liberal, was sworn in as Canada's prime minister following Justin Trudeau's resignation. Carney must now face Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre, whose party had been leading in national polls since mid-2023, though recent polls suggest the race is now neck-and-neck. Speaking in Ottawa, Carney said he needed a clear, positive mandate to deal with Trump. "We are facing the most significant crisis of our lifetimes because of President Trump's unjustified trade actions and his threats to our sovereignty," he said.

The Liberals - once written off for this election - now have a chance of forming a government for the fourth consecutive time under Carney. Carney, 60, the former governor of the Bank of England and the Bank of Canada, has never served as an MP and is untested politically. Carney made the most of his short days in office, meeting with UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron and stopping in Canada's Arctic to announce a partnership with Australia to develop a new northern radar system. He also ended Trudeau's signature carbon tax climate policy, which had faced heavy criticism by the Conservatives.

Now he will face the general electorate, which is concerned about Canada's rapidly shifting relationship with the US, its historically close ally, as well as the country's high cost of living. In a campaign launch shortly before the election

call, Conservative leader Poilievre, 45, sought to link Carney to the Liberals under Trudeau, who left office as a deeply unpopular leader. He called Trudeau's time in office a "lost Liberal decade". He accused the party of weakening the country by blocking resource development, failing to fund the military, and mismanaging immigration and the economy, saying its "post-national globalist ideology" made Canada more vulnerable to Trump's trade war. President Trump's current and threatened tariffs on Canadian goods could usher in economic instability in the country and push Canada towards a recession. Trump placed 25% tariffs on Canadian goods on 2 March before partially pausing them for a month. On 12 March, a blanket 25% duty on all aluminium and steel imports went into effect, hitting Canadian exporters.

The Trump administration plans further global tariffs on 2 April, in the

campaign's second week. Canada has retaliated so far with tariffs on about C\$60bn (\$42bn; £32bn) worth of US goods. Carney called the trade war with the US one of the "most significant threats of our lifetimes". Referring to Trump, he said: "He wants to break us so America will own us. We will not let that happen." Carney has promised further retaliation, though he has conceded there is a limit to Canada's tariff response given the different size of the two economies. Poilievre said that Canada must respond firmly to threats from the White House.

"We have to convert our anger and our anxiety into action," he said. "We have to become strong, self-reliant and sovereign to stand up to the Americans." The campaign will last just five weeks - the shortest allowed. Besides the US-Canada relationship, much of the focus will be on the economy, including cost-of-living issues.

# Pro-Trump senator meets Chinese Premier

BEIJING (Reuters): US Republican Senator Steve Daines met Chinese Premier Li Qiang in Beijing with a group of executives from US companies, following an annual business summit in the capital attended by CEOs from big foreign firms.

Daines was accompanied by seven senior executives including Qualcomm CEO Cristiano Amon, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, Cargill CEO Brian Sikes and Boeing Global Senior Vice President Brendan Nelson in the talks at Beijing's Great Hall of the People, a foreign media pool report said. Daines' trip marks the first time an American politician has visited China since US President Donald Trump took office in January. Beijing is seeking high-level dialogue with the Trump administration, hoping to reach a deal to avert further pressure on tariffs from Washington.

Daines, a staunch supporter of Trump and member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was heavily involved in negotiations over US-China trade during Trump's first term as president, and has made multiple trips to China as a senator. He lived in

Guangzhou and Hong Kong in the 1990s while working as an executive for Procter & Gamble, which he referenced in his opening speech.

"Collectively, these seven companies have over 275 years of experience of doing business in China," Daines said as he introduced the CEOs, according to a pool transcript. Beijing has been trying to attract foreign investment to offset US tariff pressure and its slowing domestic economy.

The US executives were granted an audience with Li Qiang, who will not meet separately with other foreign CEOs at the China Development Forum for the second year in a row. The annual closed-door meeting with the premier was traditionally viewed as a summit highlight by foreign firms' CEOs, who have long complained of an unequal playing field, regulatory hurdles and restricted market access in China. Relations between China and the US have come under new strain after Trump slapped additional tariffs on Chinese goods, accusing Beijing of not doing enough to stem the flow of fentanyl into the United States.

In early April, Trump is expected to unleash a round

of tariffs on all countries that tax US imports, potentially including China. A US review of whether China has fulfilled promises made during the "phase one" trade deal from Trump's first administration is set to conclude on April 1. In his opening remarks, Daines pitched meeting as a chance for them to air their views on the business environment in China directly to Li. "There are no winners in a trade war," Li told Daines in their meeting, stressing the importance of economic and trade ties in overall US-China relations. "China ... will actively promote solutions to the legitimate demands of enterprises, treat domestic and foreign enterprises equally," Li said, according to a Xinhua report. Other Chinese officials at the meeting included Commerce Minister Wang Wentao, Executive Vice Foreign Minister Ma Xiaoxu, and the director of China's state planner, Zheng Shanjie.

Daines met Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng in Beijing, and discussed with him the need for China to stop the flow of fentanyl precursors, according to a post by Daines on the X social media platform.







# Damning Yemen group chat reflects an administration indifferent to the rule of law

**I**T'S one of the most shocking national security indiscretions in years.

The revelation that President Donald Trump's national security team discussed military strikes in Yemen on an unclassified group chat suggests a cavalier attitude toward America's secrets and the safety of US forces on a deadly mission.

The group message, revealed Monday in an article by Atlantic editor Jeffrey Goldberg – who was somehow added to the chat by accident – hints at a lax national security process and incompetence as the nation faces a world of threats.

The use of Signal, an encrypted app that is nonetheless carried on phones that are vulnerable to penetration by foreign intelligence services, also suggests contempt for strict laws on the handling of classified material that would land more junior officials in deep trouble.

"This was grossly negligent," Ryan Goodman, a former Defense Department special counsel, told CNN's Erin Burnett on Monday. "That is actually the terms of the criminal statute – 'having gross negligence in mishandling classified information' ... if it is disclosed to somebody who is unauthorized. And on their call was a journalist. That means there was in fact a disclosure."

The lack of public contrition, let alone resignations, from top officials, reflects a White House that operates in a culture of impunity and has stacked the Justice Department and FBI – which might normally be expected to launch immediate investigations – with ultra-loyalists to the president.

Amid calls from Democrats for probes and oversight, House Speaker Mike Johnson shrugged off the seriousness of the matter, underscoring how the GOP in Congress has abrogated its power in deference to its strongman president.

And Trump insisted that he didn't know anything about the chat – instead attacking the Atlantic, against which he holds a grudge for its reporting during his first term.

The president also amplified a mocking social media post about the debacle by his Department of Government Efficiency chief Elon Musk. And Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth – who the Atlantic said posted sensitive strike plans to the chat – lashed out at Goldberg after landing in Hawaii, calling him a "deceitful and highly dis-

credited" journalist and denying anyone was "texting war plans."

The comments, which contradicted the richly reported details of the report, represented a familiar attempt by the Trump administration to create an alternative truth to discredit criticism.

But the reported facts about the chat – which the White House said appeared to be authentic – are damning. Beth Sanner, a former senior intelligence official, said on CNN's "The Lead" that while the Signal thread may not have been penetrated by an enemy intelligence service, the risk of senior officials using cell-phones to communicate on such a sensitive matter was

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"It means that there is a pattern here just of a complete lack of understanding of what classified information is and what needs to be protected," Sanner said of the Trump national security team. "Instead of asking how did this journalist get on, maybe they should be asking themselves, why are they on this?"

That question is likely to be put Tuesday to Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard and CIA Director John Ratcliffe, who were both included on the message chain, according to the Atlantic, and who will testify at a worldwide threats hearing in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Intelligence scandals obsess Washington because in a government town, everyone – officials, lawmakers, analysts and journalists – understands their gravity – and the oppressive weight of the law on such matters. But for many Americans outside the Beltway – who may be more concerned with paying for expensive groceries, health care and putting their kids through college – such issues can seem distant.

But apart from the risks to service personnel in combat, a drama like this paints a wider picture of an administration's character and operations, which usually reflect the personality of the person behind the Resolute Desk.

The Signal chat scandal

effect, including Hegseth, a former Fox News anchor. The inadvertent move by Waltz, an experienced and combat-decorated Green Beret, to add Goldberg to the Signal chat is especially baffling.

The chat also raises the question of what other top secret national security discussions have unfolded outside classified settings. Given the chatty tone of the group thread, it's hard to believe this is the only such conversation.

— And judging by the reporting in The Atlantic, it's possible that the discussion broke the law, namely the Espionage Act, which criminalizes the publishing of classified material or its removal from its proper place of custody. "If we had an independent Justice Department, I am sure they would be looking into this," said Goodman. "If this were lower-level officials, I am sure they would be looking into this."

— The lax attitude to national security secrets comes straight from the top, although the president wasn't involved in the chat reported by Goldberg. Trump, after all, was criminally charged with hoarding national security documents in insecure conditions at his Mar-a-Lago resort after leaving office in 2021. The case was controversially thrown out by a Trump-appointed Florida judge last year. And early in his first term, the president shared highly classified information with the Russian foreign minister and Russian ambassador to the US at the White House. Soon afterward, US intelligence agencies extracted one of their top covert sources inside the Russian government, administration officials told CNN at the time.

— There is a strong touch of hypocrisy over the sharing of classified information on a third-party app by senior officials. After all, Trump and several of the aides incessantly hammered 2016 Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton over classified information found on her private server following her service as secretary of state. And several current officials have already launched leak inquiries, including Hegseth at the Pentagon.

— Many Republicans were willing to dismiss the extraordinary breach of classified material as a trifle. Johnson breezily said the administration would "tighten up and make sure it doesn't happen again." Alabama Sen. Tommy Tuberville, a close Trump ally, said, "We all make mistakes" and told CNN's Manu Raju that it was part of "transition and growing" for the new administration. Senate Majority Leader John Thune, however, promised to "figure out what went on" in the Signal chat.

— The account of the texts in the Atlantic contains fascinating details. It suggests that Vance, despite his staunch public support for Trump's positions, was not initially on board with the strikes against the Houthis. And the vice president, Hegseth and senior White House official Stephen Miller shared contempt for America's allies, agreeing they should be forced to remunerate the US for the strikes since they would boost their economies by restoring freedom of navigation after months of Houthi attacks on shipping. "VP: I fully share your loathing of European free-loading. It's PATHETIC," Hegseth apparently typed.

— Democrats, who are struggling for traction against Trump, seized on The Atlantic's report to try to paint a picture of a reckless administration. "The secretary of defense, who was on that chain, has got to be the most unqualified person ever to lead the Pentagon in American history," House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries said. And Delaware Democratic Sen. Chris Coons told CNN's Phil Mattingly that there should be an immediate oversight hearing and accountability.

— Trump was briefed on the Atlantic story on Monday afternoon, two sources familiar with the situation told CNN's Alayna Treene. The president expressed disdain for Goldberg, who was behind another story in Trump's first term, which said Trump referred to American war dead as "suckers" and "losers."

But so far, Trump is standing behind his team and has no plans to fire Waltz, the sources said.

Forcing anyone out might require the president to admit that he erred in picking some key national security officials that many of his critics – and even some Republican senators – warned were not up to the job.

Brett Davidson

I became a US citizen in December 2023. It was a bittersweet time. My father, Malcolm, had died a few days before – and I had to postpone heading home for the memorial until I was able to obtain my new US passport. He was a man of faith – a minister in the Congregational Church – who donated his body to science. A devout Christian who was loving and supportive when I came out as gay and even when I told him I was leaving the church, he deeply admired the anti-Nazi German dissident Dietrich Bonhoeffer and urged my siblings and me to always have the courage of our convictions.

Unlike Musk, Thiel, Sacks and Pollak, I have no nostalgia for apartheid, and if I am to have the courage of my convictions as my father taught me, I feel I must speak out when Musk cynically labels efforts to undo the legacy of segregation "racism" and leads the way in cutting the funding for international health and development assistance (a tiny fraction of the US federal budget) that, according to experts, could result in more than 500,000 deaths in South Africa over the next decade.

I feel compelled to speak out because Musk and his uberwealthy South African-born or -raised friends – people with more money than many of us can fathom – are now directly working with the American president to take everything away from those who have almost nothing.

