

Pak-Iran to work for peace
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: National Security Adviser Lt Gen Asim Malik on Monday held a telephonic conversation with his Iranian counterpart General Ali Akbar amid the regional tensions. During the conversation, both sides emphasized the importance of political, economic and security cooperation between the two neighbouring countries.



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Dar arrives in Beijing on official visit

BEIJING (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday arrived in Beijing on a three-day official visit from May 19-21. He was received at the airport by senior Chinese officials and Ambassador of Pakistan to China, Khalil Hashmi, a DPM Office's news release said.

In Beijing, Ishaq Dar will hold comprehensive discussions with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, and other senior Chinese leaders, including key members of Chinese Communist Party, according to a Foreign Office press release. The meetings will focus on current regional developments and multiple dimensions of Pakistan-China relations.

The visit is a part of high-level exchanges between Pakistan and China, and a reaffirmation of the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between the two brotherly countries. Prior to his departure, DPM Dar told the media that China was a major trading partner of Pakistan and that both countries enjoyed an iron-clad close relationship.

He said that during the last three weeks, he had two telephonic interactions with FM Wang Yi, who had also invited him to visit China. Dar said that his meetings with the Chinese leadership would mark discussions on political, local, regional and global issues, besides recent tensions between Pakistan and India. To a question, he referred to his telephonic interactions with many counterparts worldwide, saying that Pakistan had already exposed the Indian blame-game against Pakistan, including attack on any nuclear installation.

6 of a family killed in Peshawar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: At least six members of the same family were shot dead in a violent attack allegedly carried out by neighbors in Khatako Pul, a suburban area here on Monday.

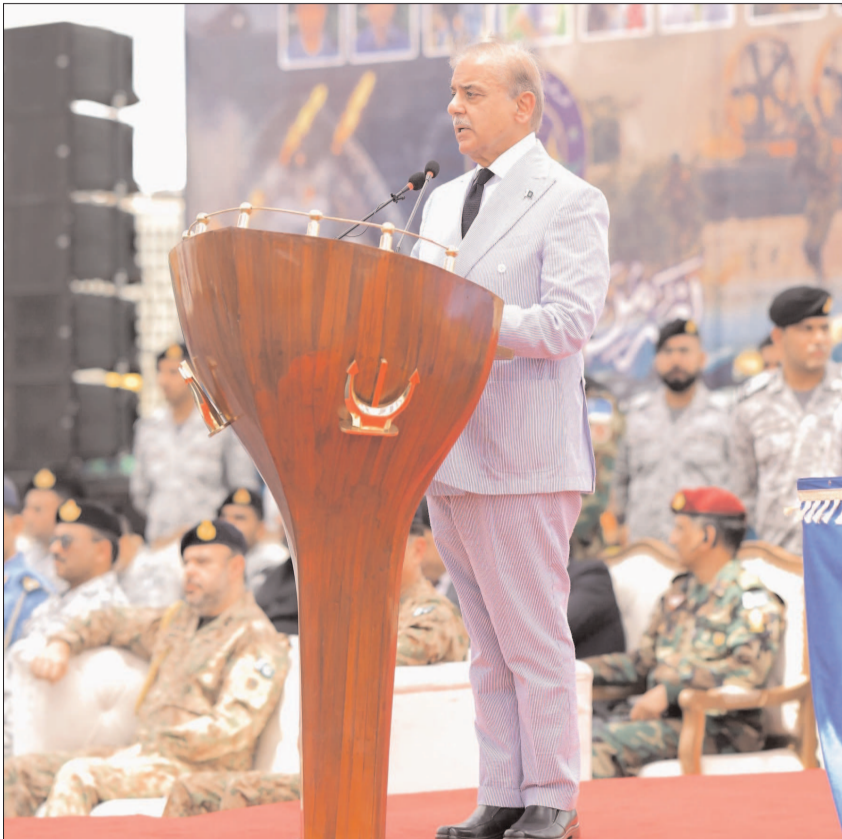
The tragic incident took place in the jurisdiction of the Urmur Police Station.

According to police, the attackers opened fire on a neighboring house, resulting in the deaths of six people, including three women and two children. One woman was critically injured and has been shifted to Lady Reading Hospital for medical treatment.

The deceased have been identified as Shamshad, wife of Atlas; Noreen, wife of Ramzan; Hazrat Ameen, son of Atlas; Fazal Ameen, son of Atlas; a 10-year-old girl named Huma, daughter of Fazal; and a 3-year-old boy named Ahmed, son of Fazal Ameen. The injured woman has been identified as Bushra, wife of Naseem.

Police officials said the incident may have been triggered by an ongoing feud, as the victims were accused by the assailants of involvement in the murder of a woman related to them. The suspects, identified as Shamshad and Mansoor, sons of Murshad Ali and residents of Urmur Miana, fled the scene after the attack.

Law enforcement teams reached the location shortly after the incident, transferring the bodies for postmortem examinations and launching a manhunt to apprehend the suspects. A case has been registered at Urmur police station and investigations are underway.



KARACHI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif addressing the officers and sailors of Pakistan Navy at Naval Dockyard.

Pakistan committed to regional stability

Pakistan denounces Indian media's false claims of Shaheen Missile use in Operation

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Monday categorically rejected baseless and misleading claims, propagated by segments of Indian media, alleging use of Pakistan's Shaheen missile during Operation Bunyanum Marsoos (BM).

In an official statement, Foreign Office Spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan condemned the allegations as "unfounded" and part of a broader campaign of disinformation. He noted that the claims gained traction after Indian Army's official Twitter account shared a video purporting to show Pakistan's use of Shaheen missile — an assertion that was quickly debunked and led to the post being deleted. However, by then, various Indian media outlets had already circulated the narrative without verification, he added.

"The Indian Army has

offered no clarification or retraction following the removal of its erroneous post. This silence raises serious questions about the credibility and intent behind such disinformation," he remarked. He said that spread of such false narratives, apparently aimed at distracting from India's setbacks in Operation Sindoor and from Pakistan's conventional military successes. "Rather than acknowledging the ground realities, India seems intent on manufacturing stories to deflect attention and mislead public and international observers," the spokesperson said.

He further highlighted that detailed information on the weaponry used by Pakistan in Operation BM was publicly released in the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) statement on 12 May 2025. According to the ISPR, the

Pakistan Armed Forces deployed precision-guided Fatah series missiles (F1 and F2), advanced long-range loitering munitions, and highly accurate long-range artillery — none of which included Shaheen missile.

"These details are available in the public domain, and any credible analysis should reference them, rather than rely on speculative and inflammatory reports," he said. Calling for responsible journalism and institutional accountability, he warned that the dissemination of unverified and provocative content endangered regional peace and reflected poorly on the professionalism of state institutions. The Ministry reiterated Pakistan's commitment to regional stability and transparency while urging the Indian side to refrain from narratives that undermined dialogue and mutual trust.

Security forces killed 12 Khwarij in KP, Balochistan

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Security Forces killed nine Khwarij belonging to Indian Proxy, Fitna Al Khwarij in multiple engagements in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province on May 17 and 18.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, an intelligence based operation (IBO) was conducted by the Security Forces in Lakki Marwat District.

During the conduct of operation, own troops effectively engaged the khwarij location and resultantly, five Indian sponsored khwarij were sent to hell.

In a second IBO, conducted in Bannu District, two Indian sponsored Khwarij were successfully neutralized by the security forces. In another incident that occurred in general area Mir Ali, North Waziristan District, khwarij ambushed a security forces convoy. Own troops responded effectively and sent to hell two Indian sponsored khwarij.

However, during the intense fire exchange, two brave sons of soil, Sepoy Farhad Ali Turi (age: 29 years, resident of District

Kurram) and Lance Naik Sabir Afridi (age: 32 years, resident of District Kohat) having fought gallantly, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced shahadat. Sanitization operations are being conducted to eliminate any other Kharij found in the area, as the security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism perpetrated by Indian proxies, and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

Meanwhile, three terrorists belonging to Indian proxy, so called Baloch Liberation Front, were killed in two separate engagements in Balochistan. An intelligence based operation was conducted by the Security Forces in general area Gishkur, Awaran District, on reported presence of Indian sponsored terrorists. During the conduct of operation, own troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location and after an intense fire exchange, Indian sponsored Terrorist Younas was killed, while two Indian sponsored terrorists got injured.

In another engagement in Turbat City, Kech District, security forces

successfully neutralized two Indian sponsored terrorists; Terrorist ring leader Sabir Ullah and Terrorist Amjad @ Bicho.

Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the killed Indian sponsored terrorists, who remained actively involved in multiple terrorist activities against the Law Enforcement Agencies as well as target killing of innocent civilians. Sanitization operations are being conducted to eliminate any terrorist present in the area, as security forces of Pakistan, in step with the nation, remain determined to thwart attempts by Indian proxies at sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif paid tribute to security forces for killing three and arresting two injured terrorists of the Indian supported terrorist organization Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) in Kech and Awaran districts of Balochistan.

President Asif Ali Zardari paid tribute to security forces for eliminating three terrorists in two different operations in Balochistan.

JCP names Ejaz Swati as BHC CJ

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Judicial Commission of Pakistan has unanimously nominated Muhammad Ejaz Swati as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Baluchistan. He is currently working as Acting CJ BHC.

Meeting of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan was held on Monday at the Conference Room of the Supreme Court premises for considering the nominations for appointment of Chief Justice of the High Court of Balochistan. The Commission, by consensus, nominated Mr. Muhammad Ejaz Swati, Acting Chief Justice High Court of Balochistan for his appointment as Chief Justice of High Court of Balochistan.

