

Police foil terrorist attacks  
F.P. Report

D I KHAN: The district police have foiled a terrorist attack on its mobile van here in the limits of Parao Police station. The police van was on a routine patrol when four unidentified armed motorcyclists opened fire on it near Hayat Minor. Station House Officer (SHO) Proa, Muhammad Ali, along with his team, promptly retaliated the fire.



@thefrontierpost

First national English daily published from Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Karachi and Washington D.C

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIXII

No. 105

Regd. No. 241

ZIQAAD 16 1446 -- WEDNESDAY, MAY 14 2025

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30

# Trump secures \$600b Saudi investment pledge

RIYADH (Reuters): US President Donald Trump secured a \$600 billion commitment from Saudi Arabia on Tuesday to invest in the United States after the oil power rolled out the red carpet for him at the start of a tour of Gulf states.

Trump punched the air as he emerged from Air Force One to be greeted by Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who later signed an agreement with the president in Riyadh on energy, defence, mining and other areas. Saudi Arabia's investment commitment includes what the US described as the largest defence sales agreement between the allies, worth nearly \$142 billion.

Reuters reported in April the US was poised to offer the kingdom an arms package worth well over \$100 billion. "I really believe we like each other a lot," Trump said during a meeting with the crown prince, Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler. The US and Saudi Arabia had discussed Riyadh's potential purchase of Lockheed F-35 jets, two sources briefed on discussions told Reuters, referring to a military aircraft that the kingdom is long thought to have been interested in.

It was not immediately clear whether those aircraft were covered in the deal announced on Tuesday. Trump, who is accompanied by US business leaders including billionaire Elon Musk, will go on from Riyadh to Qatar on Wednesday and the United



Arab Emirates on Thursday. He has not scheduled a stop in Israel, a decision that has raised questions about where the close ally stands in Washington's priorities, and the focus of the trip is on investment rather than security matters in the Middle East.

"While energy remains a cornerstone of our relationship, the investments and business opportunities in the kingdom have expanded and multiplied many, many times over," Saudi Investment Minister Khalid al-Falih told a US-Saudi investment forum. "As a result ... when Saudis and

Americans join forces very good things happen, more often than not great things happen when those joint ventures happen," he said before Trump's arrival. Trump called the Saudi crown prince a friend and said they have a good relationship, according to a pool report from the Wall Street Journal, adding that Saudi investment would help create jobs in the US.

Business leaders at the investment forum included Larry Fink, the CEO of asset management firm BlackRock, Stephen A. Schwartzman, CEO of

asset manager Blackstone, and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent. Musk chatted briefly with both Trump and the crown prince, who is otherwise known as MbS, during a palace reception for the US president. And joining Trump for a lunch with MbS were top US businessmen including Musk, the Tesla and SpaceX chief, and OpenAI CEO Sam Altman.

MbS has focused on diversifying the kingdom's economy in a major reform programme dubbed Vision 2030 that includes "Giga-projects" such as NEOM, a futuristic city the size of Belgium. Oil generated 62% of Saudi government revenue last year. The kingdom has scaled back some of its ambitions as rising costs and falling oil prices weigh.

Saudi Arabia and the US have maintained strong ties for decades based on an ironclad arrangement in which the kingdom delivers oil and the superpower provides security in exchange. MbS' ties with Trump have been smoother than with his predecessor, Joe Biden. Their relations were strained by the 2018 killing of Saudi commentator Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi agents in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. US intelligence believed the killing was ordered by MbS. He denied involvement.

Trump has not included Israel on his schedule although he wants Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to agree a new ceasefire deal in the

## US President to ease curbs on Syria

RIYADH (AP): President Donald Trump said Tuesday he will move to normalize relations and lift sanctions on Syria's new government to give the country "a chance at peace." Trump was set to meet Wednesday in Saudi Arabia with Syrian President Ahmad Al-Sharaa. "There is a new government that will hopefully succeed," Trump said of Syria, adding, "I say good luck, Syria. Show us something special." Speaking at the Saudi-US Investment Forum in Riyadh, he said the effort toward rapprochement came following discussions with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Trump received a standing ovation after his announcement, and added: "Oh, what I do for the crown prince." Al-Sharaa was named president of Syria in January, a month after a stunning offensive by insurgent groups led by Al-Sharaa's Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham or HTS that stormed Damascus ending the 54-year rule of the Assad family. The US has been weighing how to handle Al-Sharaa since he took power in December. Gulf leaders, have rallied behind the new government in Damascus and will want Trump to follow. Then-President Joe Biden left the decision to Trump, whose administration has yet to formally recognize the new Syrian government. Sanctions imposed on Damascus under Assad also remain in place.

Gaza war. Israeli officials have put a brave face on Trump's decision but there are growing doubts in Israel about its position in his priorities as frustration mounts in Washington over the failure to end the war.

Israel's military operations against Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, and its assassinations of the two Iran-allied groups' leaders, have at the same time given Trump more leverage by weakening Tehran and its regional allies. US and Iranian negotiators met in Oman at the weekend to discuss a potential deal to curb

Tehran's nuclear program. Trump has threatened military action against Iran if diplomacy fails.

Trump is expected to offer Saudi Arabia, Iran's regional rival, an arms package worth more than \$100 billion, sources told Reuters. This could include a range of advanced weapons. Trump's Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, said last week he expected progress imminently on expanding accords brokered by Trump in his first term under which Arab states including the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco recognised Israel.

## PM says Indian arrogance shattered

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday paying tribute to the martyrs of Ma'arka-i-Haq (Battle of Truth) said that through the operation Bunyanum Marsoos, the Pakistan armed forces shattered India's illusion of numerical strength and arrogance.

The prime minister, in a statement, saluted the families of those who sacrificed their lives for the nation. He paid tribute to five officers and personnel of the Pakistan Air Force and six officers and soldiers of the Pakistan Army who were martyred while defending the homeland. "We not only defended the country with full force but also ensured that the sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan remained unscathed. The brave officers and soldiers of the Pakistan armed forces fulfilled their promise to the nation to protect the motherland," he remarked.

He said that the entire nation was proud of its martyrs and their families and that they would never forget the sacrifices of its brave sons. Expressing grief over the martyrdom of 40 innocent civilians, including 15 children and 7 women, as a result of Indian aggression, he said, "We have not forgotten the martyrs of the nation, nor will we do so, and their families will never be left alone."

Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated that a Martyrs' Package had already been announced and the state would fully support the martyrs' families. He prayed to Allah Almighty for elevation of the martyrs' ranks, patience for their families and early recovery of the injured, and said the operation Bunyanum Marsoos gave a fitting response to India.

"Bunyanum Marsoos made it clear to India that it must respect the sovereignty and integrity of other nations in the region. We are a peaceful nation, but we know how to respond to any aggression. Operation Bunyanum Marsoos is clear proof of that," the prime minister commented.

**Shehbaz directs measures to broaden tax net; tech use to prevent evasion:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif calling for measures to broaden the tax net, directed the authorities concerned to take strict

action against individuals and sectors involved in tax evasion.

The prime minister, chairing a review meeting on broadening the tax base and increasing tax revenue, said that the individuals and sectors capable of paying taxes must be brought into the tax net. He also instructed the stringent accountability of officers and personnel assisting the tax evaders, according to a PM Office press release. The prime minister lauded the efforts of the government's economic team for swiftly heading toward achieving FBR's revenue targets for the current fiscal year.

**Premier directs expediting work on Danish educational institutions:** Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif directed expediting work on the under-construction Danish Schools and University and said that the establishment of these institutions across the country, for provision of quality education to the deserving and brilliant students, was among the top priorities of the government.

Chairing a review meeting on the construction of 15 new Danish Schools and Danish University, the prime minister also asked for quality construction work and their third party validation, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The meeting was attended by Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Education Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, provincial chief secretaries, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, chief commissioner of Islamabad Capital Territory and relevant authorities.

The prime minister directed for installation of smart boards in all the classrooms, establishment of digital libraries and the merit based and transparent appointment process of the teaching staff in these schools. He opined that local eligible teaching staff should be given priority during the appointment process and directed for submission of proposals for the establishment of Danish Authority. During the meeting, a briefing was given over the under-construction Danish Schools and Danish University, Islamabad.

## Nation, armed forces always ready to respond

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday said that India's blatant aggression had further united and strengthened the Pakistani people, and that the entire nation and its armed forces were always ready to respond to India's hostility.

The president, in a statement, paid tribute to those martyred as a result of unprovoked Indian aggression against Pakistan and said that the entire nation saluted the brave sons of the Pakistan Army and Pakistan Air Force who sacrificed their lives for the country's security. "We are proud of the sacrifices of our martyrs. Our brave forces have successfully defended the nation and the country's integrity. Through Operation Bunyanum Marsoos, our brave forces shattered the enemy's arrogance," he remarked.

President Zardari said that the people and the brave forces of Pakistan were always ready to thwart any aggression and would give a crushing response to every attack on their national security and sovereignty. He expressed grief over the loss of precious lives, including children and women, during the Indian attacks. He also extended condolences to the families of those who lost their lives and prayed for their patience and strength, and swift recovery of the injured.

## Turkish envoy calls on CJP

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Irfan Neziroglu, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye, called on the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi, at the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Islamabad on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the Chief Justice warmly welcomed the esteemed guest and expressed his sincere gratitude for the exceptional hospitality extended by the Turkish judiciary during his recent official visit to Türkiye.

The Chief Justice had visited Türkiye to participate in the 63rd Anniversary celebrations of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Türkiye. The Chief Justice highlighted the long-standing and cordial judicial relations between Pakistan and Türkiye, rooted in mutual respect, shared legal traditions, and deep cultural ties. He appreciated the ongoing cooperation in the field of judicial education and capacity building of various tiers of judicial system.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing a review meeting on Danish schools and University.

## 40 civilians, 11 personnel of armed forces martyred in India's attacks

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: On the night of 6-7 May 2025, the Indian Armed Forces launched unprovoked and reprehensible dastardly attacks targeting innocent civilians, including women, children, and the elderly. These barbaric strikes resulted in the martyrdom of 40 civilians-among them 7 women

In response to this grave aggression, the Pakistan Armed Forces mounted a resolute response under the banner of Marka-e-Haq, delivering precise and notch-up retributive strikes through Operation Bunyanum Marsoos. While defending the motherland with exemplary valour, 11 personnel of the Pakistan Armed Forces

Army include: Naik Abdul Rehman, Lance Naik Dilawar Khan, Lance Naik Ikramullah, Naik Waqar Khalid, Sepoy Muhammad Adeel Akbar and Sepoy Nisar. The martyrs from the Pakistan Air Force include: Squadron Leader Usman Yousuf, Chief Technician Aurangzeb, Senior Technician Najeab, Corporal Technician Farooq and Senior Technician Mubashir

Their noble sacrifice of martyrs is an enduring symbol of courage, devotion, and unwavering patriotism-etched forever in the nation's memory. The Pakistan Armed Forces, together with the people of Pakistan, pay solemn tribute to the martyred civilians and military personnel, and offer heartfelt prayers for the swift recovery of the injured.

The nation remains resolute in the face of aggression. Let there be no ambiguity: any attempt to challenge Pakistan's sovereignty or territorial integrity, ever again, shall be met with a swift, full-spectrum, and decisive response Inshallah. Pakistan Zindabad - Afwaj-e-Pakistan Paindabad.



and 15 children-while 121 others sustained injuries, including 10 women and 27 children.

embraced martyrdom and 78 were wounded.

The martyrs from the Pakistan

## SC adjourns Zahir's appeal

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: A three-member bench of the Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday adjourned until May 19 the hearing of Zahir Jaffar's appeal against his death sentence in the Noor Mukadam murder case, after both the defence and prosecution agreed to the postponement.

The bench comprised Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar, Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Ali Baqar Najafi. When the hearing of the case commenced, Zahir Jaffar's lawyer Salman Safdar sought adjournment for submitting additional documents. The court directed the defence lawyer Salman Safdar and prosecution lawyer Shah Khawar to come fully prepared on next date of hearing, as no further adjournment will be granted.

Zahir Jaffar was awarded death sentence by a district and sessions court in Islamabad in February 2022, for murdering 27 year old Noor Mukadam, daughter of a former diplomat Shaukat Mukadam.

## FO refutes Indian claims that Pakistan sought truce

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday rejected the recent remarks by the Indian Prime Minister, terming them as "provocative and inflammatory" that represented a dangerous escalation and a blatant disregard for international law, reflecting a propensity to fabricate misleading narratives to justify the aggression and its military adventurism.

The statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs warned of escalating regional tensions and accused India of engaging in political opportunism, misinformation, and a dangerous disregard for international law. The response follows a controversial address by the Indian leader, which falsely portrayed Pakistan's intent in supporting a ceasefire and misrepresented the recent Pahalgam attack to justify potential military aggression.

"At a time when international efforts are focused on regional peace and stability, such rhetoric is a reckless

## Pakistan orders Indian diplomat to leave country

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In what appeared to be a tit-for-tat move, Pakistan on Tuesday ordered an official of the Indian High Commission to leave the country in 24 hours. He was also enlisted as persona non grata and it was said that he violated diplomatic and international protocols.

Earlier, India granted one diplomat of Pakistan a status of persona non grata. The Pakistani official was accused, without any evidence, of involved in "activities not in keeping with his official status" and asked him to leave India within 24 hours.

escalation," said the Foreign Office, asserting that India is using the incident to "fabricate misleading narratives" and justify its "military adventurism."

The statement emphasized that Pakistan's response to Indian aggression had been "calibrated and targeted against military installations," reiterating the country's right to self-defense and its capacity to respond with strength and precision. It said New Delhi was setting a 'dangerous precedent' by targeting civilians and military bases alike,

risking "an uncontrollable escalatory spiral."

The Ministry also refuted Indian claims that Pakistan sought a ceasefire and said the agreement was the result of diplomatic efforts by friendly countries and Pakistan's commitment to de-escalation. The Foreign Office further criticized India's violations of the Indus Water Treaty and pointed to what it described as India's "revisionist mindset" and "brinkmanship," which could threaten strategic stability in South Asia.

7 injured in firing on van  
F.P. Report

BATGRAM: A driver and six children were critically injured when unidentified armed assailants opened fire on a school van in Batgram on Tuesday. District Police Officer (DPO) Batgram Ayaz Khan said the incident appeared to be result of an old enmity. The school van was coming from Peer Pahari area of Batgram. One girl and five boys received bullet wounds.



LAHORE: Visitors take pictures near the water fall point during their visit to the zoo. —INP Photo

## Ex-Governor lauds armed forces, stresses national unity in defense

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Former Governor Haji Ghulam Ali has paid rich tribute to the Pakistan Armed Forces, particularly the Pakistan Air Force, for the resounding success of Operation Bunyan-e-Marsoos, stating that “what the Pakistan Armed Forces have accomplished is unparalleled and perhaps beyond the capability of any other country in the world.”

He described the operation as an extraordinary demonstration of courage and strength that sent a powerful message to the world: Pakistan is a peace-loving nation, but its defense is invincible.

He emphasized that national defense is not the sole responsibility of the

military—it is a sacred duty shared by the entire nation. Referring to Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman’s historic statement, he said, “Maulana clearly offered the services of the Ansarul-Islam volunteers to fight on the front lines in case of war,” sending a unified message to the nation that standing with one’s state and institutions is the obligation of every Pakistani.

In his statement, Haji Ghulam Ali asserted that Pakistan’s defense is a collective responsibility of the entire nation. He said the resolute bravery of the Pakistan Armed Forces in the face of cowardly enemy aggression, combined with the unwavering resolve of the people, has once again proven that this nation will

neither bow down nor be intimidated.

He further stated that every Indian provocation or conspiracy has always been met with a professionally unmatched and exemplary response by Pakistan’s military, something the entire nation is proud of. However, it must be recognized that Pakistan’s defense does not lie with the armed forces alone; over 250 million Pakistanis—including youth, workers, intellectuals, students, and members of all walks of life—share this sacred duty.

He reiterated Maulana Fazlur Rehman’s words from the floor of the assembly, where he stated that in times of war, defending the state is a duty upon all, not just the

military. This was a powerful message to the nation: to stand shoulder to shoulder with their state and its institutions.

Issuing a clear warning to the enemy, Haji Ghulam Ali declared, “If anyone dares look at Pakistan with hostility again, we reserve the right to deliver an even harsher, immediate, and decisive response.” In any such response, the role of the Pakistan Armed Forces and the Pakistan Air Force will be central—etched into history in golden words.

He concluded, “The nation, the armed forces, and the state are one body, one soul, one resolve.”

Long live Pakistan — Eternal glory to the Pakistan Armed Forces, the people, and the youth.

## UK Deputy HC calls on Sindh Assembly Speaker

KARACHI (APP): Deputy High Commissioner of the United Kingdom in Karachi, Lance Domm, paid a courtesy call on to Sindh Assembly Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah here at the Sindh Assembly on Tuesday.

Domm was accompanied by Ms. Huda Ikram, Senior Political Adviser, and Noam Rosenbaum, Economic Advisor.

The meeting reflected the strength of long-standing ties between Pakistan and the United Kingdom, statement issued by Sindh

Assembly spokesman said.

The Speaker welcomed the delegation and shared the historic legacy of the Sindh Assembly, highlighting that it was the first legislature to pass a resolution in favor of the creation of a separate Muslim state.

He added that in this same Assembly the national flag of Pakistan was hoisted for the first time after independence. Discussions

focused on enhancing cooperation between the UK and Sindh, particularly in the areas of trade, education, and public health. The

Speaker expressed appreciation for the UK’s continued support, especially during floods and humanitarian crises.

They also exchanged views on current internal and external situation. The Speaker appreciated the announcement of a ceasefire and said Pakistan welcomed the decision, hoping it will be honored from the other side as well.

UK Deputy HC appreciated developments in Sindh’s transport sector.

The upon the Deputy High Commissioner’s

request, the Speaker led the delegation to the historic Old Hall of the Assembly, where the Pakistan Resolution was passed.

Speaker Awais Qadir Shah also presented Lance Domm with the Legacy Shield of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, along with a traditional Sindh Ajrak and Sindh Cap as tokens of cultural goodwill.

The Deputy High Commissioner thanked the Speaker for the warm welcome, meaningful discussions, and gracious hospitality.

### No place for criminals in Bannu Region: RPO Sajjad F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Bannu, Sajjad Khan, has stated that there is no place for criminals, terrorists, or smugglers in the Bannu region. He emphasized that the police force is committed to restoring peace in the area through comprehensive and ongoing operations.

According to RPO Sajjad Khan, successful operations are being carried out against terrorists in the region, resulting in the elimination of several key commanders of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) along with their associates. He further added that strict action is also being taken against those who facilitate terrorists, and no leniency will be shown to them.

The RPO also highlighted that a crackdown is underway against smuggling activities. Action is being taken indiscriminately against those involved, regardless of their status. He warned that any police officer or personnel found to be involved in smuggling would also face strict legal action. He stressed the importance of public cooperation in maintaining peace. “We will work together with the public to eliminate all forms of criminal activity from the region,” he asserted.

### Sindh declares May 15 as Thanksgiving and Victory Day F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Sindh government and the Pakistan Peoples Party have announced that “Thanksgiving Day and Victory Day” will be observed on May 15. On this occasion, the courageous resistance, effective strategy, and remarkable success of the Pakistani Armed Forces against the aggression of terrorist India will be fully acknowledged.

Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon said that by declaring “Thanksgiving Day” and “Victory Day” on May 15, Pakistan would clearly convey this message to the entire world that Pakistan is a peace-loving state but fully prepared to defend its borders, sovereignty, and national dignity at any time.

He further added that celebrations would be organized throughout Sindh with Quran recitation to salute the martyrs, rallies to tribute the soldiers of the Pakistan Armed Forces, and public gatherings.

### 3,800 encroachments removed

LAHORE (APP): The district administration, during a crackdown against encroachment, has removed 3,800 illegal encroachments, registered two FIRs and seized 31 truckloads of confiscated items across the city on Tuesday.

The grand anti-encroachment operation, being conducted under the direct supervision of Deputy Commissioner Syed Musa Raza, also led to the removal of a significant number of unauthorized banners, posters, and streamers. Key areas targeted during the operation include Kahna, Samanabad, Green Town, Township, Model Town, and Gulberg, along with major thoroughfares such as Multan Road and Circular Road.

## Turkiye, Azerbaijan envoys call on Governor

LAHORE (APP): Türkiye and Azerbaijan envoys Irfan Naziroglu and Khazar Farhadov called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider and felicitated the governor on Pakistan’s brilliant victory in recent war against India during a meeting in Islamabad.

Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan thanked the friendly countries that supported Pakistan during India, Pakistan conflict.

He said that Pakistan’s armed forces destroyed India’s nefarious objectives

through Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos.

The Punjab Governor said that Pakistan will never compromise on its integrity and sovereignty. He said that all political parties have proven that everyone is on the same page for the sake of the country. He observed that the nation’s unity and patriotic zeal were palpable in the face of adversity.

Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that the whole world has seen that the Pakistani army is capable of countering all kinds

of aggression.

He said that India made allegations of Pahalgam drama on Pakistan without evidence. He said that the Pakistani media played a positive role and told the world that the Indian media had misled the world through false news.

The Governor Punjab further said, “Pakistan has always wanted peace, but this should not be considered our weakness.”

He said that Türkiye and Azerbaijan have always supported Pakistan in difficult times.

## Excise Dept records Rs 5.5 billion revenue in 2024–25

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A monthly review meeting of the Excise and Taxation Department regarding recovery and performance was held in Peshawar under the chairmanship of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Excise and Taxation Khaleeq-ur-Rehman.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Excise Department Khalid Ilyas, Director General Abdul Aleem Khan, and all district Excise and Taxation Officers. The meeting reviewed the revenue collection, recovery, and set targets for the ten months of the current fiscal year 2024–25 (July to April).

It was informed that the Excise Department has collected PKR 5.5 billion in revenue during FY

2024–25, compared to PKR 2.9 billion in the previous year. Minister Khaleeq-ur-Rehman has expressed satisfaction and happiness over this significant improvement.

During the meeting, the Minister was given a detailed briefing on the revenue targets and collections of all district Excise offices. He was also updated on various ongoing administrative reforms and public service facilitation initiatives in the department.

Officers who demonstrated good performance were appreciated on the occasion. Minister Khaleeq-ur-Rehman expressed happiness over the department’s overall improved performance compared to the previous.

He reaffirmed the commitment that in the coming

years, efforts will continue with even more dedication and hard work to increase recovery and revenue for the welfare of the people of the province.

He directed the launch of a special campaign against major tax defaulters across the province in accordance with the law. Likewise, actions should be intensified against token tax defaulters and unregistered vehicles/motorcycles and rickshaws.

It was decided in the meeting that a support desk or center should be activated for the public to promptly address their complaints. An awareness campaign regarding universal number plates should be intensified so that people can benefit from it. A comprehensive plan will also be formed regarding electric vehicles.

## Delegation from Bagan Kurram meets Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): A delegation from Bagan Kurram, led by PPP Middle East Vice President Shiraz Orakzai, on Tuesday met with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi to discuss the serious challenges faced by the local population following the burning of Bagan Bazaar and the village on the night of November 22, 2024.

The delegation included religious leaders and community representatives such as Maulana Shah Nawaz, Maulana Rohullah, Kausar Alam, Shakeel ur Rehman, and Fida Muhammad.

They detailed the after-

math of the incident, saying that essential infrastructure such as the National Bank branch, NADRA office, three schools, and the electricity system had been severely damaged.

The delegates emphasized that the people of Bagan are peace-loving and committed to harmony, but stressed the urgent need for development work and restoration of basic facilities to ensure long-term peace in the region.