Their model is not the one we should be following. There are far better examples in the past and present. Take Jennifer Davis, who helped forge constructive connections between South Africa and the US based on human rights and justice.

Or the many members of the CHANGE coalition, led by organisations such as Health GAP in the US and the Health Justice Initiative in South Africa, who are right now collaborating to challenge and reverse Trump's aid cuts. Or the millions of people in both countries who are showing up every day to do the work necessary to make the US and South Africa better for all their people, no matter their race, sexuality or bank balance, motivated and inspired by the values of democracy, social justice and Ubuntu – the idea that we are all connected and responsible for one another.

Musk and his like-minded friends may now have all the power, but they are just a tiny minority. Justice- and democracy-loving people of South Africa and the US won against their kind before, and I am certain they will do so again.

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# What Musk and Trump describe is not the South Africa I know and love

**A**S a white South African man now living in the United States, I am acutely aware of the oversized role played by Elon Musk and a few other white men with strong South African ties in the US's lurch towards authoritarianism. These include far-right tech billionaire Peter Thiel, who spent formative years of his childhood in apartheid South Africa; US President Donald Trump's Cape Town-born "AI and crypto tsar" David Sacks; and Joel Pollak, the South African-American conservative political commentator currently serving as the senior editor-at-large of the Breitbart News Network.

While I am no billionaire and have no influence over government policy, these men and I still have quite a bit in common. I was born in apartheid South Africa about the same time as Musk, Pollak and Sacks and benefited from the system. Like them, I eventually migrated to the US. Like Musk, I went to Veldskool, or "field school" – a weeklong camp during high school during which teachers tried to indoctrinate us into Christian nationalism, the whites-only political ideology of the apartheid government. Also like him, I was a nerdy boy who was relentlessly bullied in school.

However, I am also very different from these men – and not just because I do not have billions in the bank or a direct line to the US president. Unlike Musk, I do not support racist pseudoscience. Unlike Musk and the administration these men serve, I question the apartheid-era policies that allowed a small minority – white South Africans – to control a disproportionate amount of land and resources. And most importantly, I take pride in the achievements and progress of post-apartheid South Africa.

In the early 1990s when South Africa was making a transition from apartheid to democracy, I was working as a radio journalist at the country's national broadcaster. I remember the pride and elation felt across the country as South Africans of all races and backgrounds lined up to vote on April 27, 1994, in their first democratic elections.

Over the next few years, my colleagues and I were part of the effort to transform the South African Broadcasting Corporation from a government mouthpiece to a genuine public broadcaster.

As South Africans won the fight for democracy, they faced another battle,

# Saudi Arabia's role in advancing regional peace and development

**S**AUDI Arabia occupies an influential position in the Middle East, as it is uniquely positioned to foster peace and sustainability amid long-standing conflicts, particularly the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands. The Kingdom's efforts have the potential to lead to significant progress, but the situation remains complex due to entrenched ideologies and historical grievances. This article will explore Saudi Arabia's pivotal role, the promise of the two-state solution and what is known as the "two-return solution," counterarguments to these approaches and the obstacles that lie ahead in the quest for peace.

As a key player in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia can assume a crucial role in mediating peace talks, drawing on its religious significance in Islam and its foreign policy orientation, which is aimed at promoting regional stability. Recent strides, such as potentially normalizing relations with Israel based on the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002, signify a transformative shift in regional dynamics. This newfound collaboration not only paves the way for initiatives that promote sustainability and social development throughout the Middle East, but it also aligns with the Kingdom's Vision 2030, which is aimed at broader

economic diversification and social reform.

The two-state solution, grounded in international law, seeks to establish an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. This framework respects the national aspirations of both parties, aiming for cohabitation within a structure that acknowledges their respective rights. Proponents argue that establishing clear borders, mutual recognition and cooperation on security and economic matters provides a roadmap toward lasting peace. An ambitious extension of this concept could lead to a broader confederation, fostering cooperation not only between Israel and Palestine but potentially with neighboring states as well.

Complementing the two-state solution, the two-return solution addresses the historical grievances of both Palestinian refugees and Jewish individuals who settled in the region. This innovative approach recognizes the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their ancestral homes while simultaneously validating the narratives of Jewish communities that have contributed significantly to the region's development.

By confronting the issue of displacement, which continues to fuel the ongoing occupation, this solution seeks to foster reconciliation. A crucial aspect of its viability is the provision of adequate compensation for all affected parties, which is essential for mitigating the emotional and material damage caused by displacement and for laying the groundwork for healing.

Despite the promising nature of the two-state and two-return solutions, significant hurdles stand in the way of their realization. Critics contend that the realities on the ground make these frameworks nearly unattainable. For instance, the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank complicates the establishment of a viable second state. Likewise, the fragmentation within Palestinian governance exemplified by the divisions between the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza further complicates efforts to create a unified Palestinian leadership capable of negotiating effectively.

Additionally, skepticism persists regarding Israel's commitment to pursuing a two-state solution. Historical precedents indicate that past negotiations have often faltered amid waves of violence and mutual distrust. Some factions within the Israeli government advocate for a one-state solution that would allow them to maintain control without substantive negotiations. Such sentiments only exacerbate the doubts surrounding the feasibility of

through shared narratives and understanding can lead to the groundwork necessary for reconciliation and mutual respect. Saudi Arabia's potential not only fosters a sense of justice but also aligns with the global community's aspirations for a fair and lasting resolution.

However, the role of the US complicates this landscape. Although Washington wields the power to impose consequences on Israeli leaders, evolving global dynamics and shifting international alliances could undermine its effectiveness. As the world order shifts, the US may find it increasingly challenging to maintain its historical position of influence, particularly amid growing opposition within the international community. This situation underscores the necessity for Saudi Arabia to adopt a more proactive role, aligning its initiatives with broader goals of justice and sustainability while working in concert with international partners to foster a peaceful and stable Middle East.

Moreover, the implications of America's withdrawal or hesitation in supporting Israel's leadership must be acknowledged. Potential parallels to the Ukraine situation highlight the need for countries in the region, including Saudi Arabia, to build strong, independent coalitions that do not rely

standing of the complexities involved in the region's conflicts. The two-state and two-return solutions offer valuable frameworks for addressing long-standing grievances and fostering reconciliation, yet significant challenges persist.

Real progress will demand genuine political will, a commitment to justice and a more inclusive approach to understanding the diverse needs of both Israelis and Palestinians. By promoting diplomatic initiatives, addressing historical grievances and championing developmental projects, Saudi Arabia can facilitate transformative shifts in the region's landscape. In navigating this intricate terrain, the Kingdom can emerge as a bridge-builder, turning conflict into cooperation and offering hope for a sustainable and peaceful future for all people in the Middle East. The vision of a cooperative regional landscape, where peace and prosperity intertwine, relies on the concerted efforts of not just Saudi Arabia but all stakeholders committed to advancing dialogue, understanding and mutual respect in a historically fragmented space. Thus, while the journey is fraught with obstacles, the promise of a united and flourishing future remains within reach, contingent on sustained commitment and collaborative action.

— Arab News





# SCCI chief presents proposals for success New KP Industrial Policy

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fazal Moqem Khan stressed uninterrupted power and gas supply with subsidized rates to industries and business.

Besides, he stressed removal of double policies and anti-business actions, and provision of facilitation to investors under one-window operation along with provision of concrete steps and incentives for revival of sick industries in KP. SCCI chief also demanded provision of soft loans, and concrete steps to address genuine grievances of industrialists and investors, adding that such initiatives would lead to New Provincial Industrial Policy to progress and would achieve all set goals under it.

He made these remarks

while chairing a meeting of the Sectoral Group on Ease of Doing Business-One Stop Facilitation under New Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Industrial Policy 2025-30 here at the chamber house on Tuesday.

Meeting was attended by KPEZDMC senior officials Fakhr Alam Sahibzada, Anwaar Zia, Muhammad Rafiq, Smeda Provincial Chief Rashid Aman, KPBOIT Director Policies/ EODB Raees Anjum and SCCI Senior Manager R&D Sohail Anjum and others.

The forum thoroughly held discussion on key points, mostly relating to investors problems, hurdle in investment, duplication in policies/actions, inefficiency in business setup, operations and elimination of NOC culture, integration of all relevant institutions, launch of business web por-

tal, digitalization of licensing, registration process, institutional framework and others.

Participants/senior officials stressed real time data collection of industries, formation of Business Redressal Council/forum on pattern of DRCs and proactively implementation on Governance Structure and others.

The speakers pointed out various issues that were hampering investment and industrialization in KP and gave a number of suggestions for adding into the New Industrial Policy 2025-30.

Despite surplus electricity and gas, and oil reserves and other natural resources, KP has remained backward as compared to other provinces, Moqem remarked.

He noted brain drain and the flight of capital from

KP is increasing, while established businesses and industries and people in this province are in great trouble under the prevailing circumstances.

The chamber president called for flourishing industries and businesses critical for elimination of terrorism, social evils and poverty through generation of employment opportunities to people in the province. Moqem emphasized the need for efficient utilization of KP's natural resources.

He viewed huge investment opportunities available in various important sectors in KP.

The SCCI chief wants pragmatic steps for ease of doing business in KP.

He assured the provincial government and relevant departments for all kinds of cooperation in the success of New KP Industrial Policy 2025-30.



PESHAWAR: President SCCI Fazal Moqem Khan chairing a meeting of Sectoral Group on Ease of Doing Business-One Stop Facilitation under New KP Industrial Policy 2025-30 at Chamber's House.

## Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was report at the port where four ships, Northern Jamboree, Eleni-T, DS Rosa and Tai Stride carrying Container, Palm oil and Coal, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal and Pakistan International Bulk Terminal, respectively during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile four more ships, SM Mahi, Hatthaya Naree, K.K Marlin and Al-Marrouna with Container, Chick Peas, Mogas and LNG are also arrived at outer anchorage same period as above mentioned.

A total of eight ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Eleni-T and Agri Ocean were expected to sail on Tuesday afternoon.

Cargo volume of 138,555 tonnes, comprising 88,025 tonnes imports cargo and 50,530 tonnes export cargo carried in 3,630 Containers (1,930 TEUs Imports 1,700 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

## Regulatory reforms vital for business growth, says ICCI President

ISLAMABAD (APP): Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), has underscored the urgent need to remove bureaucratic obstacles that hinder business growth and economic progress.

During a meeting with visiting trade and industry leaders at the Chamber House on Tuesday, Qureshi appreciated Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent clarification affirming that there is no change in the country's solar energy policy or its renewable energy priorities, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

He commended the Prime Minister's commitment to promoting sustainable energy solutions, emphasizing that this move reflects the government's dedication to ensuring affordable and eco-friendly power for the nation.

The ICCI President also welcomed the Prime Minister's instructions to clear public ambiguities regarding the solar policy through transparent facts and figures. Furthermore, he cherished the Prime Minister's announcement of a forthcoming package aimed at reducing electricity tariffs, expressing hope that this step would provide much-needed relief to the public and boost business competitiveness.

He stressed that Pakistan's economic stagnation and governance inefficiencies are deeply rooted in bureaucratic structures prioritizing control over development. He criticized the persistence of complex regulations and red tape, which he believes stifles entrepreneurial initiatives and investment opportunities.

"The real challenge lies not only in inefficiency but

in the deliberate misuse of rules to maintain authority," Qureshi remarked. "This culture of power retention has transformed governance into a self-serving mechanism that hampers national progress."

He urged policymakers to embrace a forward-thinking governance model that is efficient, responsive, and aligned with the needs of modern businesses. "If we are serious about unlocking Pakistan's true economic potential, now is the time to break away from outdated bureaucratic legacies and implement reforms that facilitate growth and innovation," he added.

The ICCI President reaffirmed the business community's commitment to contributing to the country's economic development through increased investments at both local and global levels.

## President of Aga Khan University receives Sitara-i-Imtiaz



## F.P. Report

KARACHI: Dr. Sulaiman Shahabuddin, President of Aga Khan University (AKU) was awarded the Sitara-i-Imtiaz, by the President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari. This prestigious recognition celebrates Dr. Shahabuddin's significant contributions to the education and health sectors. The timing was particularly meaningful as the award was conferred on Pakistan Day, March 23, a day of national pride.