Meanwhile, the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi, chaired fourth interactive session at the Supreme Court of Pakistan, engaging with senior officials, stakeholders, and officers of the Supreme Court to review progress on judicial reforms aimed at improving service delivery and expanding access to justice.

The session, attended by Registrar of the Supreme Court Mr. Muhammad Salim Khan, development expert Mr. Sher Shah online from Paris, Mr. Hamayun Zafar IT Expert, Director General of the Federal Judicial Academy Mr. Hayat Ali Shah, and Secretary of the Law, Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP) Syeda Tanzeela Sabahat and section heads of the Supreme Court of Pakistan focused on reviewing progress in key areas such as digitalization, procedural efficiency, accountability, and transparency.

During the session, Chief Justice Afridi commended the collective efforts of the Supreme Court's officers and stakeholders in driving transformative reforms. He lauded the dedication of the teams behind the successful implementation of the E-Filing system, which has significantly enhanced case management efficiency nationwide.

Pakistan 'sets' budget 2025-26 targets

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has set targets for the upcoming budget of 2025-26. According to sources, Pakistan has set a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth target of 4.4% is being proposed for budget 2025-26.

The new budget also proposes a 4.8% growth target for the agriculture sector. A growth target of 4.8% is being considered for the industrial sector as well. Furthermore, the sources said the services sector is expected to have a proposed growth target of 4.3%.

Sources say these proposed economic targets for the next fiscal year will first be presented in the Annual Plan Coordination Committee (APCC) meeting. Final approval for these targets will be sought from the National Economic Council (NEC). For the current fiscal year, the federal government has set a GDP growth target of 3.6%. The agriculture production target for the ongoing year is set at 2%, while the industrial sector has a target of 4.4%, and the services sector 4.1%. Earlier, the IMF urged Pakistan to gradually phase out federal funding for provincial development projects under the PSDP.

PM: Pakistan dominated India in naval warfare

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif praised Pakistan's armed forces for delivering a decisive lesson to the enemy which "they will remember until the Day of Judgment."

Addressing naval officers and personnel in Karachi, the prime minister emphasised the nation's unwavering support for its military, standing like a "wall of steel" behind them. Sharif highlighted the precision strikes by the Pakistan Army on enemy targets and the Air Force's use of advanced technology to teach the adversary a lasting lesson.

He noted that the Pakistan Navy was equally prepared, ready to repeat the historic triumph of Dwarka. "The enemy lacked the courage to confront our Navy's readiness," he said, adding that the combined efforts of the Army and Air Force had already humiliated the adversary, preventing further escalation.

The prime minister described the operation as a proud chapter in Pakistan's history, reinforcing the country's invincibility. He paid tribute to Lieutenant Yasir, martyred at PNS Mehran, for his selfless sacrifice in defending Pakistan's honour and naval assets. "Our martyrs are the pride of our nation," Sharif declared.

PM also referenced India's recent failed military misadventure, stating that the Indian Navy's pride, the aircraft carrier Vikrant, dared not approach within 400 nautical miles. He attributed this to Pakistan's exemplary defence strategy and

the resolute determination of its forces.

The prime minister credited the success to the coordinated strategy of Pakistan's armed forces, particularly under the leadership of Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, which he said reinvigorated national resolve.

During the operation, Pakistan's ports, including Karachi and Bin Qasim, remained fully operational, with commercial ships moving uninterrupted. In contrast, India's western coast saw a significant decline in trade activity, with its navy, despite being five times larger, appearing paralyzed. Sharif remarked, "Our sharks chased away the Indian whale," referring to the retreat of India's Rafale jets and Vikrant.

Earlier, upon arrival, the prime minister was received by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf. Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir and Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Baber Sidhu were also present on the occasion. During the visit, the Prime Minister boarded the Type-054A Class Destroyer PNS TAIMUR, where he was briefed by Commander Pakistan Fleet about Pakistan Navy's strategic orientation, operational undertakings, and noteworthy contributions.

Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar and Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddique were accompanying the prime minister during the visit.

'India is not Israel, Pakistan is not Palestine'
ISPR DG warns of swift, brutal response

RAWALPINDI:

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry issued a strong warning to India, stating that Pakistan will respond "swiftly and brutally" to any future aggression, emphasising that "India is not Israel, and Pakistan is not Palestine."

In an interview with Turkey's state news agency, the ISPR chief said Pakistan had suffered more than any other country from terrorism, facing over 3,700 terrorist incidents since January 2024 alone. These attacks have resulted in 3,896 deaths, including 1,314 security personnel, and have left over 2,500 people disabled. He noted that India directly supported and funded terrorism within Pakistan, adding that "millions of Pakistanis have paid the price in the war against terrorism."

Speaking on the Kashmir issue, the military spokesperson reiterated that it remained an internationally recognised dispute. "India is trying to turn it into an internal matter through force and oppres-

sion," he said. Lt Gen Chaudhry strongly warned India: "We are a peace-loving nation, but if provoked, our response will be fast and fierce. India is not the United States, and Pakistan is not Afghanistan. India is not Israel, and Pakistan is not Palestine. Pakistan will not bow to Indian domination." He added that the sooner India realises this, the better it will be for regional and global peace.

Responding to allegations over the Pahalgam incident, the ISPR DG said India failed to present any evidence implicating Pakistan.

"New Delhi is using such incidents to justify their propaganda," Referring to the Jaffar Express attack, he revealed that the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) openly sought military assistance from India, and several Indian politicians and retired generals expressed public support for the group.

He also claimed that Pakistan recently shot down five Indian fighter jets, including three Rafale aircraft, during recent escalations. "The world knows

these jets were downed, but India refuses to acknowledge the truth," he concluded. Earlier ISPR DG told a foreign news outlet that the Pakistani military has issued a strong warning, stating that any Indian attempt to disrupt Pakistan's share of the Indus River waters would lead to repercussions lasting generations.

"We hope such a moment never comes, but if India tries to block our water, the consequences will be far-reaching and long-lasting. No one can dare stop the water supply to over 240 million Pakistanis," he added. Pakistan has reported that recent Indian military actions have resulted in the deaths of 40 civilians, including 22 women and children. In response, Pakistan launched retaliatory strikes on 26 Indian military sites, halting its operations once a ceasefire agreement was reached. "Our armed forces are professional and fully committed to upholding the decisions of the civilian leadership," Chaudhry said. — Agencies

UK seals landmark post-Brexit EU deal

LONDON (Reuters):

Britain agreed the most significant reset of defence and trade ties with the European Union since Brexit on Monday after US President Donald Trump's upending of the global order pushed the two sides to move on from their acrimonious divorce.

Nearly nine years after it voted to leave the bloc, Britain, the second largest defence spender in Europe, will take part in joint procurement projects. The sides also agreed to make it easier for UK food and visitors to reach the EU, and signed a contentious new fishing deal. Trump's tariffs, along-

side warnings that Europe should do more to protect itself, forced governments around the world to rethink trade, defence and security ties, bringing British Prime Minister Keir Starmer closer to France's Emmanuel Macron and other European leaders.

Starmer, who backed remaining in the EU in the Brexit referendum, also bet that offering benefits to Britons, such as the use of faster e-gates at EU airports, would drown out the cries of "betrayal" from Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage. Flanked by EU Commission President Ursula von der

Leyen and European Council President Antonio Costa, Starmer said the deal marked "a new era in our relationship".

Von der Leyen said it sent a message to the world: "At a time of global instability, and when our continent faces the greatest threat it has for generations, we in Europe stick together." Britain said the reset with its biggest trading partner would reduce red tape for food and agricultural producers, making food cheaper, improve energy security and adding nearly £9 billion (\$12.1 billion) to the economy by 2040.

Biden diagnosed with 'aggressive form' of prostate cancer

NEW YORK (APP): Former US President Joe Biden has been diagnosed with an "aggressive form" of prostate cancer that has spread to the bone, a family spokesperson said in a statement.

Biden, 82, was diagnosed on May 16 after "experiencing urinary symptoms," and a "nodule" was discovered on his prostate, according to the statement. While the diagnosis indicates the former president has one of

the worst forms of the disease, it "appears to be hormone-sensitive, which allows for effective management," the spokesperson said in Greenville, Delaware, where the former president lives.

"The President and his family are reviewing treatment options with his physicians," the statement added. Biden, who served as president from 2021 to 2025, abruptly ended his reelection bid last July, weeks after a

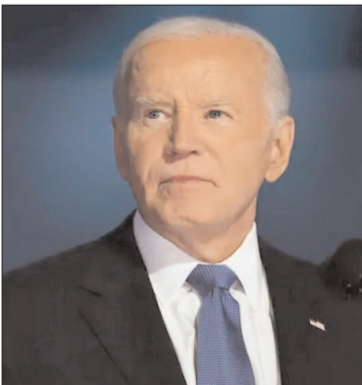
halting performance during a debate against then Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump prompted panic among his fellow Democrats. Vice President Kamala Harris took over as the party's nominee but lost in November to Trump.

Biden's physical health and mental acuity drew intense media scrutiny even before the debate. At the time of his election, Biden was the oldest person to win the presidency — Trump,

78, broke that record when he defeated Harris in 2024. Biden previously served as vice president under former President Barack Obama and as a United States senator who was first elected to the office in 1972. Biden's cancer diagnosis came on the same day audio was published of his interview with Special Counsel Robert Hur. The former president's halting speech and memory lapses in the interview — and new books about

Biden — have renewed questions about his fitness when he ran in 2024 to serve a second term.

Biden said in a May 8 interview on ABC's "The View" of allegations he suffered cognitive decline: "They are wrong." He maintained he would've won if he stayed in the race. The Biden family has been devastated by cancer before. The former president's son, Beau Biden, died of a brain tumor in 2015.





