

Sana affirms national unity
F.P. Report

FAISALABAD: Prime Minister's Adviser on Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanaullah emphasized that the nation stands firmly behind its armed forces, Pakistan would respond with unity and full force to any Indian aggression. Talking to media, he said that despite India's military strength, Pakistan has strong defense systems, command and control structures, and international support.



@thefrontierpost

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

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIXII

No. 93

Regd. No. 241

ZIQAAD 04 1446 -- FRIDAY, MAY 02 2025

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Any misadventure by India to be met with swift response: COAS

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) on Thursday reaffirmed the unyielding resolve of Pakistan's Armed Forces to defend the nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity at all costs.

"Let there be no ambiguity: any military misadventure by India will be met with a swift, resolute, and notch-up response. While Pakistan remains committed to regional peace, our preparedness and resolve to safeguard national interests is absolute," the COAS said while addressing troops at Tilla Filed Firing Ranges, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release.

The COAS visited the Tilla Field Firing Ranges (TFFR) to witness Exercise Hammer Strike—a high-intensity, field training exercise conducted by Pakistan Army's Mangla Strike Corps, it further said. Upon arrival, the COAS was received by the Corps Commander.

The exercise was meticulously designed to validate combat readiness, battlefield synergy, and the operational integration of cutting-edge weapon systems under near-battlefield conditions, it further said. A diverse array of advanced capabilities, including multirole fighter aircraft, combat aviation assets, long-range precision artillery, and next-generation field engineering techniques, were employed to simulate conventional battlefield scenarios.

Troops from all arms and services demonstrated exceptional tactical cohesion, agility, and lethality during synchronized offensive manoeuvres—reflecting an extraordinary level of training and professionalism. Notably, the exercise showcased Pakistan Army's increasing absorption of niche and emerging technologies to augment its kinetic and non-kinetic operational capabilities. During the visit, COAS lauded the high morale, combat proficiency, and war fighting spirit of the officers and troops, terming them the embodiment



of Pakistan Army's operational excellence.

Exercise Hammer Strike stands as a testament to Pakistan Army's pursuit of continuous transformation through rigorous training, doctrinal innovation, and technological modernization. Senior military leadership, formation commanders, and dignitaries from various services witnessed the exercise.

Armed forces ready 'crushing response' as war exercises continue: As India is amassing its troops along its border with Pakistan, which have heightened tensions in the region, Pakistan's armed forces, on the other hand, are also fully prepared to give a befitting reply to the enemy in the event of aggression by the latter as war exercises are underway in full swing.

The latest weapons are being used in the full-blown drills while the officers and jawans are displaying their professionalism at full throttle. War exercises are being carried out in

Sialkot, Narowal, Shakargarh, Zafarwal and other sectors with the aim to thwart the enemy's hostile designs. The Pakistan Army has been continuing war exercises with full vigour.

The exercises include practical demonstration of modern weaponry in view of war strategy. Officers and soldiers are actively showcasing their professional capabilities during the drills. Security sources said the primary objective of these war exercises is to deliver a strong and decisive response to any aggression from the enemy.

Pakistan Air Force, equipped with the latest fighter jets, is fully prepared and determined to deliver a crushing response to any aggression. The PAF has always fulfilled its professional responsibilities with utmost efficiency and dedication for the integrity of Pakistan. The Pakistan Air Force is renowned worldwide for its technical expertise and courageous reputation.

PM vows sustainable power sector reforms post Rs7.5/unit tariff cut

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday emphasised that following the recent reduction of approximately Rs. 7.5 per unit in electricity tariffs, the government was now focused on ensuring long-term affordability and reliability in power generation.

The prime minister chaired a high-level meeting to review the Integrated Generation Capacity Expansion Plan (IGCEP) 2024–2034, reaffirming the government's commitment to reducing electricity prices and implementing sustainable reforms in the energy sector, a Prime Minister's Office news release said. "After providing relief to the people with a significant tariff reduction, we are now implementing an effective strategy for sustainable energy sector reforms," said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The PM directed for the timely completion of strategic projects like the Diamer Bhasha Dam, stressing the need for a robust system to harness the country's water and power resources. "Any delay in energy projects is unacceptable," he said, adding, "We are moving towards establishing a free electricity market in the country very soon, which will promote competition and lead to further reduction in power tariffs."

The Prime Minister was briefed that the IGCEP had been thoroughly re-evaluated on his instructions, revealing room for improvement. The revised plan, prepared through dedicated efforts by the Ministry of Energy, aligns better with ground realities and future demands. The key highlights of the briefing included competitive bidding will now be used for upcoming power generation projects over the next ten years, expensive power projects amounting to 7,967 MW are being removed from the plan, revised project timelines and the exclusion of costly ventures will result

Chinese Ambassador calls on Premier

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, Jiang Zaidong Thursday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here at the Prime Minister House and emphasized that China would always support Pakistan to achieve the common desire of both the countries to secure peace and stability in South Asia.

During the meeting, the Chinese Ambassador thanked the Prime Minister for sharing Pakistan's perspective on the emerging situation due to Indian baseless propaganda and unilateral action, a Prime Minister's Office news release said. The prime minister during the meeting conveyed his warm good wishes to President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang, and expressed Pakistan's sincere thanks to China for its strong and steadfast support to Pakistan, in the prevailing situation in South Asia. While recalling the recent telephone conversation between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sen. Mohammad Ishaq Dar, the Prime Minister thanked China for understanding Pakistan's principled position vis-à-vis India's actions since April 22, 2025. In particular, the Prime Minister thanked China for its endorsement of his sincere offer to conduct a credible, neutral and transparent international investigation into the Pahalgam incident. The Prime Minister said that Pakistan had always condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. As a frontline state in the war against terror, Pakistan had sacrificed over 90,000 lives, while suffering over USD 152 billion in economic losses in its effort to make the country, as well as the rest of the world, a safer place. He added that India's belligerent actions could distract Pakistan from its ongoing counter-terrorism efforts against ISKP, TTP and BLA, who were operating from inside Afghanistan.

in estimated savings of \$17 billion (Rs. 4,743 billion), indigenous resources and alternative energy sources like solar, nuclear, and hydropower will be prioritized over imported fuels, leading to significant foreign exchange savings and gradual phasing out of capacity payments to power producers is also part of the reforms.

Prime Minister Shehbaz praised Power Minister Sardar Awais Leghari and his team for their efforts, calling the Rs. 4,743 billion savings a "historic success" for Pakistan. The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awais Leghari, Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Minister for Information Attaulah Tarar, Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik, and senior officials

from relevant departments.

Shehbaz, Amir of Qatar discuss developments in South Asia: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif had a telephone conversation with the Amir of Qatar His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani Thursday evening and discussed developments in South Asia.

During the telephone call, the Prime Minister thanked the Amir for Qatar's solidarity and support for Pakistan, that reflected the deep-rooted brotherly ties between the two countries. While referring to recent developments in South Asia, the Prime Minister stated that Pakistan condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and underscored the nation's sacrifices in the war against terror.

8 of family killed as car plunges into ravine

F.P. Report

KOHISTAN: Eight members of a family died when a Rawalpindi-bound Suzuki car plunged into a deep ravine in the Matta Banda area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lower Kohistan district on Thursday afternoon, police said.

Station House Officer (SHO) Buland Iqbal told media: "A family was returning from Gilgit Baltistan ... and experienced the accident in the Matta Banda area. Four children, their father, mother, and two female [relatives] died."

The SHO said the car fell from a height, killing all passengers on the spot. The bodies were retrieved by the local people and Rescue 1122 and moved to the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Pattan, he added.

Rescue 1122 district emergency officer Haroon Rasheed identified the adults as Asif Iqbal, Maimuna Iqbal, Ayesha Siddique and Bushra Iqbal. He said the deceased were residents of Rawalpindi. "Arrangements are being made to dispatch the bodies to Rawalpindi," he told media. Fatal accidents are common on roads in the mountainous regions of the country due to traffic rule violations, treacherous terrain and poor infrastructure.

3 CTD men martyred, 2 terrorists killed

F.P. Report

BANNU: Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) three personnel embraced martyrdom while two terrorists killed during an exchange of firing in Bannu district. A CTD spokesperson told media that the exchange of fire took place in the Spina Tangi area of Bannu between CTD personnel and terrorists.

In the exchange, three CTD officials were martyred and two were injured. The martyrs include ASI Binyamin, Constable Inam, and Mamsoor. The injured personnel include Wafid Khan and Imran.

In retaliatory fire by the CTD, two terrorists were killed. Their accomplices managed to flee along with the injured ones. Weapons, ammunition, IEDs, and hand grenades were recovered from the terrorists. The police have cordoned off the area and launched a search operation.

Meanwhile, the funeral prayers of the martyred personnel offered with full official honors at the Bannu police lines. A smartly turned-out police contingent presented a salute to the bodies of the martyrs.

Additional Inspector General CTD Shaukat Abbas, RPO Bannu Sajjad Khan, DPO Bannu Saleem Abbas Kalachi, SP CTD Fazal Wahid, Commissioner Bannu, Pakistan Army officers, and other officials attended the funeral prayers.

AIG, RPO Bannu, DPO Bannu, SP CTD, and the Assistant Commissioner laid floral wreaths on the coffins draped in the national flag and offered special prayers for the departed souls. The bodies of the martyred police personnel have been sent to their native areas with full state honors, where they will be laid to rest with official protocol. Additional IG CTD issued a statement saying that the martyred police officers are our pride, who sacrificed their lives for the safety and survival of the nation.

One policeman injured in terrorist's attack in Buner: Unknown armed militants attacked police post Kala Sang in the premises of police station Totalai Buner district in which one policeman was injured.

The injured policeman identified Irfan while shifted to district headquarters hospital Swabi. However, the attackers were repelled by the police's retaliatory firing and escaped in the darkness of night, police claimed.

No compromise on country's integrity

President, PM discuss security situation

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif called on President Asif Ali Zardari and discussed the current security situation, particularly in light of tensions with India in the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack.

The two leaders expressed deep concern over India's belligerent attitude and provocative statements, which posed a threat to regional peace and stability. They reaffirmed that Pakistan would never compromise on the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and would respond to any act of aggression in a befitting manner.

The meeting stated that the Pakistani nation was united and stood behind its Armed Forces, who were

capable of responding to any threat or aggression. They also reviewed Pakistan's response to India's belligerent posture and any possible acts of aggression.

The meeting also expressed regret over the Indian leadership's accusations regarding the Pahalgam attack, made without any investigation. It was highlighted that Pakistan had been a victim of terrorism, suffering immense human and economic losses for over two decades. They said that the international community should take note of India's involvement in funding, training, and sending militants into Pakistan to carry out terrorist activities.

President Zardari commended the Government's response to Indian baseless accusations and handling of

the situation in a responsible manner. He reaffirmed that Pakistan would take all necessary steps to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and vital national interests at all costs.

The meeting also highlighted the urgency of implementing United Nations Security Council resolutions to grant the Kashmiri people their right to self-determination, which would help bring lasting peace and stability to the region.

The Prime Minister also inquired after the health of the President after his recovery from COVID-19. Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, and Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, were also present during the meeting.

Pakistan expresses solidarity with Palestine at ICJ

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's ambassador to the Netherlands, Syed Haider Shah, made an oral statement before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), in The Hague Thursday, highlighting the atrocities being committed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory particularly in Gaza.

He made the statement in the public hearing on the request for an advisory opinion on the Obligations of Israel in relation to the Presence and Activities of the United Nations, Other International Organizations and Third States in and in relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

He emphasized that Israel's conduct towards the UN Relief and Works

Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) reflected one of the most egregious breaches of the privileges and immunities of an international organisation in the history of the United Nations.

He condemned in the strongest possible terms Israel's attempt to dismantle the operations of UNRWA in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, terming it a blatant violation of international law and part of Israel's systematic campaign to deny much-needed humanitarian aid to millions of Palestinians in dire need.

He underscored the need for providing unrestricted humanitarian access to Gaza and to hold Israel accountable for the imposi-

tion of collective punishment through the denial of humanitarian aid to millions of civilians.

Pakistan had submitted its detailed written statement to the ICJ in the case earlier this year. The oral proceedings of the case are being held at the ICJ from 28 April to 02 May 2025, in which more than 40 states and organizations are expected to participate.

The Foreign Office said that Pakistan has always and shall continue to stand by the Palestinians in their just struggle for self-determination, as well as for the establishment of a sovereign, independent, and contiguous Palestinian state based on pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

Iran says fourth round of N-talks with US postponed

TEHRAN (Reuters): Iran's foreign ministry said on Thursday that the fourth round of nuclear talks with the United States has been postponed, after mediator Oman cited "logistical reasons" for the delay.

Tehran and Washington were scheduled to meet for a fourth round of talks on Saturday in Rome, after the two sides reported progress in previous rounds. "The next round of indirect Iran-US talks, which were scheduled to be held in Rome on Saturday... has been postponed," Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said in a statement.

He added the decision was based on the proposal by Oman of and that "the next possible date will be announced later." Earlier, Oman's top diplomat Badr Albusaidi cited "logistical reasons" for the delay. "For logistical reasons we are rescheduling the US-Iran meeting provisionally planned for Saturday May 3. New dates will be announced when mutually agreed," he said on X. A source familiar with the talks said the United States "never confirmed its participation" in the fourth round meant for Saturday.

On Friday, Iranian diplomats were due to meet with representatives from Germany, Britain, and France in Rome ahead of talks with the US. It remains unclear whether these talks will be held as scheduled. The Iran-US talks mediated

by Oman, which began on April 12, have been the highest-level contact in years since US President Donald Trump abandoned a nuclear accord with world powers in 2018. Since returning to office, Trump has revived his "maximum pressure" approach against Tehran.

In March, he wrote to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei proposing talks but warning of potential military action if diplomacy failed. Western countries including the United States have long accused Iran of seeking to acquire nuclear weapons — an allegation Tehran has consistently denied, insisting that its programme is for peaceful civilian purposes.

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei proposing talks but warning of potential military action if diplomacy failed. Western countries including the United States have long accused Iran of seeking to acquire nuclear weapons — an allegation Tehran has consistently denied, insisting that its programme is for peaceful civilian purposes.

Indus Waters Treaty suspension: Bilawal warns India

F.P. Report

MIRPURKHAS: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari accused Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "attacking the Indus River" by suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, warning such acts would provoke strong resistance from Pakistan.

Addressing a rally in Mirpurkhas, the former foreign minister said the treaty had come under frequent attacks during his tenure, but Modi's current move, citing Kashmir as a pretext, was a direct threat to Pakistan's water security. "The butcher of Gujarat has tried to choke the Indus River. We will not allow it," said Bilawal. "Either water will flow, or their blood will." He reiterated that Pakistan seeks peace and that Islam promotes harmo-

ny, but said Modi's government had violated international agreements. "Even Indians love the Indus and should stop Modi from this madness," he added.

Labeling Modi an "extremist, not a democrat," Bilawal said India had become an aggressor, not a peaceful neighbor. "We will expose Modi globally and respond firmly," he warned. He also challenged India to present evidence regarding the Pahalgam incident if any Pakistani involvement is claimed. "We do not fear war if forced upon us."

Turning to domestic matters, Bilawal criticised political rivals for allegedly celebrating controversial canal projects initiated by the caretaker government. "When the scheme was announced, political orphans clapped instead of protesting. They thought

we would sell Sindh's rights like they did," he said.

Bilawal stressed that PPP has always defended the people's rights. "We are Bhutto's party. We never bow. We fight on principles," he declared. He accused former President Arif Alvi's caretaker setup of pushing illegal water projects backed by questionable certifications from IRSA and ECNEC.

Despite lacking a majority, Bilawal said the PPP blocked the project through the Council of Common Interests. "Our two members convinced others. Meanwhile, critics attacked Zardari, but feared confronting the real culprits." Praising Zardari's leadership, he said, "We protected Sindh's water peacefully, through dialogue. The Indus still flows because of the people's trust in us."



KARACHI: Graduation ceremony was held at the NIPA Auditorium for the Leadership Development Program for the Registrar of Sindh Universities. NIPA Karachi, Chief Instructor Fauz Khalid Khan presented the course report. The chief guest of the ceremony, Secretary of the Sindh Higher Education Department, Mr. Moinuddin Siddiqui, distributed certificates to the Registrar on completion of the course.

Steps to be taken for welfare of labour class

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Secretary for Human Rights Saba Sadiq, MNA on Thursday expressed the commitment that the present government will take all possible steps for welfare of labour class.

In her message marking the International Labour day, she said that all possible steps were being taken to ensure implementation of minimum wages law for labour.

She said that the goal of rapid, inclusive and sustainable growth could only be realised due to efforts of hardworking, dedicated and committed workforce.

The Government, she added, was fully committed to taking all measures, in cooperation with the provincial governments, to enhance the welfare of workers and their families as well as to raise their standards of living.

"We understand very well that only a healthy, happy, well-educated and well-paid workforce will enable Pakistan to attain its full social and economic potential, and this is what we are working towards with complete sincerity of purpose."

Paying tribute to the hard work of both male and

female workers, she said that it is because of them that the economy continues to move forward.

She said reforms are underway to ensure a safe and healthy working environment, as well as to guarantee proper training for workers.

Saba Sadiq said the government was training youth in various skills and ensuring their certification to improve their chances of securing employment opportunities abroad.

She reiterated the government's resolve to protect the rights of work force and provide them maximum facilities.

Kundi acknowledges Labourers' role

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday paid tribute to the working class, acknowledging their vital role in the nation's development and prosperity.

In his special message at the eve of 'Labour Day', the Governor emphasized that true progress and prosperity cannot be achieved unless laborers are provided with dignity, respect, and their rightful entitlements. Governor Kundi stressed that the welfare and empowerment of workers are directly linked to the advancement of Pakistan.

He highlighted the unwavering commitment of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) to defending labor rights, reiterating that the party has always been a staunch advocate for workers' interests and continues to raise its voice for their protection at every level.

He also paid homage to Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who introduced Pakistan's first labor policy in 1972. Governor Kundi said that Bhutto not only granted workers their rights but also laid the foundation for their empowerment.

The Governor remarked that Labour Day serves as a reminder of the struggles and contributions of the working class. It is a day to recognize their hard work, dignity, and crucial role in the national economy.

Smart library at district jail inaugurated

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Home Secretary Noor-ul-Ameen Mengal inaugurated the Smart Library Project at District Jail Lahore on Thursday, marking the formal launch of an education-focused initiative across Punjab's prison system.

Undertaken on the special directives of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the project aims to foster learning, rehabilitation, and character-building among inmates. Under this project, inmates across Punjab's prisons will now have access to curated books and shelves inside their barracks, fostering a culture of learning and personal development.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony at Camp Jail Lahore Secretary Noor-ul-Ameen Mengal emphasized the department's commitment to inmate rehabilitation through education. He said that Smart Libraries have been established in all 44 prisons across the province, with a remarkable collection of 100,000 books already delivered.

Furthermore, each prison has been tasked with adding 500 new titles every month, ensuring a continuously expanding literary environment for inmates.

He noted that this project complements a series of reforms initiated over the past year, which include improved food and living conditions, technical training through prison industries, and mental health assessments.

To enhance the impact of the Smart Library initiative, the Home Department has introduced a structured Code of Conduct to ensure meaningful engagement with the reading material. Under this framework, educated inmates will be responsible for presenting book summaries to groups of ten fellow prisoners, promoting peer-to-peer learning.

Sindh to launch EV Taxi service under public-private partnership model

KARACHI (PPI): The Sindh government has decided to introduce an electric vehicle (EV) taxi service across the province under a public-private partnership model, with a focus on environmentally friendly transportation and inclusive mobility, particularly for women.

The announcement was made by Sindh Senior Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon during a high-level meeting in Karachi.

Highlighting the government's commitment to improving public transport, the minister stated that the Sindh Enterprise Fund

(SEDF), an investment wing of the provincial government, will offer KIBOR-based subsidies to interested EV taxi operators to promote adoption of electric mobility solutions.

Mr. Memon explained that EV taxi services have gained traction globally and that Sindh aims to replicate this trend by encouraging private sector participation. "The EV taxi project will contribute to tackling environmental challenges and reducing pollution," he said.

As part of the initiative, the government has also approved a women-exclusive EV Pink Taxi service, where both drivers and passengers will be female. Mr.

Memon termed this a "unique and empowering step" aimed at strengthening the concept of women's mobility and security.

He added that the initiative would also generate employment, as each taxi would require at least two drivers, and stressed the importance of safety measures. He directed that drivers be properly trained, certified, and verified by the police to ensure a secure commuting experience.

During the meeting, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Investment and PPP Syed Qasim Naveed Qamar briefed participants about the investment incentives being offered to companies

interested in operating EV taxis.

It was agreed that 100 EV taxis will be launched in the initial phase of the project. Representatives from Sindh Bank, SEDF, and the Sindh Mass Transit Authority also attended the meeting, along with Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, who provided a detailed overview of the facilities being made available under the EV initiative.

Mr. Memon invited banks and private investors to submit proposals to join the project, adding that the service will offer a cleaner and safer alternative to the often-criticised Qingqi rickshaw network.

Sindh govt, WFP launch Rs578m school meals pilot project

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and World Food Programme (WFP) Country Director Coco Ushiyama agreed to launch a Rs578.39 million school meals pilot project in Malir District, targeting 11,000 primary students with daily nutritious meals to improve learning outcomes, attendance, and child nutrition.

The decision was reached on Thursday during a high-level meeting at CM House, which also addressed broader collaboration between the Sindh government and WFP on maternal and child health. The meeting was attended by senior provincial officials and WFP representatives, including Hilde Bergsma and Salma Yaqub.

The pilot project, to be implemented during the 2025-26 academic year, will be jointly funded, with the Sindh government contributing 80 percent (Rs462.71 million) and WFP covering the remaining 20 percent (Rs115.68 million). Meals will be prepared in a centralised kitchen and distributed to selected peri-urban schools that meet basic infrastructure and san-



itation standards.

Each meal will include lentils, rice or bread, vegetables, and a weekly fruit serving.

Chief Minister Shah noted that the initiative is expected not only to tackle malnutrition and improve education indicators but also to generate local employment and promote community food systems. "This project will offer critical insights into sustainable school meal delivery and serve as a model for province-wide implementation," he stated.

Alongside the school meals project, the meeting reviewed existing maternal and child nutrition programs, including the federal BISP Nashonuma initiative

and the provincial Mamta program. While both address malnutrition among women and children, BISP operates via the national

Kafalat registry and focuses on food supplements, whereas Mamta offers conditional cash transfers (CCTs) and allows self-enrolment across 15 districts.

To reduce duplication and strengthen coordination, participants agreed on three action points: realigning the technical frameworks of both programs, establishing a two-way data-sharing system to identify overlaps and service gaps, and developing a joint targeting mechanism for more effective outreach.

PAF BASE, PESHAWAR

TENDER NOTICE : BWO FLT

PAF Base Peshawar requires different Conservancy Items (Taxable and Non-taxable) for Financial Year 2024-2025.

Sealed tenders are invited for above mentioned items. Last date for submission of tender is **16 May, 2025** at 1000hrs which will be opened on the same date at 1200 hrs. The Officer Commanding reserves the rights to accept / reject any / all tenders, on technical grounds.