Dr. Shahabuddin's contributions reflect his loyalty and alignment with AKU's mission to empower people in the developing world. Since his appointment by AKU's founding Chancellor, His Late Highness the Aga Khan IV, as President in 2021, the University has continued to positively impact millions of lives and elevate Pakistan's standing on the global stage. His leadership has played a pivotal role in securing local and interna-

tional funding to advance development projects in Pakistan, with the aim to improve health, education, and climate resilience.

Dr. Shahabuddin's work extends beyond Pakistan's borders to East Africa, the United Kingdom, Afghanistan, and beyond. By integrating insights from diverse regions, he has ensured that Pakistan benefits from world-class knowledge, research, and innovation.

Under his leadership, AKU has secured partnerships with leading universities around the world, including the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary in Canada, and the Universities of Michigan and Washington. Additionally, AKU continues to strengthen its research excellence, ranking among the top 100 universities in the world in several fields, including clinical medicine, public health and more.

AKU has also significantly expanded its aca-

demical offerings to meet evolving societal needs. In 2023, AKU launched the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) in Pakistan, offering undergraduate programmes in the humanities and social sciences. This initiative diversifies AKU's programmes beyond health sciences and teacher education, providing students with an interdisciplinary education.

Dr. Shahabuddin's efforts extend beyond healthcare and education to sustainability and climate action. During his tenure, AKU has formalized partnerships focused on environmental sustainability, collaborating with institutions like the Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology and Simon Fraser University in Canada. Dr. Shahabuddin has also spearheaded initiatives such as the launch of a 3.8 MW solar photovoltaic installation at AKU's Stadium Road Campus in Karachi. This project is a significant step toward achieving the University's goal of net-zero emissions by 2030.

In 2022, AKU launched the President's Challenge for Climate Solutions, under Dr. Shahabuddin's guidance. The initiative encourages AKU students in Pakistan and abroad, as well as medical interns, residents and fellows, to develop innovative climate solutions, fostering climate-conscious leadership

among young professionals.

Dr. Shahabuddin is a dedicated, visionary leader who blends strategy with service, shaping AKU's future with purpose and commitment to excellence.

Dr. Shahabuddin joins a distinguished group of AKU leaders who have previously received national recognition, including the University's first president, Dr. Shamsh Kassim-Lakha.

## European stocks jump after Wall Street rally

LONDON (AFP/APP): Europe's main stock markets rose solidly Tuesday after a rally on Wall Street thanks to easing concerns over US President Donald Trump's tariffs. Paris led the way with a gain of 1.1% approaching midday, while Frankfurt won 0.9% and London advanced 0.6%.

"There is nothing better than a solid day on Wall Street to lift investor sentiment across the pond," noted Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.

The positivity came also after data revealed that German business confidence rose in March, as a massive government spending plan promised to get Europe's largest economy rolling once again.

Asian markets closed mixed as traders focused on more domestic matters, while the dollar dropped waiting US inflation data this week that could firm expectations of fresh cuts to interest rates later this year in the world's biggest economy.

Hong Kong sank 2.4 percent, weighed by a drop of around six percent in Chinese tech giant Xiaomi, which raised \$5.5 billion in a mega share sale as it looked to expand its electric vehicle business.

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan's leading digital microfinance institution, Mobilink Bank, has solidified its standing as a trailblazer in women's financial inclusion and economic empowerment by winning the 'CMO Marketing Campaign' Award at the GSMA Global Mobile (GLOMO) Awards during Mobile World Congress 2025. The award recognizes Mobilink Bank's groundbreaking campaign - 'The Invisible Heirs', which addresses the systemic denial of women's inheritance rights in Pakistan and empowers them with innovative tools to claim what is lawfully theirs. This marks a historic milestone as Pakistan's first-ever win in the prestigious GLOMO Awards under the CMO Marketing Campaign category.

The Invisible Heirs campaign aims to tackle gender-based financial inequality in Pakistan. At its core is an inheritance calculator integrated into Mobilink Bank's consumer app - Dost, which allows women to calculate their rightful share of inheritance easily. The campaign also featured a powerful video highlighting women's emotional and societal challenges in securing their inheritance, sparking a nationwide conversation and inspiring action.

Aamir Ibrahim, CEO Jaz, Chairman Mobilink Bank and Group Executive Committee Member of VEON, remarked: "This award is a testament to our unwavering commitment to driving meaningful societal change through innovation. The Invisible Heirs campaign not only shines a light on a deeply rooted issue but also provides a tangible solution that empowers women to take control of their financial futures. This recognition underscores VEON's mission to create transformative digital services that uplift communities and foster equality."

President and CEO, Mobilink Bank Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary, said, "We are thrilled to win the GLOMO Award for 'The Invisible Heirs' campaign,

which is a bold step toward dismantling barriers that have long hindered women's financial independence. By equipping women with the tools to claim their rightful inheritance, we are not only changing lives but also reshaping the narrative around gender equality in Pakistan.

As a forward-looking, future-ready institution, this recognition inspires us to continue pushing boundaries in fostering long-term emancipation of women through technology-driven solutions."

This victory marks another milestone in Mobilink



Bank's mission to leverage fintech for financial inclusion and gender equality.

## Court Notice

In the Court of Javeria Sartaj Khan Additional District Judge II /Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Camp Court Totalai Buner. Appeal. No.44/13. Institution. 9/5/2024-6/9/2024. Date of hearing. 12/4/2025. Mst Rahat Sultana Begum etc VS Mst Sultana etc. Notice to No.8.Niaz Ali.9. Maqsood Ali sons of Salahuden.14.Mst Najma Bibi d/o Salahuden resident of Totalai Khadukhel district Buner.Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will /shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 12/4/2025 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

## Court Notice

In the Court of Jauhar Ali Safi Civil Judge I/ Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar.Suit No 274/1.Institution 2024. Date of hearing. 5/4/2025.Hakim Dad VS Khan Dad .Notice to No.2.Jouhar Ali s/o Siraj Khan resident of Bajkatta. 3.Afsar Khan s/o Wazir Muhammad 4.Nadem Khan. 5.Naser Ahmed sons of Wazir Muhammad resident of Rega Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:00 am dated 5/4/2025 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

## Feasibility study completed for Reko Diq Project



## F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) has announced the completion of the updated feasibility study for the Reko Diq Project, marking a significant milestone in Pakistan's journey toward unlocking one of the world's largest undeveloped copper-gold resources.

OGDCL holds an 8.33% share in the project as part of a collective 25% stake held by three Pakistani State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), including Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) and Government Holdings (Private) Limited (GHPL). The SOEs' interest is managed through Pakistan Minerals (Private) Limited. Of the remaining share, 25% is held by the Government of Balochistan (15%) on a fully funded basis through Balochistan Mineral Resources Limited and 10% on a free carried basis) and 50% is held by

Barrick Gold Corporation, which is the operator of the project.

The updated feasibility study outlines a mine life of 37 years, divided into two phases. Phase 1 of the project entails an estimated capital outlay of USD 5.6 billion (exclusive of financing costs and inflation) and is expected to commence operations in 2028.

A limited-recourse project financing facility of up to USD 3 billion is being pursued, with the remainder to be funded through shareholder contributions. Negotiations for the project financing are ongoing.

The project will leverage five of the currently identified 15 porphyry surface expressions within the current mining lease, highlighting substantial future growth potential.

Phase 2 is planned to be funded through a mix of revenue generation from the project, additional project financing and shareholder contributions (if

required).

Under the updated feasibility study, Phase 1 is planned to process 45 million tonnes of mill feed annually (Mtpa) from 2028. By 2034, Phase 2 is planned to double the processing capacity to 90Mtpa.

Based on existing reserves, the Reko Diq project is expected to yield production of 13.1 million tonnes of copper and 17.9 million ounces of gold over the life of the mine (100% basis).

In light of these developments, the Board of Directors of OGDCL has approved an increase in the company's funding commitment to USD 627 million, inclusive of project financing costs, reflecting its proportional share of total capital investment.

This increase accounts for the estimated rise in copper and gold prices, which have helped offset higher project costs. The shareholder equity contributions by the Company after taking into account project financing are expected to be USD 349 million (to be adjusted for actual project financing costs and inflation).

The completion of the feasibility study represents a major achievement for the Reko Diq Project, reinforcing its potential to generate long-term economic benefits, job creation, and enhanced revenue streams for Pakistan.

## Pakistan Stock Exchange turns bullish, gains 193 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 193.55 points, a positive change of 0.17 percent, closing at 116,633.17 points as compared to 116,439.62 points on the last trading day.

A total of 268,098,907 shares were traded during the day as compared to 311,970,520 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs19.455 billion against Rs20.953 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 436 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 155 of them recorded gains and 214 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 67 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Pak Elektron with 23,534,658 shares at Rs45.90 per share, TRG Pak Limited with 22,825,615 shares at Rs66.14 per share and Cnerynico PK with 14,454,846 shares at Rs7.94 per share. Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs23.50 per share closing at Rs23,549.00 whereas runner-up was Indus Motors Company Limited with Rs18.77 rise in its share price to close at Rs2,060.00.

Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs91.06 per share price, closing at Rs9,066.01, whereas the runner-up was Services Industries Limited with Rs25.45 decline in its per share price to Rs1,292.98.

Rupee sheds 06 paise against US Dollar: The Rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 06 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs280.42 against

the previous day's closing of Rs280.36.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs280.60 and Rs282.1, respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs1.54 to close at Rs302.56 against the last day's closing of Rs304.01, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen went down by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.86, whereas a decline of Rs1.12 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs362.05 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs363.17.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal increased by 01 paise each to close at Rs76.34 and Rs74.75, respectively.

Gold prices dip by Rs800 to Rs317,800 per tola: The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs800 and was traded at Rs317,800 on Tuesday as compared to its sale at Rs318,600 on previous trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs686 to Rs272,462 from Rs273,148 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold also went down by Rs629 to Rs249,765 from Rs250,394 respectively.

The prices of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs3,475 and Rs2,979 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$6 to \$3,021 from \$3,027 whereas that of silver remained unchanged at \$33.10, the Association reported.





In brief

Final of hockey championship on Wednesday

KARACHI (APP): The final of the KHA Ramadan Mubarak Inter-Club Hockey Championship will take place on Wednesday, at 5 p.m. at the Olympian Hanif Khan and Dr. Junaid Ali Shah Sports Complex in Gulshan-e-Iqbal. The tournament, organized by the Karachi Hockey Association (KHA), has seen its final four matches completed, said a news release on Tuesday. Sindh Hockey Association President and Mayor of Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab, will be the special guest for the final. The event will also be attended by KHA President Imtiaz Ali Shah, Secretary KHA Olympian Hanif Khan, Chairman KHA Gulfaraz Khan, along with hockey Olympians, international players, KHA officials, and a large number of hockey enthusiasts.

Vernon takes

Tour of

**Catalonia sprint** (AFP): British sprinter Ethan Vernon won a mass sprint on the Tour of Catalonia on Tuesday, followed over the line at Figueres by teenage compatriot Matthew Brennan. After a four hour and 16 minute, 177km run, from Banyoles that included two mountains, the peloton was largely grouped as it raced at up to 70kmh toward the finish line in Figueres. Israel Premier-Tech's Vernon had been dropped in the mountains but kept calm to work his way back. The runner-up spot means Visma rider Brennan, just 19, retains the overall lead by 6sec from Australian Kaden Groves. The seven-day race will be decided over three mountain stages on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. Home hope Juan Ayuso of UAE is the man to beat after his Tirenno-Adriatico triumph in Italy. He sat fifth overall Tuesday at 13sec off the lead In the absence of champion Tadej Pogacar, the other 2024 podium finishers, Spain's Mikel Landa and Colombian former Tour de France winner Egan Bernal, could also contend. Wednesday's 218km run from Viladecans has a mountain-top finish at La Molina. The leading climbers are nearly all competing with Primoz Roglic, twins Simon and Adam Yates, Richard Carapaz and Enric Mas as they prepare for the Tour de France.