LAHORE: People enjoying bathing at BRB canal during hot weather in Provincial Capital. —INP Photo

CM approves annual development programs of 12 districts

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif presided over a marathon six-hour special meeting in which the district annual development program was reviewed, here on Monday. For the first time in Punjab's history, the chief minister herself approved the annual development program of 12 districts.

The meeting related to the development program, anti-encroachment and beautification of the remaining districts will be held again tomorrow (May 20). All commissioners and deputy commissioners from across the province attended the meeting and the beautification along with anti-encroachment operation in the districts was reviewed.

The CM said that eliminating encroachments and maintaining cleanliness standards were among the major challenges facing the administration. She added that commissioners and deputy commissioners had been given complete authority to perform their duties without external interference. She said that assembly members had also expressed satisfaction over the progress and improvements seen in various social and development sectors within their respective districts. "Our competition is not with any previous government, but with ourselves with regard to performance. Overall performance remained satisfactory but there is a lot needs to be done for improvement. The sense of relief among the people is our real success. We are facing dearth of time and there is a lot to be done for the welfare of the people" she remarked.

She said, "The departments could not be completely free from corruption, corruption is highly regrettable in my presence. A comprehensive crackdown against corruption must be carried out so as to stamp it out permanently. It was decided to ensure sustainable uplifting of the roads, markets and bazaars of all tehsils in the province." She directed to carry out the construction of model rickshaw stands in every city. She also directed to ensure payment to the

owners of the land acquired for land acquisition at market rates. She directed to carry out CCTV monitoring of government land retrieved after the elimination of encroachments. She directed the establishment of sports areas and urban forests on the retrieved and available government lands in the cities across Punjab.

The CM directed administrative officers to conduct daily visits to ensure the elimination of encroachments along with inspecting lane marking on the roads to prevent temporary encroachments. She directed the removal of electricity poles on the roads and further directed to carry out construction of tuff tile footpaths along the newly constructed road.

The CM directed the transfer of grain, fruit and vegetable markets outside the cities along with their uniform uplifting. She directed to install planters and one-colour uniform theme lighting on the overhead bridges and directed to install solar street lights. She also directed to plant trees of the same style between the roads. She directed to ensure a ban on building by-laws in all districts. She directed to provide more electric vehicles for the general public in Faisalabad along with providing best infrastructure and beautification in every market of the historic Ghanta Ghar of Faisalabad. The meeting reviewed the elimination of encroachments in other markets and roads including Sargodha Gol Chowk.

The CM approved a plan for urban uplifting of Rawalpindi Raja Bazaar. The meeting decided to restore the historical buildings of Rawalpindi in collaboration with the Walled City Authority. The CM was informed in the briefing that 85 percent of the violations were being eliminated in Sahiwal and continuous monitoring was being carried out. Sahiwal's Saddar Bazaar and Pakpattan Bazaar will be given a new look by carrying out uplifting plan.

She approved the project of shifting the General Bus Stand of Sahiwal

along with restoring 278-year-old Wali Muhammad Mosque of Multan. It was decided to uplift the Sher Shah Interchange and Liaquatabad Road of Multan. She approved the construction of 22 bus stops in Multan city. The meeting reviewed the nine-kilometer long Multan Avenue project along the roads on the Northern Bypass.

She directed an early completion of the expansion and restoration of Chowk Ghanta Ghar Multan. The briefing apprised that Sialkot Fort, Iqbal Manzil will be constructed and renovated on 17 kanals in Sialkot and Baab-e-Sialkot will be built. Encroachments had been removed at 1,089 places in Sialkot. Removal of encroachments and construction and expansion were underway in the central Liaquat Bazaar of Dera Ghazi Khan. The CM approved the project for the construction and expansion of Shah Sikandar Road.

She directed the early completion of the extensive sports area project in DG Khan and directed the DG Khan administration to provide 4 electric carts. She approved the construction and expansion of Bahawalpur Fareed Gate as well as the project for the food street, the beautification of Bahawalpur's 200-year-old Al-Sadiq Mosque and the construction of a connecting road. The project for the beautification of Satellite and Model Town was also approved.

She approved the repair of the internal markets of Rahim Yar Khan, installation of fiberglass roofs, mist fans and water coolers. She also directed to build a new food street in Gujranwala on the model of Lahore. It was apprised in the briefing that 6416 kanals of government land worth Rs. 9.2 billion were retrieved in Faisalabad. 116 markets and roads in Gujranwala along with 6566 permanent encroachment structures were removed. The target of cleaning the entire Gujranwala from encroachments and illegal cattle fences will be achieved. The solid waste dumping site on Gujranwala GT Road will be converted into a green area.

Action-oriented diplomatic efforts termed key to globalizing Kashmir issue

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The portrayal of the Kashmir issue as a bilateral matter between India and Pakistan is gradually giving way to a more globalized understanding, driven in part by diaspora activism.

At the same time, Pakistan's recent shift in diplomacy is characterized by compelling narratives and a more prominent presence in world media discourse. Harnessing this momentum for the Kashmir cause involves articulating a coherent policy, forging closer ties between diplomatic missions and diaspora-driven advocacy, investing in policy research, and deepening engagement with academic and media platforms.

These views were shared at a gathering of Kashmiri diaspora leaders, activists, and former diplomats at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Islamabad, under the theme "Rejuvenated Case of



Kashmir: Perspectives and Future Prospects." The delegation included Muhammad Ghalib, president Tehreek-e-Kashmir Europe, Dr Muzammil Ayyub Thakur, president World Kashmir Freedom Movement, and Zaffar Nazir Quraishi, chairman Kashmir Campaign Global. Also present were Ambassador (r) Sardar Masood Khan, former president AJK, as the chief guest, Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, and other participants.

Speakers underscored that aligning grassroots activism with state-level diplomacy through a unified, narrative-driven strategy is essential to reshaping perceptions and advancing the Kashmir cause on the international stage as a human rights concern.

Ambassador (r) Masood Khan said a shared ideological commitment unites all organizations working for the Kashmir cause. He said it is Pakistan's responsibility to match the diaspora's resolve and amplify the Kashmir cause on the global stage. He listed three key outcomes that have emerged after the Pakistan-India hostilities: The US has begun treating both countries as strategic equals, trade considerations are shifting toward parity, and the Kashmir issue has regained global visibility. He added that Pakistan must strengthen its diplomatic, military, and economic pillars while fostering unity.

Muhammad Ghalib called on Pakistan's foreign missions to more actively support diaspora initiatives aimed at

raising awareness. A clear and consistent Kashmir policy is essential for advancing Pakistan's position globally, and the government should formally engage key countries and energize its diplomatic apparatus. In Europe, the prevailing view of Kashmir as a bilateral issue deters intervention. However, he said, recent events have highlighted the urgency of resolving the conflict, as the consequences could be dire.

Zaffar Quraishi cited the lack of coordination among the Kashmiri activists and urged unifying their efforts under a broader platform. Pakistan's active and sustained support is vital to this legitimate struggle, which requires preparing a comprehensive strategic framework. It is time for Pakistan to fully own the Kashmir issue and take concrete diplomatic and strategic steps.

Muzammil Thakur noted a shift in public interest in the Kashmir issue within the UK, driven by increased outreach and community-level engagement. He said perceptions about India have also changed. India's use of bot accounts to promote pro-Israel narratives has undermined its credibility and damaged its international image. On social media, Pakistani users have successfully countered Indian disinformation, often using satire and humor to their advantage. This evolving narrative landscape now favors the Kashmiri cause and must be strategically harnessed to sustain progress.

Action continues against drug traffickers

LAHORE (APP): The police arrested over 4,700 suspects and registered more than 4,600 cases during the current year.

A spokesperson for the police said, the department had seized 2,660-kg of cannabis and 338-kg of crystal meth ("Ice") from the accused. Additionally, 215-kg opium, 207-kg heroin and over 26,000 litres of liquor had also been recovered. The division-wise arrest figures include: 891 suspects from City division, 1,059 from Cantonment division, 462 from Civil Lines division, 755 from Saddar division, 640 from Iqbal Town, 897 from Model Town.

CCPO Bilal Siddique Kamyana ordered the continuation of a comprehensive crackdown on drug networks. "Protecting our youth from drugs, especially crystal meth, is one of our top responsibilities," he said. He directed regular search and combing operations around educational institutions to root out drug peddlers.

PITB geo-tags 3,868 mines

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB), in collaboration with the Punjab Mines & Minerals Department, has successfully geo-tagged over 3,868 mineral reserves using the Chief Inspectorate of Mines App since Oct 2021.

This emerged during a progress review meeting presided over by PITB Chairman Faisal Yousaf, here on Monday. The Chief Inspectorate of Mines App, developed by PITB, enables digital inspection and oversight of mining sites across six different regions with 2,416 inspections completed by 10 inspectors since August 2023.

Additionally, the system facilitates the monitoring of emergency rescue equipment and allows timely incident reporting, enhancing safety and compliance in Punjab's mining sector.

On this occasion, PITB Chairman Faisal Yousaf stated, "This digital solution streamlines mining operations and strengthens real-time monitoring of compliance, advancing the mining sector towards greater transparency and safety."

Police conduct general parade

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Police under the directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Usman Anwar conducted weekly general parades in the province, including Lahore, with active participation from various specialised units and senior officers overseeing the proceedings.

Senior police officers inspected the parades and reviewed the turnout and preparedness of the participating officers. Contingents from multiple units, including Police Lines, Dolphin Force, Anti-Riot Force, Traffic Police, Mujahid Squad, Special Protection Unit (SPU), Operational Command Units (OCU), Investigation Wing, Operations Wing and the Ladies Police took part in the parade.