They informed the Governor that while a survey of the affected market and homes had been com-

pleted, compensation had not yet been provided to the victims. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi assured the delegation that their concerns would be conveyed to the relevant authorities.

He said that instructions had already been issued to federal departments to address the challenges faced by the community.

The delegation expressed their gratitude to the Pakistan Red Crescent for distributing relief items to the affected residents without discrimination and thanked the Governor for his support.

## India’s operation Sindoor effectively turned into Tandoor: Azma

LAHORE, May 13 (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has said that India’s so-called Operation Sindoor has effectively turned into Tandoor.

“The Modi government has no response left. They took pride in their aircraft, air defense systems, and missiles — and we brought it all to ashes,” she added.

Azma Bokhari confirmed that Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos had been successfully completed. She added that a Day of Gratitude was observed on the Prime Minister’s instructions to mark the victory. Moreover, the Chief Minister of Punjab instructed all schools to honour this day during morning assemblies.

She shared that the Chief Minister personally visited CMH Hospital to inquire after the wounded and expressed solidarity

with the families of the martyrs.

“The nation salutes its martyrs who embraced martyrdom in the face of Indian aggression,” Bokhari said.

Criticizing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s recent speech, Bokhari called it “defeated and baseless.” She remarked, “Mr Modi thought this was a Bollywood film where Pakistan could be easily defeated — but this was real, not a cinematic scene.”

Taking a strong stance against Indian media, Bokhari said, “Instead of spreading propaganda, face the facts.” She emphasized that the sacrifices of Pakistani citizens do not require compensation.

“Nonetheless, the Chief Minister will soon announce a relief package for the families of the martyrs. We are ready to sacrifice everything for our soil and our heroes,” she added.

Azma Bokhari paid tribute to the leadership of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, stating, “Nawaz Sharif is not just a leader — he is a visionary. On May 10, he, alongside Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, played a historic role in defending the nation. The entire operation was designed under Nawaz Sharif’s leadership.”

Later, Minister Azma Bokhari visited CMH Hospital where she met with war veterans and soldiers injured during the recent Indian aggression. She paid a heartfelt tribute to the brave sons of the soil who laid down their lives for the nation’s honour.

“The martyrs and veterans of this war are the pride of our nation. Their sacrifices are unforgettable, and the Pakistani nation will always be indebted to these heroes,” she stated.

### Punjab bans use of sacred text for packaging

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Home Department has enforced Section 144 across the province, banning the use of newspapers and printed papers containing holy verses for packaging and wrapping purposes.

According to the spokesperson for the Punjab Home Department, the ban will remain in effect for 90 days. The decision has been made in response to concerns that newspapers and printed materials often contain sacred words, including Quranic verses, which are then inappropriately used for wrapping or packaging goods—an act considered disrespectful and religiously sensitive.

“The use of such materials for commercial or domestic packaging can not only hurt religious sentiments but also lead to unrest,” said the Punjab home secretary.

“To prevent any potential disturbance to law and order, the ban under Section 144 has been enforced.” The order strictly prohibits the wrapping and packaging of any items using papers that bear religious text. Authorities have directed that the notification be widely disseminated through the official gazette.

## Aila Malik receives Governor’s recognition for rally achievement



PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday honored Aila Malik, the first young woman from Dera Ismail Khan to secure second position in the women’s category of the Derajat Jeep Rally, during a special ceremony held at the Governor House.

Aila Malik, accompanied by her father Mumtaz Khan and her team, was warmly received by the Governor who praised her remarkable achievement in a male-dominated sport.

The Governor presented her with a commemorative shield in recognition of her success and lauded her for being a source of pride

for her region and for inspiring young women in the province.

“This is a welcome development and a sign of real progress for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,” said Governor Kundi. “Aila’s participation and success in the Derajat Jeep Rally exemplify the determination and capability of our young women, who only need proper support and encouragement to excel.”

Governor Kundi commended Mumtaz Khan for encouraging his daughter to pursue her passion and serving as an example of parental support in women’s empowerment. He emphasized that

women’s talent in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is vast but often remains untapped due to lack of guidance and opportunities.

“Our policies must focus on unlocking this potential to ensure balanced development and representation in all fields, including sports,” he added.

In response, Aila Malik thanked the Governor for his support and appreciated his commitment to youth engagement and women’s empowerment.

She expressed her resolve to continue competing in motor sports and to serve as a role model for other aspiring young women in the region.

# Bunyan Al Marsoos: Operation that changed war scenario in South Asia



## Pakistan Navy checkmates enemy at sea

Rear Admiral Javid Iqbal

**T**O 'subdue the enemy without fighting' is the 'acme of skill,' writes Sun Tzu in his magnum opus 'the art of war'. It is not a product of sheer luck but a master stroke, a 'stratagem' as per Clausewitz, that involves years of strategizing to craft a superior strategy that directly targets the heart of enemy's strategy, and not necessarily it's forces. Indeed the worst time for a fighting side is when it is left with no options at the battlefield due to opponent's superior strategy. In chess we know it as Checkmate, and that's exactly what Pakistan Navy did to the Indian Navy at sea during the recent skirmish.

As the author alluded to in these pages (Maritime Miscalculation, The Nation, 5 May 2025) before the start of shooting war on land, Indian Navy, by planning to fight the last war, had chalked out a grandiose plan to blockade Karachi and attack from the seaward axis. However in their hearts the enemy knew that an alert and adroit Pakistan Navy with a comprehensive Anti Access & Area Denial strategy had left no option for them at sea and that their entire fleet, including aircraft carrier Vikrant would be pulverized and sunk if they dare to close Pakistani coast. Hence they took refuge in the information domain by planting a fake story in 'the telegraph' about the sailing of Vikrant. In the author's personal opinion the news was targeted more at their domestic audience to prove that the Indian Navy, which has been given a lion's share of the defence budget, was doing something. Whereas in fact the Vikrant proved to be like the proverbial US 7th Fleet that never came to the Indian Ocean! Rather it was sighted back in Karwar naval base after two days only, a credit to its seaworthiness.

As the shooting war at land and in air started, the Indians tried to fool their public again by throwing up fictitious and rather comic claims about destruction of port of Lahore (sic) and Karachi. However, little do they realize that fake news is like the proverbial ropes of Pharaoh's magicians which can scare the public for a moment but cannot stand the Moses' snake that symbolizes truth! Resultantly the Indian public soon realized the preposterous claims being a farce and criticized their political and military leadership no end.

Furthermore, zero detection of Indian submarine off Pakistan coast is a testament to the fact that Indian Navy was so scared to lose their submarines that they never deployed them anywhere close to the Pakistani coast. Tracking of the Indian Navy's state of the art P8I surveillance plane by the Pakistan Navy also sent a strong message to the enemy of the shape of things to come. Neither did the P8I venture again nor the Sea Guardian UAVs closed Pakistani coast.

Left Out of Battle (LOB) in war is a curse for any military unit. Here it is a unique occasion that an entire military service, Indian Navy, has been Left Out of Battle due to Pakistan Navy's superior strategy. It is feat par excellence, worth analysing further by naval historians. But in Pakistan and the Muslim world, it is no surprise as guidance from the Quran is very clear ... In Surah Baqarah(2:249), while citing the epic victory of David over much stronger Goliath, Quran mentions "Many a time has a small band defeated a large horde by the will of God. God is with those who are patient (and persevere)." Hence all praise be to Allah for this glorious chapter in the naval history of Pakistan.

The war may be over, as indeed all wars come to an end. But the enduring rivalries continue, and in this case it has deepened further. The extent to which India went on land, striking deep and wide inside Pakistan, a nuclear power, can only be explained through terms like imperial hubris, strategic folly and madman theory. It is no wonder that modern Germans remember Hitler with disdain now, a Strongman like Modi then with public rallying behind, who pushed Germany into flames. It is anybody's guess whether Indian Congress will pick up pieces to mount a fight against the existential threat posed by Modi and his coteri or be relegated to irrelevance.

As regards sea domain, Pakistan Navy remains ever vigilant of the opportunistic enemy who will try to exploit or create an opportunity to raise the ante in order to recover somewhat from the historic embarrassment. But let there be no doubt; Pakistan Navy's Chakravayuh (impregnable defence) will be ready to greet them again.

Author is Deputy President National Defence University, Islamabad and can be reached at javaid\_iq\_bal@yahoo.com)



## Operation Bunyan Al Marsoos - A show of strength and strategic restraint by Pakistan Armed Forces

Ali Sheikh

In a region long defined by volatility and mistrust, Pakistan's recent military operation-Bunyan-um-Marsoos-has demonstrated not just tactical brilliance, but also a level of strategic maturity that is all too rare in high-stakes confrontations. Conducted in response to repeated cross-border provocations and terrorism-linked attacks on Pakistani soil, the operation was marked by precision, proportionality, and a deliberate avoidance of wider escalation.

The strikes, targeting 26 Indian military installations, were not an act of adventurism. They were a necessary assertion of sovereignty. At a time when Indian aggression from both the Line of Control (LoC) and mainland bases threatened civilian lives and undermined regional stability, Pakistan was left with no choice but to respond-and it did so with clarity and control.

Despite Indian attacks on Pakistani soil killing innocent civilians including women and children and then sending large number of drones targeting once again civilian population and property, Pakistani government and Armed Forces show full restraint and kept on warning India that this patience of Pakistan should not be considered as its weakness.

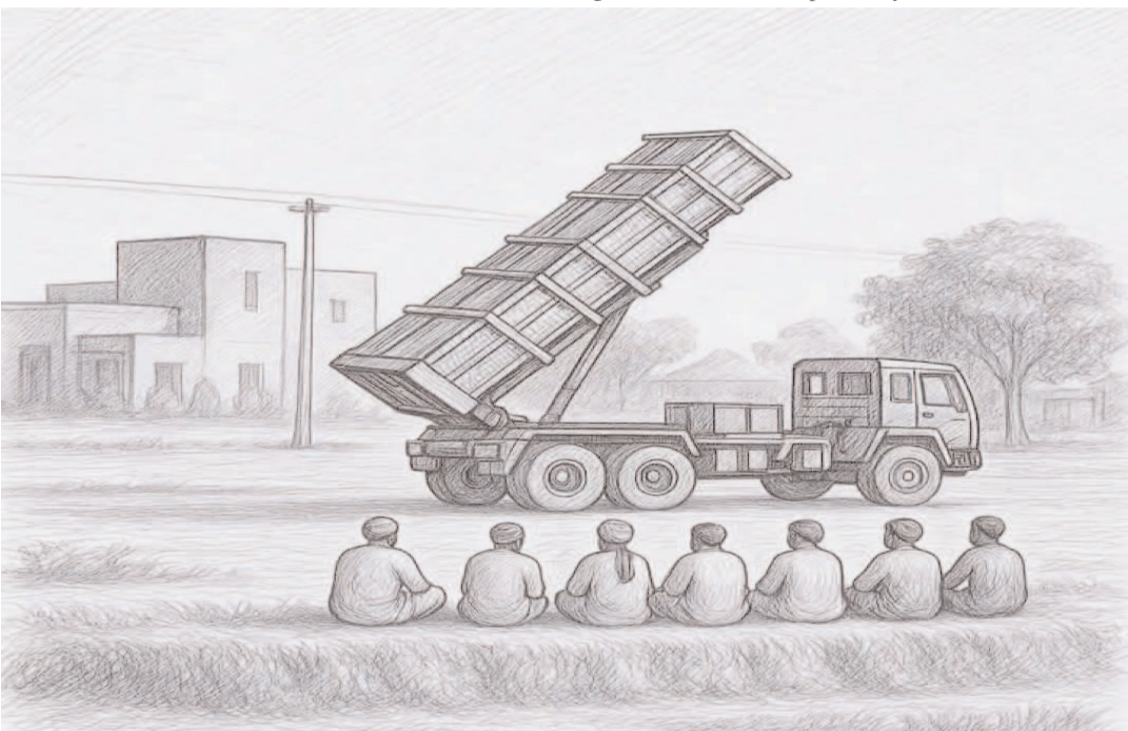


confirm that among the high-value targets was a BrahMos missile storage facility located in the Beas area, resulting in significant damage.

The Pakistan Armed Forces also launched suc-

cessful strikes on the defense system stationed at Adampur. According to defense officials, this was achieved using Pakistan Air Force's JF-17 Thunder aircraft equipped with hypersonic missiles, demonstrating advanced strike capa-

is neither weak nor reckless. It possesses the strength to defend itself and the wisdom to do so without undermining peace. It is a country that seeks stability, but will not tolerate hostility. In South Asia-where



However, India did not stop and targetted several Pakistan air bases through missiles. It was enough. The Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR), Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry in his pressers had time and again stated that the time and target will be decided by Pakistan if India did not stop its brutal aggressive behaviour and if Pakistan strikes all the world will witness it. The operation Bunyan Al Marsoos was distinguished by its multi-domain coordination. The Pakistan Air Force achieved air superiority, disrupting Indian aerial deployments, including grounding Rafale jets.

The Pakistan Navy maintained firm deterrence in the Arabian Sea, halting the advance of the Indian aircraft carrier INS Vikrant. And Pakistan Army's superiority was witnessed when its officers and jawans at the Line of Control forced Indian soldiers to wave the white flag which showed they accepted the defeat and did not want to fight anymore. And in cyberspace, Pakistani youth emerged as digital warriors, effectively countering disinformation and reinforcing the nation's narrative with clarity and conviction.

In a continued wave of precision strikes under its ongoing military operation, Pakistan has reportedly targeted and destroyed several critical Indian military assets. Security sources

successful strikes on the Udhampur airbase and the Pathankot airfield-both of which were reportedly used in prior operations against Pakistani territory and civilian infrastructure, including religious sites. These airbases were considered key operational hubs in the recent cross-border hostilities.

Further north, the Brigade Headquarters at KG Top has been destroyed, along with a major military supply depot in Uri. These locations were identified as command and logistics centers supporting offensive operations near the Line of Control (LoC). In a significant cyber warfare escalation, sources claim that a large-scale cyber operation has disrupted approximately 70% of India's electricity grid, causing widespread power outages and impacting military communications and logistics. The Udhampur airfield-allegedly involved in launching missile attacks on targets in Amritsar and within Pakistan-was also hit with precision munitions, rendering it inoperative.

Additional reports indicate the destruction of an Indian artillery gun position in Dehrangyan, as well as another BrahMos missile storage facility in Nagrota. These strikes are believed to have inflicted substantial material losses and enemy casualties.

One of the most notable achievements in the aerial campaign was the destruction of India's S-400 air

bility and air superiority.

Military sources emphasize that these operations are part of a broader effort to neutralize the military infrastructure responsible for recent attacks on Pakistani civilians and to ensure national security through decisive deterrence. Reports suggest that further operations are underway as Pakistan continues to target strategic locations deemed a threat to its sovereignty and regional stability.

What deserves particular commendation is the restraint with which the operation was conducted. Pakistan's leadership refrained from provocations and refrained from being drawn into a spiraling conflict. By ensuring that all retaliatory measures remained within the bounds of conventional warfare, Pakistan not only defended its borders but also upheld regional stability in a situation where miscalculation could have had catastrophic consequences.

Equally notable was the sense of national unity that defined this moment. Across political lines, Pakistan's leadership stood together. The media acted with responsibility. Civil society, especially the youth, rallied behind the armed forces. In an age of polarized politics and fragmentation, this collective resolve sent a powerful message-not just to the adversary, but to the world.

The lesson from Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos is clear: Pakistan

two nuclear-armed states share a troubled history-this combination of strength and restraint is not just desirable, it is essential.

As the dust settles, Pakistan's measured but firm response stands in stark contrast to the rhetoric and adventurism that often fuel instability in the region. The world would do well to recognize the difference.

A notable aspect of the response was the political consensus observed across party lines in Pakistan. The unified stance of the political leadership was seen as a strong endorsement of the military's actions and a demonstration of national resilience.Despite the intensity of the operation, Pakistan maintained escalation control, ensuring that the response remained within conventional military limits. This approach highlighted strategic discipline and maturity, especially given the potential consequences of a full-scale conflict between two nuclear-armed nations.

Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos underscored Pakistan's defense capabilities and its resolve to protect national sovereignty. The operation achieved its objectives through precise, coordinated action across multiple domains—military, cyber, and informational—while avoiding a broader war. The episode reinforced Pakistan's deterrence posture and delivered a clear message regarding the costs of unprovoked aggression.



## In brief

### One killed in road mishap F.P. Report

KARAK: As many as eight persons injured one was dead on the spot in road mishap at Karak. The injured were shifted to District Headquarters Hospital Karak by Rescue 1122. Moreover, critical injured were referred to Peshawar for further treatment. The victim identified as wife of Zir Muhammad Khan, Iftikhar Ahmed, Sher Zia, daughter of Zir Muhammad Khan, Arman Ullah, Omar Ayaz, Ahmad Ullah and Hukm Daraz died. One injured person was transported by a private vehicle. Identification could not be done at this time. Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Karak visited Tehsil Banda Daud Shah and inspected Government Higher Secondary School Nari Panos. He reviewed the ongoing examinations and expressed satisfaction with the arrangements. According to the details, Deputy Commissioner Karak Shakeel Ahmed Jan paid a surprise visit to Government Higher Secondary School Nari Panos, during which he interacted with the students in the classrooms, checked the attendance of the teachers, and expressed satisfaction with the cleanliness and discipline in the school.

### Excavation on ancient site F.P. Report

LARKANA: In order to prevent possible encroachment on "Dhamarah Jo Darro", spread over 103 acres, 20 kilometers from Mohenjo Daro the world-famous cultural heritage of Sindh, a team of archaeologists led by Ali Lashari has started continuous excavation work for the past 11 days. On this occasion, Ali Lashari, Zaheer Johkio, Zahid Detho and other experts, who were supervising the excavation, said that during the excavation of "Dhamarah Jo Darro", evidence has been found that "Dhamaraha Jo Darro" was built by Buddhists during the reign of Krishna in the second century AD. This shows that during the period of the Stupa of Mohenjo Daro, "Dhamarah Jo Darro" and "Jhokar Jo Darro" were located in the vicinity of Mohenjo Daro. They added that further excavation of the "Dhamrah mound" may reveal ancient and cultural items including pottery and other valuable items. Meanwhile, after the Pakistan Army, Pakistan Air Force and Pakistan Navy achieved a great success on the defense and other international fronts by forcing the enemy India to its knees through Operation "Al Bnyan Al Marsus", a ceremony was organized by the leadership of Pakistan People's Party Larkana at Siyal Chowk in the city.

### Annual Chilim Jusst festival F.P. Report

CHITRAL: The much-anticipated annual three-day Chilim Jusst festival is all set to begin today, May 14, in the scenic Kalash Valleys of Chitral. Final preparations have been completed for the cultural event, which attracts both domestic and international tourists. According to the district administration of Chitral, special security arrangements have been put in place across the Kalash region in anticipation of the large number of visitors. The Kalash Valleys Development Authority (KVDA) has also made extensive arrangements for the smooth execution of the festival in Bum-buret, Rumbur, and Birir valleys. These include immediate road maintenance and enhanced cleanliness measures throughout the valleys.



NANKANA: Minister for State for National Food Security and Research, Malik Rashed Ahmed Khan offering condolence to martyrs' family.

## KKKUK stands in solidarity with Pak Army

F.P. Report

KARAK: The administration, faculty, and a significant number of students from Khushal Khan Khattak Karak University (KKKUK) today held a massive rally at the university's old campus to express unwavering solidarity with the Pakistan Army.

The rally, led by Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Muhammad Tahir Khalily, Registrar Dr. Ghani Ur Rehman and Incharge Debating Society Dr. Hassan Ahmad Shah, saw enthusiastic participation from heads of departments, faculty members, and a large contingent of students. Participants carried banners paying tribute to the sacrifices rendered by the Pakistan Army in service of the nation.

While sharing his thoughts, Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Muhammad Tahir Khalily emphasized the pivotal role of the Pakistan Army in safeguarding the nation's independence. "We enjoy our freedom today solely due to the immense sacrifices of the Pakistan Army," he stated.



ed. He lauded the Pakistan Army as a leading force globally, not only securing the country's borders but also establishing peace within Pakistan through significant sacrifices in the war against terror.

Professor Dr. Khalily further highlighted concerns regarding conspiracies aimed at destabilizing Pakistan. "Certain elements are engaged in propaganda to weaken state institutions. He emphasized that the rally served as a clear message from the university community, affirming the unwavering support of the people of Pakistan for their army and acknowledging their invaluable sacrifices.

The Vice Chancellor also drew attention to critical

international issues, urging the international community and the United Nations to take serious cognizance of human rights violations in India and Occupied Kashmir. He underscored that the independence enjoyed by all segments of Pakistani society is a direct result of the Pakistan Army's dedication and sacrifices.

Concluding his message, Professor Dr. Khalily stated that KKKUK has consistently provided guidance on crucial national and international matters. He affirmed that today's rally aimed to convey a powerful message of unity, demonstrating that the Pakistani nation and its institutions stand united and on the same page.

## Students of GGHSS, Landi Kotal regret unavailability of free books

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Only Five percent students of Government Girls High Secondary School (GGHSS), Landi Kotal have received free syllabus books, provided by the provincial government that suffered their studies, female students' complaint.

Hina Khan classes (6th), Tanha (8th) and Tumiha (9th) of GGHSS said that contrary to the government policy of providing free books, a number of students have got the books so far that is equivalent to depriving them of their basic right of getting free education. They added that in 10 grade, subject books of Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Islamiyat have not been supplied even to a single student.

In the same way they added in 9th class, out of 50 students only 09 have got books of Maths, Physics, Pak- Studies and Biology while Chemistry and English books have been given to 18 and 20 learners respectively. They have demanded immediate supply of the subject's books to continue uninterrupted studies in the institution.

Miss Salma, Principal of the school said that ironically, Landi Kotal locates at the western end of the district Khyber therefore all girls schools in Jamrud and Bara collect their due share in the books in early hours and the whole deficiency of the study materials rest in girls schools Landi Kotal including GGHSS. If students lack books, how can a teacher teach them, she questioned.

Number of applications have been lodged in the district education office (female) Khyber for provision of books but to in avail, she added. When District Educational Officer (female) Shazia Nawaz was contacted on the matter she said that they have received 40% books of their demand from the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and distributed it equally in all three tehsils including Bara, Jamrud and Landi Kotal.

She maintained that they have directed all the Principals, headmistress and other female staff to collect books from outgoing or promoted female girl students and distribute it in the new students to cover deficiency of the learning materials. Demand for books has been forwarded to the provincial government and as soon as they supply it, they will give it away to the rest of the students, she remarked.

## Pakistan victory against fascist Indian aggression lauded

F.P. Report

SHANGLA: Pakistan Muslim League (N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Senior Vice President and Member of Provincial Assembly, Muhammad Rashad Khan, stated that Pakistan is an ideological state, established on the strength of faith, and the Pakistan Army has emerged as an invincible force of which we are all proud. Especially in these times, India's confrontation with it was a grave mistake, which resulted in their defeat.

He was addressing a massive "Pakistan Zindabad" rally in Bisham, attended by people from various walks of life. Participants carried placards and banners praising the young soldiers of the Pakistan Army. Alongside public representatives, political leaders, students, and lawyers also took part in the rally.

Addressing the gathering, Muhammad Rashad Khan said that in the recent conflict, Pakistan's brave soldiers demonstrated that it is impossible for disbelief and heresy to stand before them. Their valor was backed by the prayers of the people and divine assistance. He further stated that the wisdom of our brave armed forces, their commanders, and our Prime Minister, along with the nation's prayers, brought success to Pakistan. He paid tribute to the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the military leadership on behalf of the people of Shangla.