Magic hand Lakers third straight defeat

LOS ANGELES (AFP/APP): The Los Angeles Lakers suffered another setback in their NBA playoff push on Monday, falling 118-106 to the Orlando Magic, who notched their first home victory since February. Despite 32 points from Luka Doncic and 24 from LeBron James the Lakers dropped their third straight game and at 43-28 are now tied with the Memphis Grizzlies in the battle for fourth place in the Western Conference. Franz Wagner scored 32 points and Paolo Banchero added 30 for the Magic, who outscored the Lakers 34-18 in the third quarter to seize control of the contest. The defeat follows the Lakers' blowout loss to the Chicago Bulls in James's first game back after missing seven with a groin injury. The Bulls knocked off another Western Conference contender, beating the short-handed Nuggets 129-119 in Denver for a third straight victory. The Lakers had hoped James, Doncic and a newly healthy Rui Hachimura would fuel a strong stretch run. The Oklahoma City Thunder are assured of the top seed in the West but the Nuggets.

# Fast bowlers let us down, says Azhar Mehmood

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan cricket team's Assistant Coach Azhar Mehmood said on Tuesday that the team's fast bowlers were performing individually and they were not playing like one unit. Speaking to the media in Wellington, he said one day a fast bowler bowled well while the other one failed to show the same performance. "We have got to understand that bowling is also like batting where we develop partnerships. It will be better if all our three pacers perform equally well on the same day."

Azhar said it would be the team's effort to finish the T20 International series against New Zealand on a

positive note by winning the last match. "Our team consists of young players," he said, adding, "Our job is to support them." The assistant coach said that in modern day cricket, putting 160 runs on the scoreboard was nothing. "Either you score 180 runs or more than 200 so that you could stand a chance to win the match." Azhar went on to say that when the team had arrived in New Zealand, it was confronted with different challenges. "Batsmen were not familiar with the pace and the bounce one often sees in New Zealand. This time, there is more bounce in these wickets than it used to be in the

past," he said, adding, "We have told batsmen that they don't have to be aggressive, but have to play against fast bowlers with patience and sensibly." The assistant coach also hinted at making one or two changes to the team for the fifth and last T-20I to be played in Wellington tomorrow. **Pakistan team practice in Wellington** The national team practiced at the Basin Reserve cricket ground in Wellington on Tuesday as it prepares to face Kiwis in the fifth and last T20I. Besides batting, bowling and fielding, the players also participated in warmup drills.



SUWON: Mohannad Abu Taha of Jordan (1st L) controls the ball against Lee Dong-gyeong of South Korea (2nd L) during the FIFA World Cup Asian Third Qualifier Group B match.

## Pakistan omitted from Azlan Shah Hockey Cup 2025

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan has been surprisingly excluded from this year's prestigious Azlan Shah Hockey Cup, despite reaching the final in the previous tournament. The tournament, scheduled to take place in Ipoh, Malaysia, from November 22, will see teams from Belgium, Canada, Germany, India, Ireland, and host nation Malaysia competing for the title.

According to a social media post by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) regarding the event, Pakistan's name was not included among the participating teams.

Sources within the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) confirmed that the tournament organizers did not send an invitation to the country. Last year, Pakistan secured a silver medal. Their achievement was recognized at the government level, with the national team receiving widespread appreciation for their efforts.

However, despite their commendable showing in the previous edition, they have been left out this time. Interestingly, Japan, the team that won the gold medal by defeating Pakistan in the final, has also been omitted from this year's lineup. The reasons behind the exclusion of both teams remain unclear, sparking concerns about the selection process for invitations.

when Blatter quit as head of FIFA in a corruption crisis. Blatter and Platini were initially acquitted by the Swiss Federal Criminal Court in June 2022, but the Swiss Attorney General's office immediately appealed that verdict. The defence and prosecution agreed that Platini did advise Blatter between 1998 and 2002, during the Swiss administrator's first term at the head of FIFA.

## Tamim Iqbal recovering after heart attack

DHAKA (AFP): Former Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal regained consciousness and was speaking to family members after suffering a major heart attack during a domestic match, cricket officials told AFP on Tuesday.

The 36-year-old was leading Mohammedan Sporting Club in a match of the 50-over Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League when he was rushed to a nearby hospital after severe chest pain on Monday. "He is now better. He talked to his family members and also walked briefly at the hospital," club official Tariqul Islam said.

Mohammedan physiotherapist Enamul Haque said Tamim was in a stable condition and would likely be transferred to another medical facility soon. "We had to go to hospital quickly to save



his life, and luckily we did that," Enamul told AFP. Tamim is in critical condition when he was rushed to hospital, Razeeb Hasan, the medical director at the facility where Tamim received treatment, told reporters on Monday. He also said Tamim had to undergo surgery to implant stents to clear an artery blockage. News of Tamim's health crisis saw an outpouring of support from the cricketing world. "Please pray that my brother Tamim recovers quickly

and returns to the game!" long-time teammate Shakib Al Hasan wrote in a social media post.

Tamim's heart attack came the same day as Shakib's 38th birthday, but the all-rounder said he was unable to enjoy the occasion because of the news.

Indian cricketer Yuvraj Singh likewise offered his "prayers and wishes". "You've faced tough opponents before and come out stronger, this will be no different. Wishing you a speedy recovery."

Stay strong," Yuvraj wrote on social media. Tamim represented Bangladesh in 391 matches across formats between 2007 and 2023, and was their one-day captain. He scored more than 15,000 runs and is the only Bangladeshi to record centuries in all three international formats.

## Blatter and Platini cleared in FIFA graft case

MUTTENZ (AFP): Former FIFA president Sepp Blatter and ex-UEFA chief Michel Platini on Tuesday were acquitted on appeal by a Swiss court in a long-running corruption case that shattered their careers as the most powerful figures in world football.

Blatter, 89, and Platini, 69, listened in silence as the Extraordinary Court of Appeal clerk in the town of Muttenz, near Basel, read out a decision identical to the one handed down in 2022, which had initially cleared them. Prosecutors had requested suspended sentences of 20 months for the pair, but charges of fraud, for which they risked five years' imprisonment, as well as disloyal management, breach of

trust and forgery of documents were all dismissed.

After almost 10 years of legal proceedings, a final appeal is still possible before the Swiss Supreme Court, but only on limited legal grounds. The prosecutors' office said in a statement it "will decide about how to further proceed".

"The persecution by FIFA and some Swiss federal prosecutors for 10 years is now over," Platini told reporters. "Today my honour is restored, and I'm very happy." Platini, a former France captain and manager, said he felt "from the start" that the purpose of the affair was to prevent him "from being president of FIFA".

"I know that for my enemies, it was time that was

important... They kept me out for 10 years," continued Platini, whose downfall cleared the way for the election in early 2016 of Gianni Infantino as FIFA boss. Blatter and Platini returned to court earlier this month on charges stemming from a delayed payment of two million Swiss francs (1.8 million euros) FIFA made to Platini in 2011 for consultancy services.

"After two acquittals, the federal prosecutor's office must also admit that this criminal procedure has definitively failed. Michel Platini must finally be left alone in criminal matters," said Dominic Nellen, Platini's lawyer.

"Gentlemen's agreement" The case began in 2015

## S. Korea play Jordan to draw in World Cup qualifying match

SOUTH KOREA (Yonhap/APP): South Korea were held by Jordan 1-1 at home Tuesday for their second consecutive draw in the ongoing World Cup qualification round, failing to step toward an early berth in the big tournament after squandering a first-half lead.

Lee Jae-sung had the match's first goal for South Korea in the fifth minute at Suwon World Cup Stadium in Suwon, some 30 kilometers south of Seoul, in the Group B match in the third round of the Asian World Cup qualification. But Jordan equalized in the 30th minute on Mahmoud Al-Mardi's strike, and the two sides couldn't solve the deadlock over the next 60-plus minutes.

South Korea's final two matches of the third round will be against Iraq on June 5 in Basra and Kuwait on June 10 at home. There are three groups of six in this round, and the top two from each group will qualify for the 2026 World Cup in Canada, Mexico and the United States. Teams ranked third and fourth will move on to the fourth round.

With the draw, South Korea managed to stay atop Group B with 16 points, three ahead of Jordan. Iraq, with 12 points, were to play Palestine early Wednesday morning in South Korean time.

A combination of a South Korean win and an Iraqi loss or a draw against Palestine later Tuesday

would have sent South Korea to the World Cup with two matches left in the current round.

South Korea played without two national team mainstays in Bayern Munich center back Kim Min-jae, who was dropped from the national team on March 15 due to left Achilles tendinitis, and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) midfielder Lee Kang-in, who was sent home Saturday after injuring his left ankle against Oman two days earlier.

Feyenoord midfielder Hwang In-beom drew back into the lineup Tuesday after being held off the squad list against Oman. After missing about a month with a mysterious injury, Hwang was banged up in his first match back for the Dutch club on March 16, forcing Hong to keep Hwang out last week as a precaution. In the absence of PSG's Lee, Lee Dong-gyeong of Gimcheon Sangmu FC got the start for his first international appearance since September last year.

Captain Son Heung-min got the start for his 133rd international cap, tying him with former goalkeeper Lee Woon-jae for third place on the all-time South Korean rankings. Son is now three back of the two co-leaders, current national team head coach Hong Myung-bo and former striker Cha Bum-kun.

South Korea had a much better start than they did against Oman last Thursday, when they didn't register a shot attempt until Hwang

Hee-chan scored in the 41st minute.

The home side opened the scoring with a well-executed set piece five minutes into Tuesday's match, when Lee Jae-sung volleyed home a Son Heung-min corner. Lee had also scored against Jordan in South Korea's 2-0 win in October.

Son nearly picked up his second assist with a corner seven minutes later, when Cho Yu-min's header sailed just over the crossbar. Jordan did not put much pressure on South Korea early on but equalized at the half-hour mark after a dangerous foray into the attacking zone.

Goalkeeper Jo Hyeon-woo made a stop on Mousa Al-Tamari's shot from the right side of the box, but the rebound landed on Mahmoud Al-Mardi on the opposite side. Al-Mardi's right-footed shot struck the arm of defender Kwon Kyung-won and slightly changed direction en route to the bottom right corner.

South Korea had a couple of close calls to retake the lead, with Cho's second header set up by Son's corner going over the bar in the 32nd minute and Hwang Hee-chan denied by goalkeeper Yazeed Abulaila from close range in the 37th minute. Queens Park Rangers midfielder Yang Min-hyeok replaced Lee Dong-gyeong at the start of the second half, making his national team debut at age 18. Yang had a shot go off an opposing defender moments after the restart but was otherwise held in check.

## 35th National Games from May 1 to 9

KARACHI (APP): A meeting regarding the organization of the 35th National Games in Karachi was held at a local hotel on Tuesday, chaired by the Minister of Sports, Sardar Muhammad Baksh Mahar.

The meeting was attended by officials from sports associations and federations of all provinces, as well as representatives from various sports departments, including Khalid

Mahmood, Secretary of the Pakistan Olympic Association, Abdul Aleem Lashari, Secretary of Sports, Director Asad Ishaq, Ahmed Ali Rajput, Secretary of the Sindh Olympic Association, Asghar Baloch, Ali Dino

Gopang, all district sports officers of Karachi, and others.

On this occasion, Sardar Muhammad Baksh Mahar, who is also the President of the Sindh Olympic Association addressed the gathering, stating that the 35th National Games, a nine-day event, will be held from May 1 to May 9 under the supervision of the Sindh Olympic Association with the support of the Sindh Government.

The Sindh government has completed all preparations for hosting the National Games. Furthermore, the torch rally will be inaugurated by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and the Chief Minister of Sindh.

Sardar Muhammad Baksh Mahar said that the Sindh government will strive to make the National Games as successful as possible, as this is not just an event for Sindh but for the entire country.

He mentioned that the swimming events will take place at the KMC Swimming Pool and efforts are underway to construct a new swimming pool in Sindh soon.

Khalid Mahmood, Secretary of the Pakistan Olympic Association said that participating athletes will receive daily allowances and other facilities. Doctors and ambulances will be present at all venues, and special arrangements will be made in hospitals.

## Zverev marches on in Miami, Osaka falls

MIAMI GARDENS (AFP/APP): Top seed Alexander Zverev recovered from a slow start to power into the fourth round of the Miami Open with a 7-5, 6-4 win against Australia's Jordan Thompson at Hard Rock Stadium on Monday.

The German was 4-1 down in the first set but then went on a roll, winning eight of the next nine games to progress.

Zverev lost in the opening round at Indian Wells, but with Carlos Alcaraz already out in Miami he will fancy his chances of adding to his list of seven Masters 1000 titles.