According to the Punjab police spokesperson, in addition to the parade, district officers carried out inspections of various departments, including the Motor Transport Wing, stores, armories and unit-form depots. IG Punjab Dr Usman Anwar emphasised that the general parade is not only a demonstration of the force's discipline but also a reflection of its rich history and traditions.

JI's protest over water shortage and K-IV project

KARACHI (PPI): Jamaat-e-Islami leader Saifuddin Advocate has strongly criticized the water shortage in Karachi and the delay in the K-IV project.

He stated that despite the lack of water supply in the city, the Mayor of Karachi is planning for the future while ignoring current issues.

Saifuddin Advocate mentioned that the cost of the K-IV project, which was initially 20 billion rupees, has now reached 200 billion rupees.

According to the MD Water Corporation, the project will be completed by 2027. He noted that the city's water lines frequently burst under the planning, with an 84-inch line bursting 6 times in 8 months.

He labeled the Mayor of Karachi as a parachuter and criticized PPP, saying that this party is like a leech to the city and the country. He also accused SBCA of being a patron of illegal mafias in the city and stated that every institution has become a mafia.

Saifuddin Advocate said that not a single agenda in today's City Council meeting is in favor of the city. The first agenda is to give 5000 acres of land to K-Electric. He accused PPP of water terrorism, alleging that the party is planning to destroy the city's peace.

He announced that Jamaat-e-Islami will protest for the city's rights and take to the streets. He declared that there will be vigorous action and they will not sit quietly until they secure the city's rights.

Pakistan turned Indian military operation Sindoor into Operation Vidwa. Nusrat Mirza

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Nusrat Mirza (Chairman, Rabita Form International) said that Pakistan turned Indian operation Sindoor into Operation vidwa. Pakistan has proved on ground & in air that we are far ahead of India's militarily & they cannot compete with Pakistani conventional weapons. We are also ahead of India in non-conventional weapons. Our Air Force is the hero of this battle & we are 20 years ahead of India because of the modern air equipment & Pakistan Air Force maintained the tradition of air dominance, we destroyed 26 important military installations from Srinagar to Rajasthan, including Indian air bases, brigade headquarters, and Brahmos missile depots. He

expressed these views while addressing a seminar organized under the auspices of the Rabat Forum International in Karachi on the success of Operation "Binan Marsus" and its effects.

Addressing to the seminar Iram Tanveer said that the illusion of India being a great economic power and IT expert has disappeared. India's reputation has been damaged & the world has not accepted its narrative. We should also be prepared to deal with future threats. Pakistan proved to be invincible in this battle.

While speaking in seminar other speakers that includes Dr. Talat Wazare, Former Ambassador GR Baloch, Former Ambassador Rafi-uz-Zaman, Professor Dr. Uzma Shujaat, Samrin Bari

& Shakeel Ahmed Siddiqui said that India cannot unilaterally terminate the Indus Waters Treaty. Pakistan is fully prepared to defend itself. Modi's political and diplomatic reputation has been severely damaged. The illusion of India's large economy and access to IT has been shattered. In this war, the Kashmir issue came to the global stage. Our media got the opportunity to present Pakistan's narrative in a better way on the global forum. Our military capability has been exposed to the whole world. The importance of the long-standing relationship between China and Pakistan has been highlighted. During this military conflict, Pakistan has emerged as a peace-loving country. Which is another success for us.

Senator Rubina Khalid calls on CS Sindh

KARACHI (APP): The Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid here called on Sindh Chief Secretary Syed Asif Hyder Shah at his office on Monday.

They discussed matters related to strengthen collaboration and enhance the efficacy of the Benazir Income Support Programme in the province.

The meeting deliberated on pivotal aspects, including enhanced security and logistics at BISP payment centers to ensure seamless disbursement of funds to deserving beneficiaries.

The discussion also focused on ensuring joint investigations between the Sindh government and BISP staff to promptly address

grievances and complaints arising during payments to eligible women.

Furthermore, the meeting explored the allocation of suitable government land for the establishment of BISP offices across Sindh, facilitating efficient service delivery and outreach to beneficiaries. Additionally, the inclusion of BISP beneficiary women in the Sindh government's proposed housing project was discussed, aimed at providing affordable housing solutions to vulnerable segments.

Chief Secretary Sindh, Syed Asif Hyder Shah, assured BISP Chairperson Senator Rubina Khalid of the provincial government's steadfast commitment to supporting BISP's social

protection initiatives.

He emphasized that the Sindh government would continue to actively partner with BISP to ensure the success of its programs.

Senator Rubina Khalid appreciated the Chief Secretary's proactive approach and commitment to collaborative governance, underscoring the importance of inter-institutional coordination in driving socio-economic development and poverty alleviation in Sindh.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with both sides expressing optimism about the potential for enhanced collaboration and impact in the lives of the most vulnerable populations in Sindh.

Punjab govt transfers 11 officers

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government has issued orders for the transfer and posting of 11 officers in BS-17 and BS-18.

According to a notification issued by the Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD) following approval from Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Rashid Iqbal, who was awaiting posting, has been appointed as Deputy Secretary, School Education Department. Hafiz Irfan Hameed, Deputy Secretary, Specialized Healthcare, has been transferred and his services placed at the disposal of the Director General, Urban and Town Planning Agency.

Naem Siddiq Cheema, formerly Deputy Secretary, Irrigation Department South Punjab, has been posted to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA). Ahmad Naveed, also awaiting posting, has been appointed as Deputy Secretary, Irrigation Department South Punjab.

The transfer order of Muzammil Ilyas, Deputy Secretary, Local Government Department, issued on April 11, has been cancelled. He has been directed to continue in his current role. Muhammad Abid, previously awaiting posting, has been appointed as a Member of the Chief Minister's Inspection Team.

Sajid Munir, Deputy Secretary, Energy

Department, has been posted as Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue), Khushab. Nauman Farooq, ADC (Revenue), Dera Ghazi Khan, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Secretary, Energy Department.

Usman Munir Bukhari, ADC (Revenue), Vehari, has been posted to the same position in Dera Ghazi Khan, while Babar Suleman, Deputy Secretary, Special Education, has been appointed as ADC (Revenue), Vehari. Dr. Fayyaz Ali, who was awaiting posting, has been appointed as Deputy Secretary, Special Education Department.

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KHYBER MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
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CORRIGENDUM

Reference to advertisement published in Daily Aji and Daily The Frontier Post dated 28/04/2025 regarding notice for invitation of tender rfp for outsourcing model for diagnostic services at KMU hospital Peshawar & DHQ Kohat. The date of submission of bids may be read as 03/06/2025 (1030 hours) for KMU Hospital Peshawar instead of 20/05/2024 & 04/06/2025 (1030 hours) for DHQ Kohat instead of 21/05/2024. Which will be opened on the same day 03/06/2025 (1100 hours) for KMU Peshawar & 04/06/2025 (1100 hours) for DHQ Kohat. Others terms and condition will remain the same.

CHAIRMAN PURCHASE COMMITTEE
KMU Road, Phase 05, Hayatabad, Peshawar
Web site: www.kmu.edu.pk

APR 14 2025

KMU Media

PPAF commemorates Youm-e-Tashakur across Sindh

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), in collaboration with its network of organizations, commemorated Youm-e-Tashakur (Day of Gratitude) across Sindh as part of a nationwide campaign under the Paigham-e-Pakistan initiative.

These celebrations aim to honor the resilience of communities and recognize their contributions to peace building, social inclusion, and national unity, said a statement issued on Monday. District-level activities were held in Tharparkar,

Umerkot, Mirpur Khas, Matiari, Shaheed Benazirabad, Sanghar, Tando Allahyar, Khairpur, Malir, and Jamshoro, where youth groups, civil society representatives, district administration officials, religious leaders, and local influencers actively participated in a series of events.

The campaign is being implemented by PPAF's dedicated partner organizations in Sindh, including AWARE, Baanh Beli, NRSP, and SPO in Tharparkar; SDS and AGAHE in Umerkot; SACHET and

Malir; CPDI in Jamshoro; and PDI in Tando Allahyar. While partner organizations in Matiari, Sanghar, and Shaheed Benazirabad have also engaged through regional social mobilization platforms.

These community events feature storytelling sessions, awareness walks, cultural performances, and recognition of youth and community leaders, with a shared emphasis on promoting harmony, mutual respect, and positive civic engagement—especially among youth, women, and marginalized groups.

These community events feature storytelling sessions, awareness walks, cultural performances, and recognition of youth and community leaders, with a shared emphasis on promoting harmony, mutual respect, and positive civic engagement—especially among youth, women, and marginalized groups.

Free Solar Scheme Energy Department dismisses allegations of irregularities

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Energy and Power Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has strongly rejected reports circulated by some sections of the media regarding alleged irregularities and financial corruption in its flagship project of providing free solar systems to 130,000 poor and middle-class families across the province. The Department has termed these claims as baseless and misleading propaganda.

In this regard, the Energy and Power Department has clarified that the mega project—

aimed at distributing free solar systems to 130,000 households—has been initiated through its subsidiary, the Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organization (PEDO).

The first phase of the project was inaugurated by Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur through an online e-bidding system, ensuring transparency and merit-based selection of deserving families. The Chief Minister has directed for the project's timely completion to maximize its public welfare impact.

The department further clarified that, to date, no financial payments have

been made under the project and no tenders have been awarded to any contractor. The estimated rates for the project have been prepared strictly in accordance with the Market Rate System (MRS) 2024 – First Half, and are based on the approved Market Rate Analysis of the Finance Department.

Additionally, the advance procurement process has been initiated under Section 22 of the KPRA Act, which permits such action subject to the availability of funds. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has already been signed

between the Bank of Khyber (BoK) and PEDO to facilitate the implementation of the project.