Note: Quotations may be sent in favor of BWO, PAF Base, Peshawar. Detail specification may be obtained on Tel No: 091-9505031-5037, Mobile: 03239411312

VIP Goat Block bookings to begin

KARACHI (PPI): The administration of the Northern Bypass Cattle Market has announced the commencement of VIP block bookings for goat traders starting Friday evening, in a move aimed at expanding access to premium livestock for Karachi residents ahead of Eidul Azha.

Shahab Ikram, Administrator of the Northern Bypass Cattle Market, confirmed that goat sellers will be able to secure VIP plots from 7pm on Friday. The decision, he said, is part of the administration's broader effort to streamline animal availability and enhance visitor experience at what is being billed as Asia's largest cattle-friendly market.

"With this arrangement, residents of Karachi will have easier access to high-quality goats of every breed," Mr Ikram stated,

while speaking to the press here on Thursday.

Since its opening on April 19, the Northern Bypass Cattle Market has seen a steady influx of livestock from across the country. Thousands of animals—including cows, bulls, calves, goats, and camels—have arrived from Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan, particularly from cities such as Multan, Rajanpur, Ahmedpur, Kashmore, Kandhkot, Naushahro Feroze, Kandiaro, Nawabshah, and Halani.

Traders have brought in a wide variety of sacrificial animals, including Sahiwal, Gulabi, Cholistani, and Sindhi cattle breeds. Camels of the Koh-e-Mari, Lari, and Thari breeds, known for their distinct markings and size, have also added to the market's appeal.

The presence of VIP

and VVIP livestock blocks featuring animals from prominent Karachi-based farmhouses has attracted strong footfall, particularly on the public holiday, as families flocked to the market throughout the day. Many citizens said they had chosen the Northern Bypass over other markets due to its diverse animal offerings and relatively moderate prices.

The administrator also said that proper facilities, including security and digital monitoring through SMD screens, have been put in place from the entrance gate to the media and administration blocks to ensure a smooth and regulated experience.

Traders expressed optimism about upcoming sales, with many reporting that more livestock is on the way. The market is expected to grow in both scale and attendance in the lead-up to Eid.

Pakistan National Day celebrated in Dubai

F.P. Report

DUBAI: The Consulate General of Pakistan in Dubai hosted a vibrant and memorable reception to celebrate Pakistan's National Day, showcasing cultural harmony, brotherhood, and strong bilateral ties between Pakistan and the UAE.

The ceremony was attended by H.E. Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, H.E. Khalid Mohammed Al Kaabi, Representative of the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Dubai Office), H.E. Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Ambassador of Pakistan to the UAE, and H.E. Hussain Muhammad, Consul General of Pakistan in Dubai, alongside senior diplomats, officials, and

community members.

The evening began with recitations from the Holy Quran, followed by the national anthems of both Pakistan and the UAE - symbolizing mutual respect and unity.

In his remarks, Consul General Hussain Muhammad reflected on the historic significance of the Pakistan Resolution and appreciated the UAE's longstanding support for the Pakistani community. He highlighted that "the UAE is more than a host - it's a second home for millions of Pakistanis."

Renowned Pakistani actor Ahsan Khan added a special flavor to the event with his presence. Delivering a heartfelt message, he emphasized that arts and culture serve as bridges between nations

and that such events promote peace, understanding, and tolerance in today's global environment.

A symbolic copy of "Mimar Al-Watan", a tribute book on the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan authored by Khan Zaman Saroor, was presented to H.E. Khalid Al Kaabi, recognizing the deep-rooted bonds between the two nations.

A video presentation captured key moments of historical and contemporary cooperation between Pakistan and the UAE, including trade, education, and cultural exchange.

With participation from students, professionals, and diverse communities, the event stood as a testament to Pakistan's commitment to peace, progress, and inclusive diplomacy.



NO 3 PETROLEUM DISPATCH UNIT PAF BASE, MULTAN

TENDER NOTICE

1. Sealed Tenders / Quotations are invited for upcoming HMT Contract for **2025-26** from reputable, well-experienced (minimum 5 years general experience in heavy transport fleet management), financially-sound and Income Tax - registered mechanical transport contractors for transportation of Aviation Fuel from **Pak-Arab Refinery Limited (PARCO), Mehmood Kot** to Bases / Units of Pakistan Air Force, as per Tender Form.
2. Interested parties owning fleet of large-size tankers, with capacity 40,000 - 56,000Ltrs, prepared on **OGRA STANDARDS {S.R.O. 900(I)2009 dated 19 October, 2009 and PAF Quality Standards}**, equipped with the latest products handling / safety equipment and preferably satellite-based Tracker System, meeting quality safety standards and having requisite management experience to provide safe, timely and high-quality service, may participate in Bidding by providing competitive rates, along with under mentioned information:-
 - (a) Owners / Partners Name, address, telephone, mobile numbers and fax number of the company.
 - (b) Profile of the company, management and key personnel. Status of the firm, whether proprietorship / partnership / public or private limited company.
 - (c) Attested copy of CNIC of owner / partners / key operating personnel of the company are to be attached with the application.
 - (d) Details of registration with major organizations, along with detail of agreements / contracts.
 - (e) Details of vehicles owned, along with registration number, model, make, year of purchase, loading capacity, number of compartments, etc.
 - (f) Details of product handling, quality certification / safety equipment, fire extinguishers, coupling and earthing system installed on these vehicles.
 - (g) Detail of HR management system.
 - (h) Details of satellite-based Tracker system installed on these vehicles.
 - (i) Financial status duly verified / Name of bankers and certificate of financial stability.
 - (k) Sales Tax and Income Tax - registration certificate, details of Income Tax Returns and copy of assessment / payment of Income Tax.
 - (l) Detail of ISO Certificates (if any).
 - (m) Detail of transport HSE system for fleet management.
 - (n) Detail of drivers training courses and its system with record.
 - (p) Detail of workshop and Base station at Mehmood Kot or other locations.
 - (q) Detail of legal affairs (if any).
 - (r) Any other requisite information.
3. Firms interested in participating can collect **Technical Evaluation Criteria, Tender Forms, Tender Instructions** and supporting documents/guidelines/information from the undermentioned office address, during working hours **(0800hrs to 1400hrs)** and submit the tender forms complete-in-all respects by **16 May, 2025**, by **1000 hrs**. No late receipt of Tender forms / documents will be entertained after **16 May, 2025**. The Tender will be opened on **16 May, 2025** at 1030 hrs.

The offer will consist two separate quotations, as follows:-

- a. **Technical Quotation.** It should contain all relevant information on **Technical Quotation Form**, available in IT documents duly filled in and enclosed with details of bowzers available for subject Contract.
- b. **Commercial Quotation.** The quotation will be in single and will indicate the offered rates (figures, as well as, words) for delivery of Aviation Fuel to each PAF Base, mentioned on **Tender Form PAFZ-2121** (Commercial Quotation).

Sealed envelopes should be clearly marked as **"Technical Quotation"** and **"Commercial Quotation"**. Both the envelopes of commercial and technical offers should be enclosed in one cover, properly sealed, bearing the address of this office without any indication that there is tender / quotation within.

Commercial quotations of only those firms will be opened, whose technical quotations are accepted by technical authorities as per Technical Evaluation Criteria. Commercial quotations of technically rejected firms will be returned to the firms unopened.

NOTES:-

1. Pre-qualified and Registered Firms will be given preference.
2. If the information provided is found incorrect at any stage of procurement, your request for participating in tender / contract will be cancelled.

OFFICER COMMANDING
NO 3 PDU, PAF BASE, MULTAN
AIRPORT ROAD, MULTAN
TEL: 061-9201201 EXT 7107, MOB: 0323-9426731



PESHAWAR: Activists of Railways Workers Union holding demonstration on the occasion of World Labour day.

Symposium on Principles of Humanitarian Action held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A symposium centered on the "Principles of Humanitarian Action" was jointly organized by the Department of Regional Studies at the University of Peshawar and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students of Peshawar University, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women's University, Iqra National University, and the Institute of Legal Studies peshawar. The one-day symposium featured engaging discussions on critical themes including the Importance of Fundamental Principles during Humanitarian Crises, Humanitarian Journalism, and the intersection of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Islam. Participants actively shared their perspectives and insights on these vital topics. On the occasion, Ms. Zartasha Qaisar Khan, Deputy Head of Sub-dele-

gation for the ICRC in Peshawar, stated that the international humanitarian organization has been actively serving humanity in Pakistan since its inception, in line with its mandate. She highlighted the ICRC's collaborative efforts with the Pakistan Red Crescent Society and other partners, particularly in the health sector. Furthermore, she emphasized the ICRC's commitment for capacity building of students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's universities, especially at the University of Peshawar, on International Humanitarian Law and Humanitarian Journalism. She also mentioned the recent training conducted in collaboration with the Department of Criminology at Peshawar University for police officers. Renowned journalists and former President of the Peshawar Press Club, Arshid Aziz Malik, Tariq Waheed, Muhammad Naeem, along with Professor Dr. Faizullah Jan from the Journalism

Department of Peshawar University, addressed the topic of Humanitarian Journalism. They emphasized to aspiring journalists the importance of upholding the dignity of affected individuals while reporting on humanitarian crises. They also stressed the need for thorough investigation of information and focusing on potential solutions to the issues while reporting on the humanitarian crisis. As host to the event, Professor Dr. Hussain Shaheed Soherwordi expressed his gratitude to the ICRC for providing such valuable opportunities to university students. He stated that these discussions not only enhance the students' knowledge but also equip them to serve humanity more effectively as future decision-makers. He underscored the necessity of adhering to the fundamental principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement - Humanity, Impartiality, and Neutrality - in all humanitarian endeavors.

Hujjaj being facilitated

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: To save 8/10 hours at Saudi immigration at Saudi airport, the pilgrims pertaining to KPK are proceeding/traveling from Islamabad due to route to Makkah since 2023. Medical and paramedic staff deputed at the Peshawar Haji camp are working for inoculation of Vaccine from 9 am to 6 pm daily during working and closed holidays also with the cooperation of DHO. All the 15 designated Banks established their bank booths inside the Campus are delivering giveaways to the intending pilgrims and exchange of Saudi Riyals are also arranged by the banks at Haji camp. As per government policy, their traveling documents i.e. visas, tickets building lockets etc are to be delivered to the IPs from Islamabad Haji camp. One family person/ Group leader can collect documents of other group members or family members.

KMU observes World Immunization Week 2025

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Medical University (KMU) Institute of Pathology and Diagnostic Medicine (IPDM), in collaboration with AMSON Vaccines and Pharma, organized a successful symposium in connection with World Immunization Week 2025. The event aimed to highlight the importance of immunization in building a healthier Pakistan. The symposium featured expert insights on the significance of vaccines, disease prevention, and immunization strategies. Activities included an awareness walk, a cake-cutting ceremony, and a special vaccination drive offering vaccines at discounted rates for KMU faculty members, staff, and their families. Vice Chancellor KMU, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq, graced the occasion as the chief guest. In his address, he emphasized the university's commitment to public health and preventive immunization. He appreciated the vaccination drive, noting that it would not only raise awareness among students, faculty, and staff but also provide access to essential vaccines under one roof at reduced costs. The event commenced with opening remarks by Prof. Dr. Yasar Yousafzai, Director IPDM. Dr. Ehsanullah, Head of Microbiology, highlighted vaccine-preventable diseases. Dr. Taj Ali Khan elaborated on societal attitudes towards vaccines, both supportive and opposing. Dr. Khalid Ur Rehman, Director IPH, reviewed effective strategies to counter vaccine refusal in Pakistan. Dr. Gulab Fatima Rani presented an in-depth talk on the role of vaccination in cancer prevention. Dr. Asghar from Khyber Medical College discussed typhoid vaccination, while Mr. Farhan Nasir, representative of AMSON Pharma, shed light on the role of the pharmaceutical industry in promoting vaccination. Additionally, EPI representative Dr. Mehtab Khan provided informative insights into the routine immunization schedule.

Labour Day enthusiastically observed in Peshawar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Like other parts of the country, Labour Day was observed with enthusiasm in Peshawar to commemorate International Labour Day. In this regard, the Labour Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa organized a dignified ceremony in Peshawar. The event was attended by Secretary Workers Welfare Board Muhammad Tufail Khattak, Additional Secretary Labour Khaliq Dad, Director Labour Irfanullah, Vice Commissioner of WWB, Directorate of Employees Social Security Institution (ESSI)

Khurshid Alam, Director Admin WWB Mr. Saifullah Zafar, presidents of workers' unions, representatives of industrialists, and a large number of labourers. Speaking on the occasion, Secretary WWB said that Labour Day is being observed around the world to commemorate the sacrifices and struggles of workers for their rights. He emphasized that the country's economy thrives due to the contributions of workers and their role in economic development is undeniable. He added that the WWB, Directorate of Labour, and ESSI are working tirelessly for the

welfare and well-being of workers, and meaningful reforms are being undertaken to improve their quality of life. He informed that so far this year, WWB has distributed Rs. 720 million in scholarships to workers' children, provided Rs. 130 million in dowry grants to 341 families, and issued death grants to 44 families, adding that 10 workers are being sent for Hajj this year free of cost. Vice Commissioner ESSI highlighted the healthcare facilities provided to workers at ESSI hospitals. He said that all medical services are now available at the click of a button through the Health

Information Management System (HIMS). The Additional Secretary, in his address, said that the Directorate of Labour has taken effective steps for the welfare of workers. "A working group has been formed for the Child Labour Policy, which will soon present its recommendations," he said, adding that the department has been digitalized, and relief is being provided to workers through labour courts. Workers' representative, Razem, also addressed the gathering, shedding light on workers' issues and the facilities being provided to them by the government.

Rs.50,000 minimum monthly wage for laborers demanded

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Central Vice President and Provincial Chairman of All Pakistan WAPDA Hydro Electric Workers Union, Haji Muhammad Iqbal, paid tribute to the martyrs of Chicago and urged the government to take emergency steps to eliminate inflation and unemployment and provide special relief to the poor in the budget. Due to the extreme inflation, children of the working class are forced to go hungry, while the ruling class continues to

enjoy the perks of power. The country's system is sustained by the blood and sweat of laborers. Therefore, in accordance with inflation, the salaries of government and semi-government employees should be increased by 200%, and the minimum monthly wage for laborers should be set at Rs. 50,000. These views were expressed by Central Vice President and Provincial Chairman Haji Muhammad Iqbal while addressing a dignified ceremony of union officials

and workers on the occasion of Labor Day at Iqbal Labor Complex, Peshawar. On this occasion, Provincial Secretary Noor-ul-Amin Haiderzai, Provincial Vice Chairman Yasir Kamran, Deputy Chairman Shafiullah, Secretary Information & Broadcasting Gohar Ali Gohar, Joint Secretary Tariq Khan, Secretary Finance & Welfare Nasir Khan, Deputy Chairman Naseerullah Mohmand, and others made it clear that the privatization of national institutions

including WAPDA is not in the interest of the country and the nation. Therefore, the government should withdraw its decision to privatize WAPDA and other national institutions, dissolve the DISCOs, and restore WAPDA to once again make it a profitable institution. Additionally, vacant positions should be filled immediately, lump-sum and contract workers should be regularized, and the wages of part-time employees should be increased.

Timergara District Bar delegation meets Humayun

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The newly elected cabinet of the Timergara District Bar Association, led by President Advocate Saleem Khan, called on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister's Advisor for Prisons, Humayun Khan, at his office in the Civil Secretariat, Peshawar. The delegation discussed a grant for the Bar, other issues facing lawyers, developmental projects in Dir, and prison reforms in detail. A delegation from the Dir Welfare Organization, led by Senior

Vice President Ghulam Hussain Ghazi, also met the provincial advisor. They discussed developmental projects in Dir and the welfare of Dir residents living in Peshawar. Humayun Khan informed the delegations that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa prison system has been fully digitalized. Not only have in-person meetings been streamlined, but an online visitation system has also been introduced. Through this system, relatives of inmates can hold online meetings from any part of the world, at any time, including on

weekends. Even inmates in different prisons can communicate with each other. Regarding development projects in Dir, Humayun Khan stated that tenders for the six-kilometer Laramah Tunnel from Chakdara to Rabat and the 29-kilometer motorway upto Dir Khas will be advertised within the next couple of months. The projects will cost Rs. 60 billion. Once completed, the travel time to Lowari Tunnel will be reduced from three hours to just 25 minutes. The Advisor for Prisons also revealed that 200 kanals of land have been

acquired in Zolm Kot for the construction of a central jail in Malakand Division. Similarly, land has been acquired in Gandigar for a district jail in Upper Dir, and construction will begin soon. He added that the establishment of Dir University and the installation of equipment at Timergara Medical College are progressing and will be completed soon. Urban beautification projects in both Lower and Upper Dir are also underway, including the development of a large public park in Chakdara.

Dr Aneela pays first visit to Population Welfare Dept

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Dr. Aneela Meh, Secretary, Population Welfare Department paid her first visit to the Directorate General since assuming charge. The visit included a comprehensive briefing on the department's history, functions, service delivery, organizational struc-

ture, budgets, development schemes, and issues/challenges. She appreciated the department's efforts, highlighting the importance of awareness and counseling on mother and child health, as well as addressing postpartum women's psychological issues. She emphasized the need for an updated survey to assess performance and

directed to approach donor organizations for an independent survey. The Secretary also stressed the importance of collaborating with donor organizations to pilot new initiatives for improved population welfare. She emphasized strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and directed officers to work with focus and

responsibility. Secretary also requested separate briefings on different sections and projects to understand their roles and challenges better. This visit marks a significant step towards enhancing the department's efficiency and effectiveness in delivering its mandate, ultimately benefiting the community.

Girls' education summit urges reopening of schools in Kurram

PESHAWAR (APP): A Girls' Education Summit convened here Thursday by Social Welfare and Women Development Department in collaboration with Blue Veins highlighted critical challenges and potential solutions for girls' education in District Kurram. The summit placed a strong emphasis on tackling learning poverty and exploring alternative educational avenues for girls whose schooling has been disrupted by prevailing law and order situation in the district Kurram. Addressing the attendees, Minister for Social Welfare and Women Development, Qasim Ali Shah, underscored provincial government's awareness of severe impact security situation in Kurram has had on women, girls, and other vulnerable populations. "The girls of Kurram will not be forgotten. We are actively working to address education crisis and resolve broader law and order challenges" Qasim said.

Adding to this, Minister for Elementary and Secondary Education, Faisal Khan Tarakai, stressed immediate need for action, stating, "Opening all schools in District Kurram, with a specific focus on girls' education, is our priority. We are dedicated to connecting girls to alternative learning pathways where physical schooling is not currently feasible. Our mission is clear: to leave no one behind." Qamar Naseem, Program Manager of Blue

Veins, conveyed solidarity with the girls of Kurram and advocated for a collaborative approach. "The girls of Kurram are not merely victims of present challenges; they are resilient, determined, and full of potential." A poignant moment during the summit occurred when a young girl from Kurram voiced deep anxieties of her peers regarding their uncertain futures. "We are not asking for favors; we are demanding our right to education," she passionately declared. "Our dreams

should not be extinguished in silence. Immediate action is crucial to ensure that hopes and aspirations of girls of District Kurram do not fade away. We deserve a future." The summit concluded with a firm and unified commitment from senior government officials and the Education Department. They assured participants that all necessary and urgent steps will be undertaken to reopen all schools in District Kurram, including those specifically for girls.



International Labour Day Recognizing millions hands that build Pakistan

PESHAWAR (APP): Each year, Pakistan observed International Labour Day with national fervor, honouring the dedication, sacrifices, and hard work of the labour force that drives the country's economic engine to prosperity. From the mountainous valleys of Chitral to the bustling ports of Karachi, and from Kashmir to Gwadar, the labourers marked the day with rallies, demonstrations, and awareness walks. These events commemorated the contributions of countless labourers — including those who lost their lives in hazardous working conditions — toward Pakistan's development and prosperity. May 1 is a public holiday across Pakistan, with federal and provincial governments declaring official closures for government, semi-government, and private institutions. The day is rooted in the memory of the 1886 Chicago labour movement, where workers demanding an eight-hour workday were brutally suppressed. In solidarity, over 80 countries, including Pakistan, observe the day to recognize the vital role of labourers in nation-building. However, while the country commemorated the occasion, for labourers like Abad Khan, a 35-year-old wheat harvester from Nowshera, the day passed like any other. Unaware of its significance, Abad worked tirelessly to complete wheat harvesting on eight acres of land before an incoming rainstorm. Assisted by his brothers Amanat, Mustafa, and Mahboob Khan, and three fellow labourers, Abad works on a fixed-rate contract of Rs20,000 per acre that covers wheat cutting, threshing, and storage. Known locally as "Kala Khan," he shoulders the responsibility of supporting a six-member household amid rising inflation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. After losing his father, Shamas Khan, Abad was forced to abandon his stud-

ies after matriculation. He's since worked in construction, agriculture, transport, and street vending to make ends meet. His modest general store was destroyed in the 2022 floods along the Kabul River, forcing him to buy a rickshaw with borrowed money to pay for his father's medical bills and shop damages. "My dream was to own a tractor-thresher," he says, "but financial hardship made it impossible. I urge the government to offer interest-free loans so workers like me can start our own businesses." Like Abad, thousands of labourers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are engaged in agriculture, mining, construction, and other sectors forming the backbone of Pakistan's economy. Labour law expert Noman Bokhari advocate said Labour Day is not just about symbolic recognition but it is a moment to educate workers about their legal rights and protections. "The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan enshrines the rights of workers," he noted, "including the right to unionize, communicate, assemble, and secure fair employment." As a founding member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 1947, Pakistan has ratified 36 ILO conventions — eight of which are considered fundamental. These form the legal framework for worker protections, including safety, wages, benefits, and welfare. In a bid to improve living conditions, Director of the Provincial Housing Authority (PHA), Waqas Anjum, said that more than 2,000 flats have been constructed in Labour City Regi Lalma, Peshawar, for industrial workers. Sanitation, water, and infrastructure upgrades have also been carried out in the Mardan Labour Colony, 6,500 kanals of land in Peshawar, 560 kanals in Swat, 377 kanals in Charsadda, and 8,300 kanals in Hangu were earmarked for housing development of labourers and general public.

In Nowshera's Jalozi housing scheme, 9,000 housing units are under construction, including 1,300 flats dedicated to labourers. Another 8,000 low-cost housing units are being developed in Surizai, Peshawar, as part of a joint venture between the PHA Foundation and KP government. Similar efforts are underway in Swat, where the Danigram Project includes special quotas for widows, people with disabilities, and media workers. PHA is also constructing high-rise residential buildings at Nishtarabad, Warsak-I and II, and Hayatabad, Peshawar, offering a combined total of 900 flats, many of which are reserved for the working class. A one window facilitation desk at Bacha Khan International Airport started providing assistance to overseas Pakistanis through representatives from 13 key departments, including NADRA, Immigration, and the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation. Additionally, under a new government initiative, children of overseas Pakistanis receive fee assistance for international universities, and housing schemes like the one at Budhni Road, Peshawar spanning 991 kanals offer affordable residential and commercial plots. The new labour policy includes a 400% increase in minimum wages, job regularization for temporary workers, and restoration of sacked employees, marking a significant shift toward greater labour welfare. As Pakistan marks Labour Day, it is a reminder that behind the nation's growth are millions of hands like Abad Khan's — hardworking, determined, and hopeful. The experts said recognizing their sacrifices must go beyond symbolic events and sustainable policies for their welfare access to quality education, healthcare, housing, and financial tools for their families are vital in building a truly equitable and progressive society.