"Jordan made it difficult for me for sure. He's a quality player," said Zverev.

"When you're in rhythm, he knows how to break it a little bit. So he did extremely well today. I'm happy with my level from 1-4 onwards," he added. Third-seed Taylor Fritz also moved into the fourth round

beating Denis Shapovalov of Canada 7-5, 6-3.

The American let slip a 5-2 lead in the first set, but regained control with his serve proving too much for Shapovalov. In the women's draw, third-seed Coco Gauff's bid ended with a 6-4 6-4 loss to Poland's Magda Linette.

Top-seeded Aryna Sabalenka eased her way into the last eight with a 6-4, 6-4 win over last year's winner Danielle Collins of the USA. Next, Sabalenka will be up against ninth seeded Olympic gold medallist Zheng Qinwen who reached her second consecutive WTA 1000 quarter-final, with a straight-sets win over Ashlyn Krueger.

"I'm super happy to get this win in straight sets and happy with the level I played today," said Sabalenka. "She's a tough opponent, and we had a lot of tough and tricky matches in the past. So was very

happy to get through this one," she added.

Italy's Jasmine Paolini enjoyed a 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 comeback win over Naomi Osaka in 2 hours and 15 minutes.

Since her comeback from maternity leave 15 months ago, Osaka has been showing some signs of getting back towards her best but Paolini was the first top 10 player Osaka has faced this year.

"I don't think that I can say that I've played a lot of matches against top players like this in a while," said Osaka. "The way she plays kind of catches me off guard, simply because of her height. I didn't know she could hit like that," she added.

Emma Raducanu continued her impressive form in Miami, cruising to a 6-1, 6-3 in 69 minutes over American Amanda Anisimova, who had eliminated Indian Wells winner Mirra Andreeva on Sunday.

## Phil Simmons to coach BD until 2027 ODI WC



DHAKA (Agencies): Phil Simmons will continue as Bangladesh's head coach for the next two years, up until the end of the 2027 ODI World Cup. The BCB offered him a longer contract after initially appointing him as interim coach until the conclusion of the 2025 Champions Trophy.

"I am delighted to be given the opportunity to work with Bangladesh cricket on a long-term basis," Simmons, 61, said. "The talent within this team is undeniable, and I believe we have the potential to achieve great

things together. I am looking forward to the journey ahead. Having worked with some exceptional players already, I can see the immense promise in this squad.

Their skill and passion for the game inspire me daily. Together, we can take Bangladesh cricket to new heights and create something truly special."

Simmons did not have much success in his stint as interim coach. During that period, Bangladesh won one Test and a T20I series in West Indies but crashed out in the group stage of the Champions

Trophy after losing to India and New Zealand.

"My time with the Bangladesh team over the past few months has been incredibly rewarding," Simmons said. "The energy, commitment, and ability within this group have been nothing short of impressive. I'm excited to continue helping these players reach their full potential."

The appointment puts to rest speculation on Simmons' future with Bangladesh and he will not coach Karachi Kings anymore in the PSL. He was Karachi's head coach since December 2023.

Simmons, who is one of four coaches to oversee 400 international matches, was appointed the Bangladesh coach on the same day the BCB suspended Chandika Hathurusinghe in October.

Simmons, who played for West Indies in the 1990s, was previously the head coach of Zimbabwe, Ireland and Afghanistan. He also coached West Indies for two terms, winning the T20 World Cup in 2016.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 50,500 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 50,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 52,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, River Indus stood at dead level of 1402 feet at Tarbela Dam. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 16,300 cusecs and 15,900 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1070.00 feet, which was 20.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 17,800 cusecs and 16,500 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 20,900, 21,300, 18,600 and 6,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 10,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 1,700 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### Police recover gutka worth millions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Motorway Police South Zone, in a successful operation on Tuesday recovered contraband gutka worth Rs 10 lakh and arrested a drug-peddler, while the other escaped. According to the NH&MP spokesperson, a rickshaw driver near Matari informed the motorway police that a white Honda City (number BJX-462) had hit his rickshaw and fled. As soon as the information was received, the officers of the Motorway Police immediately started a chase. The accused tried to flee by leaving the vehicle at the location of 197-NB. Timely action by the Motorway Police resulted in the arrest of one of the accused, while the second suspect managed to flee. Upon searching the vehicle, police found 10 sacks filled with banned gutka and two fake number plates. The seized items and the arrested individual were handed over to the Khairani police station for further investigation. Sub-Inspector Qaiser Niazi, spokesperson of the Motorway Police South Zone, said the force is committed to reducing crime and ensuring the safety of highways. He assured the public that similar operations will continue to maintain order and protect motorists from criminal activities.

### Police arrest 11 outlaws

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police during operations against outlaws on Tuesday arrested 11 accused including drug peddlers, liquor suppliers, illegal arms owners and Tenancy Act violators. According to the police spokesman, the Morgah and Gujar Khan Police nabbed accused Qamar and Nayyar respectively recovering 650 grams and 540 grams charas from them. Similarly, the Pirwadhai Police recovered 20 litres and 10 litres of liquor respectively from accused Zahid and Abdul Masood, while the Bani Police held accused Kafeel with 5 litres of the commodity. Likewise, the Ganjmandi, Sadiqabad and Mandra Police held accused Tariq, Muzammil and Aqeel with a 30-bore pistol along with ammunition each. Meanwhile, four accused were arrested during search operations in different areas of the district for violation of the Tenancy Act. The arrested included Imran, Zohaib, Suleman and Khalid.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanaullah and Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins discuss bilateral relations and mutual cooperation. —APP Photo

## Pakistan highly values its relations with Ethiopia: Gilani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has said that Pakistan highly values its relations with Ethiopia and desires to further expand bilateral ties in diverse sectors.

"Pakistan and Ethiopia have a long history of working together on multi-lateral forums in support of international peace and stability" the Chairman expressed these views in a meeting with Jemal Beker Abdula Ambassador of Ethiopia.

He termed trade and economic relations crucial for bringing people of the two sides closer. He said that trade and business cooperation in diverse sectors can help in building lasting relations between Islamabad and Addis Ababa. He said that a Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to bring all stakeholders on a single platform. SIFC promises a win-win paradigm for our brotherly and friendly countries through symbiotic projects.

He welcomed the direct flights between Karachi and Addis Ababa. He informed that NADRA has successfully launched projects in Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya and Somalia relating to the digitalization of Passports and National Identity documents and Ethiopia can also avail of the services.

He further thanked the Ethiopian Government for extending an online visa facility to Pakistani nationals to promote people-to-people exchanges.

The volume of bilateral trade, however, he said, does not reflect the true potential of our two economies and both sides need to work together to make progress in economic and trade links. Pakistan is firmly committed to broadening cooperation with African countries in diverse fields, especially in trade, investment, and economic spheres, he observed.

Gilani said that Pakistan has been exporting medical and surgical equipment, pharmaceutical products, and medicines to Ethiopia which can be further enhanced. He said that Pakistan is known for producing high-quality footballs that are frequently used in global soccer tournaments. Pakistan offers scholarships to Ethiopian students in various disciplines. He further informed that Ethiopian diplomats have been receiving training at the Foreign Service Academy and we are ready to offer training courses to more Ethiopian diplomats.

He also considered the Defense Cooperation important as both countries are faced with identical challenges of terrorism and extremism.

He said that such cooperation would further boost our defense ties.

He said that terrorism is a great threat. Pakistan has been a victim of terrorism, saying that, we lost Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was also the victim of terrorism.

The Chairman Senate also extended an invitation to his counterpart in the Ethiopian parliament to visit Pakistan as both countries have a history of high-level exchanges. Gilani said that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Shaheed was the architect of Pakistan-Ethiopian bilateral relations as he first visited Ethiopia in 1972. He said that parliamentary exchanges play a pivotal role in promoting people-to-people contacts. He emphasized that parliamentary friendship groups in the respective parliaments can be highly beneficial in this regard.

The Ambassador of Ethiopia thanked the chairman Senate for his remarks. He said that Pakistan is an important country and we also desire to further deepen diversified ties.

He said that both countries have a shared history of cooperation at different levels. "Our countries are cooperating at international levels and there is huge scope for further boosting cooperation in different sectors", the Ambassador observed.

## IESCO notifies 2-day power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Tuesday issued a two-day power suspension programme for Wednesday and Thursday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work.

According to IESCO Spokesperson, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Wednesday from 07:00 AM to 11:00 AM, Islamabad Circle, I-10/1, I-10/2, New I-10/1, New I-10/2, Treat, Golf City, Diplomatic, Bani Gala, Mohra Noor Bani Gala, Mohra Noor, Athal, Treat, T&T, Bhara Kahu-I&II, NIH, Golf City Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Radio Pak-I, Gomalmandi, Jinnah Road, Mohanpura Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Dhok Noor, Mehboob Shaheed, Park View, Pindi Board, Jail Park-I, Car Chowk, X-Laure, AOWHS, Fazal Ahmed Shaheed Feeders, Attock Circle, Nisar Shaheed, Margalla Feeders.

On Thursday from 07:00 AM to 11:00 AM, Islamabad Circle, Upper Topa, Pir Sohawa, Bari Imam, Punjab House, Khayaban Iqbal, Pir Sohawa, Qaid-e-Azam University Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Sector IV, Airport, Chakra, Saham, Range Road, Modern Flour Mill, Mullatabad, KTM, Peshawar Road, Qaid-e-Azam Hospital, Nust Road, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Rahmatabad, Chaklala, Bisali, Jhatta Hathial, New Kallam, Industrial, Gumti, Old Kallam, Bhal, Murat, Khasala, Jarrar Camp, Japan Road, Jinnah-I&II Feeders, Attock Circle, KSB, Lala Zaar, Small Industrial Estate, Khanabad, Munirabad, Lala Rukh, Hussainabad, Ahmed Nagar, Pathar Garh, Salampur, Hassan Abdul, Col. Sher Khan Feeders and surrounding areas.

## Sanaullah calls for enhanced collaboration with Australia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanaullah met with Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins to discuss ways to improve relations between Pakistan and Australia, on Tuesday.

During the meeting, Neil Hawkins praised Pakistan for its efforts in combating terrorism and praised the country's role in maintaining peace and stability in the region. He expressed

Australia's commitment to enhancing cooperation in various areas.

Minister Sanaullah stressed the importance of strong ties between the two countries for mutual development. He pointed out the need for increased collaboration in education, trade, and investment. He also highlighted Pakistan's significant contributions to regional security and urged the international community to recognize its experi-

ence in this area.

Sanaullah emphasized that political stability and economic growth are interconnected, arguing that strengthening democratic practices is vital for national stability. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to economic stability and sustainable development.

The meeting ended with both leaders agreeing to deepen their bilateral relations and expand cooperation in multiple sectors.

## Art Exhibition brought artists from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon

### Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: The Bahi Ajman Palace hosted a

captivating art exhibition, celebrating Pakistan's rich cultural heritage and artistic diversity. The event brought together artists from various nationalities, including Pakistan, Syria, Egypt and Lebanon, showcasing Pakistan's cultural diversity and its growing appeal as a tourist destination, on Tuesday.

Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Pakistan's Envoy to the UAE, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. In his keynote address, Ambassador Tirmizi commended the hotel's management for organizing an event that highlighted Pakistan's profound cultural heritage and vast tourism potential. He emphasized

the role of cultural diplomacy in fostering people-to-people connections.

Art, music, cuisine, and sports have the power to unite people. For greater harmony and peace, we must encourage more cultural exchanges, said the Ambassador.

"The UAE's beauty lies in its ability to bring together over 200 nationalities, creating a melting pot of cultures", he added.

The exhibition featured a fusion of traditional and contemporary artworks by artists from diverse backgrounds. Following the inauguration, Ambassador Tirmizi took a guided tour, engaging with artists and appreciating their creative expressions.

Area General Manager of Bahi Ajman Palace Hotel and Coral Beach

Resort Sharjah Itfikhara Hamdani, welcomed the Ambassador and expressed gratitude for his presence.

He reiterated the hotel's commitment to promoting cultural exchanges and supporting initiatives that bridge communities through art. Adding a youthful perspective, Sarim Hamdani, the event's youngest speaker, highlighted the potential of Pakistan's youth in driving progress and reclaiming the nation's historic glory.