Meanwhile, a large demonstration was held at the district headquarters, Alpuri, under the auspices of the Shangla Youth Organization, during which the slogans of "Pakistan Zindabad" and praises for the Pakistan Army echoed in the air. Similar celebratory demonstrations were organized by PML-N workers and other

organizations in the markets of Koz Kana and Puran in Shangla.

**Education key for national development:** Assistant Commissioner Alpuri, Abdul Qayyum, emphasized that acquiring education according to modern requirements is essential for national development. He urged teachers to guide children towards modern education to realize the dream of national progress.

He expressed these views while addressing teachers and students during his visit to Government Primary School Gandao and Shehtoot. On this occasion, accompanied by Sub-Divisional Education Officer Aurangzeb Khalil, he enrolled several children in the school and distributed books among them. AC Abdul Qayyum stated that education is the first step toward progress, and without it, the dream of development remains incomplete. He highlighted that acquiring education according to the demands of modern times is the right of every child and the responsibility of the state.

The state has fulfilled its duty by establishing schools and providing teachers and basic facilities in these remote and mountainous areas. Now, it is our duty to enroll our children in these schools, ensuring that no child remains out of school. He stressed that just as we enroll our sons in schools, we should also admit our daughters, as our religion and the Holy Prophet (PBUH) teach us that acquiring knowledge is obligatory for both men and women. Sub-Divisional Education Officer Aurangzeb Khalil reiterated that it is our responsibility to enroll our children in schools and ensure that no child is deprived of education.

## Wafaqi Mohtasib holds open 'Kutcheri'

Haleem Asad

LOWER DIR: On the directive of Federal Ombudsman Ejazmad Qurishi, the Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman Secretariat), in collaboration with the Lower Dir district administration, held an open kutcheri (public forum) to address complaints against federal departments. The session was chaired by provincial commissioner and former bureaucrat Muhammad Mushtaq Jadoon.

Commissioner of the Wafaqi Mohtasib for Malakand Division Sanaullah, Additional Deputy Commissioner Bashir Khan, Assistant Commissioner Timergara Zaid Saffi, and heads of various federal departments were also in attendance. Citizens raised complaints concerning electricity, gas supply, the National Database and Regist-

ration Authority (NADRA), passport office, Pakistan Post, the Benazir Income Support Programme, driving licensing and other federal and provincial departments.

Both Mr Jadoon and Mr Sanaullah listened to the grievances and issued on-the-spot instructions to the relevant departments for immediate redressal. They also urged the public to formally lodge their complaints either in writing or through the designated WhatsApp number. The local heads of federal institutions were directed to take citizens' concerns seriously and ensure timely resolution in accordance with legal procedures.

Speaking to this reporter after the event, Commissioner Sanaullah noted that while the Wafaqi Mohtasib institution was actively working to address public complaints, a large segment of the population

remained unaware of its services and their right to approach the ombudsman. He informed that following the directives of chief minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the district administration and village council chairmen could also receive complaints about all federal departments and share it with Mohatis regional office in Swat. He encouraged citizens to submit their complaints through email, WhatsApp, or postal mail, assuring them that the secretariat was committed to prompt and fair resolution of all issues brought to its attention.

**NURSES' DAY:** A special ceremony was held in Timergara to mark International Nurses Day here the other day, with participation from trainee nurses, members of the Nursing Association, and medical professionals.

## A silent war zone

Syed Imran Ali

**A Silent War Zone is a hauntingly poignant and powerfully evocative novel that delves into the psychological, cultural, and spiritual trauma inflicted by conflict, specifically the Taliban's occupation of Swat Valley. Through the voice of its protagonist, Shamir Khan Yousafzai, the novel paints an intimate portrait of life in a village suspended between the serenity of tradition and the violence of extremism—what the author aptly frames as a state of barzakh, or limbo.**

Syed Imran Ali's storytelling is rooted in emotional authenticity. His prose is lyrical yet grounded, blending memory with melancholy, beauty with brutality. The narrative captures a deeply personal coming-of-age story while reflecting the collective suffering of a community caught in ideological warfare. The author's deep ties to

the region and his scholarly background enrich the cultural and linguistic authenticity of the novel.

The novel explores themes of lost innocence, gender injustice, generational rifts, faith, fear, and resistance. The silencing of women, the indoctrination of youth, and the crumbling of family bonds under ideological strains are all laid bare. The recurring symbolism of silence—as fear, as trauma, as resistance—is both powerful and heartbreaking.

Characters are multidimensional. Shamir is not just a narrator; he is a vessel of inherited grief and youthful longing. Bebe, the mother, is a particularly strong presence—a quiet pillar of strength whose love and endurance speak volumes. Baitullah's radicalization arc is especially nuanced, showing how even well-meaning beliefs can be twisted by charismatic extremism.

The novel is rich with

Pashto phrases and cultural references, which lend it texture and depth. The descriptions of rural life are vivid and poetic, immersing readers in the sensory landscape of Swat. The dialogue, especially within the family, feels organic and layered with subtext.

If there is a limitation, it is that the novel occasionally leans heavily into exposition. Some readers may find parts of the story didactic or overtly message-driven, though this is arguably intentional, given the novel's purpose as both literature and testimony.

Barzakh: A Silent War Zone is a deeply affecting work that stands as both a literary achievement and a socio-political document. It gives voice to the silenced, challenges the sanctimony of unquestioned authority, and reminds readers that peace, when lost, leaves behind not just destruction—but echoes that may take generations to fade.

## Lies, lines, and loss: Hidden gender costs of Indo-Pak tensions

Kinza Sualiha

**IN times of conflict, headlines scream of strategy, borders, strikes, and retaliation. Press conferences are dominated by men in uniform, and diplomacy is dictated by those seated around war rooms. But in the shadows of these power corridors, the consequences of conflict seep silently into the lives of ordinary citizens, particularly women, who are seldom consulted and yet always impacted.**

The recent standoff between India and Pakistan following the April 2025 Pahalgam attack has once again cast a chilling shadow over the region. As the two nuclear-armed neighbours engaged in cross-border artillery exchanges, suspended diplomatic

ties, and hardened visa regimes, the ripple effects were deeply felt by communities on both sides. Yet, in the cacophony of nationalism and media spectacle, one perspective was almost entirely missing: the gendered cost of this prolonged hostility.

Women, who form the backbone of every family and community, continue to bear a disproportionate burden of conflict, be it emotional, economic, or social. Along the Line of Control (LoC), entire villages were displaced amid shelling. Behind every headline of a 'strategic military operation,' there were stories of mothers running with children in their arms, widows mourning in silence, and girls missing out on education as schools remained shut indefinitely. These are not just casualties; they are silent collapses of potential, of lives

paused indefinitely, and dreams deferred.

Conflict changes the very structure of a woman's day-to-day life. In border regions, women are often the last to eat, the first to pack, and the ones left to pick up the pieces. With male family members involved in combat, missing, or killed, women shoulder the dual responsibilities of care and survival. But in policymaking, peace talks, and defense dialogues, their voices are glaringly absent. This exclusion perpetuates a cycle where those most affected by war have the least say in its resolution.

Economically, too, women suffer uniquely. In both India and Pakistan, many women work in informal sectors selling handmade goods, running micro-businesses, working in fields, and livestock farming. During times

of heightened conflict, border closures and mobility restrictions crush these small enterprises. Women-led community initiatives—often the only thread holding fragile local economies together—are the first to collapse when tensions rise.

Meanwhile, women activists, journalists, and peacemakers are silenced or branded as "unpatriotic" for urging dialogue over destruction. Advocacy for peace is often mocked in political discourse, seen as weak or naive. But true strength lies in the courage to rebuild, to reconcile, to humanize the 'other' and in South Asia, it is women who have long held this strength.

The psychological toll is no less harrowing. A generation of children, especially girls, grows up in fear zones, shaped by a reality where their identity and safety are

constantly under threat. In these conflict-scarred areas, mental health support is scarce, and trauma becomes normalized. For young women, these tensions manifest not only as fear of violence but also as restrictions on movement, education, and autonomy.

The unfortunate truth is that whenever India and Pakistan face off, women are expected to be either silent sufferers or symbolic mourners. Their resilience is applauded, but rarely supported. Their contribution to peace-building is acknowledged post-conflict, but never prioritized during peace talks. And when they speak up for de-escalation, for dialogue, they are often met with suspicion, branded as 'betrayers' of nationalistic fervour.

It is time for this to change. Both India and Pakistan must

recognize that lasting peace is impossible without gender inclusion. Women must be integrated into all levels of decision-making, from community peace councils to high-level diplomatic negotiations. Their insights are not just about empathy but about efficacy. Their experiences do not weaken our nations; they strengthen our chances for sustained peace.

As two nations continue to draw lines on maps and rewrite diplomatic strategies, the question must be asked: What kind of future are we drafting if half our population is missing from the table? The answer will determine not just our foreign policy, but the kind of society we wish to become. If peace is the destination, then women must not walk behind—it is they who should lead the way.



KYIV: Russian servicemen attend combat training for assault units in an undisclosed location in Ukraine.

## Dozens of white S Africans arrive in US under Trump refugee plan

NEW YORK (BBC): A group of 59 white South Africans has arrived in the US, where they are to be granted refugee status. President Donald Trump has said the refugee applications for the country's Afrikaner minority had been expedited as they were victims of "racial discrimination".

The South African government said the group were not suffering any such persecution that would merit refugee status. The Trump administration has halted all other refugee admissions, including for applicants from warzones. Human Rights Watch described the move as a cruel racial twist, saying that thousands of people - many black and Afghan refugees - had been denied refuge in the US. The group of white South Africans, who landed at Dulles airport near Washington DC, received a warm welcome from US authorities. Some held young children and waved small American flags in the arrival area adorned with red, white and blue balloons on the walls. The processing of refugees in the US often takes months, even years, but this group has been fast tracked. UNHCR - the United Nations refugee agency - confirmed to the BBC it wasn't involved in the vetting, as is usually the case. Asked directly why the Afrikaners' refugee applications had been processed faster than other groups, Trump said a "genocide" was taking place and that "white farmers" specifically were being targeted. "Farmers are being killed, they happen to be white, but whether they're white or black makes no difference to me." But

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said he told Trump during a phone call the US assessment of the situation was "not true".

"A refugee is someone who has to leave their country out of fear of political persecution, religious persecution, or economic persecution," Ramaphosa said. "And they don't fit that bill." In response to a question from the BBC at Dulles airport, Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau said: "It is not surprising, unfortunately, that a country from which refugees come does not concede that they are refugees." The US has criticised domestic South African policy, accusing the government of seizing land from white farmers without any compensation. In January President Ramaphosa signed a controversial law allowing the government to seize privately owned land without compensation in certain circumstances, when it is deemed "equitable and in the public interest". But the government says no land has yet been seized under the act. There has been frustration in South Africa over the slow pace of land reform in the three decades since the end of the racist apartheid system. While black South Africans make up more than 90% of the population, they only hold 4% of all privately owned land, according to a 2017 report. One of Trump's closest advisers, South African-born Elon Musk, has previously said there was a "genocide of white people" in South Africa and accused the government of passing "racist ownership laws". The claims of a genocide of white people

have been widely discredited. In a statement to the BBC, Gregory Meeks, ranking Democratic member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the Trump administration's refugee resettlement was "not just a racist dog whistle, it's a politically motivated rewrite of history". The Episcopal Church said it would no longer work with the federal government on refugee settlement because of the "preferential treatment" granted for the Afrikaners. Commenting on this news on X, Vice-President JD Vance posted, "Crazy". Melissa Keaney, a lawyer with the International Refugee Assistance project, told the BBC the White House's decision to fast-track the Afrikaners' arrival amounted to "a lot of hypocrisy and unequal treatment".

Her organisation is suing the Trump administration after it indefinitely suspended the US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) in January. She said that policy had left over 120,000 conditionally approved refugees in limbo. Afrikaner author Max du Preez told the BBC's Newsday radio programme that claims of persecution of white South Africans were a "total absurdity" and "based on nothing". Figures from the South African police show that in 2024, 44 murders were recorded on farms and smaller plots of agricultural land, with eight of those killed being farmers. South Africa does not report on crime statistics broken down by race but a majority of the country's farmers are white, while other people living on farms, such as workers, are mostly black.

## Liberal Party names first female leader after Australia election loss

SYDNEY (BBC): Australia's Liberal Party has for the first time chosen a woman as its leader, with Sussan Ley to take over from Peter Dutton after he led the party to a bruising election loss. Ley, from the moderate faction of the party, beat Angus Taylor - who ran on a promise to restore conservative values - by four votes.

At the election on 3 May, the Liberal-National coalition, currently Australia's main opposition party, suffered what many are calling the worst defeat in its history. Pundits and MPs have blamed the result on polarising leaders, a messy campaign and "Trumpian" policies, which alienated women and young people in particular.

Ley's appointment comes as Prime Minister Anthony Albanese was sworn in at Government House, following his Labor Party's landslide election win. According to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Labor has won at least 93 seats - increasing their majority by 16 - while the Coalition has 42 electorates, down from 58. Some seats are still too

close to call. Ley has held the massive regional New South Wales seat of Farrer since 2001 and has served as a senior minister in a variety of portfolios - making her one of the Liberal Party's most experienced hands. She was also the party deputy under Dutton. Ted O'Brien, a Queensland MP who was the energy spokesman in charge of selling the coalition's controversial nuclear power proposal, was elected Ley's deputy. Both are expected to address the media later on, but Ley has previously said she wanted to help the party rebuild its relationship with Australians. "Many Australians, including women and younger Australians, feel neglected by the Liberal Party," she said when announcing her desire to lead.

"We need to listen and we need to change. The Liberal Party must respect modern Australia, reflect modern Australia and represent modern Australia." Speaking after the party room vote, former minister Linda Reynolds said: "Australia spoke very clearly to the Liberal Party and we've listened and we've

acted." The junior coalition partner, the Nationals, re-elected leader David Littleproud, after he too was challenged by a headline conservative colleague. Albanese's new cabinet was also sworn in. The biggest changes include former Labor deputy Tanya Plibersek swapping from the environment portfolio to social services, and former communications minister Michelle Rowland becoming attorney general. Former Attorney General Mark Dreyfus and Ed Husic - the first Muslim to become an Australian government minister - were both removed from the frontbench. "I have got people who are, I think, in the best positions and that's across the board," Albanese said when announcing the positions.

Born in Nigeria to English parents, Ley grew up in the United Arab Emirates before moving to Australia at age 13. "Travelling, and being at boarding school on my own, I think you either sink or swim," Ley said in a previous interview. "Obviously, I was someone who decided very early on

in life that I wasn't going to sink." It was as a young woman that she changed her name from Susan to Sussan, inspired by numerology - an ancient belief that numbers have a mystical impact on people's lives. "I read about this numerology theory that if you add the numbers that match the letters in your name you can change your personality," she told The Australian. "I worked out that if you added an 's' I would have an incredibly exciting, interesting life and nothing would ever be boring. It's that simple." "And once I'd added the 's' it was really hard to take it away."

As an adult she has had a "wonderfully varied" career path, Ley says, obtaining degrees in economics and accounting while raising three young children, earning a commercial pilot licence, and working in the outback mustering livestock. Elected in 2001 to represent an area the size of New Zealand, Ley was promoted to Health Minister under Malcolm Turnbull in 2014, but resigned two years later amid an expenses scandal.

## China's Xi slams 'bullying' as Beijing hosts LatAm leaders

BEIJING (AFP): Chinese President Xi Jinping vowed to deepen ties with Latin America and condemned "bullying" in a thinly veiled swipe at the United States, as he addressed regional leaders in Beijing. Leaders and officials from Latin America and the Caribbean have descended on the Chinese capital for the China-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) Forum.

Beijing has stepped up economic and political cooperation with Latin American nations in recent years and has urged a united front against US President Donald Trump's recent maelstrom of tariffs. Addressing leaders,

Xi hailed China's burgeoning ties with the region. "Although China lies far from the Latin American and Caribbean region, the two sides have a time-honoured history of friendly exchanges," Xi said at the opening ceremony, likening the summit to a "great, sturdy tree". "Only through unity and cooperation can countries safeguard global peace and stability and promote worldwide development and prosperity," Xi said, pledging \$9.2 billion in credit towards "development" for the region. He also warned of "bloc confrontation". Xi's remarks come a day after the United States and China announced a deal to drasti-

cally reduce tit-for-tat tariffs for 90 days, an outcome Trump dubbed a "total reset". Under that agreement, the United States agreed to lower its tariffs on Chinese goods to 30 percent while China will reduce its own to 10 percent.

The deal marked a major de-escalation of a gruelling trade war between the world's two largest economies which threw global markets into turmoil, Xi told delegates: "There are no winners in tariff wars or trade wars." "Bullying and hegemony will only lead to self-isolation," the Chinese leader warned. "The world today is undergoing accelerated transformations unseen

in a century, with multiple risks intertwined and overlapping," Xi said. Among notable attendees at the forum is Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who arrived in Beijing for a five-day state visit.

Also present is Colombian President Gustavo Petro, who last week said he intends to sign an accord to join Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative during his visit. Two-thirds of Latin American countries have joined Beijing's trillion-dollar BRI infrastructure programme, and China has surpassed the US as the biggest trading partner of Brazil, Peru and Chile, among others.

## Guinea's PM announces elections in December

ABIDJAN (Reuters): The prime minister of junta-ruled Guinea announced a new date of December 2025 for elections, seeking to reassure investors in a speech at an African business forum. Guinea is ruled by military leader Mamady Doumbouya, who seized power in a coup in September 2021, and in 2022 proposed a two-year transition to elections but then did not take steps to organise a vote.

The junta later set and missed a deadline of December 31, 2024 for a return to a civilian administration. Prime Minister Amadou Oury Bah announced the new date at the Africa CEO Forum in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, while speaking about the West African country's Simandou iron ore project. The announcement comes a month after the government set September 21, 2025, as the date for a constitutional referendum, which authorities have said would be a precursor to any election and a return to constitutional rule. "The constitutional referendum will be on September 21 and the legislative and presidential elections will be in December," the prime minister said. "I can assure you that Simandou's first train will arrive before the elections." In July 2024 the junta presented a draft of a new constitution which may allow Doumbouya to participate in the next presidential election. Guinea's two former ruling parties are currently suspended. The other major opposition party, the Union of Democratic Forces of Guinea, has been placed under surveillance.

## Duterte wins hometown mayoral election

MANILA (Reuters): Former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte was almost certain to be elected mayor of his home city by a landslide, unimpeded by his detention at the International Criminal Court on charges of murder as a crime against humanity. With 80% of votes counted in an unofficial tally, Duterte, who was brought to The Hague in March over his bloody "war on drugs" that killed thousands of people, was winning the Davao mayoral contest with eight times more votes than his nearest rival.

The victory during nationwide midterm elections is testament to the 80-year-old's enduring influence in the southern city, owing to his reputation as a crime-buster that earned him the nicknames "Duterte Harry" and "the Punisher". Duterte's old Facebook account was flooded with congratulatory messages from supporters, with some calling for his return to serve his people. "Congratulations, Tatay (father) D! Let's bring him home," read one of the comments. Duterte could become the first Asian former head of state to go on trial at the ICC.

His surprise arrest by Philippine police at the request of the ICC caused outrage among his army of supporters, who called it a kidnapping at the behest of a foreign court. He has defended the anti-drugs crackdown and his legal team says his arrest was unlawful. The ICC maintains it has jurisdiction to prosecute alleged crimes committed before Duterte withdrew the Philippines from its founding treaty in 2019. Despite the ICC's case also including alleged killings of criminal suspects by a "death squad" in Davao while Duterte was mayor - which he has denied - analysts have said his arrest has only hardened support for him and his family, in Davao and beyond. The former president's two sons were also set to win posts, one reelected congressman and the other winning the contest for Davao vice mayor and likely to serve in his father's absence. The family's political resilience and dominance in Davao could prove pivotal as Duterte's popular daughter, Vice President Sara Duterte, faces an impeachment trial that could see her banned from politics for life if convicted, killing off any hopes of a presidential run.

## Russia-Ukraine talks Rush of diplomatic calls follow Trump's offer

WASHINGTON (Reuters): US and European diplomats went on a flurry of calls in the hours after US President Donald Trump offered to join prospective Ukraine-Russia talks later this week, trying to find a path that would bring an end to the war in Ukraine.

Trump's surprise offer to join the talks in Istanbul came a day after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in a fresh twist to the stop-start peace talks process, said he would travel Turkey and wait to meet President Vladimir Putin there. After Trump's announcement, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio discussed the "way forward for a ceasefire" in Ukraine with European counterparts, including the foreign ministers of Britain and France, and the EU's foreign policy chief, the State Department said.

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha and his German and Polish counterparts were also on the call, according to the readout. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov held talks with his Turkish

counterpart Hakan Fidan to discuss Moscow's direct talks with Kyiv - a proposal that came from Putin at the weekend, the Russian foreign ministry said. It remained unclear who would travel from Moscow to Istanbul to take part in the direct talks, which would be the first between the two sides since the early days of the war that Russia launched with its invasion on Ukraine in February 2022.

There has been no response from the Kremlin to Zelenskyy's offer to meet Putin in Istanbul and Moscow was yet to comment on Trump's offer to join the talks. If Zelenskyy and Putin, who make no secret of their contempt for each other, were to meet it would be their first face-to-face meeting since December 2019. "Don't underestimate in Turkey," Trump told reporters at the White House.

Trump's current schedule has him visiting Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar this week. Ukraine and its European allies have been

seeking to put pressure on Moscow to accept an unconditional 30-day ceasefire, with the leaders of four major European powers travelling to Kyiv to show unity with Zelenskyy.

Earlier, the German government said Europe would start preparing new sanctions against Russia unless the Kremlin by the end of the day started abiding by the ceasefire. Ukraine's military said that fighting along parts of the frontline in the country's east was at the same intensity it would be if there were no ceasefire.

Putin called the Western European and Ukrainian demands for a ceasefire "ultimatums" that the Kremlin said are for Russia an unacceptable language. Konstantin Kosachev, chairman of the international affairs committee of the Federation Council, the upper house of Russia's parliament, told the Izvestia media outlet in remarks published that the talks between Moscow and Kyiv can move further than they did in the 2022.

## Starmer pledges big drop in immigration

LONDON (Reuters): Prime Minister Keir Starmer promised to cut net migration to Britain significantly over the next four years, saying the country risked becoming "an island of strangers" without tougher rules on immigration. Controlling immigration was a key factor in Britain's 2016 vote to leave the European Union, yet net arrivals reached record levels after it left the bloc, helping to boost Nigel Farage's right-wing, anti-immigration Reform UK party.

In a sweeping set of immigration reforms, Starmer's centre-left Labour government said it would increase English-speaking requirements for immigrants, make it harder for them to stay in the country, and prevent companies including care homes from recruiting abroad. The automatic right to apply for citizenship will only be granted to someone who has lived in Britain for 10 years, not five, and skilled worker visas will be restricted to graduate-level applicants. "Make no mistake, this plan means migration will fall. That is a

promise," Starmer told reporters in Downing Street. "If we do need to take further steps... then mark my words, we will."

He also rejected suggestions from business leaders that the tighter immigration rules would harm Britain's economy, saying growth had stagnated in recent years while immigration surged. "The theory that higher migration numbers necessarily lead to higher growth has been tested in the last four years," he said. "That link doesn't hold on that evidence." But he refused to set a target for net migration cuts, saying "arbitrary" pledges by previous governments had failed. While the current plans have been in the works for months, government officials acknowledge they need to do more to address voters' concerns about the high levels of immigration after Reform UK won the most seats in English local elections this month and opened a big lead in opinion polls. Farage accused Starmer, a former human rights lawyer, of "playing catch up" on the issue.