The Energy and Power Department reaffirmed that, in line with the vision of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, all transactions are being carried out on merit basis with full transparency and adherence to quality standards. The department is strictly enforcing a zero-tolerance policy against corruption.

The allegations circulating in the media regarding this project are therefore baseless, contrary to facts and misleading.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Minister for Social Welfare, Syed Qasim Ali Shah, witnessing MoU signing between Khyber Medical University (KMU) and the Social Service for Physically Disabled Persons and Artificial Limbs Workshop.

Cherat Cement proposes use of solid waste as alternative fuel

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Cherat Cement Factory, operated by the renowned Ghulam Farooq Group, has shown interest to use municipal solid waste collected from Peshawar city as alternative fuel and submitted a proposal in this regard.

The proposal, presented under a public-private partnership framework, was formally submitted to the Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP).

A high-level meeting on the subject was chaired by Abdul Karim Tordher, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Industries.

Participants included officials from Cherat Cement, WSSP, the provincial departments of industries and local government, the Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade (KPBOIT) and other relevant institutions.

During the meeting, Cherat Cement officials discussed their earlier proposal to WSSP and emphasized the potential benefits of its implementation.

Cherat Cement representatives stated that approximately 500 tons of waste is collected daily from Peshawar and currently dumped at the Shamshatoo site, which holds an estimated 1.6 million tons of accumulated waste.

The factory has proposed using this waste as Refused Derived Fuel (RDF), replacing coal in its cement production process. This initiative could generate significant revenue for WSSP while also addressing solid waste management challenges.

The meeting was attended by Mujeer ur Rehman, Additional Secretary for Industries; Fazal Akbar, Additional Secretary for Local Government; Arbab Fahad, Manager at KPBOIT; Yasir Masood, Chief Operating Officer of Cherat Cement; Fakhar Abbas, GM of Cherat Cement Plant; Zameer ul Hassan, GM WSSP; Col (R) Zafar Ali from Cherat Cement and other senior government officials.

WSSP representatives briefed the Special Assistant and other attendees on the proposal and stated that its implementation under a public-private partnership model is feasible. However, since the PPP Cell under the Planning & Development Department holds the official mandate, a WSSP Board meeting has been convened for May 20 to

review previous board decisions and forward the proposal for further action by the P&D Department.

Special Assistant Abdul Karim Tordher directed all stakeholders to expedite the process to fast-track the project's subsequent phases.

He noted that the initiative not only represents a significant step towards environmental sustainability but also promises considerable financial benefits for government institutions.

He further emphasized that the successful execution of the project could serve as a model for modifying elsewhere, leveraging Cherat Cement's technical expertise and available machinery. He urged all departments involved to fulfill their respective responsibilities in a timely and efficient manner.

MoU signed between KMU and Social Service

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Minister for Social Welfare, Syed Qasim Ali Shah, has stated that the MoU signing between Khyber Medical University (KMU) and the Social Service for Physically Disabled Persons and Artificial Limbs Workshop holds immense importance. Through this collaboration, the youth of the province will be introduced to modern artificial intelligence and contemporary technologies. Equipped with this training, they will be able to provide effective medical treatment and support to patients. He expressed

confidence that KMU and the Social Service Workshop will fully utilize their capabilities with a focus on students to successfully achieve the desired objectives.

He expressed these views while addressing the MoU signing ceremony as the chief guest. On this occasion, a formal signing of the MoU took place between Khyber Medical University and the Social Service for Physically Disabled Persons and Artificial Limbs Workshop. The ceremony was also attended by Director of Social Welfare Muhammad Rafiq Mohmand, KMU officials, and other relevant officers. The purpose of this

understanding is to enhance communication and cooperation between the two institutions. The MoU will remain effective for five years and may be extended with mutual consent.

While addressing the ceremony, the Provincial Minister for Social Welfare stated that the department is taking long-term steps for the welfare and development of the public in the province. Thanks to the government's people-friendly policies, a noticeable reduction in public hardships is occurring. He added that as a result of these initiatives, the public will soon experience a significant positive change. He further stated that

the Social Service Workshop will provide a supportive and conducive environment for KMU students. A joint committee comprising representatives from both institutions will also be formed to oversee the training activities and suggest solutions for any obstacles encountered.

This mutual collaboration will not only provide students with better practical training opportunities but will also improve rehabilitation services for individuals with physical disabilities. Earlier, on behalf of KMU, Institute Director Dr. Abdullah, and on behalf of the Social Service Workshop, Manager Fayaz signed the MoU.

Governor vows reforms in education sector

PESHAWAR (APP): Swati. The delegation was led by teachers' representative Muslim Khan.

During the meeting, teachers briefed the Governor on the challenges facing the education sector and presented their demands.

Governor Kundi assured the delegation that all legitimate issues would be addressed on a priority basis.

He highlighted that since assuming office, he has been holding Open Days every ten days to provide citizens a direct platform to voice their concerns.

He pointed out that despite the 18th Amendment devolving many powers to the

provinces, efforts were ongoing within available resources to address public problems effectively.

Referring to the recent Kohistan scandal, the Governor said it has exposed several flaws in the administrative system and called for urgent reforms.

He further stated that PPP's Members of Provincial Assembly would raise the teachers' concerns vocally on the assembly floor.

The Governor also raised critical issues including the closure of government schools in the merged districts, allegations of exam papers being solved in ministers' houses, and the termination of 16,000 other

employees.

They signaled their intention to participate in the "Save the Province" protest on May 26, warning that if their demands remain unaddressed, they would expand the scope of their protest.

Meanwhile, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi assured the Peoples Students Federation (PSF) that their genuine demands would be addressed as soon as possible.

The PSF delegation, led by Hifzan Khan, Babar Khalil, Wajahatullah, and Muaz Ahmad, met with the Governor to present their concerns, particularly emphasizing the need to resolve issues related to the KP PSF cabinet.

Youm-e-Tashakur observed at UET Peshawar



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: UET Peshawar observed Youm-e-Tashakur today to honor the armed forces for their swift and resolute response to recent Indian aggression and to celebrate the successful execution of Operation Bunyan-ul-Marsoos. Dr. Sadiq Khattak, Vice Chancellor UET Peshawar hoisted the national flag in a solemn ceremony attended by faculty members, students, and staff.

In his address, Dr. Sadiq Khattak paid tribute to the valiant armed forces, the Government of Pakistan

and the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for their unwavering commitment, courage and sacrifices in ensuring the safety and security of the nation. He said the success of Operation Bunyan-ul-Marsoos stands as a powerful testament to the resolve and professionalism of Pakistan's armed forces. He emphasized their critical role in safeguarding peace and stability across the country and expressed profound gratitude to the families of the Shuhadaa for their sacrifices. Dr. Sadiq Khattak encouraged students and faculty to

remain united and dedicated to the cause of national development and nation-building.

Later, Youm-e-Tashakur Walk was also held on campus where participants marched while chanting patriotic slogans such as "N a r a - e - T a k b e e r", "Pakistan Zindabad," and "Solidarity with Kashmir," expressing deep national pride and unity. The ceremony served as a powerful demonstration of the university's solidarity with the armed forces and their shared commitment to patriotism and national cohesion.

PHC reserves verdict on Sheikh Waqas plea

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has reserved its verdict on a petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Sheikh Waqas Akram, seeking details of cases registered against him, on Monday.

The counsel Arshad Naushahrai, Bashir Khan Wazir, and Malik Samiullah advocates informed the court that the petitioner is unaware of the cases registered against him and requested the court to direct the respondents to

provide details of the cases. In the meantime, Justice Waqar Ahmad questioned why the petitioner did not approach the courts in his own province, to which the lawyer replied that he is currently residing in Abbottabad with his family. The petitioner named the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Islamabad Police as respondents.

The petitioner's lawyers requested details of cases registered in other provinces, including Punjab and Sindh. However, Justice

Waqar Ahmad observed that the court could not summon details of cases that did not pertain to the province. The court offered to grant protective bail to the petitioner, allowing him to approach the relevant courts. The lawyer, expressed concerns that the petitioner would not receive a fair hearing in other courts. Justice Waqar Ahmad assured the lawyer that it is petitioner's constitutional right to approach the relevant high court. The court adjourned the hearing, stating that it would issue orders later.

Task Force Action Committee on SDGs convened

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A meeting of the Task Force Action Committee on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was held today at the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Secretariat in Peshawar, chaired by Convener SDGs/MPA Asif Khan Mehsum. The meeting, convened to discuss key agenda items for the upcoming Speakers' Conference scheduled for December 18, 2025, in Islamabad, was attended by MPAs, including Mian Umer Kaka Khel, Malik Adeel, Arif Ahmadzai, Rehana Ismail, Asma Alam, Sobia Shahid, Ifthikhar Ullah Mishwani, Fazal Elahi, Ifthikhar Ahmad, and Shafi Jan. Representing the Assembly Secretariat, Special Secretary Administration Syed Waqar Shah, serving as Secretary to the SDGs Task Force Committee, along with other relevant officers, participated.