In brief

World Labour Day observed F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Like elsewhere in the country, International Labour Day was observed in Landi Kotal on Thursday to acknowledge the valuable contribution of the labour class. In this connection a walk was organized that was attended by Tehsil Chairman Haji Shah Khalid, Additional Assistant Commissioner Shahabuddin, local political social figures, government officials and members of civil society. The participants took a walk from the entrance of Tehsil Compound to the main Landi Kotal Bazaar. Highlighting services of the labour class, Haji Shah Khalid and others said that the basic objective of observing the Day was to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the working class in addition to creating awareness about their rights and protecting them from exploitation. We owe national development because of the hard work and contribution of laborers, they opined. They maintained that through modern skills; the working class could meet the challenges and could more effectively participate in the progress of the country. They urged to uphold rights of the working class and place a favorable working environment for them.

Several rallies, ceremonies held Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: The district administration organized ceremonies and rallies across the district to highlight the rights of laborers and inform the public about the provincial government's labor-friendly policies, on Thursday. The central ceremony was held at the District Council Hall Nowshera, attended by the Assistant Commissioner Nowshera, labor department officials, representatives of labor unions, and civil society members. The speakers praised the workers' hard work, sacrifices, and key role in economic development. They emphasized the government's commitment to resolving workers' issues and implementing welfare measures. The ceremony shed light on workers' fundamental rights, labor laws, minimum wage, social security, and health and safety matters. A large number of people participated in awareness rallies held in the three tehsils, carrying banners and placards to express solidarity with workers. The district administration is utilizing all resources to protect workers' legitimate rights and promote their welfare. These efforts will continue in the future. The event aimed to promote workers' rights and raise awareness about the government's labor-friendly policies.

Traders to hold protest F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Traders have expressed grave concern over the slow pace of construction work on the road linking Timergara Jail to the vegetable market and main bazaar, warning that prolonged delays and rising dust pollution have made business operations nearly impossible. Speaking to the media, Noor Rehman Sagar, Information Secretary of Anjuman-e-Tajran Timergara, said that the road's dilapidated condition, combined with clouds of dust and mud, had severely impacted both traders and the general public. "Shops are filled with dust, perishable goods are getting spoiled, and both traders and customers are falling ill due to respiratory issues," he said, adding that the project's sluggish progress was causing daily hardship.



LANDI KOTAL: Tribesmen holding a banner during walk in connection with World Labour Day. — F.P. photo

Govt revolutionizing agriculture in KP

F.P. Report

MARDAN: The provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was taking steps to bring revolutionary changes in the agriculture sector so as to boost and increase crops production of the province. These views were expressed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Agriculture, Maj (R) Sajjad Barakwal, on the occasion of his visit to the Sugar Crops Research Institute (SCRI) Mardan here on Thursday. During the visit, the minister inspected ongoing crop yield experiments. Director SCRI, Dr. Muhammad Tahir briefed the minister on the experimental processes. Provincial minister Sajjad Barakwal directed the staff to take all necessary measures to improve the institute's performance. The minister was accompanied by Assistant Director (Planning), Nisar Muhammad and other officials.

Later on, the minister chaired a meeting at the institute's seminar hall and exchanged views with scientists on matters of public interest. He urged the scientists to make every possible effort to advance agriculture, particularly sugar crops.

The meeting also dis-

cussed solutions to seed-related challenges faced by local farmers. Agriculture Minister Sajjad Barakwal said that the province produces high-quality tobacco, and efforts are underway to bring its research and development under provincial control. He emphasized that sugarcane is a major cash crop for the province, playing a vital role in the livelihoods of farmers. In district Mardan, Charsadda, Peshawar, and D.I. Khan sugarcane is cultivated across 94,000 hectares.

The meeting was informed that SCRI Mardan is actively working on sugarcane research and development tailored to the province's climate. The institute aims to develop climate-resilient sugarcane varieties, improve yield, enhance plant protection technologies, and educate farmers about new varieties and production techniques through conventional and digital media platforms. The institute has introduced 23 sugarcane varieties, significantly boosting production and yield.

Notable varieties include Israr Shaheed SC, Abdul Qayyum 2017, Gul Rahman 2021 and Mardan 2021. These varieties are distributed annually based on the institute's available

resources. However, a comprehensive strategy is needed to expand the cultivation of higher-yielding varieties across the province.

Labor Day observed: Islam emphasizes the dignity of labor and considers workers as friends of Allah. There is a need to give workers their rightful place and provide them with social protection at every level. These views were expressed by the speakers at a ceremony held at Government Higher Secondary School Baghdada Mardan in connection with Labour Day, organized by the district administration, the education department, and the youth office.

The event was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Eid Nawaz, District Education Officer Muhammad Zahid, Deputy EDO (Female) Fauzia Azam, along with administrative officers, teachers, and students. The speakers said that the country has achieved development milestones due to the hard work of laborers, yet their current condition remains dismal. They demanded that the government prioritize the welfare of workers and further improve the system of their social protection.

AWKUM 30th Finance & Planning meeting held

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) Finance & Planning Committee 30th meeting held with one point agenda of reviewing the Revised Estimates for the CFY 2024-25 and Budget Estimates for FY 2025-26, on Thursday.

The meeting was attended by the Director Finance, Higher Education Commission, Ms Samina Durrani, Special Secretary to the Govt. of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Higher Education Department, Ghulam Saeed, Deputy Secretary to the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Department, Warda Latif, Dean Faculty of Physical & Numerical Sciences, Prof. Dr. Sher Afzal Khan, Dean Faculty of Chemical & Life Sciences, Prof. Dr. Saleemullah, Prof. Dr. Aurangzeb Khan, Prof. Dr. Anwar Hussain, Mr. Ibrar Hussain, Director P&D, Mr. Adil Khan, Mr. Hassan Khan, Registrar and Dr. Muhammad Faizan Malik, Treasurer.

The meeting was chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Zahir Shah. The meeting discussed the Revised Estimates for the CFY 2024-25 and Budget Estimates for the next FY 2025-26. The forum appreciated the University's efforts towards increasing revenue through its own source.

After detailed deliberation on grants from HEC and Provincial Government, revenue generated through own sources, establishment as well as non-establishment costs, the forum unanimously recommended the Revised Estimates for the CFY 2024-25 amounting to Rs. 2895 million and Budget Estimates for the next FY 2025-26 amounting to Rs. 3267 million.

One killed, two injured in road mishap

F.P. Report

KARAK: One killed, two injured in collision between two motorcycles in Nara Gadikhel area of Takhti Nusrati tehsil.

According to details, two motorcycle riders collided with each other in Nara Gadikhel yesterday, as a result of which a young man named Furqan died on the spot, while Arif and Salman, residents of Abbasi Gadikhel, were taken to a local hospital in critical condition. Karak police have registered an FIR and started an investigation.

Journalist attacked: The hooliganism at its peak, journalist attacked, valuables snatched. According to details, the hooliganism of the National Highway Authority (NHA) has reached its peak. Joint Secretary of Tehsil Press Club Takht-e-Nusrati and senior journalist Lal Siddiq was attacked by NHA officials and goons.

The incident occurred when journalist Lal Siddiq raised a question about the illegal toll plaza that a toll plaza cannot be established at a distance of less than 100 kilometers and that this is not a toll plaza but only a hooligan tax collector, for which he was tortured and his mobile phone, identity card and cash were snatched. Journalist organizations and local people strongly condemned the incident and demanded that the higher authorities take immediate notice and take legal action against those involved.

International Labour Day observed in Kohat

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Like rest of the country, Labor Day was observed with enthusiasm in Kohat. The main event organized by the District Administration and Sad-e-Kohat held at Bacha Khan Library in which Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram was the chief guest, on Thursday.

The ceremony was attended by the ADC (F&P) Aamir Ali Shah, President Sad-e-Haq Kohat Dilawar Awan, Chairman Karwan-e-Amal Saleem Altaf, district officers, civil society, presidents of markets, social workers, media representatives and workers from various sectors in large numbers. The other big ceremony was held in Tehsil Lachi in which MPA Daud Afridi was the chief guest and Tehsil Chairman Lachi Ehsan Khan was the guest of honor.

The purpose of holding these ceremonies was to acknowledge the services

of the workers and pay tributes to them. The speakers said that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Give the laborer his wages before his sweat dries." They said that our religion Islam was the first to teach the world about the respect of the laborer, timely wages, and social justice. Laborers are not just the individuals but the foundation of the entire economy. Labor Day is a day to pay tributes to those who work silently day and night to brighten our tomorrow.

Deputy Commissioner Abdul Akram in his address said that labor is not just a duty but the foundation of dreams, progress, and hope for a better tomorrow. He said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is taking serious steps to protect the rights of laborers and their welfare. The district administration, in collaboration with the Labor Department, is regularly organizing welfare schemes for laborers so that

they get better opportunities and their problems can be solved. He further said that this event has been organized to pay tribute to the working class and on this occasion the efforts of social organizations that are actively working for the betterment of the workers were also appreciated. The statement of Allah Almighty was also reminded: "He who earns halal is My beloved."

The workers earn halal sustenance for their families by enduring the intense heat and cold throughout the day, which is commendable. DC announced on the occasion that complaint boxes will be installed at different places in Kohat to hear the complaints of the workers so that they can easily reach the authorities. At the end of the event, checks worth Rs.2 lakh were also distributed among the workers, while clothes were distributed among the workers by Al-Khidmat Foundation.

Political activists join hand against law & order situation

F.P. Report

WANA: In the face of escalating violence and growing unrest, political parties in South Waziristan have set aside their differences to confront a shared concern: the deteriorating security situation in the region.

In a rare display of political unity, leaders and workers from all parties gathered in Wana Bazaar to strategize ahead of a planned peace procession. The multi-party meeting comes amid increasing public frustration over rising militancy, targeted killings, and law enforcement failures in the area.

Representatives from major political parties including the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Jamaat-e-Islami, Pashtunkhwa National Awami Party, Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM),

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), Awami National Party (ANP), Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PMAP), and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) attended the meeting in large numbers. The gathering aimed to unite efforts for the success of the peace march scheduled for tomorrow, seen as a public response to the region's deepening insecurity.

The participants reviewed the arrangements for the event and unanimously expressed satisfaction with the preparations. More significantly, a joint resolution was passed during the meeting, expressing grave concern over the collapse of law and order in Lower Waziristan and demanding that the current government take immediate and concrete action to restore peace.

Speakers at the gathering

criticized the role of security forces, stating that law enforcement agencies have failed to contain the surge in violence. They highlighted that citizens in Wana are living in constant fear due to unchecked militant activity and a lack of effective state intervention. "It is the constitutional duty of the state to protect its citizens," one party leader remarked. "But the people of Wana are left to fend for themselves while violence grows unchecked."

The meeting concluded with a strong appeal to the federal and provincial governments to implement long-term, strategic reforms.

These include strengthening local policing, dismantling armed groups, and investing in the region's socio-economic development to create a sustainable path to peace.

Labour contributions for development lauded

F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: The District administration in collaboration with the Department of Labour and Human Resource, organized a Labour Day rally on Thursday to mark 1st May as the recognition and contributions of workers.

The rally was supervised by Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Naeem Sindhu and led by Additional Deputy Commissioner General (ADCG) Zeeshan Labbha Masih. Assistant Director Labour Qamar Abbas and other officials

were also in attendance. The rally began at the Municipal Committee Office and concluded at Shabbaz Chowk. Participants included workers from various sectors, representatives of labour unions, business.

On the other hand, on the instruction of Chairman Punjab Sahulat Bazar Authority, Malik Muhammad Afzal Khokhar MNA, a rally was organized on Jhang Road, Toba Tek Singh on the occasion of May Day.

Addressing the participants of the rally, Manager

Sahulat Bazar Authority Mian Saqib Shahzad said that in recognition of the services of the workers, the Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz has taken all possible steps to provide them relief in all walks of life and the issuance of ration cards for the workers on the occasion of May Day which is a valuable step and unprecedented in the past. He claimed that a special 20 percent discount was given on food items in Sahulat Bazar, Toba Tek Singh on the occasion of May Day.

Rescue-1122 rescues 13,533 people in April

F.P. Report

FAISALABAD: The Punjab Emergency Service (Rescue-1122) rescued 13,533 people in Faisalabad during April 2025. Spokesman Zahid Lateef said here on Thursday that Rescue 1122 control room received 13,292 emergency calls during last one month and responded them same promptly within shortest span of time.

He said that rescue teams handled a wide range of incidents including 2,836 road traffic accidents, 8,778 medical emergencies, 309 fire incidents, 360

crime-related emergencies, 6 drowning cases, 7 building collapses, 2 cylinder explosions and 902 miscellaneous emergencies. The rescue teams also responded to 92 calls related to animals and birds and provided them life-saving assistance where needed.

However, he expressed concern over a significant increase in fires reported in wheat fields during April and said that more than 50 such incidents were recorded but firefighters managed to control the flames rapidly and saved hundreds of acres of wheat and other crops from destruction. He highlighted the

importance of preventive measures and warned that negligence could result in major losses to crops and livelihoods. The farmers were urged to contact Rescue 1122 emergency helpline immediately in case of fire, he added. He advised the farmers to avoid smoking near ready-to-harvest crops and ensure regular maintenance of agricultural machinery to prevent sparks in addition to following safety protocols strictly. The farmers could reduce fire risks and protect their crops, properties and incomes by taking these precautions, he added.

Rescue1122 responds to 402 emergencies in April

F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: Rescue 1122 Charsadda successfully responded to 402 emergencies over the last month under the leadership of District Emergency Officer, Muhammad Jawad Khalil.

According to a performance report issued here on

Thursday, the emergency service handled a diverse range of incidents, including 281 medical emergencies, 69 road traffic accidents, 09 cases of violence or gunshot wounds, 23 recovery emergencies, and 19 fire incidents.

During these operations, 263 patients received first medical aid and were shifted

to hospitals. The emergency service received 13,960 calls, of which 9,093 were deemed irrelevant or false. To promote community safety, Rescue 1122 Charsadda has conducted fire safety and lifesaving training sessions at various schools, colleges and universities in the district.

Nation stands shoulder to shoulder with Pak Army

F.P. Report

ATTOCK: District Information Secretary PML-N Attock, Dr. Mian Rashid Mushtaq, has said that prioritizing the state before politics is true wisdom. The way India is using hostile tactics against Pakistan must be collectively exposed before the world.

Just recently, the DG ISPR, in his press conference, presented evidence of

India's interference in Pakistan to the media, which is enough to open everyone's eyes. India has never been able to digest Pakistan's progress and is constantly engaged in hatching new conspiracies against the country. But just like always, this time too, it will face defeat. India is under the false impression that its contest is with the Pakistan Army, whereas, in reality, it is up against 250

million people who stand shoulder to shoulder with their army.

These people not only know how to sacrifice their lives for their country but also how to defend it fiercely. We have always prioritized peace, and the Pakistani nation is inherently peace-loving. However, those who mistake our desire for peace as weakness are living in a fool's paradise.

Pakistan origin British citizen visits MCCI

Fazal Haq

MARDAN: United Pakhtun Society England president Syed Safdar Ali Shah Bacha visited Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and discussed areas of mutual interests. On this occasion, Senior Vice President Mardan Chamber Nouman Faqir Saraf, President Mardan Women Chamber Aqeela Sumbal and others were present.

A group leader named Zahir Shah welcomed the guests to the second largest city of the province and to the chamber. Zahir Shah explained to the guests in detail about the establishment, objectives and func-

tioning of the chamber and said that Mardan Chamber has been providing services to traders and industrialists since its inception.

Due to its services, Mardan Chamber holds a unique position not only at the national but also at the international level, which is playing full role in promoting Mardan's businesses not only regionally, domestically but also in introducing it to Central Asian and European countries.

On this, United Pakhtun Society President Syed Safdar Ali Bacha thanked Mardan Chamber Group Leader Zahir Shah and explained the establishment, aims and objectives of the society. Zahir Shah

and the president of the society said that the business community has lack of trust which has a huge impact on business, for which we should work together to restore the atmosphere of trust and promote trade between the two countries.

He said that one-window operation for traders and industrialists is the need of the hour which would provide a conducive environment for foreign investment. Syed Safdar Ali Shah Bacha assured full cooperation to solve the problems faced by his society. At the end of the program the chamber shield was presented to the guest.



BEIRUT: Lebanese rescuers extinguishing fire at a site hit by Israeli strikes following evacuation orders in Lebanon.

China deploys army of fake NGOs at UN to intimidate critics

BEIJING (AFP): China is deploying a growing army of organisations masquerading as NGOs to monitor and intimidate rights activists at the UN, a new investigation by the ICIJ media consortium said.

Dubbed "China Targets", the fresh investigation involving 42 media organisations delves into the various tactics Beijing uses to silence critics beyond its borders. One segment of the probe published by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) deals with China's increasing offensive at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva. In particular, it focuses on the growing presence at the council of pro-China, government-organised non-governmental organisations, referred to as "Gongos".

Such groups crowd into council sessions to praise China and present glowing accounts of its actions that are largely at odds with UN and expert findings of widespread rights violations and repression. A bombshell report published by former UN rights chief Michelle Bachelet in 2022 for instance cited possible "crimes against humanity" against China's Uyghur minority in the western Xinjiang region. Other reports have highlighted the separation of Tibetan children from their families and the targeting of democracy activists in Hong Kong.

But when legitimate NGOs raise such issues at the council, Gongos often strive to disrupt the session and drown out their testimonies, the ICIJ

said. An ICIJ analysis of 106 NGOs from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan registered with the UN found that 59 had close links to the government in Beijing or the Chinese Communist Party. During a regular review of China's rights record before the council last year, attended by AFP, more than half of the NGOs granted a speaking slot were pro-government groups. "It's corrosive. It's dishonest," Michele Taylor, who served as US ambassador to the Human Rights Council from 2022 until January this year, was quoted as saying in the report. She decried a broader effort by Beijing "to obfuscate their own human rights violations and reshape the narrative".

Increasingly, the Beijing-controlled groups are also used to monitor and intimidate those planning to testify about alleged abuses, the investigation found. The ICIJ and its partners said they spoke with 15 activists and lawyers focused on rights issues in China who "described being surveilled or harassed by people suspected to be proxies for the Chinese government". Such incidents occurred both inside the UN and elsewhere in Geneva. The report highlighted how a group of Chinese activists and dissidents were so fearful of Beijing's swelling presence at the council that they in March last year refused to set foot inside the UN buildings. "Instead, they gathered for a secret meeting on the top floor of a nondescript office building nearby" with UN rights chief Volker Turk, the report said. But suddenly, four people

claiming to work with the Guangdong Human rights Association showed up asking about the meeting, to which they had not been invited.

Staff from the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) who were facilitating the meeting denied it was taking place. The four left, but later, when two Uyghur participants left the office for a smoke, they reported that someone in a black car with tinted windows photographed them before people matching the description of the Guangdong group got into the vehicle and it pulled away. Zumretay Arkin, vice president of the World Uyghur Congress, told ICIJ she believed the Guangdong group was sending a message from Beijing: "We're watching you... You can't escape us." The activists had reason to be fearful. Over a decade ago, activist Cao Shunli was detained as she attempted to travel to Geneva ahead of a China rights record review at the UN. After being held for several months without charge, she fell gravely ill and died on March 14, 2014. ICIJ said her death "stood out as a powerful warning shot", determining that the "deadly reprisal" had discouraged other activists from engaging with the UN.

A decade later, Chinese rights defenders are participating in UN activities at record low numbers, the investigation found. At the same time, the number of Chinese NGOs registered with the UN has nearly doubled since 2018, it said.

Migrants' dreams buried under rubble after deadly strike on Yemen center

SAADA (AFP): Africans in search of a better future became the latest casualties of Yemen's decade-long conflict after a deadly strike blamed on the United States hit a migrant detention center, killing dozens of people.

The pre-dawn attack killed more than 60 people in their sleep, the country's Houthi militants said, attributing the raid to the US military. Rubble, blood and body parts dotted the grounds of the compound in Houthi-held Saada, with several buildings left in ruins, twisted metal glittering in the sun.

In a nearby hospital, emaciated African men were recovering from their wounds after surviving the attack that tore their friends to pieces. "The planes struck close by twice. The third time they hit us," said Abed Ibrahim Saleh, 34, a soft-spoken Ethiopian whose head and leg were wrapped in white gauze.

"Dead bodies ripped

apart. I can't describe what I saw... A hand here, a leg there. I don't want to remember," he said with a blank stare. Since mid-March, Washington has conducted near-daily air strikes on the Iran-backed Houthis in a bid to stop their campaign of attacks on shipping in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, launched in solidarity with Palestinians after the outbreak of the Gaza war.

US strikes on the militants began under former president Joe Biden, but have resumed and intensified under his successor Donald Trump. Footage broadcast by the Houthis' Al-Masirah TV at the time of the attack showed bodies lying under the rubble as rescue teams searched for survivors.

The tragedy brought back memories of a March 2021 blaze at a Sanaa migrant center that killed 45 people and was sparked by teargas canisters fired by Houthi forces responding to

a protest. Each year, tens of thousands of migrants cross the Red Sea from the Horn of Africa, fleeing conflict, natural disasters and poor economic prospects.

Inspecting the wreckage, Ibrahim Abdul Qadir Mohammed Al-Moallem, a member of Yemen's Somali community, denounced the "heinous crime" against innocent people. "This brutal aggression that killed the sons of Palestine and the Yemeni people is now targeting poor migrants," he said, blaming the United States for the attack.

The Houthis, who have also repeatedly launched missiles and drones at Israel, paused their attacks during a recent two-month ceasefire in Gaza, but had threatened to resume them after Israel cut off aid to the territory over an impasse in negotiations. Before they could, however, the intensified US campaign resumed, hitting more than 1,000 targets in insurgent-held Yemen since March 15.

The Houthi's attacks since then have only targeted US warships. "There is no justification for this," Moallem said, calling on African leaders to take a stance and urging the international community to "break your silence."

Asked about the strike, a US defense official told AFP the army was aware of reports of civilian casualties "and we take those claims very seriously." "We are currently conducting our battle-damage assessment and inquiry into those claims," they said on condition of anonymity.

The United Nations expressed deep concern at Monday's strike, while Niku Jafamia of Human Rights Watch said US attacks "are appearing to kill and injure civilians in Yemen at an alarming rate over the past month." "Failing to take all feasible precautions to mitigate civilian harm constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law," HRW said.