"Starmer is a hypocrite

who believes in open borders... Nobody believes a word he says," Farage said on X. Immigration has long been a burning issue for British voters, with critics arguing that social cohesion can be damaged if the country does not build enough houses or expand public services to accommodate a larger population. Starmer said nations depend on rules that set out rights and responsibilities, adding: "Without them, we risk becoming an island of strangers, not a nation that walks forward together." Refugee charity Care4Calais and some Labour lawmakers accused Starmer of fanning support for the far-right with such "dangerous language". Care4Calais CEO Steve Smith, recalling far-right riots in several British cities last year, said: "(Starmer) risks further race riots that endanger survivors of horrors such as war, torture and modern slavery. Starmer must apologise." Higher net numbers of foreign students, along with a rise in people arriving from Ukraine and Hong Kong, led immigration numbers to quadruple in the years after Brexit.

## 2nd mayoral candidate killed in Mexico

TEXISTEPEC (AP): Gunmen killed a mayoral candidate from Mexico's governing party in the Gulf coast state of Veracruz and four others who accompanied her, the second such local candidate killing in the state ahead of the June 1 election, authorities confirmed.

There were reports that two federal agents were killed in another part of the state. The attack on candidate Yesenia Lara Gutiérrez of the Morena party occurred when she was leading a caravan of supporters through Texistepec. Three more people were wounded. Veracruz Gov. Rocio Nahle, also of the Morena party of President Claudia Sheinbaum, said that Lara Gutiérrez's daughter was among those killed.

Texistepec is a town of 20,000 southwest of the important petroleum industry port of Coatzacoalcos. "No (elected) position is worth dying for," Nahle

said in a press conference, where she promised justice. "All of the state's power will be present in coming days so that the elections are free and democratic," she said. At a wake in Texistepec, family and friends mourned Lara Gutiérrez and spoke about the fear the violence stirred around the election. "We can't continue with the insecurity, we're tired of all of this, this is terrorism," said supporter Joaquín Fonseca. "There are five people dead, not one. We're living the worst of the terrorism."

Family friend Cruz Morales said the violence is so bad that "we're afraid to go into the fields, to go see our family in the evening, because we don't know what's going to happen to us on the way." Lara Gutiérrez was the second mayoral candidate killed in Veracruz during the campaign. On April 29, the first official day of campaigning, gunmen killed Germán Anuar

Valencia, also from the governing party at his campaign headquarters in Coxquihui in the northern part of Veracruz. Nahle said that 57 local candidates had requested security offered by the state and federal government. It was not immediately clear if Lara Gutiérrez had. Municipal elections are scheduled in Veracruz's 212 municipalities for June 1. Local candidates are historically the most vulnerable to election violence as organized criminal groups seek to gain control of local governments.

Later, local press reported that two federal agents and a third person were killed in an attack in the coastal city of Boca del Río, Veracruz. An Associated Press photojournalist saw federal agents and soldiers maintaining a perimeter around the scene of the shooting. Neither state nor federal authorities immediately responded to requests to confirm the toll.

## Belgian soldiers hurt in training 'shooting incident'

SCOTLAND (BBC): Three Belgian soldiers have been hurt in a shooting incident during a military training exercise in Scotland. Belgium's defence ministry said approximately 10 other soldiers also sustained hearing damage during the

incident.

The defence ministry declined to say where in Scotland the incident took place, but last week it was reported around 600 Belgian armed forces personnel were in Moray for a large-scale operation called Red Condor. Two of

the injured soldiers are now in a stable condition, with one expected to undergo surgery in Scotland before being repatriated to Belgium. The third soldier who went to hospital sustained minor injuries and has since been discharged.

The Frontier Post

Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town, Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 0300- 9009001

Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

## Trump's Gulf visit is also about economic prosperity

**T**HIS week, US President Donald Trump makes his first major official trip overseas since returning to office in January. That the visit should be to three Arab Gulf capitals – Riyadh, Doha and Abu Dhabi – signifies the strength of ties the US shares with this part of the world. It is telling of the region's standing in Washington's estimation and the priority that the US accords to the Middle East.

Friendly US-Gulf ties, though, are not a recent development. US-Gulf partnerships date back decades and have been mutually beneficial and able to weather global storms. For this administration, partnerships are already in place. Riyadh was Mr Trump's first official port of call during his first presidential term, too. And one of the most significant achievements of his first term was to help create the Abraham Accords framework with Israel and the UAE and Bahrain, later joined by Morocco and Sudan.

Since Mr Trump's last visit as US President, however, the region has changed dramatically. The geopolitical calculus in some cases has seen a near-complete overhaul.

Some of the altered realities that did not exist the last time he was in office include the ramifications of Hamas's attack on Israel in October 2023, Israel's ensuing wars in Gaza and Lebanon, continued attacks on shipping in the Red Sea by Yemen's Houthi rebels, the collapse of Bashar Al Assad's government in Syria and Iran's subsequently weakened state due to the degradation of its armed proxies, including Hezbollah.

Despite these profound regional changes, Mr Trump's visit will underscore a basic fact that both the Gulf and the US are committed to remaining strong partners and further bolstering ties. So, even as the major geopolitical issues remain unresolved – the occupation of Palestine and siege of Gaza, Iran's nuclear ambitions, and instability in the Levant caused by a complex matrix of unsettled issues – the US and its Gulf partners understand the value and benefits of regional security and its link to stability and economic prosperity.

Discussions around the security architecture of the region are expected this week. Furthermore, as stability and prosperity of countries becomes ever more interdependent, discussions on economic ties and joint projects will also be a feature. And they won't be in just one direction.

In this context, investment deals across a wide range of sectors are being formalised that are likely to yield benefits to the region's evolving economies as well as to the US.

For example, the UAE has in recent years invested heavily in AI, both domestically and internationally – be it in health care, transportation, education, climate mitigation, and a number of other sectors. As recently as March, the Emirates announced a 10-year, \$1.4 trillion investment framework in the US, across several sectors including AI, semiconductors, manufacturing and natural gas. The UAE's determination to use technology to advance its own economy and society of more than 10 million residents is finding acclaim elsewhere in the world.

On Thursday, Microsoft president Brad Smith told a US Senate hearing about the stellar role being played by AI apps in Abu Dhabi to make day-to-day functioning, such as renewing driving licences, easier for the emirate's residents. "We need to bring this to America," Mr Smith told officials. Microsoft has been partnering with Emirati entities to realise AI ambitions and potential, which includes a \$1.5 billion investment in the AI and cloud company G42. During his trip to the Gulf, Mr Trump is expected to discuss with Washington's partners long-term solutions to unresolved geopolitical issues that have troubled the world for decades.

It can be hoped that economic pacts that further strengthen the ties between the US and its three Gulf partners pacts will be on the agenda – and could well be to the wider benefit of the whole region.

### Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



## Reflections on war and military conflicts

Arzu Abasi

**W**AR has long been one of the most tragic yet defining aspects of human civilization. From the earliest tribal disputes to the vast global conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries, military conflicts have shaped borders, toppled empires, and rewritten the destinies of entire peoples. Yet, with all their history and complexity, the core truth remains: war is an expression of humanity's failure to resolve its deepest differences through dialogue, diplomacy, and understanding.

Across centuries and continents, the causes of war have varied territorial ambition, religious extremism, economic greed, or ideological clash. The Trojan War of myth, the Roman conquests, the Crusades, the World Wars, the Cold War proxy battles, and even modern asymmetric warfare all reflect humanity's propensity for conflict. While the motivations may change with time, the outcomes devastation, displacement, and death remain tragically consistent.

The First and Second World Wars were perhaps the most glaring examples of humanity's descent into large-scale destruction. World War I, initially viewed as a noble or patriotic duty, descended into trench warfare and senseless slaughter, costing over 16 million lives. Only two decades later, the world witnessed an even more brutal sequel. The Second World War claimed the lives of an estimated 70-85 million people civilians and military personnel alike through bombings, genocide, starvation, and battles. The Holocaust, atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and mass civilian suffering etched deep scars into the global conscience.

And yet, despite such catastrophic outcomes, wars did not cease in the post-war period. The Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War, and more recently, the conflicts in Afghanistan, Syria, and Ukraine, reflect the continuation of military solutions in a world that desperately needs peaceful alternatives. The modern era of warfare has introduced newer, deadlier technologies drones, cyberattacks, biochemical threats each capable of large-scale harm without the traditional face-to-face combat of older battles. Civilians are increasingly caught in the crossfire, often making up the majority of war casualties in contemporary conflicts.

The human cost of war is not confined to body counts. It is reflected in the orphaned child, the war widow, the veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the refugee forced to abandon home and identity in pursuit of safety. War leaves behind destroyed infrastructure, failed economies, polluted environments, and divided societies. No technology or victory can justify such outcomes if alternatives existed that were never pursued with sincerity.

At the same time, amid the horrors of war, we find stories of profound courage, unity, and resilience.

Soldiers have displayed extraordinary bravery, medics have worked tirelessly in makeshift hospitals, and civilians have risked their lives to save neighbors and even strangers. These acts of humanity shine like beacons in the darkest times, reminding us of what we are capable of when we choose compassion over

hatred.

But we must ask ourselves: Why do these virtues only become visible under such extreme duress? Why must we wait for war to bring out our empathy and cooperation? Would it not be far better to cultivate these qualities in times of peace and thus prevent war altogether?

The true heroes of our time are not those who wield weapons with unmatched precision, but those who prevent their use through wisdom and diplomacy. Peace negotiators, diplomats, peacekeepers, educators, and humanitarian workers deserve recognition, funding, and support. Their efforts often underappreciated are the key to breaking the cycle of violence. The art of negotiation, the ability to see another's perspective, the humility to compromise these are the true weapons of peace.

To build a peaceful world, we must start with education. From a young age, children should be taught the values of empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution. History should be taught not as a series of battles and conquests, but as a lesson in the costs of human folly and the triumphs of unity. Political leaders must be held to the highest standards, accountable for choices that risk millions of lives. Defense budgets should not continue to outweigh spending on healthcare, education, and environmental protection.

Media also plays a crucial role. Too often, war is glamorized or simplified in films, video games, and news coverage. We must present it with the full weight of its reality the destroyed homes, the grieving families, the ruined futures. Only when people see war for what it

truly is can we hope to foster the public will to prevent it.

Furthermore, international organizations such as the United Nations, the International Criminal Court, and the International Red Cross must be strengthened, not undermined. These institutions, though imperfect, provide the infrastructure for dialogue, aid, and justice. Global cooperation, not isolationism or nationalism, must be the foundation of our collective future.

It is also time to redefine what it means to be a strong nation. True strength lies not in nuclear arsenals or military might but in a country's ability to ensure prosperity, justice, and freedom for its people while promoting peace abroad. A strong country leads by example, using its influence to resolve disputes, support development, and build bridges across cultures.

The costs of inaction are too high. Climate change, global pandemics, and economic inequality are existential threats that require unified global responses. Continued militarization diverts resources and attention from these pressing issues. If we do not shift our focus, we may win wars but lose the planet.

In conclusion, war is not inevitable. It is a choice one often made by the powerful but paid for by the powerless. We have the tools, the history, and the moral imperative to choose differently. Let the past be a warning, not a guide. Let our generation be the one that turns the tide from confrontation to cooperation, from bloodshed to brotherhood.

Let us honor the fallen not by building more weapons, but by building a world where no more need to fall.

# Is Trump abandoning Israel? Not really

Belén Fernández

**UNITED STATES President Donald Trump descends on Tuesday on the Middle East for a regional tour that will begin in Saudi Arabia and include stops in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. It is a business trip in every sense of the term, involving potentially trillions of dollars in investment and trade deals.**

The UAE, for example, has already pledged \$1.4 trillion in investments to the US over 10 years in sectors ranging from artificial intelligence and energy to mining and aluminium production. Saudi Arabia, for its part, has committed to investing \$600bn in the US over the next four years. According to the Reuters news agency, Trump will also be offering the kingdom an arms package to the tune of \$100bn.

Meanwhile, in keeping with the president's solid history of nepotism and self-enrichment, it just so happens that the Trump Organization is currently presiding over real estate projects and other business ventures in all three Gulf countries he is slated to visit.

And yet one country is conspicuously absent from the regional itinerary despite being the US's longstanding BFF in the Middle East: Israel, the nation that has for the past 19 months been perpetrating genocide in the Gaza Strip with the help of gobs of US money and weaponry. The official Palestinian death toll stands at nearly 53,000 and counting.

Although the genocide kicked off on the watch of his predecessor President Joe Biden, Trump was

.....  
**The issue, of course, is not that Trump cares if Palestinian children and adults continue to be massacred and starved to death while Israel takes its sweet time "finishing the job". Rather, the ongoing genocide is simply hampering his vision of the "Riviera of the Middle East" that will supposedly spring forth from the ruins of Gaza, the creation of which he has outlined as follows: "The US will take over the Gaza Strip, and we will do a job with it too. We'll own it." So while war may be good for business – just ask the arms industry – it seems that too much war can ultimately be a counter-productive investment, at least from a Trumpian real estate perspective. In the run-up to Trump's Middle Eastern expedition, reports increasingly circulated of tensions between the US president and the Israeli prime minister – and not just on the Gaza front. On Sunday, NBC News noted that Netanyahu had been "blindsided – and infuriated – this past week by Trump's announcement that the US was halting its military campaign against the Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen". Even more annoying to the Israeli premier, apparently, is Trump's refusal to endorse military strikes on Iran. Plus, the US has reportedly discarded the demand that Saudi Arabia normalise relations with Israel as a condition for US support for the kingdom's civilian nuclear programme.**  
.....

quick to embrace mass slaughter as well, announcing not long after reassuring office that he was "sending Israel everything it needs to finish the job" in Gaza. It appears, however, that Israel is taking a bit too long for the US president's liking – particularly now that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has prescribed an intensified offensive against an enclave that has already been largely reduced to rubble.

The issue, of course, is not that Trump cares if Palestinian children and adults continue to be massacred and starved to death while Israel takes its sweet time "finishing the job". Rather, the ongoing genocide is simply hampering his vision of the "Riviera of the Middle East" that will supposedly spring forth from the ruins of Gaza, the creation of which he has outlined as follows: "The US will take over the Gaza Strip, and we will do a job with it too. We'll own it."

So while war may be

good for business – just ask the arms industry – it seems that too much war can ultimately be a counter-productive investment, at least from a Trumpian real estate perspective.

In the run-up to Trump's Middle Eastern expedition, reports increasingly circulated of tensions between the US president and the Israeli prime minister – and not just on the Gaza front. On Sunday, NBC News noted that Netanyahu had been "blindsided – and infuriated – this past week by Trump's announcement that the US was halting its military campaign against the Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen".

Even more annoying to the Israeli premier, apparently, is Trump's refusal to endorse military strikes on Iran. Plus, the US has reportedly discarded the demand that Saudi Arabia normalise relations with Israel as a condition for US support for the kingdom's civilian nuclear programme.

What, then, does the strained Trump-Netanyahu rapport mean for the ever-so-sacred "special relationship" between the US and Israel? According to an article published by the Israeli outlet Ynetnews: "Despite the tensions, Israeli officials insist behind-the-scenes coordination with the Trump administration remains close, with no real policy rift."

The dispatch goes on to assure readers that US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee has "denied rumors that Trump might announce support for a Palestinian state during the visit" to the three Gulf nations. Of course, it's not quite clear

.....

.....

what sort of "Palestinian state" could ever be promoted by the man proposing US ownership of the Gaza Strip and expulsion of the native Palestinian population.

Although Israel may be sidelined on this trip, that doesn't mean it won't continue to serve a key function in general US malevolence. Just last month, Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir – source of the idea that there is "no reason for a gram of food or aid to enter Gaza" – was hosted by Republican officials at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida. After a dinner held in his honour, Ben-Gvir boasted that Republicans had "expressed support for my very clear position on how to act in Gaza and that the food and aid depots should be bombed".

Flashy trillion-dollar Gulf deals aside, rest assured that the Trump administration remains as committed as ever to capitalising on Israeli atrocities.

—Aljazeera

# Scandal, deals and a hostage release: Just another day in Trumpland

**I**T was just another regular day in the second Trump administration. An American hostage tasted freedom after a surprise breakthrough with Hamas.

An unprecedented ethics storm rocked the presidency.

Officials claimed a huge “deal” with China on trade that looked a lot like a classic climb-down.

And President Donald Trump, in a bid to cut drug prices for Americans, challenged longtime Republican economic dogma.

With all that under his belt, Trump headed off on a trip to Gulf Arab states on a mission to drum up investment for the US that told a story about both his transactional money-obsessed administration and a new locus of global power.

Trump’s juggling of critical global and domestic issues defines a presidency that constantly scans the horizons for “wins” that can animate a day with photo-ops. But the show is often erratic, reflecting his own volcanic temperament and disregard for constitutional impediments. And no one can be sure what happens next in a Washington maelstrom that is part of his appeal for supporters.

But Trump’s flexibility and willingness to drop everything for a deal can open some avenues that might be closed to more conventional presidents.

On Monday, he signed off on a deal to bypass America’s ally Israel and negotiated with Hamas, which committed the October 7, 2023, attacks. The initiative, worked out with Egypt and Qatar, freed the last living American hostage in Gaza, Edan Alexander. The scenes of joy as Alexander greeted his family would crack the hardest of hearts – even though thousands of Palestinians killed in Israeli bombardments or facing a humanitarian crisis in Gaza will never know similar reunions.

The move also piled pressure on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – who prioritizes the defeat of the ruthless Islamist group over more hostage releases – to do something similar. Trump is making a habit of snubbing Netanyahu. He shocked Israel by opening nuclear talks with Iran. And while he’s visiting Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates this week, he doesn’t plan a stop in the Jewish state.

Alexander’s release was a much-needed triumph for Trump’s envoy Steve Witkoff, whose global peace shuttles haven’t yielded much peace so far.

But it might be an isolated episode, since there’s no sign of a realistic US plan to end a war that has killed tens of thousands of civilians. Trump’s earlier wild suggestion was to purge Gaza of Palestinians so he can build the “Riviera of the Middle East.” And Hamas has not agreed to cede security control of the wrecked enclave – the one concession that might prompt Israel to agree to end the war.

But Brett McGurk, a former top Middle East policy official for administrations of both parties, told CNN’s Jake Tapper that the release – apparently timed by Hamas to coincide with Trump’s Middle East trip – was a “great moment, a great day.” He added: “I give the administration

\*\*\*\*\*  
**If Alexander’s return showed compassion and diplomatic dexterity by the administration, a brewing storm over Trump’s plan to replace jets used as Air Force One highlighted his historic and brazen defiance of basic ethical standards. His defense of an idea for Qatar to gift the Defense Department a luxury \$400 million 747, which would revert to his presidential library once he leaves office, ignored fears he’d be compromised by a foreign government. And it underscored concerns that he’s appeared to use his second presidency to enrich his businesses – from his firm’s expanding portfolio of luxury properties abroad to his lucrative \$Trump meme coin. “I would never be one to turn down that kind of an offer. I mean, I could be a stupid person and say, ‘No, we don’t want a free, very expensive airplane,’” Trump said, blind to the ethics morass the Qatar plane deal could cause. For starters, the flying palace might infringe the emoluments clause of the Constitution, which prohibits a federal official from accepting a gift or payment from a foreign government. White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt insisted that every American knew Trump “only works with the interests of the American public in mind.” This is quite a claim, given that Trump’s first major foreign tour of his second term is swinging through a region where his family is launching new golf and hotel projects. Most presidents might consult the deliberations of the founders in the Federalist Papers for advice on this question. But Trump turned to the late ‘Slammin’ Sam Snead, no constitutional scholar but a golfer who won seven major championships in the 1940s and 1950s.**  
\*\*\*\*\*

credit for (continuing) pushing; you never give up.”

If Alexander’s return showed compassion and diplomatic dexterity by the administration, a brewing storm over Trump’s plan to replace jets used as Air Force One highlighted his historic and brazen defiance of basic ethical standards.

His defense of an idea for Qatar to gift the Defense Department a luxury \$400 million 747, which would revert to his presidential library once he leaves office, ignored fears he’d be compromised by a foreign government. And it underscored concerns that he’s appeared to use his second presidency to enrich his businesses – from his firm’s expanding portfolio of luxury properties abroad to his lucrative \$Trump meme coin.

“I would never be one to turn down that kind of an offer, I mean, I could be a stupid person and say, ‘No, we don’t want a free, very expensive airplane,’” Trump said, blind to the ethics morass the Qatar plane deal could cause.

For starters, the flying palace might infringe the emoluments clause of the

Stephen Collinson

Constitution, which prohibits a federal official from accepting a gift or payment from a foreign government.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt insisted that every American knew Trump “only works with the interests of the American public in mind.” This is quite a claim, given that Trump’s first major foreign tour of his second term is swinging through a region where his family is launching new golf and hotel projects.

Most presidents might consult the deliberations of the founders in the Federalist Papers for advice on this question.

But Trump turned to the late ‘Slammin’ Sam Snead,

idental ride. But Trump’s vanity in pining for a replacement for the 1990s jumbos currently in service is certainly in character.

It’s also rather embarrassing that the world’s mightiest superpower would rely on an ally to get a new plane – manufactured by an American company.

But Trump’s quest for a new Air Force One could turn into a political liability.

Ex-House Speaker Kevin McCarthy advised him to drop it. “Let’s let Boeing finish that – the new planes (are) coming in,” McCarthy told Zain Asher and Bianna Golodryga on CNN International. The former California Republican representative added: “I think America can afford their

own plane and build their own Air Force One.”

Trump started Monday by boasting about a breakthrough in China trade talks in Switzerland. “We achieved a total reset with China,” the president said. What actually happened was that both sides stepped back from the brink of a showdown that could have destroyed the global economy – which Trump caused.

In another perennial Trump move, there’s yet another deadline, of 90 days, to negotiate concessions while mutual tariffs are reduced by 115 percentage points.

US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said the agreement, largely negotiated at the residence of the Swiss ambassador to the UN in Geneva “under a big, beautiful tree on a set of patio sofas,” is a first step toward balancing trade.

Yet the deal, hammered out under the stewardship of the increasingly influential Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, also looks like a Trumpian retreat – only a week after the president was warning parents that their kids would have to make do with just a couple of dolls as new restric-

tions on China kicked in. Beijing appears so far to have made no meaningful concessions. And Trump has rolled back his 145% duties on Chinese imports while still saddling US consumers with a 30% tariff on those goods.

“It’s very clear that it’s President Trump who blinked,” former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers told CNN’s Kasie Hunt. “Sometimes it’s good to blink; when you make a mistake it’s usually best to correct it and retreat even if it’s a little bit embarrassing.”

Trump justifies his use of tariffs – a device that deepened the Great Depression nearly a century ago – by the need to reverse the tide of globalization that left many working Americans stranded.

That same rationale lay behind another policy move Monday that showed how a populist president sometimes trashes Republican economic orthodoxy. Trump signed an executive order designed to bring the price Americans pay for prescription drugs in line with prices abroad, where governments with state health care systems can negotiate down costs.

Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. pointed out the political leap the president was attempting.

“This is an extraordinary day. I grew up in the Democratic Party, and every major Democratic leader for 20 years been making this promise to the American people,” Kennedy said. “It’s one of these promises that politicians make to their constituents knowing that they’ll never have to do it.”

“We now have a president who is a man of his word, who has the courage,” Kennedy added.

But Trump may fall short. A similar effort in his first term was blocked in the courts. And the power of pharmaceutical lobbyists in Congress means that a more permanent change in the law is unlikely.