The committee focused on two critical issues: polio eradication and environmental protection, with detailed briefings provided by the Health Department and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Convener Asif Khan

Mehsum outlined the discussions in a detailed statement, quoted in full as follows:

"In today's meeting, we addressed critical agenda items for the Speakers' Conference to be held in Islamabad this December. Our primary focus was on polio eradication, a major issue in our society and region, and environmental protection. We received briefings from the Health Department and the EPA, discussing various aspects, but most importantly, we strategized on how to tackle polio effectively. We've directed the Health Department to provide a detailed report for the next meeting, covering expenditures, donor agency mechanisms, and payment processes. Critically, we emphasized revising the compensation policy for polio workers. While police personnel receive a 14-package, we want a similar package for polio workers who are injured or martyred, and we've asked the department to propose a policy, potentially for parliamentary approval, to ensure their sacrifices are honored. On the environmental front, we discussed industrial compliance, licensing, and cess require-

ments. The EPA has been directed to provide a detailed report on these matters. We also raised concerns about non-functional incinerators in major hospitals, which are vital for safely disposing of hazardous medical waste. To address this, we've formed a subcommittee with MPAs Arif Ahmadzai, Ifthikhar Ullah Mishwani, Shafi Jan, and Sobia Shahid, which will investigate incinerator operations, MTI roles, and hospital overburdening, submitting a report within seven days by Monday. Our goal is to strengthen health and environmental frameworks to improve service delivery and ensure sustainable progress in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa."

To address the issue of non-functional incinerators in major hospitals, essential for safely disposing of hazardous medical waste, a subcommittee was formed, comprising MPAs Arif Ahmadzai, Ifthikhar Ullah Mishwani, Shafi Jan, and Sobia Shahid. The subcommittee is tasked with investigating incinerator operations, assessing the roles of Medical Teaching Institutions (MTIs), and proposing measures to alleviate the burden on major hospitals.

Joint efforts on to control fire

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Forests, Environment, Wildlife and Climate Change, Pir Musavir Khan, has said that the Forest Department, Rescue 1122 and local people are jointly working to control the fire in the private and difficult mountainous area of Jabban Dargai.

In a statement issued here, the Special Assistant said that the fire in the mountainous areas of Malakand, Ala Dhand, Charat and Gonyar was extinguished on Saturday. Talking about Jabban Dargai, he said that all senior officers and personnel of the Forest Department Malakand Division, Lower Swat, Patrol Squad, and Wildlife Department are present there and are fully participating in the rescue operation.

KPITB and Sybrid commend all stakeholders involved in bringing this vision to life, as together, we move toward a more connected, prosperous future for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

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In brief

Livestock die from disease F.P. Report

PARACHINAR: A deadly outbreak of the "Tabaq" disease has resulted in the deaths of dozens of livestock in Parachinar, causing significant distress among local farmers, especially with Eid al-Adha approaching. Local Administration on Monday said, the disease has been spreading rapidly in various parts of Upper Kurram, including the village of Kunj Alizai, where scores of animals have already perished. Livestock owners are expressing deep concern as their livelihoods are at risk. In response, the Kurram District Livestock Department has initiated emergency treatment for infected animals and begun administering vaccinations in the affected areas. The Director of Livestock has urged residents to promptly contact the department for medical assistance and vaccinations. He also stressed the importance of following preventive measures strictly to stop the disease from spreading further among healthy animals.

All facilities available: MS F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Medical Superintendent (MS) Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Kamalia Dr. Adeel Arif said that all facilities are available in the hospital and no patient needs to take private medicine, on Monday. MS Kamalia Dr. Adeel Arif further said that medicines are being provided free of cost to the patients admitted and Come to the hospital. Apart from this, some medical tests are also being done free of cost. The treatment and care of the patients admitted in the hospital is being done very well. Doctors from all departments are present in the hospital at all times and there are doctors and paramedical staff available 24 hours a day in the emergency wards who check up the patients in case of any emergency. Doctor Adeel Arif said that our effort is to ensure that patients coming and admitted to the hospital do not face any problems. Meanwhile, Vice President Press Club Toba Tek Singh and Senior Photographer Mehmood Nasir said that the Operation "Bunyan Marsoos" launched by Pakistan Armed forces successful and courageous operation against the evil intentions of the enemy, which has won the hearts of the entire nation. He said that this operation is not only a proof of the professional capacity of the security agencies but also a symbol of the nation's unwavering trust in the Pakistan Army. Mehmood Nasir said that as a Cameraman, I have always seen that the dedication with which our soldiers serve on the front line requires indescribable passion.

AJK PM lauds Pak armed forces F.P. Report

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that the entire nation, including Kashmiris, observed Youme-e-Tashakur (Day of Gratitude) on Friday to mark the historic victory against India. Speaking on the occasion of Youme-e-Tashakur late Friday, the Prime Minister said, "We bow our heads in gratitude to Allah—the Almighty—for granting us a remarkable victory against the enemy who violated our territorial integrity by launching an attack in the dead of night." "The crushing defeat delivered to India by the Pakistan Army has shattered the fascist Indian regime's dreams and dashed Modi's pride into the ground," the PM said, adding that a humbled and humiliated enemy won't even think about resorting to any misadventure in the future.



CHITRAL: Adviser to KP CM, Tufail Anjum interacting with officials during his visit to Institute of Hub B Contact.

Media literacy workshop held for inmates

Anees Takar

MARDAN: A powerful and transformative workshop titled "Da Mardan Zuwanano Baithak" was held at the Technical and Vocational Centre of Mardan Jail. The event organized by Individualaand in collaboration with NACTA, the European Union, UNODC and the Municipal Council Mardan, brought together young inmates for a full-day session focused on media literacy, identifying fake news and promoting peaceful civic behavior.

The workshop created a safe space for juvenile and young prisoners to speak openly about their personal struggles, social challenges and prison conditions setting the stage for meaningful rehabilitation and institutional reform. Mashood Ali, one of the lead facilitators from Individualaand, emphasized that the core objective was to equip inmates with critical thinking skills and help them understand the power of responsible media consumption. "These young individuals are highly vulnerable to manipulation, especially through social



media. Our aim was to educate them so they can distinguish truth from misinformation and choose peaceful, civic-minded paths upon release," he said.

Saifullah Khoso, who co-facilitated the session, highlighted the emotional engagement of the participants. "What moved us most was their honesty. They weren't just passive listeners, they were emotionally invested. They spoke of their dreams, frustrations and hopes for a second chance," he shared.

The openness of the session led to an unexpected and impactful moment when Mayor of Mardan, Himayatullah, who was present at the workshop, listened to inmates' concerns about water scarcity and the unbearable heat inside the jail. Deeply affected by the inmates' condition and the transparency of the discussions, the mayor acted immediately by arranging the installation of an electric water cooler within hours. He also announced the upcoming setup of a solar-powered water pump to address the long-standing water crisis and pledged continued support for prison reforms.

The impact of Da Mardan Zuwanano Baithak went far beyond a single event. It created a rare bridge between inmates, civil society and local government, breaking barriers of silence and inaction. The workshop empowered young inmates with tools to rebuild their lives while also prompting real-time institutional change. It proved that when rehabilitation is guided by dignity, inclusion, and dialogue, even the most forgotten voices can lead the way to reform.

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Retired inspector Hussain laid to rest F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: A retired police inspector Hussain Khan has been laid to rest at his ancestral graveyard in Dhakki, Tangi area of Charsadda district.

The Qul ceremony for the deceased, who was the uncle of DSP Nasrullah Khan will be held at Ahmad Noor Qila in Dhakki on Tuesday. The late Hussain Khan was the father of Patwari Wajid Hussain and uncle of Abdul Samad.

Uniform rates for medical tests urged F.P. Report

BUNER: Buner Press Club general body asked the Health Regulatory Authority (HRA) and district administration to set rates for private clinical laboratories various tests, X-ray, CT scan, MRI, on Monday.

This was argued during BPC general body meeting and agreed that all political and social organizations must respect the Press Club policy regarding coverage. PBC president Mukhtiar chaired the meeting and presented agenda before the general body meeting. The general body clarified that government departments are accountable to the public, so they should cooperate with the Press Club members as per the law.

BPC urged government departments to ensure accountability, transparency and cooperate with journalists in reporting in the public interest. The freedom of the media to protect public interests will promote public rights and transparency in government affairs in larger public interest.

Facilities in jail reviewed F.P. Report

KOHAT: Provincial Law Minister, Aftab Alam Advocate on Monday visited Kohat Jail and reviewed facilities for the prisoners in details. The recently appointed Jail Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent were present on the occasion.

The minister also inspected various departments of the jail and obtained information from the administration about the basic facilities provided to the prisoners like cleanliness, food, water supply and correctional activities. During the visit, he also made a telephonic contact with the Inspector General (IG) Prisons regarding the recent damage in the jail, and stressed on immediate steps to rectify the damage.

The minister approved the immediate conversion of two tube wells in the jail to solar energy and issued instructions to the concerned department to complete the solarization work as soon as possible. He said that practical work on the project would be started in the next two days, which would resolve the problem of water supply in the jail.

Banned TTP claims responsibility for attacking police van

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The proscribed Tahreek Taliban Pakistan accepted the responsibility of attacking an armoured personnel carrier (APC) of police with an improvised explosive device in the Maidan area of Lower Dir here the other day. According to a news piece widely circulated on social media platform, Whatsapp groups, the TTP while terming the attack as Al-Khandaq Operation, claimed that a police APC was attacked through mines blast that partially damaged the vehicle.

According to the Lal Qila police, there was no casualty in the explosion. The Lal Qila station house officer along with elite force, bomb disposal squad officials and security personnel, were on their way to Ashrogi area to conduct a search and strike operation when the armoured van was attacked with an IED. The officials remained unhurt. The Lal Qila police registered a case and started further investigations.

Female teachers at govt schools demanded regularization: Female teachers working in second shifts at government schools across Lower Dir have demanded regularization of their services, protesting against the education department's decision to replace them with newly recruited staff. The teachers, joined by

students, staged a protest in front of the Timergara Press Club. They blocked the main Balambat road for several hours, bringing traffic between Balambat, Jandol, and Bajaur to a standstill. Commuters faced severe inconvenience due to the prolonged road closure.