China to lift sanctions on EU Parliament members

BRUSSELS (Reuters): China has decided to lift sanctions on four members of the European Parliament as well as on its subcommittee on human rights, a parliament official told Reuters.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said European Parliament President Roberta Metsola is expected to announce the change. The official initially said sanctions would be lifted for four current members and one former member but later said the decision applied only to four current members. China has grown keen to forge closer economic and political ties with Europe to limit the damage from tariffs on most of its exports to the United States.

The sanctions China is lifting, according to the official, were imposed in 2021 in response to Western measures against Chinese officials accused of the mass detentions of Muslim Uyghurs. In response to the Chinese sanctions on its members, the European Parliament halted the ratification of the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, which had aimed to put EU companies on an equal footing in China.

Asked about reports that Beijing would lift sanctions, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a news conference that "the economic and trade cooperation between China and Europe is complementary and mutually beneficial." "The legislative bodies of China and the EU are an important part of China-EU relations, and we hope that the two sides will meet each other halfway and strengthen exchanges," he said, adding that "members of the European Parliament are welcome to visit China more often."

US senator presses Trump on wrongly detained man

WASHINGTON (Reuters): El Salvador is only detaining an El Salvadoran man mistakenly deported from Maryland because the country is receiving US payments, US Senator Chris Van Hollen said in a letter to the White House. Van Hollen, a Democrat from Maryland, said his recent meeting with El Salvador's vice president shows President Donald Trump's failure to follow court orders.

In a separate statement, Van Hollen said Salvadoran Vice President Felix Ulloa told him this month that the Central American nation was holding Kilmar Abrego Garcia "solely because the United States is paying the country to do so." He said, "we have a deal with the US government. They send people. We host them. They pay. And that's it." The senator wrote in the letter to Trump, citing Ulloa.

Their conversation "clearly demonstrates that the government of El Salvador has no independent legal basis for imprisoning Mr. Abrego Garcia," Van Hollen added. "The only reason for keeping him in prison is that they entered into an agreement with your administration to be paid by the United States." Van Hollen, who says the case illustrates the risks to everyone's due process and constitutional rights, met with Garcia in El Salvador after the US Supreme Court told Trump's administration to "facilitate" Garcia's return to the US. Abrego Garcia, a 29-year-old Salvadoran migrant who was living in Maryland with a work permit, was detained by US immigration officers in March and questioned about alleged gang ties. His lawyers deny any gang affiliation, saying he left El Salvador aged 16 to escape gang-related violence and received a protective order in 2019 to continue living in the United States.

The White House has repeated the unproven accusation that Abrego Garcia is part of MS-13, which the administration has designated a foreign terrorist group. "They just keep digging themselves deeper," White House Deputy Press Secretary Kush Desai said of Van Hollen and fellow Democrats, who also visited El Salvador this month.

Kyiv says it is poised to sign minerals deal with US

KYIV (AFP, Reuters): Ukraine is poised to sign a much-anticipated minerals deal with the United States, Prime Minister Denys Shmygal has said, as both sides finalised details. The agreement would see Washington and Kyiv jointly develop Ukraine's mineral resources, an arrangement US President Donald Trump has called "money back" for the wartime aid it has received from the United States.

"This is truly a good, equal and beneficial international agreement on joint investments in the development and recovery of Ukraine," Shmygal said on national TV. "I hope that the agreement will be signed in the near future, within the next 24 hours, and we will take the first step," he added. There was no immediate comment from Washington.

Ukraine and the US had planned to sign the agreement weeks ago, but a fiery clash between Trump and Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the White House temporarily derailed talks. Al

Jazeera's Alan Fisher, reporting from the White House, said, "It seems there are still some details to work out. But the signing of that deal is expected within the next 24 hours".

Ukraine has been pushing for security guarantees as part of any deal to halt Russia's three-year invasion. The Trump administration has argued that boosting US business interests in Ukraine will help deter Russia from future aggression in the event of a ceasefire. It was not clear if the deal included any security guarantees for Ukraine.

The deal will not be linked to any "debts" for previous assistance Kyiv has received, and will create a "50/50" joint fund split between Kyiv and Washington, a senior source in the Ukrainian presidency said, as cited by the AFP news agency. "It ensures the equality of the parties. An investment fund will be created to invest in reconstruction. It is envisaged that there will be contributions from us and the United States," it

added.

When Washington provides new military aid, it will be counted as their contribution to the joint fund, the Reuters news agency reported, citing a draft of the agreement. However, the draft does not spell out how the joint fund's revenues will be spent, who benefits, or who controls decisions about the spending.

According to the draft, the United States, or other entities it designates, will get preferential – but not exclusive – access to new permits, licences and investment opportunities in the field of Ukrainian natural resources, according to the draft. Existing deals are not covered. Previous iterations of the deal during negotiations had said that it would include Ukrainian natural gas infrastructure, which is one of Ukraine's most valuable assets, sources with knowledge of the matter said earlier this month. Gas infrastructure was not covered by the draft cited by Reuters.

Trump admn withholding \$436.87b in spending

WASHINGTON (Reuters): US President Donald Trump's administration has so far withheld at least \$436.87 billion of congressionally approved funding, the top Democrats on the US Congress' appropriation committees said.

The frozen allotments span the federal government, according to the first estimate of the potential impoundments in the project led by Senator Patty Murray from Washington and Representative Rosa DeLauro from Connecticut. Almost \$42 billion was frozen or canceled for the State Department, including the frozen support for USAID, along with another \$62 billion-plus in competitive grant funding for the Transportation Department, according to the estimate.

The Democrats also detailed \$943 million frozen for the Head Start early-education program and more than \$10 billion in frozen and canceled funding for the Natural

Resources Conservation Service. "Just 100 days into office, President Trump and Elon Musk are continuing their unprecedented assault on our nation's spending laws, and it is families, small businesses, and communities in every part of the country who are paying the price," Murray and DeLauro said in a statement. "No American president has ever so flagrantly ignored our nation's spending laws or so brazenly denied the American people investments they are owed."

The White House and Musk did not immediately respond to requests for comment. These findings will be publicly posted in a tracker tallying the minimum the committees believe the administration is freezing or fighting in court to block, a committee aide said. The administration has cited Musk's Department of Government Efficiency and the undoing of the federal government's diversity, equity and inclu-

sion initiatives as reasons for blocking congressionally approved funding.

The administration's refusal to spend congressionally authorized funds amounts to a challenge of the US Constitution, which gives Congress oversight over spending, lawmakers said. Trump challenged this idea on the campaign trail, as does the current head Office of Management and Budget, Russ Vought. The US Supreme Court also twice reaffirmed the limits on presidents' power to unilaterally cut spending.

Congress in the 1974 Impoundment Control Act codified a legal process for the executive branch to tweak spending levels by proposing cuts, called a rescission, which could be approved with a simple majority vote. The administration has not submitted any rescission requests for Congress to codify, despite repeated requests from many congressional Republican lawmakers.

Mexico agrees to send water to US

MEXICO CITY (AFP): Mexico has agreed to immediately provide water to the United States to reduce shortfalls under a decades-old treaty at the center of a diplomatic spat, the two countries said. The pledge came after US President Donald Trump threatened more tariffs unless Mexico met its commitments, accusing the neighboring nation of "stealing" water from farmers in the southern state of Texas.

Trump accused Mexico of violating a 1944 pact under which the United States shares water from the Colorado River in exchange for flows from the Rio Grande, which forms part of the border between the two countries. Mexico agreed with the United States to immediately send water from the Rio Grande and make further transfers during the upcoming rainy season, according to its foreign ministry.

It underscored Mexico's "firm desire to continue fulfilling its commitments

under the 1944 treaty, which has been of great benefit to the development of the country's northern border." The US State Department welcomed the agreement, which it said would "help American farmers, ranchers, and municipalities in Texas' Rio Grande Valley get much-needed water and reduce shortfalls in deliveries" under the treaty. It thanked Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum for her "personal involvement" in facilitating a resolution to the dispute.

"The United States and Mexico also committed to develop a long-term plan to reliably meet treaty requirements while addressing outstanding water debts," it added. The current treaty cycle expires in October and Mexico owed the United States more than 1.55 billion cubic meters, according to the two countries' boundary and water commission. Washington said on March 20 that it had rejected a request by Mexico for special delivery of water for the first time

due to the shortfalls.

The row came against a backdrop of increased tensions between the two countries due to Trump's global trade war and demands for increased action from Mexico against undocumented migration and drug trafficking. The Colorado River has seen its water levels shrink due to drought and heavy agricultural consumption in the southwestern United States. US farmers and lawmakers complain that their southern neighbor has waited until the end of each cycle and has been coming up short in the latest period. The Mexican government says that the Rio Grande basin has suffered from two decades of drought that reached extreme levels in 2023. In 2020, farmers in the northern state of Chihuahua seized a dam to prevent the government from supplying water from a reservoir to the United States, leading to clashes between protesters and the National Guard that left one person dead.

Germany says it will step up military role in NATO

BRUSSELS (Reuters): NATO can count on Berlin to step up its contribution to the defence of Europe as the Atlantic alliance faces a future more uncertain than 70 years ago when Germany became a member, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said.

Speaking at a ceremony at NATO's Brussels headquarters to mark the anniversary, Steinmeier sought to reassure allies rattled by what he called epochal geopolitical

shifts. "Today, with (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's war against Ukraine raging on in full force, and with the United States putting fierce pressure on its European allies, Germany is in a crucial position," he said, addressing allies.

"We got the message, you can count on us ... We will strive to make Germany, both its military and its infrastructure, the backbone of conventional defence in Europe." In a major turn-

around for a country traditionally advocating strict fiscal discipline, Europe's largest economy has approved plans for a massive spending surge as Friedrich Merz prepares to take office as Germany's new conservative chancellor in May. The fiscal plan includes 500 billion euros (\$569 billion) for a special fund for infrastructure and plans to largely remove defence investment from the domestic rules that cap borrowing.

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

Canada votes Liberal in response to Trump's threats

THE Canadian parliamentary election on Sunday witnessed the return of Liberals to power in the face of the threat posed by United States President Donald Trump, who has been trumpeting his intention and desire to make Canada the 51st state of the United States. It would be difficult to label President Trump as a conservative because he does not display the restraint and realism that one associates with conservatism. He is on an adventurous spree, a dangerous kind of political adventure.

Till a few months ago, the Liberals were set to lose the election because they had been in power for 15 years, and former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau turned out to be a wimpy liberal unable to resist the pressures of rising divisive politics at home. And the economy was in a tail-spin of sorts.

Trudeau depended on Mark Carney, who served as the Governor of the Canadian central bank. He was earlier the Governor of the Bank of England. (It is to be noted that Canada is part of the British Commonwealth, and the British Crown appoints the Governor General of Canada.) When Trudeau had decided to step down as leader of the Liberal Party, Carney was his preferred choice. It turns out that Carney has been the right choice.

It is rarely the case that liberals can beat conservatives, either at home or abroad in the face of assertive and intrusive nationalism of the Trump kind. The Canadian Conservatives were in a better position to beat back the Trump threat. And the Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre struck the Trump note in his campaign when he raised the slogan of "Canada First" to counter Trump's Make America Great Again (MAGA).

But the Canadians who were put off by the uncouth populism of Trump had decided to vote for a tough liberal like Carney. The Canadians were not happy with a weak liberal like Trudeau, and it seemed that a weak liberal meant weak liberalism. But Carney's tough position on politics and free trade showed that people are looking for the right kind of liberal, and they were in no hurry to jettison liberalism per se.

Carney's strong post-election victory statement was predictably triumphant when he reasserted the liberal credo. He said, "Canada is ready to take a leadership role in building a coalition of like-minded countries who share our values. We believe in international cooperation. We believe in the free and open exchange of goods, services and ideas. And if the United States no longer wants to lead, Canada will."

Carney's statement can be described as euphoric, over-optimistic. But it is a necessary gesture. Trump and his supporters believe that if the United States were to flex its muscles, the other democratic and liberal countries would shiver and cower.

Carney had made it clear that there are other claimants to the leadership of the democratic, liberal world. Canada may be too small in terms of its economy and population to be able to lead the liberal democracies. But Carney's statement showed that if the United States vacates its liberal space, then there are others who are ready to step in. Surprisingly, Britain's Labour Party and Prime Minister Keir Starmer is sounding much too diffident to stand up to Trump's political arm-twisting.

Political observers are now looking to the Australian general election next week, and the Canadian poll result has given rise to the hope that the Labour Party will come back to power in Canberra. If the English-speaking democracies like Canada and Australia were to go the liberal way, then the Americans would have to reconsider their choice of Trump's populist politics.

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.



Blocking the narrative: Why India fears Pakistani voices?

Nabiha Nur

THE recent Pahalgam attack, which took the lives of 27 civilians in Indian-occupied Kashmir, has not only increased geopolitical tensions but also triggered an aggressive shift in India's information warfare.

From banning Pakistani media outlets to designing one-sided domestic coverage, the Indian government's response indicates that controlling public opinion has taken precedence over establishing facts. In response to this attack, the Indian government reacted with increased security protocols along with hard intervention designed to muzzle Pakistani media and online platforms. Indian authorities on April 28 blocked 16 Pakistani YouTube channels of its Ministry of Home Affairs. The channels included those of Dawn News, Samaa TV, ARY News, Geo News, Bol News, Suno News, Raftaar and other senior journalists.

In January 2022, 35 YouTubers from Pakistan were blocked on the same grounds, part of a trend towards increasing discomfort with cross-border views. These actions are usually framed as measures against misinformation, but also have the effect of shielding Indian audiences from critical viewpoints.

What adds to the controversy is the manner in which Indian media has portrayed the Pahalgam incident. Independent watchdogs have documented cases of recycled footage, AI-generated pho-

tos, and unverified reports being broadcasted on Indian TV for creating a particular narrative incriminating Pakistan.

India's instant media reporting and concerted stifling of opposing voices have bred suspicions. In the past, incidents such as the 2001 Indian Parliament attack and the 2019 Pulwama bombing have been questioned in terms of their timing and utilization to generate public opinion before elections for the legitimacy of their aggressive policies.

Likewise, while joining the dots of Pahalgam incident, one can clearly observe that the diplomatic tensions were already on the upswing and internal political pressure was mounting adding weight to the concerns. Furthermore, the recurring pattern of false flag narratives raises serious concerns about who actually stands to gain from such a tragedy.

This, however, aligns with the Indian state's failure to provide credible evidence connecting Pakistan to the incident, while also initiating a media blackout and inflaming nationalist sentiment.

Reports have also surfaced of unlawful demolitions and intensified surveillance, with the brunt of these actions falling on the Muslim community.

Beyond the digital realm, the impact of the narrative control has materialized violently on the ground. Credible instances of indiscriminate arrests, prolonged curfews, and

additional deployment of army personnel in urban areas have arrived from Jammu & Kashmir, all justified on the pretext of preserving "order."

Civil liberty organisations caution that the state is leveraging the attack as carte blanche for rights violations. The Pahalgam tragedy is being used not only against Pakistan but also against India's own Muslim citizens, as witnessed in the inciting language and retaliatory attacks in a number of northern Indian states.

Such systematic stifling of voices, ranging from international media to internal minorities, points towards a state machinery more intent on narrative manipulation than open governance. India risks reducing the public's capacity for critical involvement and turning its own citizens into passive consumers of state-controlled media by preventing them from accessing alternative reporting.

Under such circumstances, the Pahalgam episode has been one way or in another weaponized as a political tool to inflame communal divisions and consolidate support for majoritarian nationalism.

India's baseless accusations have been rejected by DG ISPR Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry in his press conference following the Pahalgam attack.

He provided evidence of Indian state-sponsored terrorism within Pakistan by revealing that Indian intelli-

gence agencies have been actively running a covert terror network, supplying explosives, IEDs (improvised explosive devices), and other lethal materials to militant operatives. This shows that by falsely involving Pakistan, Indian media's role has shifted from watchdog to amplifier of state propaganda.

This is now about ideological domination rather than security and in that pursuit, even a tragedy as grave as Pahalgam becomes an expendable pawn in the game of power.

Multimedia pluralism ought to be a fundamental component of any democracy, particularly one that claims to be world's largest.

Fighting false information is a valid problem, but it shouldn't be used as an excuse for censorship. The decision to silence Pakistani media in the aftermath of Pahalgam reflects not just geopolitical hostility, but a deep-seated fear of losing control over the national grip.

If India is confident in its narrative, it should not be threatened by the existence of others. The question must be asked: What is India afraid of? If the state is confident in its version of the Pahalgam incident, there should be no threat in allowing Pakistani media or even its own skeptical voices to present a different perspective.

The decision to suppress information reveals a strategic insecurity, one that fears internal questioning more than external criticism. A state that fears questions is one that likely has much to hide.

Pahalgam fallout and treaty strain

Alishba Rehman

TENSIONS between Pakistan and India have flared up again and this time, the situation looks particularly volatile. The already fragile relationship between the two nuclear-armed neighbors took a dangerous turn on April 22, 2025, when a horrific incident in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, left 26 tourists dead after unknown assailants opened fire. Without waiting for a proper investigation, India pointed fingers at Pakistan, alleging the attackers were linked to The Resistance Front (TRF), a pro-Kashmir secessionist group. However, no concrete evidence has been presented to support this claim. This hasty accusation has only inflamed tensions and led to serious diplomatic and legal fallout.

In response to the attack, India took the dramatic step of unilaterally withdrawing from the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 a longstanding agreement seen as a symbol of cooperation between the two countries. Pakistan quickly condemned the move. Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif denounced

Water has always been a critical issue for Pakistan a matter of national security. Any attempt by India to restrict or redirect water flow from shared rivers is considered a red line. While India currently lacks the infrastructure to withhold such volumes of water it doesn't have the reservoirs needed any attempt to build them would be viewed as a provocative act that could push the two countries closer to open conflict. With both nations possessing nuclear weapons, the consequences of such escalation are too severe to ignore. What's equally disturbing is how the incident has been used to malign Pakistan on the global stage. India has framed it as yet another example of Pakistan's alleged ties to terrorism again, without presenting proof. While Pakistan continues to call for calm and legal due process, India, as a nuclear power and influential regional player, is behaving irresponsibly. The incident has even stirred unrest within India itself, where Kashmiris reportedly face growing harassment and discrimination. From a legal standpoint, India's unilateral withdrawal from the Indus Waters Treaty doesn't just risk political repercussions it's also a violation of international law.

India's claims and called for a "neutral and transparent investigation," labeling the accusations as yet another baseless blame game. The attack has been described as a possible false flag operation by the Pakistani side. Pakistan then closed its airspace to Indian aircraft in retaliation, further escalating an already dangerous situation.

Water has always been a critical issue for Pakistan a matter of national security. Any attempt by India to restrict or redirect water flow from shared rivers is considered a red line. While India currently lacks the infrastructure to withhold such volumes of water it doesn't have the reservoirs needed any attempt to build them would be viewed as a provocative act that could push the two countries closer to open conflict. With both nations possessing nuclear weapons, the consequences of such escalation are too severe to ignore.

What's equally disturbing is how the incident has been used to malign Pakistan on the global stage. India has framed it as yet another example of Pakistan's alleged ties to terrorism again, without presenting proof.

While Pakistan continues to call for calm and legal due process, India, as a nuclear power and influential regional player, is behaving irresponsibly. The incident has even stirred unrest within India itself, where Kashmiris reportedly face growing harassment and discrimination.

From a legal standpoint, India's unilateral withdrawal from the Indus Waters Treaty doesn't just risk political repercussions it's also a violation of international law. Under the well-established riparian doctrine, downstream states like Pakistan are entitled to uninterrupted water flow, and upstream states such as India are forbidden from disrupting it unilaterally. India's decision violates this fundamental principle, which forms the backbone of water-sharing norms around the world.

From a legal standpoint, India's unilateral withdrawal from the Indus Waters Treaty doesn't just risk political repercussions it's also a violation of international law. Under the well-established riparian doctrine, downstream states like Pakistan are entitled to uninterrupted water flow, and upstream states such as India are for-

bidden from disrupting it unilaterally. India's decision violates this fundamental principle, which forms the backbone of water-sharing norms around the world.

Additionally, the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969) strengthens Pakistan's argument. Article 26 requires that all treaties be honored in good faith. Article 42 makes it clear that no party can walk away from a treaty unless the treaty itself permits it or both parties agree. India appears to have ignored these requirements altogether.

In fact, the Indus Waters Treaty itself includes built-in mechanisms to handle disputes. Article 9 calls for consultation and arbitration, while Articles 11 and 12 state clearly that the treaty can't be revoked unilaterally. Article XII (4) also requires at least 12 months' notice before any suspension can take place, a step India skipped entirely. In other words, its actions are not just provocative; they're unlawful by the very standards both nations agreed to.

This latest move also casts doubt on the future of other agreements, like the

Simla Accord. That agreement emphasized resolving Kashmir and other bilateral issues peacefully and established the Line of Control as a working boundary. If India can unilaterally scrap one treaty, how can Pakistan trust that any agreement will be honored moving forward? This undermines decades of diplomacy and could force Pakistan to seek redress through international forums.

What's even more frustrating is the international community's apparent double standard. Pakistan is often criticized, sanctioned, and placed on watch lists for alleged ties to terrorism, but India's actions rarely face the same scrutiny. There is growing evidence of Indian support for anti-Pakistan groups like the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which have carried out attacks inside Pakistan. If Pakistan is held accountable, shouldn't India be as well?

The threat of war isn't theoretical. We've seen how quickly things escalated after the Pulwama attack and the Balakot air strikes. That crisis showed us that while nuclear weapons might prevent full-scale war, they don't stop smaller, more frequent clashes, what's known as the "stability-instability paradox." Back then, Pakistan de-escalated the situation by returning an Indian pilot. The question now is: will India show the same level of restraint?

So far, the signs are not encouraging. India's response has been rash, not measured. If this situation continues to spiral, and the global community doesn't intervene, the risk of war is very real. And should conflict break out, the blame won't be equally shared. It will lie with those who escalated matters and disregarded international norms.

Finally, this crisis exposes a broader failure the declining strength of international institutions meant to uphold justice and peace. If powerful countries can violate laws without consequence, then what purpose do those laws serve? We've already seen this erosion of accountability in conflicts like Gaza.

Now, it's happening again in South Asia. If justice only applies to the weak and never to the strong, then the very foundation of international order is at risk.

Trump’s bubble of economic unreality is coming close to bursting

IN the space of a few hours, Donald Trump went from hailing America’s new “golden age” to warning parents their kids would have fewer toys — and they’d cost more.

The president’s dizzying switch this week epitomized the hype surrounding his “Make America wealthy again” promise and the pain it might take to get there.

Trump’s note of pessimism in a Cabinet meeting was a rare admission that his China trade war will mean fewer goods at higher prices and a dose of truth on a day when reality several times threatened to pierce the White House bubble.

It came as the president on Wednesday fought to dispel bad vibes following official data showing the economy contracted in the first quarter by 0.3% — the first big step-back measure of Trump’s impact on US growth.

The Commerce Department report doesn’t mean the country is tumbling headlong into an immediate crisis. Some of the underlying figures were more encouraging than the GDP dip. Such reports are often amended upward as more data is processed. And although the US economy has been extraordinarily resilient, it’s normal to see cycles of growth and decline in a capitalist nation.