Still, he keeps flirting with GOP policy heresy. He even suggested the rich should pay more to finance his ambitious tax-cut plan, which he hopes will exclude exemptions for wages earned as tips.

Some of this is positioning for political effect. But after three months in which the president’s approval ratings plunged, a Trump voter might consider a hostage release, a bid to cut drug prices and a trade deal with China as a good day’s work.

But perhaps the less said about the Qatari jumbo jet, the better.

# Staunch supporters of UN-centered system

**T**HE visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Moscow to attend the celebrations marking the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Soviet Union’s Great Patriotic War was very significant for Sino-Russian relations as well as the international community as a whole.

The Soviet Union and China played significant roles in the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War. They were among the Allies’ principal members. After the war, they played a key role in establishing the United Nations, which was envisioned as a guarantor of global peace and the foundation of the post-war international system.

Unfortunately, the cooperation of the allies did not last long after the

\*\*\*\*\*  
**In fact, Sino-Russian cooperation gave rise to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001. The SCO evolved from Sino-Soviet border negotiations and confidence-building measures, which after the disintegration of the Soviet Union led to the formation of the “Shanghai Five”, comprising China and four former Soviet republics, including Russia. The SCO was officially launched in Shanghai after Uzbekistan joined it in 2001. Over the years, the SCO has become an influential international organization with 10 full members, two observer states, and 14 dialogue partners. The SCO member states cover about 36 million square kilometers, have a combined population of more than 3.4 billion, and account for about a quarter of global GDP and more than 15 percent of international trade. Despite all their differences, the Shanghai Spirit respects diversity, supports every country’s right to choose its political system and development model, promotes shared prosperity, aims to reduce disparities between the Global North and Global South, and calls for abandoning the Cold War mentality. Another crucial process jointly initiated by China and Russia is the linkage of the Eurasian Economic Union, comprising five former Soviet republics—Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia — with the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, which laid the groundwork for a new system of economic partnership in “Greater Eurasia”.**  
\*\*\*\*\*

war. Russia and China laid the foundation for a multipolar world order – what is referred to in China as an “equal and orderly multipolar world”. Hence, the Sino-Russian strategic partnership is important for not only the two countries and stability in East Asia, but also consolidating the foundation of such a world.

In fact, Sino-Russian cooperation gave rise to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001. The SCO evolved from Sino-Soviet border negotiations and confidence-building measures, which after the disintegration of the Soviet Union led to the formation of the “Shanghai Five”, comprising China and four former Soviet republics, including Russia. The SCO was officially launched in Shanghai after Uzbekistan joined it in 2001. Over the years, the SCO has become an influential international organization with 10 full members, two observer states, and 14 dialogue partners.

The SCO member states cover about 36 million square kilometers, have a combined

Alexander Lukin

population of more than 3.4 billion, and account for about a quarter of global GDP and more than 15 percent of international trade.

Despite all their differences, the Shanghai Spirit respects diversity, supports every country’s right to choose its political system and development model, promotes shared prosperity, aims to reduce disparities between the Global North and Global South, and calls for abandoning the Cold War mentality.

Another crucial process jointly initiated by China and Russia is the linkage of the Eurasian Economic Union, comprising five former Soviet republics—Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia — with the

\*\*\*\*\*  
**In fact, Sino-Russian cooperation gave rise to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001. The SCO evolved from Sino-Soviet border negotiations and confidence-building measures, which after the disintegration of the Soviet Union led to the formation of the “Shanghai Five”, comprising China and four former Soviet republics, including Russia. The SCO was officially launched in Shanghai after Uzbekistan joined it in 2001. Over the years, the SCO has become an influential international organization with 10 full members, two observer states, and 14 dialogue partners. The SCO member states cover about 36 million square kilometers, have a combined population of more than 3.4 billion, and account for about a quarter of global GDP and more than 15 percent of international trade. Despite all their differences, the Shanghai Spirit respects diversity, supports every country’s right to choose its political system and development model, promotes shared prosperity, aims to reduce disparities between the Global North and Global South, and calls for abandoning the Cold War mentality. Another crucial process jointly initiated by China and Russia is the linkage of the Eurasian Economic Union, comprising five former Soviet republics—Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia — with the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, which laid the groundwork for a new system of economic partnership in “Greater Eurasia”.**  
\*\*\*\*\*

China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, which laid the groundwork for a new system of economic partnership in “Greater Eurasia”.

Meanwhile, the BRICS grouping has acquired even more importance as it offers its own vision of global governance, with the reform of the global economy being one of its key concerns. BRICS member states strongly advocate increasing the representation of non-Western countries in international financial institutions.

Initially, BRICS served as a voice for the Global South and an alternative to the G7. But this role proved insufficient. Facing strong resistance from traditional centers of global finance, BRICS countries are making efforts to help reform international financial institutions by establishing their own development bank and currency reserve pool, offering developing countries an alternative for development funding and crisis response.

BRICS also aims to strengthen the UN Security Council’s central role in international

relations and the world order, and leverage the complementarity of its member economies for accelerated development.

Supporting the central role of the UN and its Security Council in maintaining stability in a multipolar world is a key idea of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership, continuing the vision of the key allies, which after the end of World War II believed that despite their differences, they could preserve their wartime cooperation to maintain global peace and prevent another catastrophic war. That’s why the UN Security Council was designed in a way that would require a consensus among its permanent members to make a decision and reach a compromise. Unfortunately, that com-

\*\*\*\*\*  
**In fact, Sino-Russian cooperation gave rise to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001. The SCO evolved from Sino-Soviet border negotiations and confidence-building measures, which after the disintegration of the Soviet Union led to the formation of the “Shanghai Five”, comprising China and four former Soviet republics, including Russia. The SCO was officially launched in Shanghai after Uzbekistan joined it in 2001. Over the years, the SCO has become an influential international organization with 10 full members, two observer states, and 14 dialogue partners. The SCO member states cover about 36 million square kilometers, have a combined population of more than 3.4 billion, and account for about a quarter of global GDP and more than 15 percent of international trade. Despite all their differences, the Shanghai Spirit respects diversity, supports every country’s right to choose its political system and development model, promotes shared prosperity, aims to reduce disparities between the Global North and Global South, and calls for abandoning the Cold War mentality. Another crucial process jointly initiated by China and Russia is the linkage of the Eurasian Economic Union, comprising five former Soviet republics—Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia — with the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, which laid the groundwork for a new system of economic partnership in “Greater Eurasia”.**  
\*\*\*\*\*

mitment to compromise was not sustained.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, some big power tried to promote a new system based on its own rules, leading to numerous global conflicts, and undermined the UN’s ability to resolve them. It labelled Russia and China “revisionist” powers, although it is Russia and China that work to preserve the international system with the UN at its core.

The “unipolar moment” has ended, and multipolarity is strengthening. In this environment, there is no higher arbiter or coordinator of global affairs than the UN. It is for this reason that BRICS, the SCO and the Global South insist on strengthening the UN’s central role.

China and Russia suffered huge losses in World War II, with tens of millions of their citizens perishing, prompting them to consistently uphold the tradition of cooperation between the wartime allies. Hopefully, their former allies will soon remember that fruitful cooperation.

— China Daily

# Trump’s Middle East trip leaves Netanyahu watching from the sidelines again

**T**HE first stop was Riyadh. Just a few months into his new administration, the president of the United States met the king of Saudi Arabia as part of an effort to push forward relations with the Arab world.

From there, it was off to another regional capital, where the leader of the free world gave a speech about a new vision for the Middle East.

Conspicuously missing from the itinerary was a stop in Israel.

The year was 2009, and the president was Barack Obama. His decision not to visit Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who had just returned to office, was viewed as an insult. It marked the beginning of what many to this day see as Obama’s fractured relationship with Israel, and particularly with the country’s longest-serving leader.

But as President Donald Trump prepares for his first visit to the region in his second term, the same elephant sits in the same corner of the Oval Office. Trump’s itinerary includes Saudi Arabia – where he’ll arrive early Tuesday local time – Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

The White House has called it a “historic return to the Middle East” and promised “a shared vision of stability, opportunity and mutual respect.” Israel is once again not on the itinerary. And after Trump blindsided Israel several times already – announcing talks with Iran, a deal with Yemen’s Houthi rebels, and

direct talks with Hamas – Israeli officials are concerned another surprise could be coming.

Israeli officials tried to inquire about the possibility of a stop in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv during Trump’s trip, according to a source familiar with the matter. But the president doused the flicker of those hopes last week when he said he had no plans to stop in Israel.

“We will be doing it at some point,” Trump said. “But not for this trip.”

Trump might have been persuaded to add the visit to his itinerary if he could claim some sort of victory, whether it be a ceasefire agreement in Gaza, a humanitarian aid plan, or something else. But with Israel poised to expand its war in Gaza, there are no such deliverables. Even with the release of hostage Edan Alexander on Monday, prospects for a comprehensive ceasefire still seem distant. “Without results, he’s not coming (to Israel),” said the source.

Netanyahu prided himself on being the first world leader to visit Trump in his second term in February. On his second visit, in April, he became the first leader to try to begin negotiations for a new trade deal after Trump announced sweeping tariffs on imports. The prime minister left the White House without a trade deal and with a new concern: Trump’s shock announcement that the US would begin negotiating a new nuclear deal with Iran.

The problem for Netanyahu is that he has lit-

tle leverage in Washington right now, said Alon Pinkas, a former Israeli diplomat.

“There’s nothing that Netanyahu has that Trump wants, needs or (that he) can give him, as opposed to, say, the Saudis, the Qataris, (or) the Emiratis,” Pinkas told CNN. The wealthy Arab nations have pledged

\*\*\*\*\*

**Netanyahu prided himself on being the first world leader to visit Trump in his second term in February. On his second visit, in April, he became the first leader to try to begin negotiations for a new trade deal after Trump announced sweeping tariffs on imports. The prime minister left the White House without a trade deal and with a new concern: Trump’s shock announcement that the US would begin negotiating a new nuclear deal with Iran. The problem for Netanyahu is that he has little leverage in Washington right now, said Alon Pinkas, a former Israeli diplomat. “There’s nothing that Netanyahu has that Trump wants, needs or (that he) can give him, as opposed to, say, the Saudis, the Qataris, (or) the Emiratis,” Pinkas told CNN. The wealthy Arab nations have pledged trillions of dollars in US investments and may announce major weapons purchases, which Trump can tout as a victory for American manufacturing. Despite years of being perhaps Trump’s most vocal international supporter, Netanyahu has few cards left to play, Pinkas said. Under Democratic administrations, Netanyahu has used his Republican supporters to put pressure on the White House. But Netanyahu has never criticized Trump openly, and he’s unlikely to start. “He’s got nothing right now,” Pinkas said. As Trump’s visit to the region nears, Israeli officials’ concerns about what it will bring have only grown. In the weeks leading up to his trip, Trump has made a series of moves that have left the Israeli prime minister looking little more than a frustrated bystander. Trump has pursued negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program that don’t preclude the possibility of Tehran maintaining some civilian nuclear capabilities; he agreed to a ceasefire with the Houthis that doesn’t halt the Yemeni group’s attacks on Israel; and according to a Reuters report is also no longer demanding that**  
\*\*\*\*\*

trillions of dollars in US investments and may announce major weapons purchases, which Trump can tout as a victory for American manufacturing.

Despite years of being perhaps Trump’s most vocal international supporter, Netanyahu has few cards left to play, Pinkas said. Under Democratic administrations, Netanyahu has used his Republican supporters to put pressure on the White House. But Netanyahu has never criti-

Oren Liebermann and Jeremy Diamond

cized Trump openly, and he’s unlikely to start.

“He’s got nothing right now,” Pinkas said.

As Trump’s visit to the region nears, Israeli officials’ concerns about what it will bring have only grown.

In the weeks leading up

Saudi Arabia normalize relations with Israel as a condition to facilitating a Saudi civil nuclear program.

And on Sunday, the Trump administration bypassed Israel to seal a deal with Hamas to free

\*\*\*\*\*

**Netanyahu prided himself on being the first world leader to visit Trump in his second term in February. On his second visit, in April, he became the first leader to try to begin negotiations for a new trade deal after Trump announced sweeping tariffs on imports. The prime minister left the White House without a trade deal and with a new concern: Trump’s shock announcement that the US would begin negotiating a new nuclear deal with Iran. The problem for Netanyahu is that he has little leverage in Washington right now, said Alon Pinkas, a former Israeli diplomat. “There’s nothing that Netanyahu has that Trump wants, needs or (that he) can give him, as opposed to, say, the Saudis, the Qataris, (or) the Emiratis,” Pinkas told CNN. The wealthy Arab nations have pledged trillions of dollars in US investments and may announce major weapons purchases, which Trump can tout as a victory for American manufacturing. Despite years of being perhaps Trump’s most vocal international supporter, Netanyahu has few cards left to play, Pinkas said. Under Democratic administrations, Netanyahu has used his Republican supporters to put pressure on the White House. But Netanyahu has never criticized Trump openly, and he’s unlikely to start. “He’s got nothing right now,” Pinkas said. As Trump’s visit to the region nears, Israeli officials’ concerns about what it will bring have only grown. In the weeks leading up to his trip, Trump has made a series of moves that have left the Israeli prime minister looking little more than a frustrated bystander. Trump has pursued negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program that don’t preclude the possibility of Tehran maintaining some civilian nuclear capabilities; he agreed to a ceasefire with the Houthis that doesn’t halt the Yemeni group’s attacks on Israel; and according to a Reuters report is also no longer demanding that**  
\*\*\*\*\*

to his trip, Trump has made a series of moves that have left the Israeli prime minister looking little more than a frustrated bystander. Trump has pursued negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program that don’t preclude the possibility of Tehran maintaining some civilian nuclear capabilities; he agreed to a ceasefire with the Houthis that doesn’t halt the Yemeni group’s attacks on Israel; and according to a Reuters report is also no longer demanding that

Edan Alexander, the last known living American hostage in Gaza, with Trump framing it as a step “to put an end to this very brutal war and return ALL living hostages and remains to their loved ones.” Israeli officials are now concerned what a week spent meeting with and being feteed by Gulf leaders – all of whom have been critical of Israel’s military assault in Gaza and its ongoing humanitarian blockade of the strip – will

mean for Trump’s posture vis-à-vis the war and ceasefire negotiations.

Leading up to Trump’s trip, the US has been heavily pressing Egypt and Qatar to convince Hamas to agree to the release of some hostages, a source familiar with the negotiations said, in exchange for several

\*\*\*\*\*

**Netanyahu prided himself on being the first world leader to visit Trump in his second term in February. On his second visit, in April, he became the first leader to try to begin negotiations for a new trade deal after Trump announced sweeping tariffs on imports. The prime minister left the White House without a trade deal and with a new concern: Trump’s shock announcement that the US would begin negotiating a new nuclear deal with Iran. The problem for Netanyahu is that he has little leverage in Washington right now, said Alon Pinkas, a former Israeli diplomat. “There’s nothing that Netanyahu has that Trump wants, needs or (that he) can give him, as opposed to, say, the Saudis, the Qataris, (or) the Emiratis,” Pinkas told CNN. The wealthy Arab nations have pledged trillions of dollars in US investments and may announce major weapons purchases, which Trump can tout as a victory for American manufacturing. Despite years of being perhaps Trump’s most vocal international supporter, Netanyahu has few cards left to play, Pinkas said. Under Democratic administrations, Netanyahu has used his Republican supporters to put pressure on the White House. But Netanyahu has never criticized Trump openly, and he’s unlikely to start. “He’s got nothing right now,” Pinkas said. As Trump’s visit to the region nears, Israeli officials’ concerns about what it will bring have only grown. In the weeks leading up to his trip, Trump has made a series of moves that have left the Israeli prime minister looking little more than a frustrated bystander. Trump has pursued negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program that don’t preclude the possibility of Tehran maintaining some civilian nuclear capabilities; he agreed to a ceasefire with the Houthis that doesn’t halt the Yemeni group’s attacks on Israel; and according to a Reuters report is also no longer demanding that**  
\*\*\*\*\*

weeks of ceasefire and the entry of humanitarian aid. The Trump administration now appears to be aiming even higher. Another source familiar with the matter tells CNN the release of Alexander will lead to “immediate peace deal negotiations.”

A comprehensive agreement to end the war has remained out of reach, but Trump has made clear that that is his goal. “Hopefully this is the first of those final steps nec-

essary to end this brutal conflict,” Trump said on social media on Sunday.

The result is that Trump and Netanyahu seem to be more at odds than ever, a situation that comes shortly after Netanyahu doubled down on the war and made explicitly clear he believes defeating Hamas is more important than securing the release of the hostages. If a deal with Hamas for the return of more hostages seems within reach, the US will drive up the pressure on Israel to accept it, another source familiar with the matter said.

Until now, there were major doubts about whether Hamas’ leader in Gaza, Mohammad Sinwar, would agree to a limited deal. But Hamas seems to have shrewdly outplayed Israel this time around when it comes to Trump.

And Trump’s visit to the region will serve as a pressure point to potentially unlock a deal.

“There has to be a practice of no surprises” on either side, said Dan Shapiro, a former US Ambassador to Israel and senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, a think tank in Washington, DC. “Otherwise, the trust that is so essential for this partnership breaks down really, really quickly.”

Trump is moving forward “like a bulldozer” for what he wants, Shapiro told CNN, and that wish list currently includes progress on a ceasefire deal and a hostage release. Netanyahu’s tendency to drag his feet on major deci-

sions and his history of prioritizing his own political survival appear to have contributed to the White House’s willingness to forgo consultation with Israel on key decisions, he said.

“He’s clearly frustrated with Netanyahu, as every other president who’s worked with Netanyahu has been,” Shapiro said.

Meanwhile, Trump’s man in Jerusalem, US Ambassador Mike Huckabee, has tried to downplay speculation about a rift between the two leaders, and said he would “fully expect” Trump to visit Israel this year.

“No president has ever cared as much and done as much as President Trump has for the state of Israel,” Huckabee told Israel’s Channel 13 News in an interview aired Saturday evening. “And his relationship with the prime minister is, I think, remarkable.”

Israelis see it differently. The front page of the prominent Yedioth Ahronot newspaper last Thursday showed a cartoon of Trump with the headline “A policy of surprises.” As Trump prepares a soup, Netanyahu sits nervously in the background. Even the ardently pro-Trump Israel HaYom newspaper has keyed in on the apparent rift with Netanyahu. Columnist Shai Golden wrote in an opinion article over the weekend, “The old saying ‘Be careful what you wish for, you might just get it’ perfectly captures the trap Netanyahu has fallen into with Trump.”



# Export-led growth only way forward: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday met with a group of leading exporters and businessmen led by Shabbir Diwan, former Chairman of the Pakistan Business Council (PBC), as part of the government's ongoing consultative process with stakeholders from the business and industrial community.

Speaking during the meeting, the Finance Minister underscored that export-led growth is not just a priority—it is the only viable path forward for Pakistan's economic stability and sustainability.

"Every sector of the economy will have to contribute."

He said that increased productivity and outward-looking policies are essential if Pakistan wants to break free from the recurring boom-and-bust cycles and avoid returning for what would be a 25th IMF program, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance and Revenue.

He reiterated that the existing protectionist regime must be dismantled to enable market-based competitiveness. "The era of unnecessary protection must come to an end. The Prime Minister is personal-

ly chairing meetings to drive this shift," he added.

The minister further highlighted that resolving structural bottlenecks—such as high financing costs, elevated energy tariffs, and an overly complex tax regime—is essential for helping the local industry become competitive and lead the country to a productivity and export led growth.

He said the government was aiming to prepare the upcoming federal budget as a strategic document—one that aligns fiscal priorities with the broader objective of sustainable, export-driven growth.

The discussion covered the government's Tariff Rationalisation Program, aimed at removing anomalies and inconsistencies that hinder business operations. Mr. Diwan welcomed the government's efforts and shared private sector perspectives on improving policy consistency and predictability.

Aurangzeb assured that all stakeholders inputs will be considered in shaping the next phase of reforms. He emphasized the importance of public-private collaboration to lay down a resilient, productive, and globally integrated economic framework.



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb engaging with leading exporters and businessmen led by Shabbir Diwan on driving export-led growth and policy reforms.

## Traders to get facilitation not harassment: Abid

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue, Islamabad Abid Mehmood has reaffirmed his department's commitment to facilitating the business community, recognizing its vital role in the economic development of the country.

He assured that every possible measure would be taken to resolve tax-related challenges faced by businesses.

Addressing a gathering of business leaders during his visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), the Chief Commissioner emphasized the ongoing efforts to simplify the tax system through digitization, aiming to improve tax compliance and ease of doing business.

He was accompanied by senior tax officials, including Ms Bushra Jaffar (Commissioner Refund Zone), Naveed Khan Tareen (Commissioner Withholding Taxes Zone), Said Munaf (Commissioner North

Zone), and Zafar Jamal Jasra (Additional Commissioner, Headquarters).

Abid Mehmood highlighted the importance of fostering a relationship of mutual trust between tax collectors and taxpayers, adding that teams would be formed to visit markets, conduct awareness sessions, and assist in filing tax returns.

He stressed that the environment of coercion or intimidation has no place in the tax system and reaffirmed that his office remains open to all taxpayers. Special facilitation counters have also been set up for senior citizens and women to ensure inclusive and accessible tax services, he concluded.

Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of ICCI, welcomed the RTO's supportive stance and underscored the need for extending due respect to the business community, which he described as a cornerstone of the national economy.

He urged the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to work in close coordination with chambers to expand the tax base, rather than placing additional burdens on existing taxpayers.

Qureshi stressed the importance of involving the business community in policymaking to build a taxpayer-friendly culture that encourages growth and investment.

He added that offering attractive incentives to compliant taxpayers would reduce apprehensions and broaden tax participation.

ICCI Executive member Chaudhry Nadeem Ahmed, Ms Fatimz Azim, Council member Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi, Mohammad Masood Chaudhry, Traders leaders Assad Aziz, Naeem Iqbal, Advisor to ICCI President Naeem Siddiqui also highlighted the problems facing the business community concerning the FBR and called for continued collaboration to resolve longstanding tax issues.

## Pakistan, Russia agree to setup new steel mills

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Russia on Tuesday agreed to establish a new steel mill in Karachi aimed at enhancing bilateral relations between the two countries.

The agreement reached during a meeting between Russian Representative Denis Nazarov and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) Haroon Akhtar Khan.

"The primary focus of the discussion was the establishment of new steel mills in Pakistan," a news release said.

The two sides remained engaged in extensive talks on the potential collaboration between Pakistan and Russia in setting up a new steel mill in Karachi.

They agreed to form a joint working group to facilitate the development and implementation of this initiative.

During the meeting, Haroon Akhtar Khan emphasized the Prime Minister's vision to increase investments in Pakistan.

He highlighted that this was an opportune time for foreign investors to invest in the country, noting that Pakistan has evolved as a strong and safe destination for international investment and business.

Furthermore, the SAPM underscored the potential for a remarkable collaboration between Pakistan and Russia in the steel industry, which could prove beneficial for both nations.

"Pakistan is a secure and thriving hub for investment, and the international community has recognized its potential," he added.

He also extended an invitation to all Russian businesspeople to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan. The meeting also marked an important step in further strengthening the ties between the two nations and opening new avenues for joint ventures in key sectors such as steel production.

## MCB achieved certificate

F.P. Report

LAHORE: MCB Islamic Bank proudly announces the successful attainment of the PCI DSS (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard) v4.0.1 Certificate of Compliance, awarded by Risk Associates, Pakistan's premier PCI Qualified Security Assessor.