Carrying placards inscribed with their demands, the protesting teachers said they had been teaching in second shifts for the past two years and had played a significant role in promoting female education in the district. "We contributed to the rise in literacy rates by serving in difficult conditions," said one of the teachers, adding that instead of recognizing their efforts, the government planned to terminate our services.

They urged the provincial government to regularize their jobs instead of recruiting fresh candidates, arguing that their experience and dedication deserved acknowledgement and job security. Political leaders, including former PPP National Assembly candidate Advocate Alam Zeb, Jamaat-e-Islami's deputy general secretary Meraj ul Haq, and PPP leader Nawabzada Irfan, expressed solidarity with the teachers. They condemned the government's move and demanded immediate reversal of the decision.

The speakers said that it was a rare scene as veiled

female teachers and young students took to the streets in protest, a reflection of growing frustration in a district that was "politically orphaned." The road blockade, they said, was a last resort to make their voices heard in a system that continued to overlook their sacrifices and service.

The protest concluded after Additional Assistant Commissioner Union Abdul Aziz Khan assured the demonstrators that their concerns would be forwarded to higher authorities for consideration. Almost 63 policemen obtained cheques: District Police Officer (DPO) Lower Dir, Abdul Salam Khalid, and DSP Headquarters Amir Zeb Khan distributed welfare fund cheques among 63 police personnel in a ceremony.

A total amount of Rs 4.475 million was distributed among the officials. The cheques covered medical expenses and dowry assistance, aiming to support the welfare of police officials and acknowledge their dedicated services. Speaking on the occasion, DPO Abdul Salam Khalid said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police gave top priority to the welfare of its personnel. He emphasized that timely resolution of financial and social challenges faced by police officials is essential for improving the overall performance of the force.

Unknown armed men kill father, son injured

F.P. Report

WANA: Unknown armed ambushed a vehicle at Torsalai area of tehsil Birmal, district South Waziristan in which father killed while his son critically injured, on Monday.

According to initial reports, unidentified armed assailants ambushed the father and son as they traveled in their vehicle through the remote region of Torsalai. The father killed at the scene, while the son, identified as Aziz Ullah, sustained severe wounds. Eyewitnesses described scenes of chaos as local residents rushed to assist the victims before emergency services arrived.

The injured Aziz Ullah transported to Wana headquarters hospital, where medical teams are working tirelessly to stabilize his condition. Local authorities have cordoned off the area and initiated a thorough investigation.

Law enforcement agencies are actively pursuing leads to identify and apprehend the attackers, while community members express growing concern over escalating violence in the region. Police officials have assured that every effort is being made to bring the perpetrators to justice.

justice.

Armed men patrolling causes fear & panic among tribesmen: In the Samar Bagh area of Wana, South Waziristan, more than 100 armed individuals patrolled, spreading intense fear and panic among the people. According to details, groups of armed men, more than 100 individuals, entered the Samar Bagh area of South Waziristan.

The armed men entered Samar Bagh, showcased their weapons prominently, and then left, while the police and other law enforcement agencies remained unaware. This caused widespread fear and panic among the entire population of Samar Bagh.

Local sources and police stated that the armed men were seen patrolling Samar Bagh for quite some time, spreading fear among the public. Police sources mentioned that there has been a long-standing dispute over the ownership of the Chini Khwa land between the Wazir and Dotani tribes. The Dotani tribe received false information that construction had started on the Chini Khu road, prompting over a hundred-armed members of the Dotani tribe to reach Samar Bagh.

It should be noted that the ownership dispute over

the Chini Khwa land has been ongoing for the past forty years between the sub-clan Kare Khel of the Zali Khel tribe and the Dotani tribe.

Forest fire reported: A massive forest fire has erupted in the mountainous region of Ghorlama, located in Sarwekai Tehsil of Upper South Waziristan, causing widespread devastation to valuable olive trees and other wild vegetation. The fire, which began late Saturday evening, continues to spread rapidly, prompting urgent calls for intervention as local communities watch in despair.

According to the spokesperson for Rescue 1122, the blaze has intensified due to strong winds and dry conditions, engulfing large swathes of forestland. "The fire is spreading quickly, and there is a serious risk of further damage if it is not contained soon," the spokesperson stated. Rescue authorities have swiftly responded by deploying a special team to the site. Firefighters, equipped with necessary gear, are actively working to suppress the flames. "The operation has been initiated, and all available resources are being utilized to bring the fire under control," added the spokesperson.

DPO hails media role



F.P. Report

LODHRAN: DPO Captain (Retd) Ali Bin Tariq met with a delegation from the Press Club Lodhran.

The meeting was attended by members including President Malik Shafiq Arain, General Secretary Sheikh Tahiruddin, Rahim Talab, Chaudhry Amin, Mubashir Wasim Lodhi, Chaudhry Khalil Gill, Abdullah Dahan, Malik Mushtaq, Malik Saeed,

Sajid Iqbal Qureshi, Faisal Bhutta, Jam Nadeem Akhtar, Malik Shahbaz Lodhran, Rana Muhammad Aslam, Chaudhry Munir, Malik Muhammad Shahzad, Muzammil Hussain, Muhammad Iqbal Khan Lodhi, Atiq Bhutta, Ijaz Bhutta, Nadeem Pirzada, Shahzad Riva, Dr. Khizar Hayat, Muhammad Ehtesham, Malik Kamran, and other members.

During the meeting, DPO Captain (Retd) Ali Bin Tariq

emphasized that the media should play a role in guiding the public against social evils and crimes. He stated that the police would take immediate action against such issues and highlighted the importance of collaboration between the police and the media to eradicate crime and social issues in society. The DPO further noted that timely identification and reporting by journalists are crucial in preventing crimes effectively.

Ownership rights to slums inhabitants granted F.P. Report

LARKANA: Adviser to Chief Minister Singh for slums Najam Alam reached Larkana and chaired a meeting regarding granting lease and ownership rights under slums. The meeting was attended by MNA Khursheed Ahmed Junejo, Commissioner Larkana Tahir Hussain Sangi, DC Larkana and other concerned officials and representatives of local bodies.

It was decided in the meeting that camps would be set up in different areas of Larkana to provide ownership rights to citizens under slums and government land would be leased to them on easy installments so that they could get their ownership rights. In the meeting, MNA Khursheed Ahmed Junejo and other concerned representatives said that you should try as soon as possible so that the problems of the

people are resolved and they can get ownership rights.

On this occasion, the Director General of Slums said that the people of this place should be informed so that they can come to us to regularize the slums so that they can be facilitated. On the other hand, talking to the media, the provincial advisor on slums, the Sindh government is making efforts to provide a roof to every person before the end of his term.



GAZA: Displaced Palestinians fleeing Beit Lahia amid ongoing Israeli military operations in Gaza Strip arriving in Jabalia.

Syria sets deadline for ‘small groups’ to join Defence Ministry

DAMASCUS (Reuters): Syria's defence minister has called on small armed groups that have yet to merge with the security apparatus to do so within 10 days or face unspecified measures, in a bid to consolidate state authority six months after Bashar al-Assad was toppled.

A plethora of weapons outside government control has posed a challenge to interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa's efforts to establish control, as groups that both back him and oppose him remain armed. Syrian Defence Minister Murhaf Abu Qasra, in a statement, said "military units" had now been integrated into "a unified institutional framework", calling this a great achievement.

"We stress the need for the remaining small military groups to join the ministry within a maximum period of 10 days from the date of this announcement, in order to complete the efforts of unification and organisation," he said. He did not say which factions he was talking about. The statement did not seem aimed at the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a large Kurdish-led force in the northeast that signed an agreement with Sharaa earlier this year aimed at integration with state institutions.

Damascus received a big diplomatic boost last week when US President Donald Trump met Sharaa and announced sanctions on Syria would be lifted. Syrian Interior Minister Anas Khattab has said the decision would support efforts "to consolidate security and stability and promote civil peace in Syria and the region". Sunni Muslim Arab rebel groups which, like Sharaa's Islamist

Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, fought Assad during the war agreed in December to dissolve into the Defence Ministry.

Syria has faced several outbreaks of violence this year. In March, Sunni militants killed hundreds of members of the Alawite minority in revenge killings prompted by what the government described as deadly attacks by Assad-loyalists on its forces in the coastal region. More than 100 people were reported killed by fighting that erupted in late April in Druze areas near Damascus, pitting Sunni militants against Druze fighters. The Syrian authorities conducted raids targeting Islamic State cells in Aleppo.

Meanwhile, Syria will set up commissions for justice and missing persons tasked with probing crimes committed during the rule of the Assad family, compensating victims and finding thousands of people whose whereabouts remain unknown, the presidency said. Syria's grinding 13-year civil war has left hundreds of thousands of people, most of them civilians, dead and more than 100,000 people missing, according to United Nations estimates and human rights groups.

Former leader Bashar al-Assad was ousted by Islamist rebels Hayat Tahrir al-Sham last year in a stunning 11-day offensive, a shift met with jubilation by many Syrians who nonetheless want to see accountability for abuses suffered under the former government, including in a notorious dungeon-like prison system. The National Transitional Justice Commission's remit is "exposing the truth about the grave violations com-

mitted by the former regime and holding those responsible accountable, in coordination with relevant authorities," said a statement from the presidency seen by Reuters. It did not say whether the commission would be responsible for investigating and addressing violations by other parties involved in the Syrian war, such as Islamic State.