The report is more important for its political and symbolic effect than for its snapshot of a slowing economy. Trump cannot afford for its flashing red lights to become conventional wisdom.

To start with, the data rained on a White House flattery offensive billing Trump’s first 100 days as the greatest-ever burst of presidential action. And it pointed to a growing political vulnerability. While much of Trump’s support derives from his tough border policies, the idea that he’s a master businessman who knows how to steer the economy is key to his mystique. If that is stripped away, his political foundation becomes weaker.

Second, the GDP report played into a growing sense that bleak economic days are ahead and that this is just the start. Trump cannot allow such an impression to take hold. Apart from its impact on his personal standing, panic among GOP lawmakers could rock the fragile unity of the House — which Trump needs to pass his “big, beautiful” tax and budget plans.

More importantly, amid signs that consumers are already pulling back, evidence that rough times are ahead could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. History shows that a country can talk itself

into a recession.

The world is watching, too. If Trump’s sliding approval ratings create any impression of political weakness, it could undermine his negotiating position as he seeks to close trade deals with dozens of countries seeking to avoid his tariffs. If foreign leaders think he’s desperate, why would they put good offers on the table?

As usual, Trump’s reaction tells the story.

After the release of the GDP report, Trump published a panicky Truth Social post saying, “This is Biden’s Stock Market not Trump’s.” He added, “This will take a while, has NOTHING TO DO

.....
To start with, the data rained on a White House flattery offensive billing Trump’s first 100 days as the greatest-ever burst of presidential action. And it pointed to a growing political vulnerability. While much of Trump’s support derives from his tough border policies, the idea that he’s a master businessman who knows how to steer the economy is key to his mystique. If that is stripped away, his political foundation becomes weaker. Second, the GDP report played into a growing sense that bleak economic days are ahead and that this is just the start. Trump cannot allow such an impression to take hold. Apart from its impact on his personal standing, panic among GOP lawmakers could rock the fragile unity of the House — which Trump needs to pass his “big, beautiful” tax and budget plans. More importantly, amid signs that consumers are already pulling back, evidence that rough times are ahead could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. History shows that a country can talk itself into a recession. The world is watching, too. If Trump’s sliding approval ratings create any impression of political weakness, it could undermine his negotiating position as he seeks to close trade deals with dozens of countries seeking to avoid his tariffs. If foreign leaders think he’s desperate, why would they put good offers on the table? As usual, Trump’s reaction tells the story. After the release of the GDP report, Trump published a panicky Truth Social post saying, “This is Biden’s Stock Market not Trump’s.” He added, “This will take a while, has NOTHING TO DO WITH TARIFFS.” All day, the president slammed his predecessor to offset blame for the economic numbers. Later, he looked to future data. “This is Biden, and you could even say the next quarter is sort of Biden because it doesn’t just happen on a daily or an hourly basis,” Trump said. Every administration blames its predecessor for grisly economic news — it’s fair game in politics. And it’s true that it takes time for an administration to establish its own economic policies and see the results.
.....

WITH TARIFFS.” All day, the president slammed his predecessor to offset blame for the economic numbers. Later, he looked to future data. “This is Biden, and you could even say the next quarter is sort of Biden because it doesn’t just happen on a daily or an hourly basis,” Trump said.

Every administration blames its predecessor for grisly economic news — it’s fair game in politics. And it’s true that it takes time for an administration to establish its own economic policies and see the results. Trump is undoubtedly responding to a real economic problem — the gutting of many communities in industrialized parts of America as the result of globalization.

But his claim that disappointing economic indicators are the fault of his predecessor would have more credibility had he not initiated the most disruptive assault on the global economic and trading system since World War II with little planning, questionable metrics and trademark chaos.

The day that Trump stood up in the White House Rose Garden with his scoreboard showing each nation’s tariff rate, he took ownership of the economy. Many of the shocks and uncertainties that are weighing on investors and consumers can be traced directly back to “Liberation Day.”

Millions of Americans,

Stephen Collinson

meanwhile, have seen the impact on their 401 (k) pension plans. These have been especially scary months for those who have just retired or plan to do so soon.

And one important reason why Trump won the 2024 election is that voters judged him to have more credible answers on reducing the costs of living, such as groceries. Despite the president’s attempts to obscure the truth, he’s done little to mitigate those prices, which have a huge impact on the lives of those who — unlike most of his Cabinet members — are

.....

.....
To start with, the data rained on a White House flattery offensive billing Trump’s first 100 days as the greatest-ever burst of presidential action. And it pointed to a growing political vulnerability. While much of Trump’s support derives from his tough border policies, the idea that he’s a master businessman who knows how to steer the economy is key to his mystique. If that is stripped away, his political foundation becomes weaker. Second, the GDP report played into a growing sense that bleak economic days are ahead and that this is just the start. Trump cannot allow such an impression to take hold. Apart from its impact on his personal standing, panic among GOP lawmakers could rock the fragile unity of the House — which Trump needs to pass his “big, beautiful” tax and budget plans. More importantly, amid signs that consumers are already pulling back, evidence that rough times are ahead could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. History shows that a country can talk itself into a recession. The world is watching, too. If Trump’s sliding approval ratings create any impression of political weakness, it could undermine his negotiating position as he seeks to close trade deals with dozens of countries seeking to avoid his tariffs. If foreign leaders think he’s desperate, why would they put good offers on the table? As usual, Trump’s reaction tells the story. After the release of the GDP report, Trump published a panicky Truth Social post saying, “This is Biden’s Stock Market not Trump’s.” He added, “This will take a while, has NOTHING TO DO WITH TARIFFS.” All day, the president slammed his predecessor to offset blame for the economic numbers. Later, he looked to future data. “This is Biden, and you could even say the next quarter is sort of Biden because it doesn’t just happen on a daily or an hourly basis,” Trump said. Every administration blames its predecessor for grisly economic news — it’s fair game in politics. And it’s true that it takes time for an administration to establish its own economic policies and see the results.
.....

not millionaires or billionaires.

Public perceptions have also been shaped by an avalanche of evidence that the economy is headed south.

“This has probably been the least successful first 100 days of a presidency on the economy in history, in the last century,” former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers told CNN’s Kate Bolduan. “We’ve seen the stock market go down by as much as ever. We’ve seen the dollar go down more than ever. We’ve seen forecasts of unemployment go up. Forecasts of inflation go up. Forecasts of the odds of recession go up. We’ve seen consumer confidence collapse. We’ve seen businesses take back all their previous earnings projection.”

Top administration figures dismissed such a downbeat prognosis.

“This was the best negative print, as they say in the trade, for GDP I have ever seen in my life. It really should be very positive news for America,” Trump’s trade adviser Peter Navarro told reporters. Trump, meanwhile, claimed credit for a spike in investment in the report — raising the question of why that indicator was down to him while more negative figures were attributable to Biden.

Other officials argued the Commerce Department numbers were influenced by a sudden tsunami of imports that suppressed the

growth calculation.

This, they said, gave a false reading of the economy’s health. But the import surge came as companies stockpiled products in the expectation that Trump’s tariffs would shut down trade. It is therefore more an indicator of coming economic problems than a marker of current strength.

The dueling mix of rhetoric and data coming out of the administration on Wednesday suggests the White House has a growing problem that will go a long way to dictating the shape of Trump’s second term.

Having launched the US and the world into the

.....

.....
To start with, the data rained on a White House flattery offensive billing Trump’s first 100 days as the greatest-ever burst of presidential action. And it pointed to a growing political vulnerability. While much of Trump’s support derives from his tough border policies, the idea that he’s a master businessman who knows how to steer the economy is key to his mystique. If that is stripped away, his political foundation becomes weaker. Second, the GDP report played into a growing sense that bleak economic days are ahead and that this is just the start. Trump cannot allow such an impression to take hold. Apart from its impact on his personal standing, panic among GOP lawmakers could rock the fragile unity of the House — which Trump needs to pass his “big, beautiful” tax and budget plans. More importantly, amid signs that consumers are already pulling back, evidence that rough times are ahead could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. History shows that a country can talk itself into a recession. The world is watching, too. If Trump’s sliding approval ratings create any impression of political weakness, it could undermine his negotiating position as he seeks to close trade deals with dozens of countries seeking to avoid his tariffs. If foreign leaders think he’s desperate, why would they put good offers on the table? As usual, Trump’s reaction tells the story. After the release of the GDP report, Trump published a panicky Truth Social post saying, “This is Biden’s Stock Market not Trump’s.” He added, “This will take a while, has NOTHING TO DO WITH TARIFFS.” All day, the president slammed his predecessor to offset blame for the economic numbers. Later, he looked to future data. “This is Biden, and you could even say the next quarter is sort of Biden because it doesn’t just happen on a daily or an hourly basis,” Trump said. Every administration blames its predecessor for grisly economic news — it’s fair game in politics. And it’s true that it takes time for an administration to establish its own economic policies and see the results.
.....

economic unknown — on his own gut calls — Trump’s path to a successful outcome is looking opaque.

That’s why his comment on the cost of toys was so revealing.

The president was referring to the potential impact of his showdown with China — the most important front in the trade war.

With Chinese President Xi Jinping still refusing to bend to the president’s 145% tariff, the president has been insisting for days that he and his administration have been involved in intense talks with Beijing, despite no public evidence this is the case. US-based observers don’t usually believe China’s communist government over statements from Washington. But this administration’s record of propaganda and falsehoods means that it’s not getting much benefit of the doubt these days.

The president, describing China as the “chief ripper-off” of US factories and workers, boasted that his action had caused cargo ships laden with goods for the US market to turn around and head back to port. He curiously painted all this as a good thing.

“You know, somebody said, ‘Oh, the shelves are going to be open,’”

Trump said. “Well, maybe the children will have two dolls instead of 30 dolls, you know? And maybe the two dolls will cost a couple of bucks

more than they would normally.”

The remark may have been flippant, but it was revealing nonetheless, and pointed to a looming trap for the president.

There is a solid argument that the United States has let itself become too reliant on cheap consumer goods from China and that, for the overall health of the nation, it would be better to have a more balanced economy.

But it’s a discordant political argument for a billionaire president who moves in an orbit of wealthy CEOs and members of his Mar-a-Lago club to tell working parents that they will be able to afford fewer toys for their children.

And this goes far beyond dolls.

While the trans-Pacific pipeline of goods from China has hurt US domestic manufacturing, it has raised living standards for millions of Americans.

Almost everyone has benefited from cheaper school supplies, clothes and consumer electronics like flat-screen TVs. Every parent knows how quickly kids grow out of their shoes. Most of that footwear comes from China.

If that suddenly goes away, there’s going to be real pain.

This was one of the only times he’s leveled with the Americans about the probable cost of his trade clash with Beijing.

But the White House is still trying to keep reality at bay. On Tuesday, Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt accused Amazon of a “hostile and political” act following a since-denied report it planned to itemize the true cost of tariffs to shoppers on its websites. And much of Trump’s day Wednesday was taken up by events featuring Cabinet members and friendly business figures lavishing him with praise.

“President, your first 100 days has far exceeded that of any other presidency in this country ever, ever. Never seen anything like it. Thank you,” said Attorney General Pam Bondi during the pageant of sycophancy at the Cabinet meeting.

It was not the first time recently that the White House communications effort has seemed more geared to boosting the president’s morale than that of the country.

Some of this is comical. But it suggests that a president who has set the economy and the world on a perilous course is not getting genuine advice about the consequences.

So the gap between reality and Trump’s world will only grow, and will undermine statements like the one he made in Michigan on Tuesday night.

“Our Golden Age has only just begun.”

— CNN

Europe’s mobilization struggles prime for exploitation

JOSEPH Stalin is rumored to have once asked, “How many divisions does the pope have?” The story goes that the Soviet leader said it during the 1943 Tehran Conference, a turning point in the Second World War. Others attribute it to a different time and place. Nevertheless, it is a statement that carries an undeniable truth about the importance of military might and how Moscow analyses military situations.

The rhetorical question was meant to denigrate anything that is not real power symbolized by armies. There is nothing that can be gained on the front line without material power. In short, military strength is the ultimate determinant during wars and, hence, in the balance of international relations.

.....
The shortfall is attributed to understaffed and underfunded European armies. London, which was pushing for this initiative, has reportedly scaled back its plan to deploy a large number of troops due to high risks and inadequate forces, opting instead to offer limited training missions in western Ukraine, such as near Lviv. Europe’s struggle to mobilize troops reveals a weakness that will undoubtedly have a direct consequence on Europe’s capacity to shape the geopolitical outcome of the war. This incapacity to align sufficient military resources with the ongoing discussions about supporting a peace deal in Ukraine makes the future of Europe fragile, not only at its borders but also from within. This situation destroys any deterrence capacity. The harsh reality of the current situation in Ukraine reinforces that hard power is ultimately the only thing that matters. In comparison, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies’ 2024 “Military Balance” report, Russia has about 1.1 million active troops, including 500,000 in the army, along with 1.5 million reservists. This is despite the heavy losses it has suffered in Ukraine. As of late 2024, 95,000 to 165,000 Russian soldiers had been killed and up to 700,000 injured. Desertions exceed 50,000, reflecting low morale in a force that is still large but is less robust than its Soviet predecessor. During the Second World War, the Soviet Union lost at least 8.8 million military personnel and suffered 15 to 17 million civilian deaths. There is no doubt that, if it were not for the Eastern Front and these deaths, the war in Europe would have lasted much longer. Now, there is no doubt that even Russia cannot sustain such losses alone and the presence of North Korean soldiers on the front line in Ukraine underlines this. Yet, Moscow’s numbers and, more importantly, its willingness and capacity for sacrifice are still much higher than Europe’s.
.....

A similar question could be asked today: “How many divisions does Europe have?”

It is clear that Europe finds itself facing a tricky dilemma. As the old continent contemplates sending troops to stabilize Ukraine, the question of military capability remains central. According to a report in The Times this week, European nations that are part of the “coalition of the willing” are struggling to assemble even a proposed 25,000-strong military force for a potential peacekeeping or deterrence mission in Ukraine, far short of an initially suggested target of 64,000 troops.

The shortfall is attributed to understaffed and underfunded European armies. London, which was pushing for this initiative, has reportedly scaled back its plan to deploy a large number of troops due to high risks and inadequate forces, opting instead to offer limited training missions in western Ukraine, such as near Lviv.

Europe’s struggle to mobilize troops reveals a weakness that will undoubtedly have a direct consequence on Europe’s capacity to shape the geopolitical outcome of the war. This incapacity to align sufficient military resources with the ongoing discussions about supporting a peace deal in Ukraine makes the future of

Khaled About Zahr

Europe fragile, not only at its borders but also from within. This situation destroys any deterrence capacity.

The harsh reality of the current situation in Ukraine reinforces that hard power is ultimately the only thing that matters.

In comparison, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies’ 2024 “Military Balance” report, Russia has about 1.1 million active troops, including 500,000 in the army, along with 1.5 million reservists. This is despite the heavy losses it has suffered in Ukraine. As of late 2024, 95,000 to 165,000 Russian soldiers had been killed and up to 700,000 injured. Desertions exceed 50,000, reflecting low morale in a force that is still large but is less

robust than its Soviet predecessor.

.....
The shortfall is attributed to understaffed and underfunded European armies. London, which was pushing for this initiative, has reportedly scaled back its plan to deploy a large number of troops due to high risks and inadequate forces, opting instead to offer limited training missions in western Ukraine, such as near Lviv. Europe’s struggle to mobilize troops reveals a weakness that will undoubtedly have a direct consequence on Europe’s capacity to shape the geopolitical outcome of the war. This incapacity to align sufficient military resources with the ongoing discussions about supporting a peace deal in Ukraine makes the future of Europe fragile, not only at its borders but also from within. This situation destroys any deterrence capacity. The harsh reality of the current situation in Ukraine reinforces that hard power is ultimately the only thing that matters. In comparison, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies’ 2024 “Military Balance” report, Russia has about 1.1 million active troops, including 500,000 in the army, along with 1.5 million reservists. This is despite the heavy losses it has suffered in Ukraine. As of late 2024, 95,000 to 165,000 Russian soldiers had been killed and up to 700,000 injured. Desertions exceed 50,000, reflecting low morale in a force that is still large but is less robust than its Soviet predecessor. During the Second World War, the Soviet Union lost at least 8.8 million military personnel and suffered 15 to 17 million civilian deaths. There is no doubt that, if it were not for the Eastern Front and these deaths, the war in Europe would have lasted much longer. Now, there is no doubt that even Russia cannot sustain such losses alone and the presence of North Korean soldiers on the front line in Ukraine underlines this. Yet, Moscow’s numbers and, more importantly, its willingness and capacity for sacrifice are still much higher than Europe’s.
.....

smaller armed forces.

This is why any decisions that might cause an escalation of the conflict must be carefully considered at this stage. Understanding this reality must ensure a pragmatic and street-smart approach. If Europe cannot mobilize the troops needed for peacekeeping or even agree on the principle, then this is not a deterrence but an invitation. It will need to rebuild this deterrence as soon as possible; this not only applies to troop numbers, but also industrial capacity.

Moreover, this also means that if Europe cannot implement the steps following a ceasefire agreement, it will have even less influence on the outcome of the negotiations. Ukraine demands a complete Russian military withdrawal and the restoration of its 1991 borders, including Crimea, while Moscow insists on recognition of its control over these territories. Ukraine is paying in kind for its position and is showing its will. So, the equation for Europe is simple, either accept what the facts on the ground say or increase its military involvement. In this case, Europe will not only have to boost its divisions, but also its will to sacrifice. This underlines the absolute necessity for a negotiated breakthrough as soon as possible.

At a time when Europe is looking to build up its deterrence without the US, this is a weak signal

This May Day, workers unite to make big polluters pay for climate damage

AS extreme weather events become the new normal, informal workers across South Asia are bearing the growing brunt of intersecting crises. Labour rights violations and poor social protections are worsening under the climate crisis. In India, amid the ongoing heatwave, we may have come to a boiling point as street vendors, waste pickers, and other informal workers rise in defiance, coming together in solidarity.

Their demands for compensation for losses and other damages are aimed squarely at the coal, oil and gas corporations. In 2023 alone, climate disasters prompted by oil and gas corporations have affected more than 9 million people in Asia, while Big Oil continues to block climate action and spread disinformation, amassing immense wealth.

This International Workers’ Day, a new

coalition is forming in Delhi. Informal workers, trade unionists and climate justice campaigners like Greenpeace India, supported by counterparts in Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh, have launched the Workers’ Collective for Climate Justice — South Asia. Along with the Collective, groups have signed the Polluters Pay Pact, a global campaign to hold billionaires and polluting corporations accountable for the climate crisis, by demanding that the governments introduce new taxes on fossil fuel corporations to help communities rebuild from climate disasters and invest in inclusive adaptation solutions.

Informal workers in South Asia are no strangers to crises. They have been on the front lines of social marginalisation, and increasingly, the effects of climate change. South Asia, with more than 80 percent of

its labour force in the informal sector, is seeing rising temperatures and erratic weather events that are drastically affecting people’s ability to work and survive.

In 2024, Greenpeace India documented how street vendors face financial loss and health risks during peak summer months, with vendors in cities like Delhi reporting more than a 50% decline in income due to heat waves. Yet, workers remain largely absent in policymaking. While just five oil majors earned more than \$102bn in 2024, informal workers are left to bear the brunt of the crisis.

From the struggles of jute mill workers in Bengal to the tea plantation workers’ resistance across the region — labour organising has secured fundamental rights and labour protection for millions. They were never just about wages, but about dignity, recognition, and power.

Amruta S Nair and Sandeep Verma

Today, that legacy is more important than ever. The climate crisis is fun-

.....
From the struggles of jute mill workers in Bengal to the tea plantation workers’ resistance across the region — labour organising has secured fundamental rights and labour protection for millions. They were never just about wages, but about dignity, recognition, and power. Today, that legacy is more important than ever. The climate crisis is fundamentally altering the nature of life and work. These effects are set to worsen under a carbon-intensive scenario, with projections of more than 800 million South Asians living in locations that will become climate hotspots by 2050. In a strong response, workers are reclaiming the power of collectivising. When workers unite across sectors, castes, genders, religions and ethnicities, they challenge systems of both exploitation and environmental degradation. This movement refuses to flatten their diverse experiences into a single narrative. By connecting the strength of past labour struggles with the urgency of the climate crisis, this collective is not merely reacting, it’s forging a new path forward. Communities on the front lines of climate effects such as fisherfolk and waste pickers are agents of knowledge and lived experience. They witness real-time ecological changes, gaining an understanding of the risks to their livelihoods that policy briefs are often too slow to capture. Yet, both domestic and global climate policy spaces continue to remain distant, dominated by elite institutions and exclusionary technocratic jargon.
.....

damentally altering the nature of life and work. These effects are set to worsen under a carbon-intensive scenario, with projections of more than 800 million South Asians living in locations that will become climate hotspots by 2050.

In a strong response, workers are reclaiming the power of collectivising. When workers unite across sectors, castes, genders, religions and ethnicities, they challenge systems of both exploitation and environmental degradation. This movement refuses to flatten their diverse experiences into a single narrative.

By connecting the strength of past labour struggles with the urgency of the climate crisis, this collective is

not merely reacting, it’s forging a new path forward.

Communities on the front lines of climate effects such as fisherfolk and waste pickers are agents of knowledge and lived experience. They witness real-time ecolog-

ical changes, gaining an understanding of the risks to their livelihoods that policy briefs are often too slow to capture. Yet, both domestic and global climate policy spaces continue to remain distant, dominated by elite institutions and exclusionary technocratic jargon.

Further, it is well established that in the Global South, non-economic losses such as the loss of culture and community far exceed economic ones. Addressing these losses requires the meaningful involvement of affected communities. Particular attention must be paid to ensuring that Loss and Damage financing is equitable and just, without deepening the existing debt burden or imposing unfair conditions on the very countries already bearing the brunt of the crisis.

Loss and damage from climate change in South Asia are already running into the billions of dollars annually. By 2070, this number could jump to \$997bn. Despite the promises made at UN Climate Change Conferences, climate finance has been sluggish, fragmented, and insufficient. Wealthy nations and polluters have under-delivered while continuing to drill for new oil and gas.

The adaptation needs of workers must be met now. They urgently require shade and paid breaks for livelihood and survival. While global climate finance talks stall, adaptation costs and urgency are mounting. This is why the Polluters Pay Pact is so vital. It’s not just a gesture — it demands enforceable commitments. As workers gather in Delhi this May Day, they send a clear message: A just, sustainable future must be led by the working class. By holding oil and gas corporations accountable, climate resilience becomes a right — not a privilege.



Minister vows to ensure dignified livelihoods

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday reaffirmed the government's commitment to building a nation where workers were ensured dignified employment, fair wages, safe working conditions, access to essential health and education facilities.

"We aim to establish a society and economy where everyone has equal opportunities for advancement, and no one is left behind due to their social or finan-

cial background," Ahsan Iqbal said in a special message on International Labour Day.

The minister said the foundation of a strong, self-reliant and developed Pakistan rested on the tireless efforts of labourers, farmers and skilled professionals. "This day is an opportunity to renew our commitment to upholding the rights, dignity and well-being of this vital segment of our society," he added.