The ceremony concluded with Ambassador Tirmizi distributing certificates to the participating artists in recognition of their contributions to art and culture. A special cake-cutting ceremony was also held to commemorate Pakistan Day, adding a festive touch to the event.

## NADRA starts operations at Pakistani Embassy in Oslo

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has set up a NADRA counter at the Pakistani Embassy in Oslo, Norway, aimed at providing comprehensive identity document services to Pakistanis residing in Norway.

This new counter will serve as a one-stop service center for NADRA's services, ensuring convenience for the large Pakistani diaspora in the region.

NADRA has also announced that similar counters are in the works for other countries with significant Pakistani populations. These include

Manama (Bahrain), Montreal and Vancouver (Canada), Italy (Milan) and Pretoria (South Africa).

Currently, NADRA counters are available at multiple Pakistani missions in the United States (Washington, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston), Spain (Madrid), Greece (Athens), Germany (Berlin), France (Paris), Oman (Muscat), Turkey (Istanbul), Canada (Toronto), Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), Kuwait and Australia (Sydney).

Additionally, NADRA operates registration centers in countries such as Saudi Arabia (Jeddah,

Riyadh and Madinah), United Arab Emirates (Dubai and Abu Dhabi), Qatar (Doha) and United Kingdom (London, Manchester, Birmingham and Bradford).

These centers and counters ensure that overseas Pakistanis can access all services related to identity documentation, providing them with the same level of service they would receive within Pakistan.

NADRA also organizes regular mobile registration operations in the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia to provide registration services to expatriates at their doorstep.

## Gov't intensifies efforts to eradicate polio: Mustafa

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Health, Mustafa Kamal, on Tuesday highlighted the government's renewed commitment to eradicating polio in Pakistan by 2025.

Talking to a private news channel, he announced a series of proactive measures to tackle the virus, focusing on increasing vaccination coverage and addressing community concerns.

He shared that the government is launching an extensive polio vaccination campaign in April,

aiming to surpass 90% coverage meeting the World Health Organization's (WHO) target for polio elimination.

He emphasized that advanced data systems now allow health authorities to identify and address vaccine refusals at the local level, improving the efficiency of vaccination drives.

To tackle vaccine hesitancy, the government is working with local influencers and community leaders to build public trust and promote immunization, he added.

The minister rejected the use of force, advocating for a community-based approach to persuade families. He expressed confidence that these efforts would significantly reduce vaccine refusals and accelerate the country's progress toward a polio-free future.

He emphasized that national health and public welfare remain a top priority, and the government is dedicated to working together to achieve lasting public health improvements.



ISLAMABAD: Gypsy boy collecting valuables from garbage at G-6 area in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo

## Organized child begging rings exploit Eid charity in ICT

ISLAMABAD (APP): The citizens of the twin cities, including Islamabad and Rawalpindi, report coordinated groups of minors flooding markets, shopping hubs, and residential areas, allegedly directed by handlers to solicit money, food, or goods during Ramadan and ahead of Eid.

They complain that the city is grappling with a surge in child begging linked to criminal networks capitalizing on Ramadan and Eid generosity. As public frustration grows, the city has launched a major crackdown, arresting dozens of beggars and urging citizens to redirect donations to registered charities.

Residents across Islamabad describe frequent encounters with children working in teams to demand cash or food, particularly in busy commercial zones like Blue Area and Jinnah Super Market.

Many believe adults are orchestrating the operations, exploiting religious charity traditions during Ramadan and ahead of Eid.

Muhammad Arif, a local resident, told APP that family outings are often disrupted by minors who first ask for money and then insist on food if refused. "One child approaches, and suddenly more follow. It feels planned," he said. Hafeez Ullah, another resident, reported being surrounded by groups of beggars while shopping. "They signal each other. It's unsettling," he added.

Meanwhile, Islamabad's district administration has escalated efforts to dismantle begging networks. In a recent operation, 25 children found begging were moved to the Edhi Center, a welfare organization, where they receive shelter while authorities trace their families or handlers.

Deputy Commissioner Irfan Nawaz Memon emphasized the need to prosecute those exploiting minors. "This isn't just about begging—it's about criminal networks profiting from children," he stated.

Critics, however, argue that arrests alone won't resolve systemic issues. Child rights advocates highlight poverty, lack of education, and weak law enforcement as drivers of the crisis. "Rescuing children is crucial, but without rehabilitation and prosecuting handlers, the cycle continues," said social worker Ayesha Khan.

Furthermore, in a separate operation, authorities detained 69 individuals accused of professional begging across Islamabad. Among them, 9 beggars were arrested by the Assistant Commissioner (AC) City near 9th Avenue.



### MoU signed to provide aid

KABUL (BNA): Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled Affairs signed MoU with Qamar Charity Organization to deliver essential Ramadan assistance to orphans, widows and individuals with disabilities. The MoU, valued at 510,000 Afghanis, aims to support the most vulnerable members of society during the holy month. The MoU will facilitate the preparation and distribution of seven types of food supplies to 150 beneficiaries across Kabul and Kunar provinces.

### 2 killed in Ghazni accident

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): Two people have been killed and as many others wounded in a traffic accident in Ghazni. Police HQs said that accident occurred when a passenger car struck an 11-year-old girl while she was crossing the road. The vehicle then swerved off the road and flipped over in the Qarabagh district along the Kabul-Kandahar highway. The girl and one woman lost their lives in the accident, while two others sustained injuries.

## Sadiq: Peace in Afghanistan essential for regional stability



KABUL (TOLONews): Mohammad Sadiq, Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan, stated during the flag-raising ceremony at Pakistan's embassy in Kabul that peace and progress in Afghanistan are essential for regional stability. The Pakistani envoy emphasized during the ceremony that the economic interests of the two countries are interconnected, and that Afghanistan is one of Pakistan's key regional partners.

According to him, Kabul and Islamabad must make efforts to strengthen regional economic development. "Both countries should cooperate to boost bilateral trade and enhance regional connectivity. Pakistan remains committed to strong and mutually beneficial bilateral relations with Afghanistan," stated

Mohammad Sadiq. "Sadiq Khan can play a role in building relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, but the two countries cannot live without each other," stated Moeen Gul Samkanai, a political analyst. These remarks come as relations between Kabul and Islamabad have deteriorated in recent months due to clashes along the hypothetical Durand Line, the

expulsion and detention of Afghan migrants from Pakistan, and the closure of crossings.

Some analysts stress that Pakistan's special representative for Afghanistan should work to resolve the disputes between the two nations.

"Sadiq should say these things sincerely, but he doesn't. The Afghan people are always ready to engage positively with Pakistan, but the Pakistanis don't want to have relations with us," stated Salim Paigere, a political analyst.

"Having good relations with Pakistan is in the interest of both countries and the region. The only good way to resolve existing challenges is through dialogue—provided that the Pakistani government remains committed to it," said Aziz Maarej, a former diplomat.

Meanwhile, during his visit to Kabul, Pakistan's special envoy for Afghanistan met with the acting Foreign Minister and discussed strengthening bilateral ties, adding that obstacle to trade and transit benefit no one.

## Ban on girls' education sparks int'l criticism

KABUL (TOLONews): The European Union, the British Embassy in Kabul, and Malala Yousafzai, an education activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner, have reacted to the continued ban on girls' education in the new academic year in Afghanistan.

The European Union stated that educated women are the architects of a stronger, more stable, and self-reliant country.

As part of the "Education For All" campaign, which currently supports girls' education in Afghanistan, the EU said that learning is vital for Afghanistan's long-term resilience and prosperity.

The EU's statement reads: "Education For All is crucial for Afghanistan's long-term resilience and prosperity. Educated women, with their vital skills and knowledge, are the architects of a stronger, more stable & economically independent country. The EU supports their right to education!"

The British Embassy also called on the Islamic Emirate to lift the ban on education for girls above grade six. The embassy described the denial of education to another 400,000 girls in the new school year as a disaster for both the girls and Afghanistan.

The British Embassy said that education is not a privilege but a right.

It further stated: "As another new school year starts in Afghanistan, 400,000 more girls will be denied education, making a total of 2.2 million. This is a tragedy for them and their country. Education is a right not a privilege. We urge the Taliban to lift the ban."

"What we women want is for closed doors to be opened, for our rights in Afghan society to be recognized, and for restrictions to be eased. What we seek is the reopening of schools and universities," said Tafsir Syaposh, a women's rights activist.

"The right to education and attending school should be granted to them [the girls], because it is obligatory for both men and women to seek knowledge. Our society needs doctors, teachers, and engineers. Overall, we need educated individuals in every field," said Ansharah Rahmani, a teacher at one of the schools.

Meanwhile, Malala Yousafzai, an education activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner also called the continued ban on Afghan girls' education an injustice in a message directed at Afghan girls.

In her message, Malala wrote: "Dear girls in Afghanistan, you should be in school today, sitting at your desk, opening your books, imagining the possibilities your future holds. Instead, you wake up each morning to a world that tells you that your future does not belong to you."

This comes as the Ministry of Education announced last Thursday the start of the academic year for boys and for girls below grade six, but made no mention of education for girls above grade six.

## 16 family members hospitalized due to TB

KABAUL (TOLONews): Officials at the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) hospital in Kandahar say that more than 2,700 positive cases of tuberculosis (TB) have been recorded in Kandahar and Zabul provinces since last year.

According to Sediqullah Ishaq, the hospital's representative in Kandahar, these cases have been registered in TB diagnosis and treatment centers.

He added that in addition to patients with regular TB, 85 patients with severe forms of the disease have also been treated in these centers.

"Since 2024, in collaboration with Afghanistan's National TB Program, we have diagnosed and treated 2,700 positive TB cases out of 45,000 suspected patients in Kandahar and Zabul. Additionally, 85 severe TB cases have also been treated," stated

Sediqullah Ishaq.

Zarif Khan, a hospitalized patient from Ajrstan district of Ghazni province who came to Kandahar, said all 16 members of his family are infected with TB.

"My daughters, sons, and wife are all infected with TB, and now we are hospitalized here," said Zarif Khan.

These patients complain of persistent coughing, fever, weight loss, chest phlegm, and night sweats—symptoms that eventually made them aware of their tuberculosis infection.

"I had a persistent cough, fever, chest phlegm, and was losing weight. Later, we found out I had TB," said a patient, Naqibullah.

"We didn't even realize how we got infected with TB, but I think living in tight and dark places is the main reason, as we used to live in such conditions,"

said Hidayatullah, a patient.

Polluted air, weakened immune systems, and living in dark, crowded spaces are considered major factors in the rapid transmission of tuberculosis contagious and dangerous disease.

Most of the hospitalized patients in this center are women and children.

"I had a cough and fever. They gave me medicine, and now I've recovered," stated Suhaila, one of the infected women.

"We brought my daughter to this hospital in very poor condition, but now she is recovering," said Sorat Khan, the father of a sick child. The World Health Organization has listed Afghanistan among the countries with the highest TB-related mortality rates.

According to the organization, around 13,000 Afghan citizens die annually due to this disease.

## DABS CEO meets Turkish firm



KABUL (BNA): Dr. Abdul Bari Omar, the Chief Executive Officer of Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), held a productive meeting with Sulaiman Cilio, the representative of the Turkish company 77, to review the status of electricity production projects in Afghanistan.

During the meeting, Cilio expressed strong interest in boosting investments in renewable energy projects within the country. He reaffirmed the Turkish firm's commitment to ongoing collaboration with DABS, emphasizing the potential for growth in Afghanistan's energy sector.

The press office of

DABS highlighted the company's recent achievements in developing domestic electricity production sources. These advancements are paving the way for Afghanistan's potential self-sufficiency in power supply and are crucial for enhancing the nation's electricity infrastructure.

## NRC cuts back on essential humanitarian services in Afghanistan

KABUL (Ariana News): The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) said Tuesday it is forced to cut back on services in Afghanistan due to the cuts in aid by Donald Trump, the president of the United States.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, Suze van Meegen, NRC's interim country director in Afghanistan said: "At a time when men, women and children in Afghanistan urgently need international funding and support, NRC and our partners are facing drastic funding cuts from key donors."