Following last year's PCI DSS v3.2.1 compliance, the latest v4.0.1 certification marks a major advancement, introducing more robust security controls, continuous monitoring mechanisms, and adaptive risk-based authentication standards. This upgrade is part of the Bank's strategic roadmap to proactively meet evolving global cybersecurity threats and ensure seamless, secure payment systems.

At MCB Islamic Bank, achieving PCI DSS v4.0.1 underscores our proactive and future-focused approach to digital security. As the latest evolution of this globally recognized standard, PCI DSS v4.0.1 empowers us to strengthen our payment environment with greater flexibility, innovation, and advanced technical safeguards for protecting cardholder data. The ceremony was attended by senior executives from both organizations.

## PSX stays bullish, gains 1,278 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with a bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 1,278.16 more points, a positive change of 1.09 percent, closing at 118,575.89 points as compared to 117,297.73 points on the last trading day.

A total of 684,294,646 shares were traded during the day as compared to 732,877,141 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 52.586 billion against Rs 30.382 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 462 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 221 of them recorded gains and 194 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 47 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 41,734,903 shares at Rs 1.26 per share,

Maple Leaf with 41,052,877 shares at Rs 75.92 per share and Sui South Gas with 35,773,773 shares at Rs 32.79 per share.

PIA Holding Company LimitedB witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 850.88 per share closing at Rs 9,359.63 whereas runner-up was Lucky Core Industries Limited with Rs 97.35 rise in its share price to close at Rs 1,557.37.

Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 154.22 per share price, closing at Rs 8,911.00, whereas the runner-up Nestle Pakistan Limited with Rs 90.58 decline in its per share price to Rs 7,074.09.

**Rupee sheds 11 paise against US Dollar**

The Rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 11 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.67 against

the previous day's closing of Rs 281.56.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.20 and Rs 283.70, respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs0.35 to close at Rs 313.21 against the last day's closing of Rs 312.86, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.90, whereas an increase of Rs1.10 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 372.17 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 371.07.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 paise each to close at Rs 76.68 and Rs 75.09, respectively.

**Gold prices increase Rs.3,700 to 344,200 per tola**

The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs.3,700 on Tuesday and was sold at Rs.344,200 against its sale at Rs.340,500 on the previous trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs.3,173 to Rs.295,096 from Rs.391,923 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat increased by Rs.2,821 to Rs.270,514 from Rs.267,693.

The rates of per tola silver surged by Rs.82 to Rs.3,482 and ten gram silver rose by Rs.71 to Rs.2,985 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market also increased by \$37 to \$3,258 from \$3,321 whereas that of silver also increased by \$0.82 to \$33.00, the Association reported.

## UBL sign agreement with Shahzad Trade Link

— to promote mechanization of agri farms



### F.P. Report

KARACHI: UBL and Shahzad Trade Link (STL) have signed an agreement to promote the mechanization of agriculture farms in Pakistan. Both entities have agreed to ensure the availability of Belarus Tractors to the farmers through subsidized financing rate and quick delivery.

The agreement focuses

on joint sales promotion to encourage small and medium sized land holders to adopt farm mechanization solutions.

Under the Farm Mechanization scheme, UBL and STL will collaborate to provide direct agricultural loans at flat markup rate of 9.5%, with repayment spread over five years' tenure. The partnership between the two enti-

ties will help promote the financial inclusion and boost farmer-economics in the country.

The signing ceremony, attended by Mr. Abdul Aleem Qureshi, Group Executive, Branch Banking and Mr. Shahzad Riaz - Proprietor, STL along with other senior executives from both organizations, was held at the UBL Head Office, Karachi.

## Stocks, dollar steady after China-US truce rally

LONDON (AFP/APP): European stock markets and the dollar steadied Tuesday after kicking off the week with strong gains as investors basked in the glow of the China-US tariff suspension.

Asian equities, catching up with big advances Monday on Wall Street, saw further rallies Tuesday, although Hong Kong dropped nearly two percent on profit-taking.

Oil prices firmed further on hopes that the global economy would avoid a tariffs-fuelled recession.

"European markets are making moderate gains... as stocks take a breather after yesterday's widespread exuberance," noted Joshua Mahony, analyst at Scope Markets.

"The tariff breakthrough seen over the weekend managed to outperform even the most optimistic."

The United States agreed

to temporarily reduce its 145-percent duties on China to 30 percent, while Beijing cut its retaliatory measures to 10 percent from 125 percent.

Wall Street's main indices surged by an average of around 3.5 percent Monday, while a gauge of US-listed Chinese stocks surged more than five percent.

"Clearly, US-China trade talks have yielded much faster success than many had expected," HSBC strategists concluded in a note to clients.

They cautioned that "things could easily turn out a bit bumpier in future trade negotiations".

On the corporate front, focus was on the auto sector after major news out of Japan.

Nissan posted a annual net loss of \$4.5 billion, confirmed plans to slash 15 percent of its global work-

force and warned about the possible impact of US tariffs.

The carmaker, whose mooted merger with Honda collapsed this year, is heavily indebted and engaged in an expensive business restructuring plan.

For its part, Honda on Tuesday forecast a 70 percent drop in net profit for the 2025-26 financial year.

"The impact of tariff policies in various countries on our business has been very significant, and frequent revisions are being made, making it difficult to formulate an outlook," said Honda chief executive Toshihiro Mibe.

French automaker Renault said it expects to book a 2.2-billion-euro (\$2.4-billion) hit in the first quarter owing to partner Nissan's turnaround plan, which sees 20,000 jobs axed.

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has released a Consultation Paper on Standard Principles for Recognition and Conduct of Industry Associations, introducing a strategic framework aimed at strengthening Pakistan's financial sector through enhanced self-regulation.

In today's dynamic regulatory landscape, industry associations are increasingly moving beyond their conventional role as advocacy bodies. Globally, they are being recognized as vital contributors to economic development by engaging in policy dialogue, supporting regulatory compliance, and fostering responsible industry practices, said a press release issued here.

The proposed framework sets out a clear roadmap for eligible industry associations to transition into Self-Regulatory Organizations (SROs) over the next three years.

These SROs will be vested with the authority to set ethical standards, monitor industry conduct, enforce compliance, and drive sector-specific initiatives, all in alignment with SECP's overarching regulatory objectives.

Key features of the proposal include the mandatory conversion of trade associations into Section 42 companies under the Companies Act, 2017, ensuring they operate as not-for-profit entities.

This aims to enhance transparency, strengthen governance, and uphold financial integrity.

The framework also aligns with international best practices, emphasizing diverse and merit-based membership, strong governance, conflict-of-interest safeguards, stakeholder engagement, fair dispute resolution, a robust code of conduct, and ongoing investment in training of members and investor education.

To enhance sector-specific advocacy, the Commission encourages the establishment of specialized associations within regulated sectors, each focusing on distinct sub-sectors.

This targeted approach enables tailored representation that addresses the unique operational dynamics, challenges, and compliance requirements of each segment.

This initiative under-

scores SECP's commitment to nurturing a transparent, accountable, and competitive financial ecosystem.

By enabling the evolution of industry associations into functional SROs, the Commission aims to elevate market integrity, build investor confidence, and foster sustainable sectoral growth.

## Cars' sale up 32.24% to 83,269 units during July-April

ISLAMABAD (APP): The sale of cars during the first ten months of the current fiscal year 2024-25 increased by 32.24 percent compared to the same months of last year, Pakistan Automobile Manufacturers Association (PAMA) said on Tuesday.

According to the data, as many as 83,269 cars were sold during the months under review as opposed to 62,964 units in the same months of last year.

The breakup figures showed that 13,034 units of Honda Civic and City were sold during July-April 2024-25 compared to the sale of 9,470 units during July-April 2023-24.

Toyota Corolla and Yaris cars sales increased by 48.53 percent as it went up to 18,496 units in 12,452 units.

Suzuki Swift's sales also rose by 67.65 percent as its sales surged from 3,914 units to 6,562 units this year.

Sales of Suzuki Cultus declined to 2,130 units during the period under review, whereas during the same period last year, the sale was recorded at 3,123 units while the sale of Suzuki WagonR also decreased to 1,789 units from 2,790 units last year.

Suzuki Alto's sales witnessed an increase of 22.17 percent from 27,469 units to 33,560 units during the current year, whereas the sales of Suzuki Bolan surged to 3,168 units as opposed to sales of 1,971 units in the same months of last year.



In brief

Paolini reaches Italian Open semis

ROME (Agencies): Home favourite Jasmine Paolini recovered from a set down and a 4-0 deficit in the second set to edge past Diana Shnaider and reach the Italian Open semi-finals. The sixth seed claimed a 6-7 (1-7) 6-4 6-2 victory to become the first Italian woman to reach the last four in Rome since 2014 when her doubles partner, Sara Errani, was beaten by Serena Williams in the final. Having won the opening set after a tie-break, Shnaider led 3-0 in the second before rain interrupted play. Shnaider held serve to stretch her advantage to 4-0 after play resumed but Paolini, backed by the vociferous home support, won the next six games to level the match. Paolini, who cruised to victory in the deciding set, paid testament to Errani for her influential words of encouragement during the rain delay. "It was a good thing that it rained for five minutes. I got some coaching from Sara," Paolini said of Errani, who was watching from the stands. The 29-year-old will face either two-time Italian Open winner Elina Svitolina or Peyton Stearns in the last four. Raffaella Reggi was the last Italian woman to win the tournament in 1985.

**FIA president proposes changes to governing body**  
LONDON (Agencies): FIA president Mohammed Ben Sulayem is proposing changes to the statutes of motorsport's governing body that appear to further extend his control. BBC Sport has seen a confidential document containing the proposed revisions, which are set to be voted on at a meeting of the FIA General Assembly next month. These bring forward the deadline for candidates for December's presidential election, give Ben Sulayem the possibility to bar any candidate from running against him and allow him more control over the membership of the FIA Senate. No critic was prepared to comment on the record about the changes, as many are bound by non-disclosure agreements. But one said: "Most proposals aim at some sort of consolidation of power, more centralised control and trying to eliminate independent checks and balances." Another said the document containing the proposals was "very cleverly written". "It's taking a very moral high ground," they said. "Or it's appearing to. Whereas the reality of it is probably less so." Ben Sulayem was criticised last December for statute changes that were labelled a "worrisome concentration of power" by one of its member clubs. The FIA have been approached by BBC Sport for comment.

**Murray and Djokovic end coaching partnership**  
LONDON (AFP): Andy Murray and former rival Novak Djokovic have ended their coaching partnership after six months, the pair announced on Tuesday. Djokovic stunned the tennis world in November when he hired the retired Murray, who had no track record as a coach. But the two 37-year-olds have now parted company after a tough start to the season for the 24-time Grand Slam champion, with the French Open looming. "Thank you, coach Andy, for all the hard work, fun and support over last six months on and off the court, really enjoyed deepening our friendship together," said Djokovic.

## PSL X to resume to May 17, grand final on May 25

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Super League (PSL) X will resume on May 17 (Saturday) after a week-long hiatus and culminate with the final on May 25 (Sunday) at the Gaddafi stadium as per the revised schedule announced by the Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi in a tweet on social media platform X Tuesday morning.

The rest of eight matches of the tournament are likely to be played at the two venues, Rawalpindi and Lahore, instead of the original plans of three venues including Multan before it was suspended on May 8 (Thursday). The PSL X was suspended due to unprovoked, blatant act of war by India on May 7 when the Indian Air Force violated Pakistan's sovereignty using standoff weapons, targeting civilian population across international border in various cities including Rawalpindi where the PSL X matches were being played.

The unprovoked aggression resulted in 26 casualties and created security situation across the country. In an unprecedented violation of rules of war, the Indian government attacked civilian targets and even hit the sporting arena of Rawalpindi cricket stadium where PSL X fixtures were being played. The government was obliged to postpone the world's second best T20 franchise league for the safety of the foreign and local players and the foreign broadcast crew.

A ceasefire was reached between the two neighboring countries on the intervention of the US President Donald Trump on May 11. In a message Mohsin Naqvi wrote: "HBL PSL X picks up from picks up from where it left off! six teams zero fear. Let the aura take over as we unite

and celebrate the spirit of cricket. Get ready for eight thrilling matches starting 17th May, leading up to the Grand Final on 25th May. Best of Luck to all the teams."

With more details on the rescheduling of the PSL 10 yet to come, the meeting between the PCB and the franchises on Monday evening has reached the decision to resume the league on May 17. With the HBL PSL X final to be played on May 25 means the Pakistan and Bangladesh T20I series, which was scheduled to commence on May 25 in Faisalabad, will not be affected and was likely to be moved a day or two ahead.

### PCB appoints Mike Hesson as white-ball head coach

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday announced the appointment of Kiwi Mike Hesson as head coach of the Pakistan Men's cricket team in the white-ball cricket. Mike Hesson will take over the coaching role on May 26 soon after the final of PSL X on May 25.

As per the PCB media release here on Tuesday, Hesson comes in to fill the post after evaluation of numerous applications received against the vacancy, which fell vacant after Pakistan men's team tour to New Zealand in April. Known for his illustrious career as the most successful New Zealand head coach, Mike Hesson took New Zealand Men's team to new heights between 2012 and 2018. As head coach, he led the New Zealand Men's team to finish runner-up at the 2015 ICC men's ODI World Cup. He also served as the head coach of Kenya and other international and domestic teams. He

has been working as the head coach of Pakistan Super League (PSL) franchise Islamabad United since 2023 and took coached them to victory in PSL 9 edition.

PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi, in his welcome note to the incumbent head coach, said "I am pleased to announce the appointment of former New Zealand cricketer and renowned coach Mike Hesson as the white-ball head coach of the Pakistan men's team. "Mike brings with him a wealth of international experience and a proven track record of developing competitive sides. We look forward to his expertise and leadership in shaping the future of Pakistan's white-ball cricket. Welcome to the team, Mike!"

### PCB appoints Aqib Javed as Director High Performance

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday appointed former Pakistan Test fast bowler Aqib Javed as the Director High-Performance.

Aqib represented Pakistan in 22 Tests and 163 ODIs from 1988 to 1998. He has previously served as the interim head coach of the Pakistan men's team. PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi said, "To strengthen our cricket infrastructure, we are pleased to welcome Aqib Javed as the Director of High Performance. His appointment, alongside Mike Hesson as the white-ball Head Coach, marks a significant step forward in our strategic vision for Pakistan Cricket.

"Together, their expertise and leadership will play a pivotal role in the development, evolution and success of our national setup."

### Pakistan's Inaugural Women's Blind CWC matches to held in Nepal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The first-ever Women's Blind Cricket World Cup is set to take place in India and Nepal in November, with Pakistan's matches to be held in Kathmandu.

Talking to APP, Syed Sultan Shah, Chairman of the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council and President of World Blind Cricket Limited, said Pakistan's matches will be held in Kathmandu, and if the team reaches the semi-finals and finals, those matches will also be held in Nepal.

To prepare for the World Cup, the Pakistan Blind Cricket Council plans to start a training camp for national women's blind cricket players in July.

A total of 35 players from across the country will be invited to participate in the camp, with 20 players selected for further training. A 16-member team will be announced in October.

Shah also highlighted the national women team's recent tour to Australia, which resulted in a draw.

He expressed hope that the team would perform well in the World Cup. Pakistan has been actively promoting blind cricket globally, having started the sport in Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

Pakistani coaches have trained players in these countries, and forty Afghan players participated in the World Cup held in Pakistan last year, he said.

He said Pakistan's national blind cricket team is currently ranked number one in the world in one-day and T20 formats. The country's coaches also provide training to blind players from other countries, demonstrating Pakistan's leadership in blind cricket worldwide, he said.

## Alcaraz battles into Italian Open quarter-finals



ROME (AFP): Carlos Alcaraz reached the Italian Open quarter-finals on Tuesday after battling past Karen Khachanov 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 to continue his bid for a first Rome title.

Third seed Alcaraz had never lost a set in his previous four meetings with Russia's Khachanov but was forced to fight on the Foro Italico centre court.

Alcaraz needs to get to the Rome semis not just for a chance at his third title of the season but also to secure a top-two seeding at the French Open which begins later this month.

The Spaniard took his 12th clay-court win of the

year to set up a clash in the last eight with fifth seed Jack Draper, a winner over France's Corentin Moutet. "It was tiring. You know the match was really tough. I had to run. I had to run a lot," said Alcaraz.

"I didn't play well. I just fought and I'm just really happy about it."

Alcaraz seemed set to cruise through when he rattled off six games in a row to win the first set and the first game of the second.

Khachanov's fate looked sealed when his serve was broken in game five of the second set, but the big hitter had other

ideas and immediately broke back before claiming the set.

And the 28-year-old showed incredible spirit to win three games on the bounce to level the third set at 4-4, just as Alcaraz look certain to win.

But Alcaraz would not be denied and took an entertaining match at the second time of asking.

Later Jannik Sinner faces the first true test of his pre-Roland Garros form when he takes on Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo.

On Monday the world number one dealt with lucky loser Jesper de Jong 6-4, 6-2, the second of two straightforward matches to begin his Rome comeback from a three-month doping ban.

The 23-year-old was knocked out in the last 16 by Cerundolo the last time he played here, in 2023.

Reigning Rome champion Alexander Zverev is also in action against Arthur Fils in a day dominated by the men's tournament. Sinner's compatriot Jasmine Paolini stars in one of two women's quarter-finals, the sixth seed taking on Diana Shnaider on centre court.

## South Africa pick Rabada for Test C'ship final

CAPE TOWN (Agencies): Kagiso Rabada has been named in South Africa's squad for next month's World Test Championship after completing a one-month ban for recreational drug use.

The seamer returned to the camp of his Indian Premier League side Gujarat Titans shortly before the competition's suspension last week and looks set to feature against Australia at Lord's.

Cameron Green and Pat Cummins have been named in the Australia squad for the final, for which both sides have named 15-man parties. All-rounder Green has not played for Australia since he suffered a stress fracture in his lower back during the one-day international series in England last year and had surgery in October.

Cummins returns as captain after missing the tour of Sri Lanka because of the birth of his second child in February as well as being ruled out of the Champions Trophy campaign earlier this year because of an ankle injury.

Fellow pace bowler Josh Hazlewood is included after missing the Sri Lanka series with a hip injury, while teenage opener Sam Konstas could make his first overseas appearance after his debut in the Australian summer.

Rabada is one of six quick bowlers in the Proteas group, with Lungi Ngidi - who has not played Test cricket since last August - preferred over 19-year-old Kwena Maphaka.

The final between defending champions Australia and South Africa begins on 11 June.

Australia squad: Pat Cummins (capt), Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Usman



Khawaja, Sam Konstas, Matt Kuhnemann, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Beau Webster

Travelling reserve: Brendan Doggett

South Africa squad: Temba Bavuma (captain), David Bedingham, Corbin Bosch, Tony de Zorzi, Marco Jansen, Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, Wiaan Mulder, Senuran Muthusamy, Lungi Ngidi, Dane Paterson, Kagiso Rabada, Ryan Rickelton, Tristan Stubbs, Kyle Verreyne

"We are fortunate and looking forward to having Pat, Josh and Cam back in the squad," Australia chief selector George Bailey said. "The team finished the WTC cycle with an impressive series victory in Sri Lanka following an equally strong summer in defeating India for the first time in a decade.

"Those series capped a consistent performance across the two-year cycle and now present us with the incredibly exciting opportunity to defend the WTC."

"A key part of our success has been consistency in selection, and we've stuck with the core group of players who have been part of this WTC cycle," said South Africa head coach Shukri Conrad.

"We've selected a balanced squad for the conditions we expect at Lord's.

"I'm particularly pleased to welcome Lungi back in the side. He's put in the work and offers us an experienced option with the ball."

A number of players from each squad could face a quick turnaround before the final given the Indian Premier League now only finishes eight days earlier.

Cricket Australia said on Tuesday it was working with the government and India's cricket authority the BCCI with regard to security arrangements, with several players poised to decide whether to return to the IPL when it resumes this week.

The world's biggest franchise league was suspended on Friday amid the ongoing tensions between India and neighbouring Pakistan.

The BCCI announced on Monday the remaining 17 games would resume on 17 May, with the final rescheduled for 3 June.

"Following the announcement that the Indian Premier League will resume on Saturday, Cricket Australia will support players in their individual decisions whether to return to India or not," Cricket Australia said in a statement.

"Team management will work through preparation implications for the WTC final for those players who choose to play in the remaining IPL matches."

## Sidra, Sadaf shine as Challengers and Stars bag wins in fifth round

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Stars skipper Sidra Amin (78) continued her superb form with the bat to hand Stars their third win in the fifth round of the National Women's T20 Tournament 2024-25 at the National Bank Stadium on Tuesday afternoon.

Challengers' Sadaf Shamas (3-31 & 29) showcased all-round skills to inspire her team to a hard-fought win over Strikers at the Oval Academy Ground.

At the National Bank Stadium, Stars slipped to 19-3 after opting to bat first before Sidra, batting at no.3, took it upon herself to rebuild the innings and steer her team to 145-8 in 20 overs.

Sidra, who struck seven fours and three sixes in her 58-ball 78 and currently leads the batting charts with 249 runs, forged a 34-run stand with Sidra Nawaz (11, 13b, 1x4) before three quick wickets pushed the Stars to 74-6. At this juncture, Sidra in alliance with no.8 batter Waheeda Akhtar (24, 20b) collected 68 runs for the ninth wicket.

For Conquerors, Fatima Sana picked up three wickets for 34 runs.

In turn, Waheeda removed both the Conquerors opening batsmen, while Hafsa Khalid fell to Anosha Nasir with just 14 runs on the board.

Najiha Alvi (39 not out, 44b, 4x4s) and Fatima

Sana (38, 24b, 5x4s, 1x6) staged counterattack with a 60-run stand but Anosha returned to dismiss the latter tilting the balance back in Stars' favour.

Syeda Aroob Shah's eight-ball 13 including a six and a four wasn't enough as Conquerors fell 23 runs short. Anosha, Waheeda and Neelam Mushtaq dismissed two batters each.

In the other game, Challengers posted 145-7 against Strikers after being asked to bat first. Opening duo of Sadaf Shamas (29, 23b, 5x4s) and Shawaal Zulfiqar (22, 24b, 4x4s) stitched a 47-run stand.

Batting at no.3, Aliya Riaz struck two sixes and a solitary four to score 35

runs off 29 balls, while also partnering with Natalia Parvaiz (22, 17b, 3x4s) for a 45-run stand, which took Challengers to 111-3. Gull Rukh hit one six in her 11-ball 14 not out, while Tasmia Rubab chipped in with two boundaries as he finished 10 off six.

Diana Baig and right arm leg spinner Zunash Abdul Sattar snapped three wickets each.

Strikers' pursuit of the target was dented by opposition skipper Rameen Shamim and Sadaf, who eked out the opening batters with 25 runs on the board. Eyman Fatima continued her fine batting form as she registered her second half-century as she

took her team out of trouble in an 85-run alliance with Zoofishan Ayyaz (30, 27b, 3x4s).

Eyman, who has so far collected 151 runs in four outings, departed for fluent 47-ball 56 including nine fours as Challengers fought back to restrict the Strikers to 138-7 with Sadaf taking 3-31.

Rameen picked up two wickets for 18 runs in her four overs.