The minister stressed that the working class was not confined to factories,

fields or construction sites, but included all individuals who labour tirelessly for the betterment of their families and the country.

He said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government believed national progress was incomplete without ensuring social justice, protection, respect and equal opportunities for the labour force.

Accordingly, he said, the government was working to expand dignified employment through economic revival, industrial develop-

ment, increased exports and youth skill-building initiatives.

"We envision Pakistan as a welfare state where hard work is considered a form of worship, and those who engage in it are treated with full respect, support and fairness," he said.

Ahsad qbal called upon the nation to renew its pledge to honor the country's hardworking men and women, safeguard their rights and help build a brighter, more peaceful and more prosperous society for all.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Commerce Rana Ihsaan Afzal Khan addressing launch of Global Illicit Trade Index 2025.

GtCCI pays tribute to workers on Labour Day

GUJRAT (APP): The Gujrat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GtCCI) paid rich tribute to the nation's workers, acknowledging their dedication and critical role in Pakistan's development.

GtCCI President Muhammad Munir Peshawari, along with Senior Vice President Musa Nadeem and Vice President Fahd Rafiq, said that laborers are the backbone of the national economy and deserve full social, economic, and legal protection.

The perseverance, sacrifice, and dignity of our workers are the foundation of sustainable national growth the GtCCI leadership stated.

They emphasized that societies thrive when workers' rights are upheld and justice is ensured.

The Chamber reaffirmed its commitment to improving the welfare and rights of the labour force, recognizing them as key partners in the country's progress.

FCCI demands modernization of labour welfare institutions

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) has demanded modernization of labor welfare institutions to empower the workers by resolving their genuine issues.

Addressing a meeting of FCCI Standing Committee on Art & Culture held in connection with International Labour Day, Senior Vice President FCCI Qaisar Shams Gucha highlighted the interconnection of rights and responsibilities.

He said that social security and labor welfare institutions would have to play a very dynamic and active role in accordance with the requirements of the present era to provide basic facilities to the workers.

He said that it is the employer's duty to care for their labor force and on the same time it is imperative for the workers to fulfill

their responsibilities with diligence, honesty and dedication.

He discussed the changing industrial landscape and said that new machinery requires skilled operators but there is currently a shortage of appropriately trained labor.

He appealed to the government to initiate on-the-job training programs to equip workers with necessary skills to operate modern equipment.

Former FCCI Senior Vice President and Co-Convenor of the Committee Farooq Yousaf said that Faisalabad's growth has been driven by its hardworking labor force.

He quoted the Islamic teachings to highlight the moral and ethical obligations of the employers towards their workers and stressed the need to provide all possible facilities.

He also underlined the

importance of skill development and said that improved labor proficiency would not only increase productivity but also enhance product quality which would reciprocally boost the exports.

Dr. Jafar Mubarak Committee Convenor stressed the need to adhere to Islamic values and ILO standards concerning labor rights.

He appealed to departments dealing with labor to take proactive steps in skill development particularly in rural areas.

He pointed out that despite their hard work the rural women are often not counted among formal labor forces. He also paid tribute to these "nameless workers" on the occasion of Labour Day.

Mohtarma Dur Shehwar, Nadia Shameem, Tariq Qureshi and M. Faisal also spoke on the occasion.

SCCI chief meets minister

SIALKOT (APP): President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Ikram-ul-Haq held a meeting with Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

According to the SCCI spokesperson, Ikram-ul-Haq expressed his heartfelt appreciation for the minister's unwavering commitment to development of Sialkot. He acknowledged Khawaja Asif's longstanding role as a strong voice for the city in the government and commended his efforts in championing key initiatives aimed at addressing industrial challenges, improving civic infrastructure, and ensuring sustained economic growth in the region.

Ikram-ul-Haq particularly lauded the minister's accessibility and responsiveness to the concerns of the business community, which have greatly contributed to building confidence among local stakeholders.

Khawaja Asif reaffirmed his full support to the SCCI president and assured that all infrastructure projects of significance to Sialkot's industry and citizens would be expedited and completed at the earliest.

The minister also shared that development projects amounting to over Rs. 40 billion would be included in the upcoming federal budget as a special gift from the prime minister to the people of Sialkot. He said he would soon visit the Sialkot Chamber to formally announce these projects in the presence of the business community.

Minister pays tribute to workers on 'Labour Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Thursday paid tribute to the hardworking men and women whose tireless efforts form the backbone of our economy on "Labour Day".

"On this Labour Day, I extend my heartfelt tribute to the hardworking men and women whose tireless efforts form the backbone of our economy. The dignity of labor is the foundation of a strong and prosperous

nation. Our workers—whether in industry, agriculture, trade, or services—are the true drivers of national development, said a press release issued here.

The Ministry of Commerce remains committed to creating an enabling environment where the rights of laborers are protected and opportunities for decent employment and fair trade are expanded, the minister said.

As "we pursue inclusive economic growth, we will

continue to work closely with stakeholders to enhance workforce skills, promote local industries, and expand export potential—ultimately benefiting our labor force."

Let us all recommit to the values of equity, justice, and respect for every worker across Pakistan, he said.

"I reaffirm the government's resolve to support and empower workers, as they are the driving force behind building a strong and prosperous Pakistan."

VIP goat block bookings to begin at cattle market

KARACHI (PPI): The administration of the Northern Bypass Cattle Market has announced the commencement of VIP block bookings for goat traders starting Friday evening, in a move aimed at expanding access to premium livestock for Karachi residents ahead of Eidul Azha.

Shahab Ikram, Administrator of the Northern Bypass Cattle Market, confirmed that goat sellers will be able to secure VIP plots from 7pm on Friday. The decision, he said, is part of the administration's broader effort to streamline animal availability and enhance visitor experience at what is being billed as Asia's largest cattle-friendly market.

"With this arrangement, residents of Karachi will have easier access to high-quality goats of every breed," Mr Ikram stated, while speaking to the press

here on Thursday.

Since its opening on April 19, the Northern Bypass Cattle Market has seen a steady influx of livestock from across the country. Thousands of animals—including cows, bulls, calves, goats, and camels—have arrived from Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan, particularly from cities such as Multan, Rajanpur, Ahmedpur Sharqia, Kashmore, Kandhkot, Nau-shahro Feroze, Kandiaro, Nawabshah, and Halani.

Traders have brought in a wide variety of sacrificial animals, including Sahiwal, Gulabi, Cholistani, and Sindh cattle breeds. Camels of the Koh-e-Mari, Lari, and Thari breeds, known for their distinct markings and size, have also added to the market's appeal.

The presence of VIP and VVIP livestock blocks featuring animals from promi-

nent Karachi-based farmhouses has attracted strong footfall, particularly on the public holiday, as families flocked to the market throughout the day. Many citizens said they had chosen the Northern Bypass over other markets due to its diverse animal offerings and relatively moderate prices.

The administrator also said that proper facilities, including security and digital monitoring through SMD screens, have been put in place from the entrance gate to the media and administration blocks to ensure a smooth and regulated experience.

Traders expressed optimism about upcoming sales, with many reporting that more livestock is on the way. The market is expected to grow in both scale and attendance in the lead-up to Eid.

IBA Karachi hosts All-Pakistan Inter-Varsity Archery C'ship

E.P. Report

KARACHI: IBA Karachi proudly hosted the All-Pakistan Inter-Varsity Archery Championship at its Main Campus, bringing together nine universities from across the country. The event celebrated athletic excellence and sportsmanship, as participants showcased their talent in a competitive and spirited environment. After three days of intense competition, the University of the Punjab emerged as the gold medalist, while IBA Karachi secured silver, and the University of Lahore claimed bronze.



The event was graced by the presence of Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Chairman, Higher Education Commission (HEC), as the chief guest. Welcoming the guests, Dr.

Mohammad Asad Ilyas, Registrar, IBA Karachi, emphasized the institute's dedication to fostering a vibrant sports culture on campus. Also in attendance were key HEC officials, including Mr. Javed Ali Memon, Director of Sports, HEC; Mr. Nazir Ahmed, Regional Head, HEC, and Mr. Ahmad Ali Rajpoot, Secretary General, Sindh Olympic Association, alongside team managers from all participating institutions.

Dr. Ahmad praised IBA's efforts in organizing the championship and emphasized HEC's role in nurtur-

ing professional athletes within universities. He urged academic institutions to create more opportunities for students to actively participate in physical activities.

This event reflected IBA's commitment to promoting athletic development and offering a platform for emerging talent to excel. It also highlighted the collective enthusiasm and dedication of universities in nurturing archery as a rising competitive sport in Pakistan.

IBA Karachi, Pakistan's leading and most prestigious

institution of higher education, has nurtured generations of trailblazers, with 20,000+ alumni driving innovation and leading organizations across the globe.

Equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure, modern learning spaces, and cutting-edge facilities, IBA offers a world-class education that empowers students to shape the future.

Committed to sustainability, IBA fosters an eco-conscious campus community, continuously reducing its carbon footprint through impactful green initiatives.

GM cuts 2025 outlook

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): General Motors on Thursday lowered its 2025 earnings outlook and said it expects a \$4-5 billion hit from US President Donald Trump's tariffs, despite moves this week to dampen the blow.

On Tuesday, Trump signed an executive order to limit the impact of multiple overlapping tariffs on automakers.

He also released a proclamation that gives the industry a two-year grace period to move supply chains back to the United States and reduce "American reliance on imports of foreign automobiles and their parts."

'Govt to take serious steps for workers' welfare'

FAISALABAD (APP): Regional Chairman of All Pakistan WAPDA Hydro Electric Workers Union (CBA) Chaudhry Sarfraz Ahmad Hundal demanded the government to take serious steps to protect the rights and welfare of the working class because strict implementation of workers' rights is imperative for national progress and prosperity.

He expressed concerns over the lack of enforcement of labor laws and said that federal and provincial governments should take concrete steps for elimination of unemployment besides increasing the wages and pensions which

are essential to reduce the wealth gap between rich and poor.

He said that child labor has become a burning issue and the government should concentrate on fixing this program in addition to stopping discrimination against women workers by ensuring safety and security for all laborers. Ch. Sarfraz also opposed privatization of DISCOs and demanded the FESCO to regularize all contract and daily-wage employees in addition to filling long-vacant posts without further delay.

He said that 1st May is not just a day of celebration but a time to honor the historic

sacrifices of the Chicago labor movement which laid the foundation for workers' right to unionize.

He also appealed the government to ensure the right to unionization, workplace safety and elimination of forced labor in line with ILO standards.

Regional Joint Secretary of the Union Mian Sajid Hussain, President All Pakistan Workers Confederation Hajji Abdul Jabbar and President Punjab Hosiery Manufacturing Association Malik Munir Ahmed also addressed the function and highlighted the plight of the working class.

Microsoft reports strong results driven by cloud and AI

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP/APP): Technology giant Microsoft posted robust quarterly results on Wednesday, with revenue rising 13 percent to \$70.1 billion, powered by a strong performance in its cloud computing and artificial intelligence businesses.

The results, which solidly beat analyst expectations, drove Microsoft's share price more than eight percent higher in after-hours trading. The Redmond, Washington-based company also allayed worries that it would suffer due to the high tariff policies of President Donald Trump's administration, offering a good outlook for the ongoing quarter.

Microsoft has remained more discreet in its support for Trump than its rivals, many of which contributed money to the president's

inauguration fund and announced major investments in the United States.

The company, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, saw net profits climb 18 percent to \$25.8 billion, compared to the same period last year.

Crucially, Microsoft Cloud revenue reached \$42.4 billion, growing 20 percent year-over-year, which Chief Financial Officer Amy Hood attributed to "continued demand for our differentiated offerings."

Microsoft was one of the first tech giants to double down on artificial intelligence when the launch of ChatGPT in 2022 rocked the tech industry.

Like its rivals, it has spent massively on building the infrastructure necessary to power the AI revolution, with analysts keeping a close eye on the return on

investment.

The company in January said it was on track to pump about \$80 billion into capital and infrastructure this fiscal year.

But CEO Satya Nadella said that even if "I feel very, very good about the pace" of investments, the company was always tweaking its spending.

He added that finding enough power sources for its AI data center needs was a priority.

Microsoft this quarter said its relationship with ChatGPT creator OpenAI was evolving and that it would no longer be the exclusive provider of the key startup's colossal computing needs.

It has been a major backer of OpenAI, mainly by providing the heavy computing capacity required to build AI mod-

els. The company's Intelligent Cloud segment, a key part of Microsoft's business, showed particularly strong growth with revenue of \$26.8 billion, up 21 percent.

Its Azure and other cloud services revenue surged 33 percent, reflecting the increasing adoption of Microsoft's cloud platforms.

The Productivity and Business Processes division, which includes Office 365 and LinkedIn, generated \$29.9 billion in revenue, a 10 percent increase.

The company said it returned \$9.7 billion to shareholders through dividends and share repurchases during the quarter. "This was a strong, steady quarter from a company that's matured into its AI moment," said Jeremy Goldman of Emarketer.



ISLAMABAD: Labourers pushing handcarts loaded with sacks of onion after unloading from a delivery truck at fruit and vegetables market.

Court Notice

In the Court of Jawad Bin Dawood Civil Judge II, Alaga Qazi Buner at Daggar, Suit No 305/1. Institution 12/12/2024. Date of hearing : 23/5/2025. Case Title: Basit Ali etc VS Director General NADRA. Notice to no. 6.MV Line Authority district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8. am dated 23/5/2025 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notice

In the Court of Jawad Bin Dawood Civil Judge II, Alaga Qazi Buner at Daggar, Suit No 154/1. Institution 31/7/2024. Date of hearing : 2/6/2025. Case Title: Fazal Gul VS Muhammad Karim . Notice to no. 8. Rahim Khan s/o Sher Alam. 9. Shamsur Rehman s/o Saifur Rehman resident of Jowar teshel Gadezal/ Salazai district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8. am dated 2/6/2025 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.



PSL completes triple century of matches

LAHORE (APP): The HBL Pakistan Super League (PSL) on Tuesday night reached a major milestone as it completed triple century of matches when the Quetta Gladiators took on Multan Sultans at the Gaddafi Stadium here.

The Gladiators have been part of the first and 300th HBL PSL games and reaped victories on both the occasions. The first-ever HBL PSL fixture took place on 4 February 2016 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

Across 10 seasons and in 300 exciting matches, the HBL PSL has provided the fans across Pakistan and around the globe an opportunity to witness the best of the best cricketers in action.

Babar Azam, who has

featured in all 10 seasons and taken the most catches (49), holds the record for most runs in the league history with 3,621 runs to date in 96 matches, which is also a record for most HBL PSL games played by an individual. The right-hand batter also holds the record for most half-centuries (34) and 401 fours in HBL PSL history.

Hasan Ali has taken the most wickets in HBL PSL history with a tally of 121 scalps in 88 matches. In the 300-match history of Pakistan's premier cricket extravaganza, England's Jason Roy holds the record for highest individual innings – 145 v Peshawar Zalmi in 2023, Fakhar Zaman has hit the most sixes – 117 in 90 matches, while Ravi Bopara's 6-16

from season 1 remains the best individual bowling performance.

Among the wicket-keepers Mohammad Rizwan takes the lead with 84 dismissals and 2,749 runs. Former Quetta Gladiators' skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed holds the record for most matches as captain (80) and most wins (38). On the Umpiring front, Aleem Dar, who is set to retire from professional Umpiring at the end of this season has officiated the most HBL PSL games – 81 in 10 seasons.

No. of matches played by each franchise:
Peshawar Zalmi 110
Islamabad United 105
Karachi Kings 101
Lahore Qalandars 100
Quetta Gladiators 98
Multan Sultans 86

Salman Naseer, CEO HBL PSL:

"We are incredibly proud to have witnessed the 300th match of the HBL PSL history. The HBL PSL has never looked back after taking off in 2016 and its success throughout the whole decade is a testament to the quality of cricket on display and utmost confidence of the fans and players alike on the brand.

"I congratulate each and everyone who has been involved with the HBL PSL in any capacity during these 10 years especially the fans, franchises, commercial and services partners. It is because of their commitment that the league continues to grow, prosper and entertain us all season after season."

PCB confirms T20Is against Bangladesh

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Wednesday confirmed that Bangladesh will tour Pakistan in May for a five-match T20I series. The series, which is part of the Future Tour Programme (FTP) originally consisted of three ODIs and three T20Is, said a press release.

However, with the ICC Men's T20 World Cup

scheduled for next year, both the boards have mutually agreed to replace the ODIs with two additional T20Is.

The five-match T20I series will be played in Faisalabad and Lahore from May 25 to June 3. Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad, which successfully hosted the inaugural Champions One-Day Cup in September last year

and National T20 Cup last month, will stage the first and second T20Is of the series, scheduled on May 25 and 27, respectively.

Iqbal Stadium, which has previously hosted 24 Tests and 16 ODIs between 1978 and 2008, will welcome back international cricket after a 17-year hiatus.

The historic venue's last international fixture

was an ODI between Bangladesh and Pakistan in April 2008.

Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will host the remaining three T20Is, scheduled on May 30, June 1 and 3. All five matches will begin at 8pm.

Bangladesh team will arrive on May 21 and will undergo training sessions at the Iqbal Stadium from May 22 to 24.

Messi's Miami thrashed in Champions Cup semi-final



MIAMI (BBC): Lionel Messi's hopes of leading Inter Miami to their first Concacaf Champions Cup title are over this season after a comprehensive semi-final defeat by Vancouver Whitecaps.

Trailing 2-0 from the first leg, Miami were beaten 3-1 at home in Fort Lauderdale as the Canadian side ran out 5-1 aggregate winners.

Argentina legend Messi and Uruguay striker Luis Suarez were both

involved in the build-up as their former Barcelona team-mate Jordi Alba opened the scoring on the night for Miami with a low shot in the ninth minute.

But a comeback by Miami, who are coached by another ex-Barcelona star in Javier Mascherano, failed to materialise with 37-year-old Messi shooting high and wide with his best chance of the first half. The Whitecaps hit the outside of the post

before half-time, while American striker Brian White and Ecuador's Pedro Vite both tested Miami goalkeeper Oscar Ustari.

The visitors regained their two-goal cushion in the 51st minute through White's clever flick into the bottom corner from 10 yards, and when a shot from the edge of the box by Vite deflected up over Ustari two minutes later the tie was effectively settled.

Another deflected strike from Sebastian Berhalter, after the Whitecaps had again cut through Miami's ragged defence, added the visitors' fifth on aggregate in the 71st minute.

They will play Cruz Azul or Tigres UANL - the two Mexican sides meet in Thursday's second semi-final (03:00 BST on Friday) - in the

final, bidding to become the first Canadian side to win the regional competition.

Miami, currently fifth in the MLS Eastern Conference, have seven domestic matches before the league breaks for the Club World Cup in June.

"Although it was the first time the club had advanced to the semi-finals, the defeat hurts us a lot because we imagined reaching the final," said Mascherano. "But we have to accept that our opponents outplayed us."

"Now we have to focus on MLS."

"I'm not thinking about the Club World Cup. There's a month and a half to go and it would be a mistake to focus on that." Miami are in a group with Egyptian side Al Ahly, Portugal's Porto and Palmeiras of Brazil in the Club World Cup.



ARLINGTON, TEXAS: Shea Langeliers #23 of the Oakland Athletics beats the pickoff throw to Jake Burger #21 of the Texas Rangers in the ninth inning at Globe Life Field on Thursday.

Vince leads Kings' batting effort as Sultans are eliminated

L A H O R E (ESPNCricinfo): Karachi Kings dumped Multan Sultans out of a tournament they never really got into, with former Sultan James Vince scoring a majestic unbeaten 65 to ask Sultans to chase 205.

Sultans never looked to have the belief they would get anywhere close, and, eventually, didn't.

Kings were tidy, if not spectacular, letting Sultans' tame, limp display on a blistering afternoon in Lahore do the job for them, and helping themselves to an 87-run win.

This game was moved from Multan to Lahore despite Sultans' objections. But it would have taken more than home advantage to overcome the gulf in the two sides' performances on Thursday.

David Willey conceded just 24 runs in his four overs, but when Michael Bracewell bowled the second over and conceded just as many in those six balls, it was more representative of what Sultans would dish up.

That onslaught from

David Warner on the New Zealand spinner set the tone for the innings, even if the Kings captain mis-cued Willey to point for an entertaining off just 30 13 balls.

It was one of three wickets Sultans took within 11 balls, and would briefly have raised hopes that they would rein Kings in with wickets.

Either side of Warner's dismissal, Ubaid Shah removed Tim Seifert and Omair Yousuf. But it brought Vince and Irfan Khan together, as they took charge of the middle overs. As Sultans wilted in the heat, the pair cashed in, compiling 78 in 56 balls, and setting up a platform for a big finish.

Sultans promised their fielding would stand out this tournament, and for reasons they wouldn't want, it has.

The shelling of a top edge from Vince by Usama Mir at square leg in the 17th over took the Englishman to 50, before both he and Khushdil Shah cut loose.

The last 14 balls of the

innings yielded 45 runs as Khushdil's unbeaten 33 from 13 deliveries led the way as Vince offered ample support in his slip-stream, smashing Ubaid for a six and a four in a penultimate over that went for 19 runs.

When Khushdil cleared his front leg as well as long-on to heave Chris Jordan for six off the innings' final delivery and dragged the total above 200, it was merely an exclamation mark on Kings' dominance.

Like a film that has revealed its hand halfway through but still needs to get through the remaining time, the second innings began.

Sultans demonstrated there was little fight left, and their captain Mohammad Rizwan fell for a duck in the second over to Abbas Afridi.

Usman Khan, once more, played an ordinary shot to scoop a wide delivery into Vince's hands, while Yasir Khan's breezy 26 was brought to an abrupt end by Aamer Jamal in the fifth over.

Curtis Campher, though, went after Afridi in the final over of the powerplay to bring Sultans up to 53 in six overs, not far off from where Kings were at that stage. However, Sultans couldn't bring themselves to put together a partnership of note, and the collapse that feels just around the corner was about to be realised. They lost five wickets for 14 runs to go from 76 for 4 to 90 for 9, wickets scattering like seeds in the wind, with Mohammad Nabi the primary grateful recipient.

Two wickets in two balls from Nabi put Bracewell and Willey out of the equation before Khushdil mopped up Iftikhar Ahmed and Kamran Ghulam.

Nabi added a third before Chris Jordan and Ubaid Shah found 27 runs for the final wicket that got Sultans to three figures while avoiding a three-figure defeat, but when Mir Hamza applied the coup de grace by getting Ubaid, it was almost more a relief for Sultans than Kings.



A talent that comes along every 50 years - 'genius' Yamal steals show

MILAN (BBC): Teenage Barcelona forward Lamine Yamal said he would not compare himself to Lionel Messi - and then put in a performance a 17-year-old Messi could only have dreamed of in one of the all-time great Champions League semi-final ties.

It led to him being called "a genius", "a cheat code" and "a phenomenal talent".

Barca and Inter Milan ended up drawing 3-3 in their epic first-leg encounter, with visiting full-back Denzel Dumfries involved in all three Inter goals, scoring twice, and being named man of the match.