"This situation leaves us with no choice but to make untenable reductions in our services, further jeopardizing vital lifelines for the most vulnerable and impoverished communities." She said like many humanitarian organizations, NRC Afghanistan has been forced to close offices in several provinces and lay off many dedicated and professional humanitarian staff, with a particularly adverse impact on female aid workers.

"These funding cuts have far-reaching consequences. They extend from

communities that have lost access to basic assistance to thousands of experienced Afghan staff that have lost their livelihoods," van Meegen said.

The NRC warned that wide-ranging cuts in aid will lead to a diminishing footprint of humanitarian agencies in Afghanistan and leave the lives of millions on an increasingly dangerous trajectory, affecting women and children most adversely.

In January, Trump suspended ongoing aid projects which forced the majority of US-funded humanitarian work to be put on hold or end. Other donor governments – including Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom – have since also announced that their global aid budgets will be reduced in the coming years, foreshadowing a significant drop in the assistance available to the world's most vulnerable.

"This is the most challenging situation that NRC Afghanistan has faced in its 22 years in the country.

However, I want to emphasize that NRC Afghanistan is not shutting down its operations. We remain committed to staying in Afghanistan to support displaced women, men and children and to ensure that communities affected by decades of war are not left behind," said van Meegen.

The NRC said that since January, it has been forced to close two of its community resource centres, with two more at risk without suitable funding in the coming month.

The centres have been crucial in supporting returning and internally displaced Afghans, providing assistance with housing, food, legal assistance and referrals to healthcare providers, particularly for Afghan women who are heading their families and depend on female-to-female aid.

The loss of female aid workers across the country is further restricting women and children's access to essential services, reinforcing the conditions that prevent them from enjoying their basic rights, the NRC said.

Van Meegen said: "To prevent catastrophic damage in Afghanistan, the international community needs to step up and commit to supporting a population that has faced decades of war and neglect."

The NRC has been present in Afghanistan since 2003, delivering key services with the support of its donors, directly delivering assistance to people in need.

This includes providing shelter and protection services to displaced Afghans and those returning from neighbouring countries.

According to the UN's latest findings, almost 22.3 million Afghans need humanitarian assistance and 1 in 3 Afghans (more than 14 million people) do not know where their next meal will come from.

In 2024, the United States contributed just under \$742 million to Afghanistan's \$1.72 billion Humanitarian Response Plan – this equaled 43.4%.

The 2025 humanitarian response plan for Afghanistan is currently just 13.3%, according to UNOCHA.

## Over 1b afs projects executed in Laghman last year



MEHTARLAM (Pajhwok): Scores of development projects have been executed at a cost of more than one billion afghanis in Laghman last year, an official announced on Tuesday.

Deputy Governor Maulvi Akhtar Mohammad Muzamil told reporters 88 development schemes were planned in various sectors in Mehtarlam, the provincial capital and five districts in the solar year 1403.

Out of the 88 projects, 52 had been completed and work on the remaining was still ongoing, he said, adding the 1,024b afs schemes were funded by the government and partner organisations.

### 37m afs transport terminal being built

TIRINKOT (Pajhwok): Construction work has been initiated on a transport terminal at a cost of 37 million afghanis in the capital of central Uruzgan province, an official announced on Tuesday.

Acting Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation Hamidullah Akhundzada told the inaugural ceremony the terminal was being built on approximately five acres of land in Tirinkot. Funded by the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation (MoTC), the 37m afs project would take 14 months to complete, he said.

Meanwhile, Uruzgan Governor Inayatullah Shuja described the facility as a significant step forward.

He hoped the project's completion would go a long way in augmenting transport services for local residents.

## Cabinet meeting of IEA held in Kabul

KABUL (BNA): The cabinet meeting of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan convened under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund. During the meeting, several key issues were assigned to special committees for further deliberation and are expected to be reported back at the next cabinet session.

One of the significant proposals discussed was led by Mawlawi Shamsuddin Shariati, the Acting Director of the Directorate of Monitoring and Enforcement of Decrees and Orders.

The cabinet approved measures

to prevent the importation of low-quality oil into the country, directing relevant departments to take necessary steps for implementation.

Additionally, all Emirate departments received instructions to collaborate with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs on large and small projects related to labor recruitment. Emphasis was placed on prioritizing domestic citizens in the hiring process to bolster local employment.

The meeting also covered various other topics, resulting in several essential decisions aimed at the effective governance of the nation.

## Urgent action needed in fight against tuberculosis: Minister

KABUL (BNA): During the commemoration of World Tuberculosis Day, Mawlawi Abdul Wali Haqqani, Deputy Minister of Public Health, called for immediate and intensified efforts to combat tuberculosis (TB), a leading cause of death worldwide.

The Ministry of Public Health highlighted Haqqani's remarks, noting that TB remains one of the top ten contagious diseases responsible for significant mortality globally.

He underscored the critical importance of commitment, investment, and service delivery in eradicating TB, asserting that with collective efforts, the disease can be eliminated from Afghan society. "By providing neces-



sary care and treatment, we can ensure that all TB patients receive the support they need," Haqqani stated. He also reported that the Ministry successfully diagnosed and treated

51,319 TB cases last year, reflecting ongoing efforts to address this public health crisis.

During the meeting, several officials from the Ministry of Public Health

shared insights into the health services available and the treatment protocols for TB patients, emphasizing the need for continued awareness and action.



# BHC allows Mahrang to meet relatives in jail

— Gwadar, other coastal cities observe shutter-down strike

## F.P. Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan High Court (BHC) on Tuesday allowed imprisoned rights activist DR Mahrang Baloch to meet with her relatives after the Balochistan National Party-Mengal held strikes and issued a call to support the recent protests by the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) against a police crackdown and arrests of its leaders.

A two-member BHC comprising Justices Rozi Khan Barrech and Shaukat Ali Rakhshani presided over a hearing today on a petition by Mahrang's sister Nadia Baloch against the imprisonment and mentioning various state officials and authorities as respondents.

Petitioner's counsel Imran Baloch requested the court to issue a directive to the government to provide details of the cases against Mahrang. The bench accepted the petition for hearing and issued notices to the parties. It also allowed one week's time to provide details of the cases at the request of the Balochistan advocate general and prosecutor general.

The short order, said the petitioner's counsel had contended that Mahrang was arrested under Section 3 of the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance "without any reasoning," which was a violation of constitutional articles 15, 16 and 19. "Point needs consideration," the order said.

"After admission of the petition, petitioner's counsel filed an application with a request therein that the relatives of the detainee and her counsel may be allowed to meet her at District Jail Hudda Quetta. It is worthwhile to mention here that it is the right of every prisoner to meet with his/her counsel or relatives. Therefore, the application is accepted and the detainee's counsel and her relatives are allowed to meet her," it added.

However, Nadia alleged in a post on X that despite the high court's order, jail authorities stopped her for three hours "blatantly violating the high court's order". "Mahrang's life and health are

## Court releases BYC's Sammi Baloch, police rearrest

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Police rearrested Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) leader Sammi Deen Baloch from the court premises on Tuesday, shortly after a judicial magistrate ordered her release along with the other accused.

However, as soon as she was freed, police attempted to rearrest her, leading to resistance from lawyers present at the court. Shortly after, they detained the Baloch leader from the court premises and shifted her to jail for 30 days under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO).

According to the Sindh Home Department, the decision was made on the recommendation of Inspector General (IG) Sindh, citing security concerns. Officials alleged that Sammi, along with Abdul Wahab Baloch, Raza Ali, and others, was inciting road blockades and sit-ins, which could disrupt law and order in the city. The department further stated that the presence of the detained individuals in public places posed a potential threat to peace and stability. According to Sammi's lawyer, Jibrin Nasir, police attempted to detain her under the MPO ordinance. "The learned judicial magistrate discharged all five accused in the FIR registered yesterday," Jibrin wrote in a post on X. "As soon as the accused were discharged and ordered to be released, the police started waving the MPO order. While Sammi surrendered and willfully gave her arrest, the whereabouts of four others, Lala Wahab, Raziq, Sultan, and Shahdad, are unknown," he added. It must be noted that the BYC had announced to stage a protest at the Karachi Press Club (KPC) against the "illegal detention" of its top leaders, including Dr Mahrang Baloch. Mahrang was taken into custody on Saturday, along with 16 other activists from their protest camp in Quetta, a day after they alleged police of beating up three of their protestors to death during an anti-riot action.

in serious danger as she is being held among dangerous, hardcore criminals. When she resisted this, she was threatened of solitary confinement.

"Surveillance cameras have been installed directly in front of her prison cell and washroom, and she is subjected to constant 24-hour monitoring. She has no privacy, even in personal matters and has reported that her clothing choices are also being observed. "The food provided is extremely unhygienic, and we fear it is contaminated. As a result, both Mahrang and Bebo have fallen ill. Despite this, they are not being treated. They are also not being treated as political prisoners and are being denied basic rights," Nadia alleged. She appealed appeal to Quetta's legal fraternity and human rights organisa-

tions to take immediate action to ensure Mahrang and Bebo's safety and a fair trial.

Meanwhile, all businesses, banks, shops and petrol pumps in Gwadar were closed to protest against the arrests and cases registered against all BYC women leaders, including Dr Mahrang, Bebo Baloch and Sammi Deen Baloch. Thw protest came a day after the Karachi police detained Sammi and several others during a protest against the recent arrests of BYC leadership and a crackdown on its Quetta sit-in. Similar situation was witnessed in Ormara, a city 270 kilometres away from Gwadar, where a complete shutter-down strike by the traders' association was under way. Shops were also closed in Pasni, another coastal town 142km from Gwadar.



QUETTA: A view of closed shops during strike observed in Balochistan's Pasni.

## Canada to hold elections on April 28

### F.P. Report

OTTAWA: Canada's newly elected Prime Minister, Mark Carney, has dissolved parliament and announced early elections in the country. According to media, the prime minister declared that the elections would take place on April 28 to provide a strong mandate for his government.

The upcoming Canadian election will feature a close contest between the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party for a total of 343 seats in parliament. While proposing a tax cut for the middle class, Prime Minister Carney expressed concerns about U.S. President Trump's intentions, suggesting that Trump aims to undermine Canada's sovereignty. It is noteworthy that Mark Carney, the leader of Canada's ruling Liberal Party, was sworn in as the country's 24th Prime Minister on March 14.

## Robbers loot Rs 10m from private bank

### F.P. Report

BARA: Armed robbers looted a private bank in Bara Bazaar of Khyber district and managed to escape with around 10 million rupees.

District Police Officer (DPO) Rai Mazhar Iqbal Tuesday said, the robbery took place at around 9:00 a.m. adding a total of five robbers were involved in the incident. One of the robbers stayed outside the bank while the others carried out the heist, and fled with the stolen cash.

Police said an investigation was underway, and authorities were reviewing CCTV footage to identify the culprits. Police also assured that all possible measures will be taken to apprehend the accused soon.

## Journalist Farhan Mallick sent to jail

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: A court in Karachi sent journalist Farhan Mallick to jail on a 14-day judicial remand on Tuesday for allegedly airing "anti-state" content on his outlet's YouTube channel.

Mallick was presented before the court of Judicial Magistrate-I (East) Khaliq Zaman today. Investigation Officer Zeeshan Awan appeared during the hearing. The FIA sought an extension of the Raftar founder's physical remand till April 3. However, the court denied the request and sent him on a 14-day judicial remand.

Separately, the court also took up Mallick's bail petition and issued notices to the respondents, including the prosecutor and the investigation officer, for the next hearing on March 27.

Earlier on Tuesday, Raftar said Mallick was to appear before a "link judge" as the previous judge would not be coming. "We've been at the court since 8:30am, as today the FIA was ordered to present Mr Farhan after their investigative remand period ended," a post on Raftar's official X account said.

"In the morning we were told the judge was not going to be coming today. Farhan will now have to appear before a link judge. The link judge is waiting for the regular court to send files. The regular court is waiting for the FIA to bring Farhan," it added.

# Police bust cash van robbery gang

— recover Rs 34.9 million

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a major breakthrough, Peshawar police arrested suspects involved in a high-profile cash van robbery in the jurisdiction of Hashtnagri police station within hours of the crime. The arrested individuals, including the van driver, had been planning the heist for nearly a month.

Speaking to media persons at Malik Saad Police Lines, SSP Operations Masood Ahmad said the suspects had been surveying the area since early Ramadan, visiting the location on the 5th and 15th of the month to finalize their plan.