Scores in brief:

Match 9: Stars beat Conquerors by 23 runs at the National Bank Stadium Stars 145-8, 20 overs (Sidra Amin 78, Waheeda Akhtar 24; Fatima Sana 3-34)

Conquerors 122-7, 20



overs (Najiha Alvi 39 not out, Fatima Sana 38; Anosha Nasir 2-19, Waheeda Akhtar 2-21, Neelam Mushtaq 2-28)

Player of the match – Sidra Amin (Stars)

Match 10: Challengers beat Strikers by seven runs at the Oval Academy Ground Challengers 145-7, 20 overs (Aliya Riaz 35, Sadaf Shamas 29, Natalia Parvaiz 22, Shawaal Zulfiqar 22; Zunash Abdul Sattar 3-13, Diana Baig 3-33)

Strikers 138-7, 20 overs

(Eyman Fatima 56, Zoofishan Ayyaz 30; Sadaf Shamas 3-31, Rameen Shamim 2-18)

Player of the match – Sadaf Shamas (Challengers)

6th round fixtures, Wednesday, 14 May: (both matches to begin at 3pm PKT)

Match 11: Conquerors v Invincibles at National Bank Stadium

Match 12: Strikers v Stars at Oval Academy Ground.



## In brief

### 1.4 million out-of-school children enrolled

ISLAMABAD (APP): Punjab Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat on Tuesday said that around 1.4 million out-of-school children have been enrolled across the province. Talking to a private news channel, he said that the schools with less than 50 students were outsourced under a public-private partnership through the Punjab Education Foundation. The enrollment in these schools, which was earlier stuck at 215,000, has now reached 500,000. The department identified and removed 1.5 million ghost enrollments and replaced them with 1.4 million real students which allow us you generate over 50,000 jobs through this process. For the purpose of transparency and accountability, the records of all enrolled children have been linked with NADRA. He said this is the highest number of enrollments recorded specially in both Punjab and the history of country. He added that the government's goal is to enroll 2 million children every year.

### IRSA releases 174,046 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 174,046 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 214,343 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1462.48 feet which was 60.48 feet higher than dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 108,400 cusecs and 82,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1143.95 feet, which was 93.95 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 41,897 cusecs and 28,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 128,200, 81,146, 51,015 and 15,500 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 39,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 8,715 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### CTP set up Traffic Response Unit

RAWALPINDI (APP): The City Traffic Police Rawalpindi have established the 'Traffic Response Unit' on the instructions of Chief Traffic Officer Beenish Fatima for public convenience and quick response. Under the initiative undertaken under the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, initially, 10 traffic wardens with motorcycles had been deployed, a CTP police spokesman said. The response unit would work in two zones. "Zone 1 comprises Misrial Road, Dhok Syedan, Tench, Adiala Road, Barf Khana, Girja Road and Chakri Road, while Zone 2 includes Murree Road, Saddar, Raja Bazar, Gowalmandi, Faizabad, Sadiqabad and Civil Lines," the spokesman said. The Response Unit officer would play a proactive role in traffic flow by using hooters, sirens and public address systems on motorcycles, he added. The spokesman said citizens would be informed in time about traffic on roads particularly during rush hours and the unit would manage immediate clearance. He said officers on duty would patrol their zone areas at least four times in each shift daily and mobilize the relevant traffic staff in every cycle. After each patrol, the officers would submit a report on the traffic situation to the headquarters, the spokesman added.

# PML chief links lasting peace to resolution of Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League (PML) President and former Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain stated that true global peace cannot be achieved without resolving long-standing conflicts such as Kashmir, emphasizing the need for sincere and serious efforts toward lasting stability in the region. He specifically urged the United States, stating that if the international community is truly committed to lasting global peace, it must not ignore longstanding disputes

like Kashmir and should prioritize resolving them. Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain appreciated the US President's interest in the Pakistan-India ceasefire and expressed hope that President Trump would show the same seriousness by taking practical and prioritized steps toward a lasting solution to the Kashmir issue. Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain also stressed that while global attention is focused on conflicts such as Russia-Ukraine and Israel-

Palestine, the significant issue of Kashmir must not be overlooked. Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain thanked friendly nations including Saudi Arabia, China, Türkiye, Azerbaijan, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, Qatar, and other Islamic countries for consistently supporting Pakistan's stance and standing with the Kashmiri people on all issues. He urged global powers to rise above self-interest and pursue a policy rooted in justice for the region.

## Minister chairs meeting of PM Laptop Scheme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Tuesday chaired the 2nd meeting of the special committee of Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme (Phase IV). The meeting was attended by Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Mr Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, Federal Minister for Public Affairs, Mr. Rana Mubashir Iqbal, Minister for Education, Balochistan, Ms. Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Former Chief Minister, Balochistan, Hafiz Hafeez ur Rehman, Former

Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Former Senator, Mr Nehal Hashmi. Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said that the youth of Pakistan needs to be given the right tools so that they can help Pakistan develop with the pace of the first world. He said that youth is the present and the future of our country. He said that Prime Ministers initiative to provide laptops to the youth of Pakistan will not only help the economy of Pakistan but will also enable the youth to be productive members of the society. During the briefing, Dr

Khalid was told that 1 lakh laptops will be disbursed and that this number has the potential to go upto 5 lakh laptops. All of the provincial representatives were taken on board for the SOPs developed for the disbursement policy. Dr Khalid said that all potential measures are being taken to meet the assigned deadlines of the scheme. He said that Pakistanis have a renewed optimism in the wake of the recent developments and he had hoped that the Pakistani nation can convert the positive environment into something meaningful and productive.

## Hanif Abbasi meets Swiss Ambassador

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi Tuesday met with Swiss Ambassador to Pakistan, George Steiner and discussed various mutual matters. During the meeting, Hanif Abbasi acknowledged Switzerland's role in supporting global peace and humanitarian causes and expressed gratitude for the country's continued cooperation.

On this occasion, the Swiss Ambassador congratulated the minister on assuming charge of Pakistan Railways and praised his efforts in modernizing and improving the railway sector, said a news release. The discussion also focused on new opportunities for cooperation between Pakistan and Switzerland in the railway sector, as well as further collaboration in trade,

tourism and other areas. Hanif Abbasi invited the Swiss Ambassador to visit historical railway stations in Pakistan, including the famous Golra Station. This meeting marks an important step in strengthening the relationship between both countries, and it is expected to further enhance cooperation in the railway sector between Pakistan and Switzerland.

## ANF arrests 9 smugglers with over 148 kg of drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting six operations across the country, recovered as many as 148,400 kg of drugs worth more than Rs 156.8 million and arrested nine suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Tuesday. He informed that 12 kg of hashish was recovered from the bag of two accused riding in a passenger bus near Gadani on RCD Road.

In another operation, 9.6 kg of hashish was recovered from a vehicle near Burhan Interchange, Attock, and two accused were arrested. As much as 8.4 kg of hashish was recovered from a vehicle near Mandi Mor, Islamabad and two accused were nabbed. Similarly, 2.4 kg of hashish was recovered from two accused riding a motorcycle near Iqbal Shaheed Toll Plaza,

Attock. 6 kg of hashish recovered from a vehicle during another operation near Gadani on RCD Road, the accused was arrested. As many as 110 kg of heroin, hidden for smuggling, were recovered in a deserted area of Chaman district. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and an investigation has been initiated.

## AIOU holds "Pakistan Zindabad Rally"

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) organized a grand "Pakistan Zindabad Rally," on Tuesday which began at Gate No. 1 and proceeded with great enthusiasm to the Vice Chancellor's Secretariat. The rally was participated by Principal Officers, faculty members, staff, and students in a great number. Participants carried national flags and passionately chanted slogans such as "Long Live Pakistan and the Pakistan Army," expressing their unwavering support for the armed forces. This rally was organized in celebration with the recent historic victory of Pakistan Army over its enemy. The primary objective of this grand rally was to pay tribute to the courage, sacrifices, and bravery of the Pakistan Armed Forces and to demonstrate national unity against the nefarious intentions of the enemy. The rally was organized by the University's Employees Welfare Association and was enthusiastically attended by senior university officials, faculty members, staff, and stu-

dents. Participants carried national flags and passionately chanted slogans such as "Long Live Pakistan and the Pakistan Army," expressing their unwavering support for the armed forces. Registrar Raja Umar Younis in his spirited speech, stated that in the recent conflict, Pakistan gave a fitting response to the enemy, proving that this nation will never compromise on its sovereignty, freedom, and security. He emphasized that the Pakistan Armed Forces — the Army, Air Force, and Navy — demonstrated exemplary coordination and unity, thwarting the enemy's malicious designs and delivering a crushing response. He urged everyone to set aside personal differences and always promote national unity and cohesion. He also extended gratitude to the public and friendly nations, especially China, for standing by Pakistan in difficult times, proving true friendship. Concluding his address, he passionately expressed love for the homeland and led the audience in chanting, "Pakistan Forever Zindabad!"

President of the Employees Welfare Association, Sher Asif Satti, while addressing the rally, said that standing alongside the Pakistan Armed Forces is the duty of every patriotic citizen. He stated that we stand as a solid wall against every conspiracy of the enemy. Sher Asif Satti advised his friends and colleagues to adopt unity, cooperation, and hard work as guiding principles for the progress of the country and the institution so that Pakistan may always remain alive and radiant. Dr. Hafiz Tahir Islam, in his vote of thanks, said that with the grace and mercy of Allah Almighty, our armed forces forced an enemy eight times larger to face crushing defeat. He noted that the bravery, skill, and sacrifice displayed by the soldiers of Pakistan's Army and Air Force have been recognized by the entire world. Dr. Tahir Islam added that our commander-in-chief, who is also a Hafiz-e-Qur'an, fulfilled his role and leadership in such a way that he made the entire nation proud.



ISLAMABAD: Students of UCA BA (Hons) Fashion Textiles showcase their work during the Annual Thesis Display | Class of 2025, organized by the Department of Art and Design at TMUC. —APP Photo

## Minister praises unity of nation, courage of armed forces

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry Tuesday praised the unity of Pakistani nation and the courage of the armed forces during the recent Indian aggression, calling it the rise of a "new Pakistan." Speaking in the National Assembly, he said the entire nation - including lawmakers - stood together during Indian aggression. "India wrongly assumed we were divided. That mistake led to their defeat," he added. Dr. Tariq highlighted the bravery of Pakistan's armed forces, saying, "India can never match the spirit of sacrifice and courage shown by our military. Their attack was stopped with strength and skill."

He said the Indian miscalculation came at a time when their proxies were losing ground inside Pakistan due to the efforts of the armed forces. "India may have tried to shift our military's focus from internal security to border defense, but we were fully ready." He appreciated the role of Pakistani media, noting it was praised internationally, while Indian media was mocked for spreading false news. Dr. Tariq said Pakistan wants peace in the region, but true talks cannot happen without addressing the Kashmir issue. He added that the matter is once again gaining attention at the global level, and even the United States understands that peace in South Asia is impossible without resolving it. He also praised Pakistan's military leadership, especially Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir and Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Babar Sidhu for their professionalism. "Thanking God for Pakistan's success, he said the country showed the world its strong defense, including the downing of Indian Rafale jets and intercepting missile attacks. "India now realizes that defeating Pakistan is not an option," he said.

Dr. Tariq applauded the unity of both the Senate and National Assembly, saying all lawmakers stood above political differences for the country's dignity and sovereignty. Referring to the Indian attacks on May 6 and 7, he said that night shattered India's arrogance. "We brought down five Indian aircraft, including the Rafale jets they thought were unbeatable. The world is now asking how Pakistan did this - the answer lies in the passion and skill of our soldiers." He also said Pakistan achieved a diplomatic victory, as the global community recognized the country's calls for peace, dialogue, and resolution of the Kashmir issue as per UN resolutions. "By Allah's blessing, Pakistan's role as a responsible country was acknowledged. Islamic countries congratulated us and showed strong support," he said, adding that it is now clear to everyone - including India - that Pakistan knows how to defend itself.

## Pakistan, Nepal pledge regional climate cooperation amid broader peace efforts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Nepal reaffirmed their commitment to regional climate cooperation during a meeting between Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr. Musadik Malik and Nepalese Ambassador Rita Dhital on Tuesday. The meeting focused on regional peace and environmental collaboration, with the visiting ambassador extending an invitation to Dr. Malik to attend Nepal's inaugural regional Climate Dialogue Forum. The event, which will

bring together climate ministers from across South Asia and beyond, aims to conclude with a non-binding declaration on climate action. Ambassador Dhital welcomed the recent de-escalation of tensions in the region, calling it "a relief" and noting the "challenging circumstances faced by Pakistan." She also praised the country's leadership in international climate advocacy and environmental protection efforts. During the meeting, Dr. Malik emphasized

Pakistan's "longstanding commitment to regional peace and stability," while highlighting the nation's experience as a victim of terrorism and aggression. "Pakistan speaks from a position of clarity and dignity," Dr. Malik said. "While it earnestly seeks peace, this desire must not be misconstrued as a sign of weakness." Referring to the recent tensions with India, the minister expressed regret over the loss of life on both sides and blamed the escalation on what he described as "India's failed attempt to assert hegemonic dominance in the region." "We are happy that peace has now been restored," he added. Both sides agreed that climate change is one of the most urgent global challenges and stressed the need for stronger regional cooperation to address its impacts. The meeting ended on a note of shared purpose, with Pakistan and Nepal pledging to continue working together on environmental and regional issues through diplomatic channels.

## RDA expresses solidarity with Pakistan Armed Forces

RAWALPINDI (APP): Director General, Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA), Kinza Murtaza, has expressed strong support for the Pakistan Armed Forces following the Operation "Bunyanum Marsoos" in response to hostile aggression from India. In a statement, she stated that the Pakistan Army's operation had delivered an effective response to Indian military aggression. "India made a grave miscalculation by interpreting Pakistan's commitment to peace as a sign of weakness." The retaliation has made it clear that Pakistan will never tolerate acts of hostility on its soil. Kinza further noted that Pakistani forces have successfully targeted Indian military installations and emphasised the valour of the Pakistan Air Force, whose swift and decisive action served as a message of strength and unity. She said Pakistan enjoys not only military strength but also moral superiority. "The entire Pakistani nation stands shoulder to shoulder with our armed forces. The martyrdom of our innocent citizens has not gone unanswered, the enemy has faced the full consequences of its aggression." Every Pakistani is ready to defend their homeland, she said and added, "We stand united against any threat to our sovereignty."

## Meeting held to address issue of damaged fencing on Motorways: NA told

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Secretary for Communication Engineer Gul Asghar Khan Baghoor on Tuesday said the government had conducted a high-level meeting in February, 2025 to address the issue of damaged fencing on Motorways. He was responding to a calling attention notice raised by the Member National Assembly Ms Asiya Naz Tanoli in the National Assembly regarding the deteriorating condition of safety fencing along the country's motorways and national highways, warning that the poor infrastructure poses a significant risk of accidents. Parliamentary Secretary for Communications further said "Previously, the condition of fencing was not satisfactory, but we have now taken concrete actions. On the M-1 Motorway, for example, 100 percent of the fencing repair work has been completed in the targeted area," said the

Parliamentary Secretary. In response to the question, he added that sufficient funds have been allocated for the repair and maintenance of the Lahore-Islamabad M-2 Motorway. "We have already completed work on most sections. Now, only selected areas on the M-2 and M-9 motorways remain. Around 30 percent of the work in these remaining sections is expected to be completed within the next six months," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Women take shelter under umbrellas to shield themselves from the scorching sun on a hot summer day in the federal capital. —APP Photo

Recovering addicts reunited

NIMROZ (BNA): Officials at the Nimroz Police Headquarters announced that 90 individuals recovering from addiction have returned to their families. Faiz Mohammad Faizani, the Manager of Counter-Narcotics at the Nimroz provincial Police Headquarters, reported that these individuals, originally from Kandahar province, were referred to a 1000-bed addiction treatment center in Nimroz for rehabilitation.

Smuggled goods seized

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Finance reported that mobile surveillance teams from its General Directorate of Customs intercepted and confiscated large quantities of smuggled goods last week across Nimroz, Kandahar, Farah, Herat, and Helmand provinces. The seized items included chocolate, Greek and agricultural medicines, fruit leather, qimaq (clotted cream), fruit paste, salt, and macaroni. Smugglers had attempted to import these goods without paying customs duties.

Taliban dismantle Afghan Film Organization

KABUL (Amu TV): Taliban have dissolved the Afghan Film Organization, once the country's only state-run film body, and closed its offices, according to four sources, including two familiar with the agency's operations.

No formal statement has been issued by the Taliban. However, staff have been informed that the institution's structure has been nullified and its operations halted.

Founded in 1968 during the reign of King Mohammad Zahir Shah, Afghan Film served for decades as the backbone of Afghanistan's cinematic and documentary production. It played a pivotal role in preserving the country's visual history — from newsreels in the 1970s to feature-length fiction films under the Republic.

The agency also housed a valuable film archive, much of which was hidden or smuggled abroad during the civil war and the

Taliban's first rule in the 1990s to prevent its destruction.

Prior to the fall of the Republic in 2021, Afghan Film operated under the Ministry of Information and Culture and employed between 30 and 40 staff across departments including production, archiving, film restoration, and digitization. In its final years, it had initiated modernization efforts and digital preservation projects to safeguard its historic collection.

The institution's shuttering comes amid a broader Taliban crackdown on cultural and artistic life in Afghanistan. Since the group's return to power in August 2021, public music has been banned, murals painted over, and women barred from performing arts. Artists have faced exile, threats, and forced silence.

"Artistic life in Afghanistan has collapsed," said one Kabul-based filmmaker, speaking

on condition of anonymity for safety reasons. "Afghan Film was not just a building — it was the custodian of our cinematic memory."

The last known head of Afghan Film, Sahraa Karimi, fled the country in August 2021 as the Taliban seized control of Kabul. Since then, the agency has operated in a reduced, ad hoc capacity, with little public visibility and no new productions.

The fate of the archive — thousands of reels chronicling decades of Afghan life — remains uncertain. Cultural preservationists fear it may be at risk of neglect, censorship, or erasure.

For many artists and historians, the closure of Afghan Film is a devastating loss. It follows the weakening or destruction of numerous cultural institutions under Taliban rule, and marks what many see as an ongoing effort to erase public memory and silence the arts.

15 public welfare projects completed in Kunar

KUNAR (TOLONews): In Kunar province, 15 different public welfare projects have been completed and handed over for use at a cost of 45 million Afghanis.

In the Barikot area of Narai district, with financial assistance from a supporting organization, a ceremony was held to inaugurate and hand over a retaining wall built to protect agricultural lands.

Officials say that in the past year, projects aimed at increasing groundwater levels, constructing check dams, and building retaining walls have been completed and handed over in 15 districts of Kunar.

Dust Mohammad Hanafi, Director of Water and Energy in Kunar, said: "Last year, we implemented such projects in about 15

districts, including the center. All of them have been completed and handed over. Two more projects remain, which will be inaugurated in the coming days."

Aminullah Shahab, the district governor of Narai, said: "With the implementation of this project, protection has been provided for the village, houses, agricultural lands, and roads." Ismatullah Andalib, a representative of the Kunar governor's office, said: "We hope more services will be delivered to people so that solutions can be found for those facing similar challenges in the future."

Meanwhile, several Kunar residents expressed satisfaction with these projects but urged the caretaker government and aid organizations to implement more

public welfare projects in the province.

A tribal elder from Kunar, Malik Sherzamin, said: "This project benefits the people. We suggest that all the agricultural lands in the Barikot area that are under threat should be given attention, and authorities should take necessary steps to protect them."

Sifatullah Safi, a representative of the implementing company, added: "This project has been completed according to the plan, and all public demands have been taken into account."

These various public projects are being handed over at a time when just a few days ago, a solar irrigation network worth 5.6 million Afghanis was also completed in Nari district of the province.

Usmon resigns as Afghan football team coach

KABUL (TOLONews): Omid Homayouni, the manager of the national football team, confirmed to TOLONews that Toshev submitted his resignation to the Afghanistan Football Federation last Thursday, and it has been accepted. However, Homayouni did not provide further details regarding the reason for Toshev's resignation.

Usmon Toshev, an Uzbek national, led the national team for over six months. During his tenure, the Afghan players, under his guidance, played four official and friendly matches against Nepal, Thailand, Tajikistan, and Myanmar, all of which resulted in defeats for Afghanistan. The manager of the



national football team said they reached an agreement with an Italian coach, who is expected to be introduced as the new head coach of the national team in the coming days. However, he did not provide further details about the new coach.

This development comes amid growing dissatisfaction among fans due to the national team's poor performances in recent official and friendly matches. Some have even called for major changes in the leadership of the country's football federation.

Taliban shut down community-based classes

PAKTIKA (Amu TV): Taliban have shut down community-based girls' education classes in the provinces of Logar and Paktika, according to women's rights activists, a move they say further deepens the country's education crisis and strips thousands of girls of the little access they had to schooling.

The Afghan Women's Lantern Movement, led by activist Hajar Azada, said in a statement that the Taliban closed classes supported by the United Nations and its partners, including UNICEF and the Education Cannot Wait fund. The classes, designed for girls beyond the sixth grade in remote and underserved areas, had played a vital role in keeping education alive for

young women amid the broader school bans.

"These closures are not only a blatant violation of human rights but a silent crime against Afghanistan's future," the statement read. "The Taliban fear women's knowledge and awareness."

The community-based classes were part of alternative education models set up in rural areas where formal schools are absent or inaccessible, especially for girls. The programs had enabled students to continue their education in local homes or community buildings with the help of trained instructors and basic materials.

Activists condemned the closures and urged the United Nations and the international community to intervene. They called for

the immediate reopening of the shuttered classrooms and proposed a range of measures, including increased political pressure on the Taliban, security guarantees for educators, and expanded alternative education strategies such as remote learning and clandestine schools.

Prior to the Taliban's return to power in 2021, community-based education initiatives had enrolled over 49,000 girls across the country. But since the group imposed a ban on schooling for girls above grade six, UNESCO estimates that at least 1.4 million girls have been directly denied education, with the total number of out-of-school girls now approaching 2.5 million.

Taliban begin removing teachers as staff cuts continued

KABUL (Amu TV): Taliban have begun removing schoolteachers across the country in what appears to be a sweeping extension of a broader campaign to downsize public sector staffing, according to multiple sources familiar with the matter.

Following official confirmation that the Taliban leader had ordered reductions in government positions, sources told Amu TV that the cuts have now expanded beyond military and police institutions to include the education sector. Teachers and university professors in several provinces, including women and those over 60, have reportedly been dismissed without formal evaluations or written notices.

Three recently dismissed schoolteachers confirmed to Amu that they were among dozens of education workers terminated over the past two days. "They've dismissed a large number of teachers, especially older ones, without justification," said one teacher, who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal. "They've cut our salaries from 5,000 to 4,500 Afghanis. Some teachers have been reassigned to other schools, but the wages don't even cover transportation or basic living costs."

Sources also reported that teachers with bachelor's degrees are now earning as little as 4,500 Afghanis (approximately \$60), while those without degrees or on daily-wage contracts are receiving as little as 3,000 Afghanis.

A leaked internal restructuring plan from the Taliban's Ministry of Education — previously obtained by Amu — outlined an order from Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada to eliminate nearly 90,000 government positions as part of what the ministry called a "rebalancing" of its structure.

The job cuts are not limited to schools. Over the past 48 hours, sources say the Taliban have also begun dismissing university professors from state institutions, including Kabul University. These removals, too, have reportedly occurred without performance reviews or transparent criteria.

Despite mounting evidence, the Taliban's Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education have denied that any formal dismissal process is underway.

Meanwhile, state employees across several ministries have reported that their salaries have been delayed for more than two months. Some say they have received no clear communication from the government regarding when payments might resume.

Afghanistan, Azerbaijan strengthen transportation ties

KABUL (BNA): Mullah Hamidullah Akhundzada, the country's Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation, met with Ilham Mahmudov, the Azerbaijani Ambassador to Kabul, to discuss the enhancement of transportation ties between their two countries.