But most of the global headlines will focus on the 17-year-old Yamal, who scored his 22nd goal on his landmark 100th Barcelona game.

He is the youngest player to complete a century of competitive games for the club.

The remarkable stat being widely shared post-match was a direct comparison with the two greatest players of this generation at the same age - Messi, who had one goal in nine appearances at 17 and Cristiano Ronaldo, who had five goals in 19 appearances before he was 18.

Yamal put on a masterclass, especially in the first half to inspire a superb comeback after Inter had led 2-0 by the 21st minute.

Yamal claimed a classy

Champions League semi-final goal to go with one in the Euro 2024 last four last summer. Already one of the best players in the world - and before he even turns 18.

"I don't think I have seen a 45 minutes like that from one individual before in my life. It is unbelievable," said TNT Sports pundit Ally McCooist as the players walked off the pitch at half-time.

Inter Milan boss Simone Inzaghi gave Yamal the highest of praise afterwards.

"Lamine is the kind of talent that comes along every 50 years, and to see him up close really impressed me," he said.

"He caused us huge problems because we were supposed to double up on him and it wasn't enough."

Barca boss Hansi Flick said: "He's special, he's a genius. In the big matches, he shows up."

"If it only comes every 50 years like Simone said, I'm glad it's for Barcelona." BBC pundit Stephen Warnock called him "a future Ballon d'Or winner".

One of the games of the season has everyone excited about the second leg at the San Siro in Milan next week, a change of pace from Paris St-Germain's hard-fought 1-0 win at Arsenal the day before.

There was a bit of drama before the game when Yamal appeared to hurt his

groin and went down the tunnel during the warm-up, with speculation that he might not play.

He did start but had barely had an impact before Inter led 2-0 via two fantastic goals - Marcus Thuram's 30-second backheel flick from a Dumfries cross, and Dutchman Dumfries' flying close-range volley.

But then Yamal - who was being double marked - came to life, beating a few Inter players before whipping the ball in off the far post with astonishing ease and confidence.

Moments later, he beat more defenders on the byeline and slammed in a shot which Inter keeper Yann Sommer tipped on to the bar.

Ferran Torres then capped off a fine team move to get Barca level before the break.

Dumfries, though, got his second with a header to put the Italian side back in front.

But moments later Barca were level again as Yamal cleverly dummed a pass and Raphinha lashed a shot in from 25 yards which hit the bar and went in off the back of Sommer for an own goal.

Henrikh Mkhitaryan thought he had made it 4-3 to Inter but his goal was ruled out for a marginal off-side.

Yet Yamal almost had the final say, one more memorable moment, when

his cross-shot hit the angle of post and bar.

It is tough to even fathom how much Yamal has achieved at his age.

This was his 100th Barcelona appearance, and a 22nd goal to go with four in 19 games for Spain.

Yamal has 27 assists too, including two in Saturday's Copa del Rey final extra-time win over Real Madrid. Messi and Ronaldo did not make their international debuts until they were 18, while Yamal won Euro 2024 the day after his 17th birthday.

Messi scored one goal and had no assists before he was 18, with Ronaldo bagging five and four assists.

Yamal is Barcelona's youngest La Liga player (aged 15) and the youngest to score and assist in La Liga for any team.

He also holds records for being the youngest Champions League starter, youngest player to score in a knockout game, a quarter-final and now a semi-final.

Yamal is Spain's youngest player and goalscorer and the youngest player and goalscorer in a European Championship.

Very few players have had the impact in football by Yamal's age. He will turn 18 in July.

He appears to be the closest thing we have seen to Barcelona and Argentina great Messi, now at Inter Miami and arguably the greatest footballer in histo-

James unsure of future after Lakers play-off loss

LOS ANGELES (BBC): LeBron James says he is unsure if he will continue his NBA career next season after the Los Angeles Lakers were knocked out of the first round of the play-offs by the Minnesota Timberwolves.

The 40-year-old, in his 22nd season as a professional, was unable to prevent the Timberwolves completing a 4-1 series victory with a 103-96 win in game five at the Crypto.com Arena.

James, the NBA's all-time leading scorer, had been hoping to win a fifth championship this season.

James, who signed a two-year deal with the Lakers in 2024, says he will take time in the off-season to consider his future.

Asked how many more years he will continue to play, James said: "I don't know."

"It's something that I will sit down with my family, my wife, and my support group and kind of just talk through and see what happens, and just have a conversation with myself on how long I want to continue to play."

After a 74-game campaign, James said the opportunity to play alongside Bronny - becoming the first father-son duo in NBA history - was the highlight of his season.

"Number one, for sure," said James.

"That's not even close. To be able to play the game

that I love and to be able to be alongside my son, this whole year has been one of the most gratifying, satisfying journeys I've ever been on."

Rudy Gobert registered 27 points and 24 rebounds for the Timberwolves.

"It feels great," he said. "We had a season with ups and downs so to come here and play the way we did means a lot."

"We just have a bunch of guys that want to win, and a lot of guys who have been through adversity throughout their career and their life, and we love each other. All the things we went through throughout the season prepared us for this moment."

The Timberwolves will face the Golden State

Warriors or the Houston Rockets in the Western Conference semi-finals.

The Rockets kept their play-off hopes alive with a 131-116 win against the Warriors in game five, cutting their series deficit to 3-2.

Fred VanVleet scored 26 points for the Rockets, while Amen Thompson added 25 and Dillon Brooks 24 at Toyota Center.

The Rockets led by 31 points at one stage, and Warriors coach Steve Kerr substituted many of his starters in the third quarter in order to keep them fresh for game six.

"We can't come out with that lack of defensive focus and energy and expect to beat a great team on their home floor," said Kerr.





In brief

WASA on high alert

RAWALPINDI (APP): As rain began in twin cities on Thursday, the Water and Sanitation Agency Rawalpindi put all its staff on high alert to cope with any flooding in Nullah Leh and other drains of the city. WASA Rawalpindi Managing Director Muhammad Saleem Ashraf said that a rain emergency was imposed on the basis of the forecast of Pakistan Meteorological Department for heavy rain in twin cities. "All the staff is present in the field with heavy machinery," he added. According to the PMD, 8 mm of rain was recorded in Saidpur, 7 mm in Golra, 8 mm in PMD, and 8 mm in Shamsabad till filing of this story. He said the water flow in Nullah Leh was normal at present, however, it was being monitored. The water level in Nullah was 5 feet at Katarian and 4 feet at Gowlamandi Bridge.

Police conduct operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police on Thursday carried out search operations in different areas on the instructions of City Police Officer Syed Khalid Hamdani. During the operations, conducted in the areas of Race Course, Civil Lines, Naseerabad and Pirwadahai police stations, some 140 houses, 63 shops, tenancy records of 20 tenants and more than 130 individual citizens were checked, a police spokesman said. Along with the police, other law enforcement agencies also participated in the search operations. "The aim of the search operations is to keep a close watch on criminal and law-breaking elements," the spokesman said. The Rawalpindi Police, he said, "are always busy in protecting the lives and property of citizens and maintaining law and order".

Tribute paid to workers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Thursday paid tribute to the pivotal role of workers in Pakistan's progress and prosperity through a special message dedicated to the nation's hardworking laborers. In a statement, Dr. Tariq Fazal stated that "workers' welfare is indispensable for a prosperous and strong Pakistan." He emphasized that "their unmatched hard work and dedication are the backbone of the national economy, and it is through their invaluable contributions that the nation's future is shaped." The minister praised the dedication and greatness of workers while highlighting their crucial role in the country's development. "The greatness of workers is the pride of nations," he said, reaffirming the government's commitment to ensuring workers' rights and welfare. On Labour Day, he reiterated the government's resolve to support and empower workers, as they are the driving force behind building a strong and prosperous Pakistan.

Jatli Police arrest accused

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Jatli Police of Rawalpindi on Thursday arrested an accused for allegedly abusing a 15-year-old boy. According to the police spokesman, the father of the victim boy filed a complaint with the Jatli Police that the accused Nafees along with his accomplices performed sodomy on his son and made an 'indecent' video, which they made go viral. The Jatli police registered a case and immediately arrested the accused Nafees, while raids were underway to nab his accomplices.

Pakistan reaffirms commitment to health reforms

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan has reaffirmed its dedication to implementing robust and sustainable health reforms, with a strong focus on primary healthcare and women's reproductive rights.

The commitment was made at a high-level meeting between Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed Bharath, Minister of State for Health, and a visiting delegation from the British High Commission's Global Health Directorate.

In the meeting, Dr. Bharath stressed the urgent need to strengthen the Primary Healthcare (PHC) system, especially in urban areas where fragmented services hinder equitable access.

He highlighted the importance of integrated, people-centered care as essential to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), particularly for underserved peri-urban populations.

"A key priority for us is expanding access to family planning services across all

provinces," Dr. Bharath stated.

"Empowering women through accessible reproductive health services is fundamental to sustainable development. We are committed to ensuring that every woman can make informed decisions about her health and well-being."

The Minister also addressed the pressing issue of sustainable health financing in light of a shifting global aid environment.

He emphasized the importance of transitioning from donor-dependent vertical programs to domestically funded, resilient health systems.

"In the face of global aid reductions, we must regularize essential health services and build national systems that are resilient, efficient, and accountable," he noted, while expressing appreciation for the technical support provided by the United Kingdom.

Dr. Bharath specifically lauded UK-supported initiatives such as the Evidence for Health (E4H)

Programme, which he said has significantly contributed to policy development, health systems strengthening, and improved national health security.

These initiatives, he added, align closely with Pakistan's broader roadmap for transition and sustainability.

Reiterating the government's long-term vision, the Minister underscored Pakistan's commitment to bolstering routine immunization systems and advancing indigenous vaccine production to enhance national preparedness and reduce reliance on international supply chains.

Dr. Bharath expressed Pakistan's determination to work closely with development partners in building a health system that is equitable, evidence-driven, and self-reliant. "Together, we must build a future where every citizen—regardless of location or income—can access quality health services with dignity and confidence," he said.

Chairperson BISP pays tribute to workers

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the occasion of International Labor Day, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, extended heartfelt tributes to the labor force of Pakistan, calling them the "backbone of the nation" and vital contributors to the country's development and progress.

"Today, we honor the unwavering dedication, relentless passion, and significant contributions of our workers who drive Pakistan's prosperity," said Senator Rubina Khalid in her message. She underscored that a dignified and just society can only be built upon the pillars of equal opportunities, respect,

and inclusive development for all workers.

Reaffirming BISP's commitment to empowering marginalized communities, the Chairperson highlighted the Benazir Hunar Mand Program—a flagship initiative designed to equip underprivileged women and their children with vocational skills and training. "This program reflects the vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who believed that 'skill is your asset—something no one can take away from you,'" she noted.

Senator Rubina Khalid emphasized that the initiative aims not only to create employment avenues but also to instill self-confidence, self-reliance, and a

sense of dignity among its beneficiaries. "By empowering women and families with practical knowledge and skills, we are fostering a stronger, more equitable society," she added.

In her concluding remarks, the Chairperson urged the nation to come together in pursuit of a skilled and inclusive Pakistan.

"Let us unite to uphold the rights of workers, promote fair labor practices, and build a country where every citizen can thrive in a safe and respectful environment. This is the dream envisioned by Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto - a dream we must turn into reality," she affirmed.

'Steps to be taken for welfare of labour class'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Secretary for Human Rights Saba Sadiq, MNA on Thursday expressed the commitment that the present government will take all possible steps for welfare of labour class.

In her message marking the International Labour day, she said that all possible steps were being taken to ensure implementation of minimum wages law for labour. She said that the goal of rapid, inclusive and sustainable growth could only be realised due to efforts of hardworking, dedicated and committed workforce.

The Federal Government, she added, was fully committed to taking all measures, in cooperation with the provincial governments, to enhance the welfare of workers and their families as well as to raise their standards of living.

"We understand very well that only a healthy, happy, well-educated and well-paid workforce will enable Pakistan to attain its full social and economic potential, and this is what we are working towards with complete sincerity of purpose."

Paying tribute to the hard work of both male and

female workers, she said that it is because of them that the economy continues to move forward. She said reforms are underway to ensure a safe and healthy working environment, as well as to guarantee proper training for workers.

Saba Sadiq said the government was training youth in various skills and ensuring their certification to improve their chances of securing employment opportunities abroad.

She reiterated the government's resolve to protect the rights of work force and provide them maximum facilities.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology Khalid Hussain Magsi chairing a high-level meeting on ongoing and future development projects.

'Labourers a true partners in national development'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Thursday organized a special programme at the Police Lines Headquarters to commemorate Labour Day, where Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, paid rich tribute to the dedication and sacrifices of workers.

The ceremony aimed at to recognize the invaluable contributions of labourers to the country's development. Several workers were specially invited to the event as guests of honour, acknowledging their crucial role in society.

At a ceremony IG Rizvi said that labourers were not just contributors but true partners in the journey of development and national prosperity.

IG Rizvi said that their relentless hard work and unwavering commitment had paved the way for progress, and they stand as the backbone of Pakistan's social and economic advancement.

IG said that the Islamabad Police salutes the determination of all workers and reaffirms its commitment to safeguarding their rights and well-being, especially those serving within the police department.

IG Rizvi said that the Labour Day celebration was a reminder to honour the dignity of labour and renew collective efforts toward creating a more inclusive and respectful working environment for all.

RWMC acknowledges workers' dedication

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief Executive Officer Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) Rana Sajid Safdar on Thursday said that the sanitary workers were real heroes who worked day and night to keep the areas clean and environmentally friendly.

In his message on the occasion of Labour Day, he said that workers and labourers played a dynamic role in the country's development, and the RWMC's sanitary workers were making all-out efforts to keep the city neat and clean.

The RWMC acknowledged the hard work and dedication of its workers and was determined to provide them with the best kind of possible facilities.

"We pay respects to the martyrs of the workers' movement," he said and added that this day not only commemorates the struggle of workers but also reflects the recognition of their role in national development and prosperity.

Khalid Magsi hold high level meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Khalid Hussain Magsi Thursday emphasized that science and technology must serve as a vehicle to uplift the lives of citizens in backward and underserved regions.

Chairing a high-level meeting in Islamabad, the minister reviewed the progress of 31 ongoing development projects under the Ministry of Science and Technology and discussed future initiatives.

Federal Secretary Sajid Baloch and heads of various affiliated organizations were present at the session. The federal minister stressed that under the vision of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, development must be people-centric, ensuring equal access to scientific progress and innovation for all Pakistanis.

He called on organizations to go beyond infrastructure and focus on human capital development through education, awareness,

and capacity-building.

He further emphasized the importance of improving the ease of doing business, urging the Ministry and its institutions to create a transparent and efficient environment to foster investment, research, and innovation.

The minister directed all stakeholders to accelerate project implementation while aligning with national priorities and public welfare.

Eco-friendly electric tram feeder buses to be launched

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has announced plans to introduce a modern, eco-friendly transport system, including an electric tram and feeder buses, to reduce pollution and improve public transit in the federal capital.

The decision was made during a high-level meeting chaired by CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa, on Thursday, attended by senior officials and NRTC representatives.

The project aims to provide efficient, accessible, and sustainable transport options while cutting fuel costs and air pollution.

Chairman Randhawa emphasized that modernizing Islamabad's transport infrastructure is a top priority. "The electric tram and feeder buses will not only offer advanced facilities but also help reduce environmental harm," he said.

The tram will feature multi-compartment designs to accommodate more passengers, with accessibility for women and disabled individuals.

A feasibility study will finalize routes, focusing on high-traffic areas, and explore public-private partnerships to ensure long-term sustainability.

The chairman directed

officials to develop a self-sufficient financial model, incorporating revenue streams like digital ads and smart ticketing to minimize subsidy reliance.

Feeder bus routes will be data-driven, prioritizing high-demand areas, while terminals will be equipped with digital screens displaying schedules and safety alerts.

Randhawa called the projects "a vital step toward making Islamabad a modern, clean, and attractive capital," urging public cooperation.

Further timelines and operational details will be finalized soon.

Dr. Mukhtar reaffirms commitment in robust

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed Bharath on Thursday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment in robust and sustainable health reforms during a high-level meeting with a visiting delegation from the British High Commission's Global Health Directorate.

During the meeting, the minister underscored the urgent need to strengthen the Primary Healthcare (PHC) system, particularly in urban areas where fragmented services hinder equitable access, said a press release issued by Press Information Department (PID). He emphasized the importance of integrated, people centered care in advancing Universal Health Coverage (UHC), especially for underserved Peri-urban communities.

A key priority highlighted by Dr. Bharath was the enhancement of family planning services across all provinces. "Empowering women through accessible reproductive health services is fundamental to sustainable development," he said. "We are committed to ensuring that every woman can make informed decisions about her health and well-being."

The minister also addressed the need for sustainable health financing in the face of a shifting global aid landscape. He expressed appreciation for the technical assistance provided by the UK and emphasized Pakistan's phased transition from donor-supported vertical programs to domestically financed health systems.

"In the face of global aid reductions, we must regularize essential health services and build national systems that are resilient, efficient, and accountable," he noted. Dr. Bharath acknowledged the value of UK-supported initiatives such as the Evidence for Health (E4H) Programme, which has contributed to policy development, health systems strengthening, and enhanced national health security. These efforts, he said, are aligned with Pakistan's roadmap for transition and sustainability.

He further reiterated the government's commitment

in strengthening routine immunization systems and highlighted a long-term vision for indigenous vaccine production to ensure national preparedness and reduce reliance on international supply chains.

The minister reaffirmed Pakistan's determination to work closely with development partners to advance a self-reliant, equitable, and evidence-driven health system.

Drug supplier caught with 2 kg charas

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Ratta Amral Police caught a drug supplier with more than two kilograms charas.

The accused Shakir had been actively involved in supplying drugs in the limits of Ratta Amral Police Station.

The police on a tip-off conducted an action, taking the accused into custody recovering some 2.05 kg charas from his possession.

The police had initiated investigations and would arrest his accomplices.

IFA raids 81 outlets, seals 15, seizes expired items

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) has launched a major crackdown on vendors and food outlets selling or storing expired food items and sealed 15 while checking over 80 outlets.

Talking to APP, Deputy Director Operations of IFA, Dr Tahira Siddique said that the food safety teams inspected 81 food outlets in areas including I-8, F-10, G-7, Ghouri Town, Lehtar Road, Bani Gala, and Tarnol. The inspections

were carried out to ensure food being sold to the public met health and safety standards.

As a result of the inspections, 15 outlets were immediately sealed for storing or selling expired food. The teams confiscated over two maunds (more than 80 kilograms) of expired goods, which were later destroyed, she said.

As many as six additional establishments were fined for unhygienic condi-

tions and failure to comply with basic cleanliness rules.

According to Dr. Siddique, action was taken where the teams observed food safety standards being ignored.

"There is a complete ban on the sale or storage of expired food products, and such practices are punishable under food safety laws," she said.

Dr. Siddique added that using or selling such items can pose serious risks to health. "Expired food can

cause harm and may lead to food poisoning or other health issues. It is a serious threat that cannot be ignored," she stated.

The food authority has pledged to continue its campaign to ensure the public has access to safe food. Regular inspections and surprise visits will remain part of the authority's efforts.

"We are committed to ensuring the availability of safe food to every citizen. No one has the right to

compromise public health for profit," said Dr. Siddique.

She also stressed the importance of food businesses following legal and safety protocols. "Those involved in the food trade in Islamabad must follow the rules. Food businesses are required to store, prepare, and sell only items that are fit for human consumption."

The official reiterated that strict action would be taken against those who

violate the law. "No leniency will be shown to those who put public health at risk," she added.

According to the food authority, such inspections are not one-time events but part of an ongoing process. The authority aims to not only identify and act against violators but also raise awareness among food business operators and the general public.

Meanwhile, she also urged the citizens to report any suspicious food items

or unsafe practices to the authority. Public cooperation, they said, is essential for maintaining food safety across the city.

Dr. Siddique concluded by saying that these efforts are meant to create a safer environment for all residents. "Our teams are working across the city to ensure that food served or sold is safe. Business owners must understand that violating food safety laws will result in legal consequences," she said.

661m old banknotes set alight

KABUL (Pajhwok): Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) torched about 660,700,000 old afghani banknotes in Kabul on Thursday. The banknotes were burnt in the presence of a delegation after an accurate count based on Articles 39 and 42 of the Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) Law, the central bank said in a statement. It said the money had been collected from the western zone of the country and included 1,000, 500, 100, 50, 20 and 10 denominations.

Medical laboratory opened

JALALABAD (Pajhwok): A laboratory worth 27 million afghanis has been constructed and put into use in eastern Nangarhar province, an official said on Thursday. In the opening ceremony, Public Health Director Maulvi Aminullah Sharif this “reference laboratory” would conduct tests that were previously sent to other countries. He said the laboratory at the Eastern Health Complex was established by UNDP costing 27 million afghanis.

Muttaqi, Qatari officials discuss aid, education



KABUL (Pajhwok): Acting Foreign Minister Maulvi Amir Khan Muttaqi has held talks with senior Qatari officials on improved management of humanitarian aid and enhanced cultural and academic cooperation.

During his visit, Muttaqi met with Mariam bint Ali bin Nasser Al Misnad, Qatar’s Minister of State for International Cooperation, and Lolwah Al Khater, Minister of Higher Education.

According to Abdul Qahar Balkhi, spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the meetings focused on the management of humanitarian aid, capacity building, and strengthening scientific and cultural cooperation between the two countries.

Muttaqi underscored the importance of building hospitals in Afghanistan, supporting capacity-building initiatives, and assisting returning refugees.

Neglected master engraver bids farewell to art in Khost

KHOST CITY (Pajhwok): In the southeastern province of Khost, a master engraver and miniature artist, Ismail Zadrán, reflects with disappointment on a lifetime he dedicated to a fading craft.

After spending 36 years creating nearly 2,000 pieces artworks, Zadrán says he is now weary, disheartened, and ready to

own money and the help of friends—so Afghan students, youth, and citizens could learn about the country’s natural resources,” he said.



Despite the passion behind his work, Zadrán says he’s reached a breaking point. “I’ve exhausted my life and my wealth for this art, but what did I get in return? Nothing,” he said. “Why are there no competitions or exhibitions for our kind of art? No one has even invited me to a seminar or workshop in the past three years. Why?”

Officials at the Khost Department of Information and Culture admit the problem. Shah Hussain Masjidi, head of the department, acknowledges that little has been done to support engraving and miniature art.

“No meaningful steps have been taken so far,” Masjidi said. “However, we do have plans to promote these forms of art through exhibitions and cultural programs.”

He added that such exhibitions—held in places like Khost Stadium, the municipal park, and other public venues—could play a vital role in reviving interest and appreciation for this under-recognized field.

Although Zadrán says he has bid farewell to the profession, his words reveal a lingering hope. Deep down, he still dreams of support and recognition. He wants his work to be preserved, and perhaps—if given the chance—to return once more to his artistic path.

shun the profession. “Neither the government supports my work, nor does society value it anymore,” he says quietly from a secluded room filled with wood, marble, rare stones, and sheets of delicate paper.