He added that on the day of the robbery, they targeted a Bank of Punjab cash van, held the staff at gunpoint, and fled with over Rs. 30 million. They also disarmed the security guard, taking his pistol before escaping.

Masood Ahmad further stated that upon receiving reports of the incident, senior police officials, including himself and SSP Investigation Noor Jamal, arrived at the crime scene.

CCTV footage was immediately collected, and



initial questioning led to suspicions about the van driver and cashier, who were taken into custody for further interrogation.

SSP Operations revealed that during questioning, van driver Fazal Wahab, son of Munsif, provided conflicting statements, raising police suspicions. Under intense interrogation, he eventually confessed to his role in the robbery and disclosed the names of his accomplices.

A special police team swiftly moved in, arresting Umar Khan, son of Bakhmal Khan; Fareed Khan, son of Ismail; and Faheem, son of Akhtar Munir.

The team recovered Rs. 34.9 million, along with the vehicle used in the robbery, two motorcycles, and three pistols.

Following the robbery, CCPO Peshawar Qasim Ali Khan and SSP Operations Masood Ahmed ordered the formation of a special joint investigation team. The team comprised SP City Khalid Khan, SP Fagirabad Syed Talal Ahmed Shah, DSP Hashtnagri Zahoor Khan, DSP Investigation Khalid Khan, DSP Fagirabad Umar Afridi, SHO Hashtnagri Javed Khan, and SHO Kotwali Qazi Akmal.

The investigators used CCTV footage and extensive questioning to piece together the crime. Their efforts led to the recovery of the stolen money and weapons used in the robbery. All arrested suspects have confessed to their involvement, and further investigations are ongoing.

# PHC to decide Faisal Javed plea tomorrow

## Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has adjourned the hearing of the case regarding the removal of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Faisal Javed's name from the Provisional National Identity List (PNIL) till tomorrow (Thursday). The court has decided to hear the case and decide on Thursday.

PHC two-member bench comprising Justice Sahibzada Asadullah and Justice Aurangzeb. The counsel for the petitioner, Alam Khan Adinzai, Additional Attorney General Sana Ullah, and the representative of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) appeared before the court.

The counsel for the petitioner informed the court that Faisal Javed wants to perform Umrah, but his name is on the list, and he is not being allowed to travel. The court had granted permission for Faisal Javed to perform Umrah, but his name was still placed on the passport control list.

The Additional Attorney General told the court that Faisal Javed's name was included in the PNIL and passport control list because he did not appear

in the cases registered against him in Islamabad. The Islamabad police had recommended adding his name to the list.

Justice Sahibzada Asadullah asked why the court's orders were not implemented, and the Additional Attorney General replied that they had removed Faisal Javed's name from the PNIL, but the Islamabad police had recommended adding his name to the passport control list.

Faisal Javed told the court that he was going to perform Umrah in the first decade of Ramadan, but he was stopped at the airport. The court had granted him permission, but he was still not allowed to travel.

Justice Sahibzada Asadullah asked how Faisal Javed's name was added to the list and who had the authority to do so. The FIA representative told the court that the Director of Immigration has the authority, and Faisal Javed's name was added to the list on the recommendation of the Islamabad police. Justice Sahibzada Asadullah asked where it was written that Faisal Javed's name was added to the PNIL. The Additional Attorney General replied that all the records were available on

the file. Justice Sahibzada Asadullah said that the court would give time to the parties and hear the case on Thursday. He directed the parties to obtain all the relevant documents from the concerned authorities. After the hearing, Faisal Javed told the media outside the Peshawar High Court that good news would come after Eid. He said that the senior leadership of the PTI was in contact with the opposition parties, and those parties that stood with the constitution, law, and democracy would be accepted by the people.

Faisal Javed said that a strong alliance of opposition parties was being formed. He added that for the supremacy of the constitution and democracy, everyone would have to come out. Faisal Javed criticized the federal ministers for going on foreign tours while the people were facing difficulties due to inflation. He said that the federal cabinet had increased their salaries, but the people were suffering. Faisal Javed said that he was not allowed to go for Umrah, despite the court's permission. He added that today was a day of great joy for Pakistanis, as on this day in 1992, Pakistan had won the Cricket World Cup.

# US airstrikes targeting Houthis kill two people

DUBAI (AP): US airstrikes targeting Yemen's Houthi militia pounded sites across the country into early Tuesday, with the group saying one attack in the capital killed at least two people and wounded more than a dozen others.

The American strikes on the militia, who threaten maritime trade and Israel, entered their 10th day without any sign of stopping. They are part of a campaign by US President Donald Trump targeting the rebel group while also trying to pressure Iran, the Houthis' main benefactor. So far, the US has not offered any specifics on the sites it is striking, though Trump's national security adviser Mike Waltz

claimed the attacks have "taken out key Houthi leadership, including their head missileer." That's something so far that's not been acknowledged by the Houthis, though the militia have downplayed their losses in the past and exaggerated their attacks attempting to target American warships.

"We've hit their headquarters," Waltz told CBS' "Face the Nation" on Sunday. "We've hit communications nodes, weapons factories and even some of their over-the-water drone production facilities." An apparent US strike Sunday hit a building in a western neighborhood of Yemen's capital, Sanaa, killing at least two people and

wounding 13 others, the rebel-controlled SABA news agency said, citing health officials. Footage released by the militia showed the rubble of a collapsed building and pools of blood staining the gray dust covering the ground.

A building next to the collapsed structure still stood, suggesting American forces likely used a lower-yield warhead in the strike. The Houthis also described American airstrikes targeting sites around the city of Saada, a Houthi stronghold, the Red Sea port city of Hodeida and Marib province, home to oil and gas fields still under the control of allies to Yemen's exiled central government.

## Israel kills six in Syria

BEIRUT: An Israeli attack killed six people in southern Syria on Tuesday, the Syrian Arab Republic's foreign ministry said, after the Israeli military said its troops had clashed with militants who had opened fire on them.

The violence in the border area marks increased friction between Israel and Syria, where a new Islamist-led leadership has been installed after rebels ousted former leader Bashar Assad from power in December. Israel says it will not tolerate an Islamist militant presence in southern Syria and has sent its troops into Syria's border zone. Syria's leadership has said it does not intend to open a front against Israel.

The Israeli military said militants in southern Syria opened fire toward Israeli troops, without specifying whether the Israeli troops were within Syrian territory when they were targeted. It said its troops returned fire and that an Israeli warplane struck the militants. It gave no details on casualties but said "hits were identified."

Syria's foreign ministry said six people had been killed in the attack on Koya, a town in the southern province of Daraa, adding that the toll was expected to rise due to serious injuries sustained from the attack. It has called for an international investigation into the Israeli attacks on its territory, describing them as a "blatant violation of its sovereignty."

Earlier, Israel said it had attacked two military bases, Tadmur and T4, in Homs province in central Syria. Israel spent years carrying out airstrikes on Syria during Assad's rule, targeting Iran-linked military installations and weapons transfers from Tehran intended for the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah.

That arms route was cut when Assad was toppled but Israel has continued to carry out strikes on Syrian military bases. The European Union's foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas warned on Tuesday that Israel's strikes into Syria "risk further escalation." Speaking at a joint press conference with Israel's foreign minister Gideon Saar, Kallas said the pair had discussed Israel's actions.

"And we (the EU) feel that these things are unnecessary, because Syria is right now not attacking Israel," Kallas said. The foreign ministry also urged Syrian people to reject any attempts to displace them or "enforce any new realities on the ground." — Arab News

# IHC adjourns hearing of petition of Imran, Bushra

## F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday adjourned hearing of the petition for suspension of the sentence of Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi in the 190 million pound case until after Eid due to the absence of defense lawyer.

A two-judge bench comprising Acting Chief Justice Sardar Sarfaraz Dogar and Justice Muhammad Asif heard the case. PTI founder's lawyer Shoaib Shaheen said that Barrister Salman Safdar is on his way, the lead counsel is just coming from the Supreme Court, the court should keep this case for later.

On this, the Acting Chief Justice said that they will keep this case after Eid. Due to the absence of the PTI founder's lawyer, the court adjourned the hearing of the case until after Eid. PTI founder's lawyer

## Babar Awan allowed to meet founder

### F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: A new controversy came to light on Tuesday after Babar Awan was allowed to meet with the PTI founder Imran Khan. The meeting between Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi was due on Tuesday.

Tensions arose between the legal team and the jail administration when Babar Awan was allowed to meet. Salman Akram Raja, while talking to the jail staff, said, "You should establish discipline." Babar Awan's name is not included in our list. Why did you call him inside?

PTI secretary general was of the opinion that only the names given by the party should be sent for the meeting. Bushra Bibi also instructed to include the names of Salman Safdar and Usman Gul. He further explained that this entire matter had been settled in the High Court yesterday, so only those six people whose names were already provided should be allowed to meet. However, the jail administration finally allowed Babar Awan, Niazullah Niazi, and Salman Akram Raja to meet, in addition to this, Zaeher Abbas Chaudhry, Naem Haider Panjhuta, and Salman Safdar were also allowed to meet.

Salman Akram Raja the jail authorities yesterday. Advocate said that this day, but they did not court had ordered meetings with the founder of PTI. I that the court issue that gave the list of Names to written order.

# Children among 62 killed as Israel pounds Gaza

GAZA: Renewed Israeli bombardments across the Gaza Strip have killed dozens of Palestinians, including children, as the Israeli army has issued a new round of forced displacement orders across the besieged territory.

In a statement on Tuesday afternoon, the Ministry of Health in Gaza said at least 62 people were killed in Israeli attacks over the past 24-hour reporting period. At least 23 people, including seven children, were killed in overnight attacks, according to medical sources. Reporting from Deir el-Balah in central Gaza, Al Jazeera's Hind Khoudary said different areas across the Strip were under heavy artillery shelling and air attacks.

In southern Gaza, at least five Palestinians were killed in attacks that hit two tents sheltering displaced people in Khan Younis, she said. Another eight Palestinians were killed in an attack on a residential home in Bureij in central Gaza while more attacks were reported in northern areas, including in Gaza City and Jabalia. In Beit Lahiya, also in the north, an Israeli attack killed at least three Palestinians, including a three-year-old girl. "There have been continuous air strikes on civilians' homes and where Palestinians are sheltering," Khoudary said.

After the latest attacks, Hamas issued a statement denouncing the "horrific

## UNHCR suspends aid to refugees

CAIRO (AFP): The United Nations refugee agency said on Tuesday a lack of funding was forcing it to suspend vital aid to refugees in Egypt, including medical care for many fleeing war-torn Sudan. "The lack of available funds and deep uncertainty over the level of donor contributions this year has forced UNHCR to suspend all medical treatment for refugees in Egypt except emergency life-saving procedures, affecting around 20,000 patients," the UN agency said in a statement. This includes cancer treatment, heart surgeries, and medication for high blood pressure and diabetes.

UNHCR public health officer Jakob Arhem said that without the agency's services, some patients "will not be able to find the means to pay for health care themselves and they will get sicker, weaker and many will die". The agency last year received less than half of the \$135 million needed to assist more than 939,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers from Sudan and 60 other countries currently residing in Egypt.

massacres" and urged the international community to rein in Israel, which last week broke a two-month ceasefire with the Palestinian group. Since it renewed its bombardment on Gaza on March 18, the Israeli army has killed 792 people, including hundreds of children, and wounded 1,663, according to the Health Ministry.

Amid a total aid blockade, tens of thousands of people have also been forced to flee once again, just weeks after returning following the start of the ceasefire on January 19. In its latest round of forced displacement orders, the Israeli army on Tuesday warned of new attacks in Jabalia, Beit Lahiya, Beit Hanoun and Shujayea in Gaza City, saying rockets

had been fired towards Israel from the northern area. Other orders were also issued for Khan Younis and Rafah in the south.

A number of aid groups and United Nations agencies have long said there are no safe areas in Gaza as Israeli-designated "humanitarian zones" and shelters have repeatedly come under Israeli attack. The international charity Save the Children on Tuesday called the resumption of the war "a death sentence" for children in besieged Gaza.

"Children are being killed in their sleep in tents. They are being starved and attacked. The only way to ensure children and families are protected is through a definitive ceasefire," it said. — Aljazeera