During the meeting, held at the Ministry's office, both officials highlighted the progress made in establishing a framework for the transportation of Azerbaijani commercial goods through Afghanistan to various regional markets.

The Minister underscored the significance of the Lapis Lazuli Corridor, a key transit route designed to facilitate trade and connectivity among several nations. He noted that the



current conditions are conducive for traders to transport their goods across Afghanistan, thereby open-

ing new opportunities for commerce.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to fur-

ther cooperation that would enhance regional connectivity and economic growth.

Kenya to extradite Zahir Qadeer to US, says sources

NAIROBI (Amu TV): Kenyan authorities have agreed to extradite Zahir Qadeer, the former deputy speaker of Afghanistan's parliament, to the United States, sources told Amu TV on Tuesday.

According to Qadeer's relatives, a Kenyan court recently approved the US extradition request, and Qadeer is expected to be transferred to American custody in the coming days.

The Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not yet responded to inquiries regarding the extradition proceedings.

Qadeer was arrested in Kenya at the request of the United States on charges related to drug trafficking and the possession of ille-

gal weapons, according to the sources.

The US has accused Qadeer of conspiring in narcotics trafficking and possessing multiple automatic weapons. He remains in custody under court order while the case proceeds.

Qadeer has alleged that the charges are part of a broader plan by his political adversaries to remove him from Afghanistan and silence him abroad. In documents submitted to the court, he claimed to have led a civil movement known as the "Peace Caravan" in Nangarhar Province and to have consistently opposed foreign interference in Afghan affairs.

He also referred to his family's political legacy,

noting that he is the son of Abdul Qadeer, a key figure in the United Islamic Front and a former vice president in Afghanistan's transitional government, who was assassinated in 2002.

"In parliament, I was one of the most outspoken critics of the government," Qadeer said in a written statement. "In one speech, I told the president: You were a restaurant worker in America, and we made you president with our votes — we can take those votes back."

He claimed that his political activism has made him a persistent target of threats and alleged that the Taliban administration is using fabricated charges through its prosecutor gen-

eral's office to further silence him.

Qadeer denied any involvement in drug trafficking or arms smuggling and said he has never faced criminal charges in Afghanistan or abroad. "I am a law-abiding Afghan citizen," he said. "These accusations are baseless and unfamiliar to me."

He also noted that his last visit to the United States was nearly two decades ago and called Washington's sudden interest in extraditing him "strange and troubling."

Qadeer served as a member of the Afghan parliament from 2010 to 2021, including a term as deputy speaker under the former republic.

Rights group warns UN 'Mosaic' initiative risks legitimizing Taliban

KABUL (Amu TV): A coalition of human rights defenders has raised alarm over the United Nations' "Mosaic" initiative for Afghanistan, warning that the plan is being developed with the involvement of regional actors linked to terrorism and could ultimately pave the way for legitimizing the Taliban.

In a sharply worded statement released under the name "Alliance of Human Rights Activists," the group said the initiative does not reflect the will of the Afghan people and is instead being shaped by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) with the cooperation of actors affiliated with extremist networks.

"This is not a path to salvation; it is a blueprint for renewed crisis," the statement said. "UNAMA has lost its legal and moral legitimacy. What began as a humanitarian mission has effectively transformed into a political facilitator for a group responsible for systemic rights abuses."

The group alleges that the Mosaic initiative is quietly enabling the normalization of Taliban rule, and warned that granting Afghanistan's United Nations seat to a Taliban representative would amount to de facto international recognition — with far-reaching consequences for global security, the rule of law, and the international human rights framework.

"The Taliban are not only devoid of national legitimacy but also lack any legal, political, or moral standing," the statement said. "No future framework can be built on appeasement of terror, exclusion of women, suppression of minorities, silencing of

media, or the exile of civil society."

The group called on the United Nations and international stakeholders to engage directly with the Afghan people — particularly women, civil activists, and the displaced — rather than "prioritizing the voice of the gun." It urged support for a transparent and inclusive political process that excludes the Taliban and other armed groups.

Their criticism comes amid reports that the United Nations is quietly consulting regional and international stakeholders — including the Taliban — on a proposal that could form the basis for a negotiated political framework in Afghanistan.

According to sources familiar with the talks, the "Mosaic" plan revolves around six pillars: the formation of an inclusive gov-

ernment, counterterrorism assurances, respect for human rights (particularly women's rights), lifting international sanctions on the Taliban, transferring diplomatic missions to Taliban representatives, and unfreezing Afghanistan's central bank assets.

While the UN has yet to publicly outline the initiative, it has reportedly been canvassing views from Afghanistan's neighbors and key stakeholders. The Alliance of Human Rights Activists called for a people-centered approach: "Any effort for Afghanistan's future must be anchored in justice and democratic values. Excluding voices that have kept the hope of freedom and dignity alive would betray the very principles the United Nations was built upon."

While the UN has yet to publicly outline the initiative, it has reportedly been canvassing views from Afghanistan's neighbors and key stakeholders. The Alliance of Human Rights Activists called for a people-centered approach: "Any effort for Afghanistan's future must be anchored in justice and democratic values. Excluding voices that have kept the hope of freedom and dignity alive would betray the very principles the United Nations was built upon."



salaries have dropped from 5,000 to 4,500 Afghanis. Some of us have been reassigned to distant schools with no transportation support. How are we supposed to cover our expenses or feed our families? The goal seems to be total elimination, under flimsy excuses."

University staff have also begun reporting dismissals at institutions such as Kabul University, with no formal evaluation or justification provided by authorities.

The Taliban-run Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher

Education have denied the reports, saying no official dismissal process has begun. However, education sector workers say the purges are already underway — deepening concerns over academic freedom and institutional collapse under Taliban rule.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi in a meeting with Ambassador of Turkey to Pakistan, Irfan Neziroglu.

## Environmental pollution a serious issue : KP CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The third meeting of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environment Protection Council was held here at the Chief Minister's Secretariat Peshawar on Tuesday. Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur chaired the meeting via video link. Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Climate Change, administrative secretaries of relevant departments, and other members of the council attended the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the implementation status of the decisions made in the previous council's meeting, and important directives were issued. On this occasion, Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur directed that it be made mandatory to plant fruit-bearing trees within the premises of all government buildings, including official residences, offices, hospitals, and educational institutions. He emphasized that fruit trees must be planted during the upcoming plantation campaign around government buildings and along roadsides, and a written directive should be issued to all concerned authorities in this regard.

Ali Amin Gandapur stated that the tradition of planting fruit trees is diminishing and needs to be revived. "The presence of fruit trees is essential not only for humans but also for the survival of birds", he remarked and directed that the Agriculture Department be given special responsibility for planting fruit trees. Moreover, he called for initiatives to promote fruit tree planting among the younger generation.

The meeting also reviewed the implementation of the council's previous decisions for environmental protection. The Chief Minister instructed that complete

data on existing brick kilns in the province and their conversion to zigzag technology be submitted within 15 days. Expressing concern over the delays and obstacles in the implementation of some of the council's decisions, he sought a detailed report and directed all departments entrusted with specific responsibilities by the council to fulfill those within a month and present their progress in the next meeting of the council.

The meeting also reviewed progress on the decision to regularize old housing societies established without NOC or proper approvals. The Chief Minister expressed dissatisfaction over the progress and instructed that clear and measurable progress be ensured within 15 days, and a report be submitted. He also directed that medical waste management in hospitals across the province be treated as a priority. He assured that the provincial government would provide all necessary resources on a priority basis to support this effort.

The meeting approved guidelines for the regulation of BTS towers and mini/micro-hydropower projects. Additionally, the council accorded in-principle approval for regulatory guidelines for 32 sectors contributing to environmental pollution. The formation of a Technical Committee, Legal Committee, and Climate Change Committee under the council was also approved during the meeting. The Chief Minister remarked that environmental pollution is a serious issue that is worsening with time; addressing it effectively requires timely and coordinated efforts. "All concerned departments and institutions must work together under a comprehensive and integrated strategy to tackle this challenge", he added.

## Nation stand behind its armed forces: PPP leaders

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Secretary General Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians, Syed Nayyer Hussain Bukhari, Deputy President Pakistan Peoples Party, Senator Sherry Rehman and Secretary Information PPP, Nadeem Afzal Chan held a joint press conference at the Central Secretariat, on Tuesday.

SG PPP addressing the press conference said that Pakistan is a peaceful country but at the same time reserves the right to protect itself. The leadership of the PPP made the defense of the country impregnable. The nuclear capability and the missile technology are the achievements of the party. The Pakistan armed forces deserve commendation for thwarting the nefarious designs of the enemy. The entire nation is behind its armed forces. The PPP Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari presented Pakistan's narrative before the whole world. Bukhari congratulated the entire nation for this victory against the enemy. Now, the ceasefire is in operation so the talks should start.

Nayyer Hussain Bukhari said that Modi is hiding his incapability and defeat behind his tall claims. We do not want war but the wish for peace must not be regarded as our weakness. India violated the international laws by attacking Pakistan but did not know that the Pakistani nation is like iron dome. War is never productive and always precious lives are lost in the wars. India had imposed war on Pakistan and we proved that we can defend our sovereignty.

## Palestinian journalist among two killed in Gaza

GAZA (AFP): Israel's army has admitted to carrying out "a targeted attack" on the Nasser Medical Complex in the city of Khan Younis in southern Gaza, killing two people, including Palestinian journalist Hassan Eslaih. Gaza's Government Media Office on Tuesday confirmed the killing of Eslaih, who was receiving treatment at the hospital's burn unit for severe injuries sustained during an April 7 Israeli strike on a media tent located next to the hospital.

The AFP news agency footage from Nasser Hospital after Tuesday's strike showed smoke rising from the facility as rescuers searched through the rubble by the light of torches. A hospital worker who gave his name as Abu Ghali said the Israeli bombardment "does not differentiate between civilians and military targets".

"This is a civilian hospital that receives injured people around the clock," he told AFP. Eslaih was the director of the Alam24 News Agency and a freelancer who contributed to international news organisations, including photos of the Hamas-led October 7 attack. Israel has claimed Eslaih was a Hamas fighter who participated in the October 7 attack, an allegation he vehemently denied.

At least 178 journalists and media workers have been killed in Palestine, Israel, and Lebanon since the war began, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. Gaza's Government Media Office put the death toll at 215. Israel's military said in a post on Telegram that the strike targeted a Hamas "command and control complex" at the hospital – the largest in southern Gaza – without providing further evidence.

# Gilani, Matvienko reaffirm commitment to deepen ties

MOSCOW (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani met with bilateral relations Chairperson of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation, in Kremlin, Moscow, on Tuesday where both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to deepening bilateral relations, boosting parliamentary diplomacy, and promoting peace, trade, and regional stability.

Expressing gratitude for the warm hospitality, Gilani highlighted Pakistan's desire to strengthen ties with Russia. "Pakistan-Russia cooperation today carries global significance — not just for our shared prosperity, but also for a stable and secure region," he said.

Gilani emphasized that high-level parliamentary engagements like this play a key role in fostering better understanding and long-term cooperation, said a news release received here. He also congratulated the Russian leadership on the 80th anniversary of Victory Day and discussed wide-ranging issues with Chairperson Matvienko, including enhanced parliamentary dialogue, energy collaboration, regional peace, and people-to-people connections.

Matvienko welcomed Gilani warmly, acknowledging his longstanding ties with Russia and his contributions to deepening relations during his premiership. She said bilateral ties were growing stronger and reaffirmed Russia's commitment to implementing the MoU signed between the two parliaments. She noted the Joint Implementation Protocol had been received and would soon go through internal processes.

Both sides stressed the value of parliamentary diplomacy, especially

in times of rising global tensions. Gilani said stronger parliamentary ties could help stabilise volatile regions such as Afghanistan and South Asia. Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to peace and dialogue, Gilani said Pakistan continues to advocate for diplomatic solutions to disputes, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir. He said Pakistan remains dedicated to peaceful coexistence despite ongoing provocations.

"Billions of lives cannot be hostage to conflict. We have rejected baseless accusations, called for independent investigations into recent escalations, and condemned unilateral actions like the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty," he said. Gilani urged Russia to play a constructive role in facilitating dialogue between Pakistan and India, adding that Pakistan has formally requested proof and a fair investigation instead of escalatory measures. "We passed a unanimous resolution rejecting false claims and condemned India's unilateral suspension of the water treaty as a serious breach of trust," he said.

Reiterating Pakistan's counter-terrorism stance, Gilani stressed, "No country's soil should be used for terrorism against another." He called on Russia, as a responsible global power, to help encourage peace and stability in South Asia. Matvienko responded positively, saying Russia is ready to assist in Pakistan-India dialogue. "It is encouraging to see signs of stabilization and a ceasefire," she said.

On global security, Gilani and Matvienko agreed that international terrorism is a threat beyond regional borders. Referring to the Russia-

Ukraine conflict, Gilani said the language of diplomacy must be prioritised, and all disputes must be resolved through dialogue. On economic cooperation, Gilani noted the untapped potential in Pakistan-Russia trade and called for progress through the Intergovernmental Commission.

He advocated for joint projects in energy, metallurgy, LNG, and hydropower, and welcomed recent discussions on barter trade and business-to-business (B2B) cooperation. He also called for expanding cultural and academic exchange through university partnerships, student programs, technology collaborations, and relaxed visa regimes.

He expressed optimism about the resumption of direct flights to enhance tourism and trade. Recalling Pakistan's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, Gilani shared personal experiences: "My son was held hostage for three years. Shaheed Benazir Bhutto fell to terrorism. Malala Yousafzai—recognised globally during my term—symbolises Pakistan's resilience. We expect global solidarity in our fight."

Gilani further noted that both countries are part of the six-nation Speakers' Conference and proposed future cooperation between this body and Russia's Federation Council to enhance dialogue and regional connectivity. The meeting, held in a cordial and forward-looking atmosphere, was also attended by Federation Council Deputy Chairman Konstantin Kosachev, Head of the Pakistan-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Group Vladimir Chizhov, Pakistan's Ambassador to Russia Khalid Muhammad Jamali, and Aizaz Khan.

## Peshawar police move to cancel weapon licenses

Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar Police has sent a formal letter to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Peshawar recommending the cancellation of weapon licenses held by individuals accused in serious criminal cases. According to the letter, 320 suspects named in FIRs across various police stations in the city still possess licensed firearms, posing a potential threat to public safety.

The letter highlights that many of these individuals have ongoing legal proceedings or established criminal records, yet continue to retain their weapon licenses. Police emphasized the importance of canceling these licenses under relevant legal provisions to maintain law and order in the city.

Details of the suspects have been categorized according to police jurisdictions. The highest number, 51, are located in the jurisdiction of Chamkani Police Station, followed by 42 in Regi, 24 in Rehman Baba, 18 in Tehkal, and 16

each in Khazana, Shahpur, and Bhana Mari.

Other figures include: 14 in Urmur, 13 in Inqilab, 11 in Faqirabad, 10 each in Gulberg and Town, 9 each in Machni Gate and Phandoo, 7 each in Sarband and Nasir Bagh, 6 each in Yakatoot and Mathra, 5 in Daudzai, 4 in Badhber, and 3 each in Hayatabad, Mattani, and Hashnagri. Additionally, two suspects each with licensed weapons are reported in the jurisdictions of Paharpur and Arabi police stations.

The police have forwarded the complete list of these 320 individuals - including their CNIC numbers and FIR details - to their respective police stations for immediate action. The letter also calls for a copy of the final decision to be shared for further legal proceedings.

**KP decides major crackdown on terrorists, facilitators:** The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has announced a major crackdown against terrorists and their facilitators under the Provincial Action Plan.

According to a directive issued by the KP Home Department on Tuesday all divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners have been instructed to freeze the properties of identified terrorists. The decision was taken during a high-level meeting of the Home Department, where it was also ordered that all terrorist networks operating in the province be dismantled immediately.

The directive further stated that information about terrorists' families will be obtained from NADRA (National Database and Registration Authority), and if any links are confirmed, legal action will be initiated. The government also plans to scrutinize relatives of terrorists, currently employed on government positions. Strict action will be taken if any such affiliations were found. Additionally, the Home Department has directed officials at the district level to hold meetings to compile comprehensive data on terrorists operating within their jurisdiction.

## MPs praise Pakistan armed forces

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Lawmakers on Tuesday praised Pakistan's armed forces for their effective and united response to Indian aggression, while mocking Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi by calling him "Surrender Modi."Drones

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) senior leader Hina Rabbani Khar condemned India's aggressive behavior, calling it reckless and against international norms. "India acted irrationally; Pakistan acted responsibly. But our patience was mistaken for weakness," she said. She expressed disappointment over the silence of the international community on India's move to revoke Article 370. He said that US President Donald Trump has acknowledged Kashmir as a disputed territory.

She warned against justifying cross-border strikes in the name of counterterrorism. "If such logic is accepted, Pakistan could also justify striking inside India by presenting proof of Indian-sponsored terrorism," she cautioned. PPP leader Abdul Qadir Patel paid tribute to Pakistan's armed forces, Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, and the Pakistan Air Force for their brave and united response. He mocked Modi by calling him "Surrender Modi," and said, "Pakistan has shown the world that we want peace, but if war is forced on us, we will respond with full force."

He accused India of being behind acts of terrorism in Pakistan and credited the country's nuclear strength to the efforts of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto. He also appreciated PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for promoting Pakistan's peace message internationally.

Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen MNA Hameed Hussain lauded the unity of the armed forces, political leadership, media, and public in resisting Indian attacks "under the cover of darkness."Drones Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MNA Fazal Muhammad Khan expressed full support for the military and praised their professionalism and courage. "Our Army, Navy, and Air Force have once again proven their strength—not just in the region, but globally," he said.

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam's Abdul Ghafoor Haideri praised the armed forces and thanked friendly nations like China and Turkey for standing by Pakistan during the tense period. Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-P) MNA Syed Waseem Hussain appreciated the unity of the nation and the firm response by Pakistan's armed forces.

PPP's Sehar Kamran praised the government's foreign policy and noted that India faced diplomatic isolation during the recent tensions.

## Farewell ceremony held in honour of retiring DG Info

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A dignified farewell ceremony was held at the Information & Public Relations Department to honour the retirement of Director General Salim Khan. Advisor to Chief Minister for Information & Public Relations Barrister Dr. Saif attended the event as the chief guest, while Secretary Information Muhammad Khalid, Additional Secretary Information Hayat Shah, Deputy Secretary Information Beenish Iqbal, Directors, Deputy Directors, and Assistant Directors were also present.

Speaking on the occasion, Barrister Dr. Saif lauded Salim Khan's long and meritorious services in the Directorate General of Information & Public Relations, commending his professionalism, dedication, and commitment to duty. He said that under Salim Khan's leadership, the department achieved significant milestones and progressed remarkably.

The Advisor Information



presented a commemorative shield to the outgoing DG and expressed his gratitude for his contributions. He remarked that officers like Salim Khan are valuable assets to institutions and serve as role models for younger officers.

Secretary Information Muhammad Khalid also paid tribute to Salim Khan, describing him as an experienced, capable, and visionary officer whose leadership led the Directorate General of Information to various important achievements. He added that Salim Khan's administrative vision and commitment to teamwork are exemplary for younger officials. "He fostered a positive and professional environment within the Directorate General,

and his services will be remembered for years to come," he added. Other speakers at the ceremony also shared their experiences of working with Salim Khan and praised his professional abilities and leadership qualities.

In his farewell address, Salim Khan expressed gratitude for Advisor Information, Secretary Information and to his colleagues and staff, stating that he always tried to fulfill his responsibilities with honesty and integrity. He said he was proud to retire with dignity and pledged to continue contributing to the department even after retirement. The event concluded with prayers and heartfelt wishes for Salim Khan's future.

## Pakistan Navy ship Hunain visits Oman

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) HUNAIN visited Muscat, Oman during Regional Maritime Security Patrol (RMSP). Upon arrival at the port, the ship was warmly welcomed by Omani authorities.

PNS HUNAIN and Royal Navy of Oman's Ship, RNOV KHASSAB, carried out a bilateral passage exercise (PASSEX) in Gulf of Oman, reinforcing enduring Naval partnership between the two countries. The exercise aimed to strengthen maritime cooperation and enhance interoperability between the two navies.

Earlier during stay at port, Commanding Officer of PNS HUNAIN called on senior leadership of Royal Navy of Oman. During these interactions, matters of mutual interest, Navy-to-



Navy engagements, and cooperation in maritime security were discussed. Commanding Officer also conveyed well wishes from Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf to the people of Oman. In addition to high level interaction, various matters were discussed during professional engagement with Royal Navy of Oman Officers.

Pakistan Navy ships are regularly deployed on RMSP missions to fulfill international obligations for maritime security, ensure freedom of navigation on the high seas and protect global commons. Pakistan and Oman enjoy brotherly ties, with frequent Naval engagements focused on enhancing operational preparedness and mutual integration for ensuring safe and secure seas in the region.

## Indian intelligence complete failed: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that the recent ceasefire between Pakistan and India was the result of diplomatic efforts of various countries. Talking to Sky News, he said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif thanked US President Donald Trump for playing key role to ensure ceasefire.

He said that China, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Turkey and Qatar also played an important role in the ceasefire. The minister said that the US President's second post on X expressed America's desire to resolve the Kashmir dispute. He said it was a good sign that President Donald Trump wanted to resolve the Kashmir issue.

To a question about Indus Water Treaty, he said India has not yet stopped the flow of water to

Pakistan, as it did not have the capacity to stop the water. At present, the flow of water was continuing as usual, Attaullah Tarar remarked. The minister said that Pakistan had expressed regret and sympathy over the Pahalgam incident.

"Pakistan offered cooperation in a transparent investigation. India leveled allegations against Pakistan without evidence," the minister lamented. India has not yet and could not present evidence, he said, adding no group had claimed responsibility for the Pahalgam incident. The minister opined that the presence of seven lakh Indian troops in occupied Kashmir was a security and intelligence failure of India.

"Indian intelligence has proven to be a complete failure," Attaullah Tarar said.

India, he added, has failed miserably in linking

the Pahalgam incident to Pakistan. The minister said that the first contact between DGMOs had been made after the ceasefire. Pakistan, he said, was fighting the biggest war against terrorism, and operations against terrorists were ongoing on the western borders. In the war against terrorism, Pakistan has sacrificed the lives of innocent civilians, soldiers, and officers, Attaullah Tarar said. The minister said no safe haven for any terrorist group in Pakistan. The ceasefire was not a weakness of Pakistan but a strategic success, he remarked.

Pakistan targeted Indian military installations and arms depots and its losses were in front of everyone. India was not in a position to bear further tension, Tarar said. The entire nation stands with the Pakistani forces and Pakistan's victory was quite clear.

## PHC extends PTI's MNA protective bail

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) has extended the protective bail of Member National Assembly (MNA) and leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Muhammad Iqbal Afridi, on Tuesday.

PHC's two-member bench comprising Acting Chief Justice S.M. Atique Shah and Justice Muhammad Ijaz Khan has restrained the authorities from arresting him and has issued a notice

to the federal government, seeking details of the cases registered against him.

The counsel Bashir Khan Wazir advocate informed the court that the petitioner is a member of the National Assembly and cases registered against him in Islamabad and Punjab. The petitioner wants to attend the National Assembly session but fears arrest, he added.

The lawyer requested the court to provide details of the cases registered against him so that he can appear before

the relevant courts. MNA Iqbal Afridi told the court that he had gone to Islamabad on the 29th but returned after the Punjab police arrived.

PHC extended Iqbal Afridi's protective bail and issued a notice to the federal government, seeking details of the cases registered against him. The court asked the federal government to provide the details of the cases so that the petitioner can appear before the relevant courts.