A somber signboard displayed among his tools and artworks reads: “Don’t tell anyone who I am today; for an artist in a land without artists.” The words capture the mood of the 50-year-old artist, who has given his life to a form of art few now recognize.

Hospital and 12 clinics for deportees active

JALALABAD (Pajhwok): About 12 health centers, including a 20-bed hospital are operational in Torkham town to treat returning refugees in Nangarhar, Public Health Department officials said on Thursday. Over 100,000 Afghans have been forcibly deported so far.

Public Health Director, Maulvi Aminullah Sharif told Pajhwok Afghan News health facilities have been provided for the forcibly returned refugees from Pakistan at Torkham, in addition to other services.

He said in collaboration with various agencies, they established 12 health centers, including a 20-bed hospital, where hundreds of people are treated and examined daily. In the past month or so, since the second wave of refugees began, 66,951 people have visited these health centers.

In addition to outpatients, patients with acute respiratory infections, diarrhea, suspected measles, suspected dengue, dermatology, mental health, gynecology, childhood vaccinations, children under 5 years of age, children with severe and moderate malnutrition, malaria, and suspected tuberculosis have been treated and examined.”

Four-day exhibition started in Kabul

KABUL (Pajhwok): A four-day exhibition showcasing agricultural and domestic products titled ‘Supporting agriculture and livestock guarantees your health and economic growth’ commenced at the Badam Bagh Research Farm in Kabul on Thursday.

Agricultural, horticultural and livestock products, processed products, handicrafts, agricultural machinery, pure Afghan saffron, medicinal plants and plants, irrigation equipment, fruit-ful and non-fruitful seedlings, solar power generating devices and a number of other domestic products have been put on display at the show organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock.

As many as 263 booths have been installed at the event, with 56 booths dedicated to women’s handicrafts. This year’s agricultural exhibition aims promoting economic growth, developing agricultural sec-

tor, supporting domestic products, promoting the culture of using domestic products, and developing and expanding the agriculture and livestock sectors, achieving self-sufficiency in these areas, and encouraging farmers.

At the opening ceremony, Acting Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Maulvi Attaullah Omari, said that 75 percent of Afghanistan’s people were associated with agriculture and livestock.

He said Afghanistan’s agricultural products were superior in the world in terms of quality.

He added the Islamic Emirate leadership had ordered the relevant ministries to embark on projects in various fields that have economic benefits for Afghanistan.

Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Maulvi Sadri Azam Usmani, said that one of the main objectives of today’s

Baradar-led delegation to attend Kazan Forum

KABUL (Pajhwok): A delegation from Afghanistan, led by Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, is scheduled to participate in the 16th Kazan Forum in Russia.

Previously, the Russian news agency TASS reported the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) would send a high-level delegation, led by Minister of Industry and Commerce Nooruddin Azizi, to the forum.

The international Kazan Forum will take place from May 13 to 18, 2025, in

Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan, and Russian Federation. According to a statement from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC), the delegation will explore opportunities for bilateral cooperation with the Russian Federation and represent Afghanistan at the forum.

Mullah Baradar will be accompanied by Acting Minister Nooruddin Azizi and representatives from other ministries.

Meanwhile, a consultative meeting was held on Wednesday, chaired by

Azizi and attended by members of the private sector, to prepare for the participation of the Afghan delegation and private businesses in the forum.

According to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC), Afghanistan will set up a pavilion covering approximately 100 square meters, where around 10 companies from various sectors—including carpets, transportation, non-alcoholic beverages, healthcare, detergents, and agriculture will showcase their products and services.

Land allocated for industrial parks: Zahid

KABUL (TOLOnews): Ahmadullah Zahid, deputy minister of industry and commerce, told TOLOnews that over 160,000 acres of land have been allocated to the ministry to address the shortage of land for industrialists.



In this exclusive interview, Zahid said that nearly 100,000 acres of the allocated land have already been officially handed over to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

“So far, about 100,000 acres of land have been transferred to us, and the rest is in process. The Islamic Emirate has paid special attention to industrial parks, and currently, land distribution for industrial parks is underway in eleven provinces, including Kabul,” he said.

Zahid also mentioned that efforts are ongoing to resolve banking challenges and expand economic ties

with regional countries. He added that the number of industrial factories in the country has increased by 40 percent over the past three years.

According to Zahid, there are currently around 5,000 industrial factories operating across Afghanistan.

He further said: “We now have around 5,000 factories in the country, and relevant agencies such as the National Standards

Authority and the Directorate of Food and Medicine are working hard to ensure our products meet international standards.”

In another part of the interview, the deputy minister discussed trade challenges with Pakistan, noting that the caretaker government is actively working to expand its economic relations with all regional countries and is also seeking alternative trade routes.

Espousing peace – heart and soul

KABUL (Pajhwok): Maulvi Gul Ahmad Ahmadi, a widely respected tribal elder in northwestern Nimroz province, has spent the past three decades mediating feuds and fostering peace in his community.

A staunch advocate for traditional jirgas, he believes disputes resolved through these assemblies bring greater satisfaction and reconciliation to all parties involved.

“Conflicts resolved through jirgas bring happiness and satisfaction to both parties,” says Ahmadi. The jirga is a time-honored Afghan tradition – an assembly of tribal elders, religious scholars, and local representatives – to settle social, ethnic, political and cultural disputes. Its consensual approach often leads to outcomes more acceptable than formal legal rulings.

A life devoted to peace-making

Ahmadi, originally from the Gulistan district in Farah province, spent his early years in Pakistan and

Iran. “I studied up to the third grade in Pakistan before migrating to Iran, where I endured in a seminary.

“After the fall of the Dr. Najibullah government, we returned to Afghanistan, and I have since been living in Nimroz for over 34 years,” he said.

Alongside his informal role as a mediator, Ahmadi has held various governmental positions in the previous tenure of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan: Customs director (3 years) Head of the Electricity Department (7 months) Deputy district chief for Chahar Burjak (7 months) Director of public health (11 months) Customs director in Faryab province

He was later elected to the Nimroz Provincial Council in 2005 (1384), where he also served as deputy head, earning broad public support due to his community work.

Enduring power of jirga

According to Ahmadi, the jirga system has not only endured through centuries but has recently seen a resurgence.”This tradition has always been part of Afghan culture, but in the past three years, its use has grown significantly, producing positive results,” he said. “Just last year, a 35-year-old dispute in Nimroz was peacefully resolved through a jirga.”

He emphasizes that jirgas are a cornerstone of Afghan identity, noting that they often bring genuine reconciliation—something court verdicts cannot always achieve.

From family legacy to social mission

The influential elder recalled his involvement in conflict resolution began well before he began his formal political role.

“During my service in customs, electricity and district administration, I was helping people solve problems. I took the path my father and uncles had chosen. I followed them like a student and will continue this mission for the rest of my life.”

Hundreds of cases addressed

While Ahmadi does not keep a precise count, he estimates he has mediated hundreds of cases over the past three years. These include family disputes, tribal conflicts, domestic violence, divorce cases, murders, financial issues and traffic accidents.

Quick, acceptable solutions

Ahmadi thinks jirgas yield faster and more acceptable outcomes than courts. “In court, one party usually wins and the other loses. But in a jirga, both sides feel heard and often agree to reconcile. They even forgive each other and celebrate together afterward,” he commented.

Asked whether anyone has ever rejected a jirga decision, he responded: “So far, no jirga decision has been rejected outright. In rare cases where hesitation exists, we revisit the parties two or three times, explain



the reasoning, and listen to their concerns. These cases, too, were eventually resolved.”

Trusted across borders

Ahmadi’s reputation extends beyond Nimroz. He has mediated disputes in several provinces, even internationally.

“In Farah, I helped resolve a case involving the murder of three youngsters. In Herat, I worked on economic disputes; in Helmand, longstanding tribal tensions; in

Kandahar, both murder and traffic incidents. “Just before Ramadan, I was invited to Paktia to sort out a traffic case. Six months ago, I was part of a delegation that traveled to Bandar Abbas, Iran, to help end a decades-old feud, which was resolved peacefully.”

A message for youth

“My message to youth is: Never give up, no matter how formidable challenges are. Never put down the pen. With knowledge, we can rebuild this country. Education is the key to fighting ignorance and darkness. Without it, we will fall behind.”

He believes educated youth can transform society, gain wisdom and eliminate internal divisions. “Human problems can be solved through knowledge,” he concluded.



MANILA: Activists and workers scuffle with police as they trying to remove barricades during a May Day rally near the Malacanang presidential palace in Philippines.

‘We are at a defining juncture in global affairs’

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS) Lahore held a seminar titled, "Is the US-led West Partnership Unravelling? Consequences for Global Order and Impact on Pakistan", on 30 April 2025. The seminar provided a platform to deliberate on the major implications for the fractured West-led global order and the impact on Pakistan.

A m b a s s a d o r Muhammad Haroon Shaukat (Retd) made the opening remarks, cautioning that a fragile international system, fuelled by trade wars and changing global norms, may increase regional instability and complicate Pakistan's efforts to confront its economic and geopolitical challenges.

Ambassador Javid Husain (Retd) delivered a keynote address, noting the far-reaching shift in the global strategic order. He observed the breakdown of the unipolar order and the rise of a multipolar world, where power politics increasingly over-ride international law, causing instability and undermining global institutions. China's rise threatens US global dominance. Ambassador Husain cautioned that deglobalisation may give way to economic fragmentation.

With this changing paradigm, he stressed that the power of a nation would depend on its economic and technical strength, coupled with its scientific advancements. He advocated stronger strategic ties with China and US as well as preserving credible security deterrence against India.



Dr. Rizwan Naseer, reflected on the apparent US-EU security rift, referring to strategic divergences in the approach to the Ukraine war and the EU's efforts to bolster its defence.

He warned that these drifts would impact South Asia, especially as the US enhances strategic cooperation with India, which could further exacerbate military and technological asymmetries in the region. Mr. Shahid Najam underscored a massive geo-economic shift in the 21st century, resulting from the rise of China and other Asian powers. He examined the economic consequences of the US-EU schism for Pakistan, which include economic impact, trade disruption and strategic challenges. He recommended a people-centric democratic vision, the need to refine macroeconomic goals and their management, the necessity of strengthening trade frameworks and boosting economic competitiveness and efficiency.

In his concluding remarks, Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd), President, CASS, Lahore, stated that we are at a defining juncture in global affairs. The erosion of long-standing Western alliances and the rise of nationalism are

reshaping the international order. This moment of global flux for Pakistan presents risks and rare opportunities. As traditional partnerships fragment, space opens for agile and visionary nations to reposition themselves strategically. Pakistan must respond with clarity, economic reform, and diversified diplomacy to secure its relevance and role in the evolving world order.

An engaging and thought-provoking discussion ensued during the interactive session. The majority of participants concurred with the identified trends in the evolving global order and expressed concern that Pakistan may encounter a range of new and complex challenges. It was emphasised that Pakistan must swiftly position itself to enhance its national power by prioritising economic development and advancing rapidly in high-end, new, and emerging technologies. The event was widely attended by academia, students, intellectuals, and domain experts. CASS is an independent think tank that continues to arrange academic events for academia and practitioners interested in National Security in its wider context.

Saif terms fuel price cut ‘too little, too late’

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Adviser, Barrister Dr. Saif, criticised the recent reduction in fuel prices, calling it not even a drop in the bucket.

In a statement, Barrister Saif said that global crude oil prices have been steadily declining, and based on international trends, petrol prices should have been reduced by at least Rs 20 per litre in April alone. However, he alleged that the federal government suspended fuel price cuts twice in April, denying the public much-needed relief.

He further stated that the government was not serious about providing economic relief and pointed out that current global crude prices were even lower than during PTI's tenure. According to the provincial adviser, petrol was Rs 150 per litre during Imran Khan's government, and he described Imran Khan as "the only leader who genuinely provided relief to the people."

SC fixes May 6 to hear review pleas

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) has fixed May 6 to take up the review petitions against its July 12, 2024 majority verdict declaring that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was entitled to get reserved seats for women and minorities in the National and provincial assemblies.

The review petitions filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) and Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) against the Supreme Court's July 12, 2024 verdict in the reserved seats case, will be heard by a 13-member constitutional bench of the apex court. The constitutional bench headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan comprises Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A. Malik, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Musarrat Hilali, Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan, Justice Muhammad Hashim Khan Kakar, Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan, Justice Salahuddin Panhwar, Justice Aamir Farooq and Justice Ali Baqar Najafi.

Meanwhile, the PTI's legal team has decided to challenge the composition of the constitutional bench. The PTI legal team contends that as per the Supreme Court's rules, a review petition can only be heard by that bench which announces the main verdict. The legal team argues that most of the judges of the currently formed constitutional bench were not part of that bench which had decided the main case.

It contends that most of the judges who were part of the majority judgment had been excluded from the constitutional bench, which was a malafide and illegal act. They say majority of judges of that bench are available, thus they should be included in the constitutional bench to hear the instant review petitions.

This unique majority verdict had given the PTI a new lease on life in the legislature to be a parliamentary party. Despite the 8-5 split, all 13 judges of the apex court had declared the PTI a parliamentary party.

No proof from India up to now suggests its own role in Pahalgam attack: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Thursday said India has failed to provide a shred of proof of Pakistan's involvement in Pahalgam incident up to now which suggested its own role in the attack.

"India, after Pahalgam incident, blamed Pakistan without any evidence, but Pakistan has offered a fair and transparent investigation to the matter," the minister told CNN. "They kept pointing their fingers (towards Pakistan)," he said, adding New Delhi used such incidents as pretexts to attack Pakistan in the past. "This is not the first time, they have done this before in the past, exploiting such incidents to their advantage," he added. He said the Indian government has so far not been able to pinpoint a single group which was involved.

"They will have to tell the world who was involved. You cannot just say that Pakistan was behind this. Our Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, while speaking at the passing out parade at the Military Academy, said that we are open to a fair, just, and impartial investigation, meaning thereby we have the clean hands," the minister stressed.

"We expressed our desire to conduct an impartial inquiry to prove a point we have nothing to do with this," he said, adding "now the situa-

tion diplomatically is very clear where we are engaged with our friendly nations talking to them and telling them what our perspective is." "Let's see how the situation unfolds in the near future," he stated.

To a query, he said, "we had very reliable and very authentic intelligence reports at the operational level. Obviously, the operational details cannot be shared, but we have confirmed reports that India will attack Pakistan, and this is not the first time, and let me also share that had I not, at that point in time, shared this information very timely with the world... with the international community." "So, you see, when you communicate things, sometimes they act as a deterrent. So, as a responsible state and non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, we had to share information very timely."

"There are three forms of deterrence: one is our capability, which is our very strong military, and we have always defended our motherland and we have always acted in self-defense as we have never been aggressors; second is the resolve, which is the resolve of the nation and the resolve of the people; and third is the communication." "So, communication plays a big part in averting crises, not only making the international community aware but also our local population aware of what is going on right now," the minister noted.

"Pakistan has always been desirous of peace, and Pakistan has always wanted peaceful coexistence, but having said that, we have a right to defend ourselves." "In all this situation, Pakistan is neither the aggressor, nor the provocateur," the minister said in response to another query.

He noted that Pakistan has not contributed to the escalation and "we have been saying that we have a right for self defense and we will defend ourselves," he affirmed. To another query, he said, "the situation is fluctuating and sometimes escalation is high and sometimes it is low; sometimes engagement with the diplomatic community, and this is an ever evolving situation."

"We keep receiving intelligence reports, and having said that, our armed forces are on alert; our armed forces are ready, and we are conducting exercises, and there is much at the operational level which I cannot share right now." To another query about Indian plans of conducting military attack on Pakistan, he reiterated "yes, there could be a possibility, based on the information that we have, and the kind of strategy we have here and the way we are watching developments in India. Yes, there is a possibility, that is why I said that Pakistan is always well prepared to defend that and our armed forces are ready for self defense."

Justice Mandokhail suggests to declare mining as formal Industry

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, has urged the government to recognize mining as a formal industry, highlighting the harsh and often deplorable conditions faced by workers, particularly miners in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

He made these remarks while addressing a high-level national conference under the theme "Workers and Employers in 2025: Navigating Change with Harmony." The event was organized by the National Industrial Relations Commission (NIRC) in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) Pakistan, marking the International Labour Day on Thursday.

Delivering the keynote address as chief guest, Justice Mandokhail emphasized that in the eyes of the law and Islam employers and workers are equal, and the Supreme Court stands as the ultimate guardian of their rights. He expressed deep concern over the absence of institutional safeguards for mine workers and called for legal and administrative reforms to ensure their protection and welfare.

"A judge must follow the law, but justice is not limited to the courts."

Every individual is responsible for ensuring justice in their actions," he said. Quoting Article 17 of the Constitution, he noted that the right to association is a fundamental right and added that labour unions must work to protect legal rights while promoting harmony. "Cordial relations and mutual consultation between employees and employers can help reduce the growing backlog of labour-related cases in courts," he observed.

Justice Jawad Hassan of the Lahore High Court praised Pakistan's legislative framework for labour rights, saying the country has a long-standing tradition of progressive labour laws, starting with the Industrial Relations Ordinance of 1969. "Pakistan has signed nearly all 48 international treaties relating to labour rights," he added. In his opening remarks, Justice (Retd.) Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui, Chairman of NIRC, said the commission's core mandate is to keep the national industry moving forward while safeguarding workers' interests.

Renowned jurist Barrister Dr. Zafarullah Khan cited the Holy Quran in stating that the mission of the prophets was to establish justice. He added that "According to Islamic teachings, lawful and hard-earned income is not just permissible—it is an act of worship. Islam replaced

slavery-based labour systems with principles of liberty, equity, and dignity." A technical session followed the inaugural speeches, featuring addresses delivered by Muhammad Asim Khichi, Managing Director of Associated Press of Pakistan; Tahir Yaqoob Bhatti, President of ZTBL; Shoaib Adi, Additional Secretary, Pakistan Railways; Faisal Nisar Chaudhry, MD of Utility Stores Corporation; and Mir Ibrahim Rehman, CEO of Geo TV.

Labour leaders including Syed Nazar Ali, General Secretary of the Employees Federation of Pakistan; Khurshid Ahmad, General Secretary of the WAPDA & Hydro Power Employees Association; Shams ur Rahman Swati, President of the National Liberation Federation; and Chaudhry Yasin, General Secretary, Employees Federation of Pakistan, shared their perspectives on strengthening labour-employer cooperation. The event was attended by a large number of workers, legal experts, and dignitaries, including Justice (Retd.) Mian Shakerullah Jan, former Supreme Court Judge; Syed Atique Shah, Chief Justice of the Peshawar High Court; Mr. Geir Thomas Tonstol, Country Director of ILO Pakistan; and Salman Mansoor Siddiqui, General Secretary of the Supreme Court Bar Association.

US Senate rejects bid to block Trump's tariffs

WASHINGTON: The United States Senate has rejected an effort to block US President Donald Trump's tariffs amid bipartisan concerns about the impact of his trade salvos on the economy.

The upper house of the US Congress voted 49-49 to knock back the resolution on Wednesday, hours after government data showed that the US economy shrank for the first time in three years. Three Republican senators — Rand Paul of Kentucky, Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska — voted for the measure in a rare rebuke of Trump from within his own party, along with all present Democrats and Independents.

"The United States Senate cannot be an idle spectator in the tariff madness," Democratic Senator Ron Wyden, who represents Oregon, said ahead of the vote. "The Congress has the power to set tariffs and regulate global trade."

The resolution was widely viewed as a symbolic gesture since it was unlikely to have gained traction in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives and would ultimately be subject to Trump's veto power. "It's still a debate worth having, because, you know, if a month from now, we have massive tariffs go on, and we have a massive sell off in the stock market, and we didn't have a first good quarter in growth, and if it's worse again in the second quarter, people would start asking, 'Is it good policy, or is it a bad policy?'" Paul, who co-sponsored the resolution, said of the failed vote. Trump has played down fears that his sweeping tariffs, including a 145 percent duty on China, could tip the US into recession. — Aljazeera



ISLAMABAD: Chief of JUI-F Maulana Fazlur Rehman addressing during condolence reference of Shaheed Hamid-Ul-Haq and Yakehti Palestine conference.

Israeli drone strikes kill four in Lebanon

BEIRUT: The Israeli military resumed drone strikes on targets in southern border areas of Lebanon on Thursday. One such attack on a vehicle in Mays Al-Jabal killed three people collecting scrap from damaged buildings. The Lebanese Health Ministry said the two passengers in the vehicle were Syrian nationals. Hezbollah media outlets identified the driver as Lebanese citizen Izzat Karout.

Less than two hours later, another drone attack in the same area killed a motorcycle rider, said to be a former paramedic who had been injured in a previous Israeli raid. Mays Al-Jabal municipality gave his name as Oussama Bahij Farhat, a volunteer with Lebanese Civil Defense. Citing a security source, Israel's Channel 12 news reported that the "second attack was carried out to target a Hezbollah member."

Since the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hezbollah came into effect in November, deaths caused by Israeli attacks have continued to be daily occurrences, with more than 2,000 Israeli viola-

tions of Lebanese sovereignty recorded in the south of the country, Beirut's southern suburbs and areas in the east along the border with Syria. Also on Thursday, intensive activity by Israeli reconnaissance planes in Lebanese airspace was observed, particularly in the skies over Beirut and its southern suburbs.

A political source told Arab News the latest activity was "proof that Israel has not responded to any diplomatic pressure aimed at halting its violations." The ceasefire agreement, mediated by the US and France, stipulated that Hezbollah must withdraw from border areas south of the Litani River and dismantle its military infrastructure, allowing the Lebanese army to strengthen its presence there in coordination with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon.

Israeli forces, which carried out a ground offensive in southern Lebanon in October, withdrew following the peace deal but maintained a presence on five hills they describe as strategic locations. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun, who returned

to Beirut on Thursday after an official visit to the UAE, said the "Lebanese army controls more than 85 percent of the south after clearing it, in a military sense, as part of its commitments to the ceasefire agreement."

Meanwhile, the US Embassy in Lebanon said Maj. Gen. Michael Leeney was joining the Cessation of Hostilities Implementation Mechanism, the international group set up to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire agreement, "as a full-time senior US military leader in Beirut." His appointment continues the strong relationship between the Lebanese Armed Forces and the US military, it added. Maj. Gen. Jasper Jeffers, will continue to chair the mechanism while fulfilling his other duties as commander of US Special Operations Forces in the Levant, Gulf and Central Asia, the embassy said. During meetings with Leeney, Lebanese officials were united in their calls for action to halt "Israel's continued violations of the agreement." — Arab News

Pakistan, Korea agree to strengthen bilateral ties

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar on Thursday held a telephone conversation with the Republic of Korea's Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul. He apprised Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul of the escalating regional situation arising from India's baseless propaganda and

unilateral actions, including holding the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance.

Expressing concern over the situation, Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul underscored the importance of resolving issues through dialogue and diplomacy to maintain regional peace and security. As non-permanent members of the UN Security Council, the two leaders

reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening multilateral cooperation. Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul appreciated the successful co-hosting of the Third United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Preparatory Meeting, in Islamabad last month. They also agreed to further strengthening bilateral relations through high-level exchanges.