Hassan al-Dughaim, a close adviser to the new Syrian leadership, told Reuters the transitional justice commission would focus on physical and moral reparations and national reconciliation. There will also be trials for those legally proven to have committed crimes, but the process of gathering legal evidence that can be used in court against some individuals associated with the Assad government is difficult and complex, he said. Former Syrian Major General Ibrahim Huwajia, accused of being implicated in the 1977 assassination of Lebanese Druze leader Kamal Joumblatt, will be among those to stand trial, al-Dughaim said. Syrian security forces arrested Huwajia in March. Interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa also announced the formation of a National Commission for Missing Persons, which will be tasked with investigating and uncovering the fate of missing and forcibly disappeared persons, documenting cases, creating a national database, and providing humanitarian and legal support to their families, a presidency statement said. The UN Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic (IIMP) welcomed the formation of the commission in a post on social media.

Support for Japan PM hits record low

TOKYO (Reuters): Support for Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba has hit a record low, with nearly nine out of every 10 voters dissatisfied with the government's response to soaring price of rice, the nation's beloved staple, Kyodo news agency reported.

Support for Ishiba's government was at 27.4%, down from 32.6% a month ago, a Kyodo poll showed, boding ill for his ruling Liberal Democratic Party and junior coalition partner Komeito in an upper house election slated for July. The poll showed 87.1% of respondents found government measures addressing rising rice prices insufficient. Retail rice prices are about double what they were a year ago after extreme heat hit crops and a tourism boom added to demand, although the government in March started releasing stockpiled rice into the market.

US plan to move 1m Palestinians to Libya

WASHINGTON (Reuters):

The Trump administration is working on a plan to permanently relocate as much as one million Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to Libya, NBC News reported, citing five people with knowledge of the matter.

Citing two people with direct knowledge and a former US official, NBC also reported that the plan is under serious enough consideration that the US has discussed it with Libya's leadership. In exchange for resettling the Palestinians, the administration would release to Libya billions of dollars of funds the US froze more than a decade ago, according to NBC and citing the same three people.

Warsaw's liberal mayor leads vote

WARSAW (BBC): Warsaw's liberal mayor Rafal Trzaskowski won a narrow victory in Poland's presidential election, according to an exit poll, but a second-round runoff with conservative historian Karol Nawrocki will be required to decide the country's next president.

According to a second exit poll released, Trzaskowski, a deputy leader of prime minister Donald Tusk's centrist Civic Platform (PO) party, won 31.1% of the vote. Nawrocki came second with 29.1% of the vote.

If the poll is confirmed by the final official result - not expected until late Monday - Trzaskowski and Nawrocki will compete in a second-round on 1 June as none of the 13 candidates won more than 50% of the vote. Trzaskowski told his supporters at a rally in Sandomierz, southern Poland: "We're going to win." But he said a lot of work and "great determination" would be needed. "I'm convinced that all Poland will win," he said. He pledged to cooperate with prime minister Tusk's coalition to liberalise the country's strict abortion law and accelerate reform of the Polish judiciary, which was widely seen to have been politicised by the previous PiS-led government. Trzaskowski performed worse than opinion polls predicted before the vote, which had him between 4%-6% ahead of Nawrocki. Poland's president has largely ceremonial powers but he or she is able to veto government legislation. Tusk's coalition does not have a big enough parliamentary majority to overturn a presidential veto. Tusk has failed to deliver many of his campaign promises, partly because the incumbent conservative president Andrzej Duda has vetoed his government's legislation, but also due to divisions within the coalition over issues like abortion and civil partnerships. A victory for Trzaskowski would remove the president's veto, but Nawrocki would likely be an even tougher obstacle than Duda.

Starmer to host first UK-EU summit since Brexit

LONDON (AFP): UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer hosts European Union chiefs on Monday for a landmark summit designed to usher in a closer relationship between Britain and the bloc, five years after Brexit. The meeting in London is expected to deliver the first results from Starmer's much-heralded "reset" of the UK's ties with its European neighbours following the rancour of the post-Brexit years.

Downing Street leader would be striking a deal for a "strengthened, forward-looking partnership" with the 27 EU members. Starmer said it would be "good for our jobs, good for our bills and good for our borders". Talks were going down the wire to resolve squabbling over long-standing issues, including fishing rights and a youth mobility scheme, but negotiators were hopeful of at least signing a defence and security partnership. It would mark a symbolic step in turning the page on the animosity that followed Britain's exit from the bloc in January 2020.

"There are still some details to resolve, but it's quite positive, and we're going to get there," said one European diplomat, who asked not to be named. "There is a real willingness on the British side to move closer to the EU on economic issues." Starmer, who came to power in last July's general elections ousting the Conservative Party, wants a deeper relationship with the EU than the one painfully negotiated

by the Tories. But he has several red lines he has said he will not cross. Sticking points remain over some EU demands, and the Conservatives are already criticising the reset move as a "surrender". If negotiators clear the final hurdles, then inking the "Security and Defence Partnership" will be the highlight of Monday's sit-down between Starmer and EU bosses Ursula von der Leyen, Antonio Costa and chief diplomat Kaja Kallas.

Two other documents are expected on Monday - a joint statement of European solidarity from the EU-UK leaders summit, and a Common Understanding which includes some measures to ease some Brexit trade barriers. The talks come as the EU and Britain race to rearm in the face of the threat from Russia and fears that US President Donald Trump will no longer help protect Europe. The defence partnership should mean more regular security talks, Britain possibly joining EU military missions and the potential for London to fully tap into a 150-billion-euro (\$167-billion) defence fund being set up by the bloc. But much of the detail is likely to be filled in later -- giving the UK and its defence industry unfettered access to the EU programmes, for instance, would require further agreement. Britain already has intertwined defence ties with 23 EU countries in NATO, so the defence pact was always seen as the easiest deal on the table. "I think we should keep our sense of

the importance of this relatively tempered," said Olivia O'Sullivan, director of the UK in the World programme at the Chatham House think-tank. "It's the next step in closer cooperation... but not a resolution of many of the outstanding questions," she told AFP.

Starmer has ruled out rejoining the customs union and single market, but has suggested the UK is ready for dynamic alignment with the EU on food and agricultural products. Europe Minister Nick Thomas-Symonds, the UK's chief negotiator, said the government would be willing to align with EU rules in some areas. "Red tape, all the certifications that are required, we absolutely want to reduce that," he told the BBC in an interview, describing how food was rotting as lorries waited hours to cross borders. EU diplomats in Brussels have been working to get Britain to keep its waters open for European fishermen in return for easing the checks on some food imports from the UK. "The British remain difficult, but discussions are continuing," the European diplomat said. Starmer has also rejected a return to freedom of movement, but is open to a limited youth mobility scheme that would allow some British and European 18- to 30-year-olds to study and work in the UK and vice versa. Starmer is approaching it cautiously amid rising support for Nigel Farage's anti-immigration and Eurosceptic party Reform UK. Thomas-Symonds said any scheme would be "smart and controlled".

Libya's PM for eliminating militias

TRIPOLI (Reuters): Libyan Prime Minister Abdulhamid al-Dbeibah said that eliminating militias is an "ongoing project," as a ceasefire after deadly clashes this week remained in place, "We will not spare anyone who continues to engage in corruption or extortion. Our goal is to create a Libya free of militias and corruption," Dbeibah said in a televised speech.

Dbeibah is the country's internationally recognized leader in the west, based in Tripoli. After Dbeibah ordered the armed groups to be dismantled, Tripoli was rocked by its fiercest clashes in years between two armed groups. The clashes killed at least eight civilians, according to the United Nations. The government announced a ceasefire.

It followed Monday's killing of major militia chief Abdulghani Kikli, widely known as Ghaniwa, and the sudden defeat of his Stabilisation Support Apparatus group by factions aligned with Dbeibah.

SSA is under the Presidential Council that came to power in 2021 with the Government of

National Unity of Dbeibah through a United Nations-backed process. SSA was based in the densely populated Abu Salim neighbourhood. GNU's Interior Ministry said in a statement that nine decomposed corpses were found in a morgue refrigerator in Abu Salim-based Al-Khadra hospital. It said SSA never reported them to authorities.

The PM's media office posted a video of Dbeibah greeting the security force protecting the Prime Ministry Building. It said he later received delegations from elders to discuss Tripoli's situation and what he called "successful security operation in Abu Salim." "The Prime Minister stressed that this operation falls within the state's fixed vision to eliminate armed formations outside the police and army institutions," the media office said. At least three ministers resigned in sympathy with hundreds of protesters who took to the streets calling for Dbeibah's ouster.

Dbeibah did not comment on their resignations. "The protests are annoying, but I've put up with them. I

know some of them are real, but a lot of them are paid," he said. The United Nations Support Mission in Libya expressed concern about the escalation of violence in Tripoli, calling on parties to protect civilians and public property. Libya has had little stability since a 2011 NATO-backed uprising ousted longtime autocrat Muammar Gaddafi. The country split in 2014 between rival eastern and western factions, though an outbreak of major warfare paused with a truce in 2020.

While eastern Libya has been dominated for a decade by commander Khalifa Haftar and his Libyan National Army, control in Tripoli and western Libya has been splintered among numerous armed factions. A major energy exporter, Libya is also an important way station for migrants heading to Europe, while its conflict has drawn in foreign powers including Turkey, Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. State-oil firm NOC said that its operations at oil facilities are proceeding as normal, with oil and gas exports operating regularly.

South Korea's presidential candidates hold first heated debate

SEOUL: South Korea's two leading presidential candidates, Lee Jae-myung and Kim Moon-soo, have held the first of three televised debates as the race intensifies to replace former President Yoon Suk-yeol, who was removed in April over his contentious move to declare martial law late last year.

Yoon's ouster has stoked political turmoil in the nation, and a snap election is set for June 3. During heated debate, Lee, who is the main opposition Democratic Party's candidate and the frontrunner in the race, faced criticism about being too friendly towards China from his opponents, who cited his comments that South Korea does not need to get involved in China-Taiwan disputes.

But Lee, who considers pragmatism as key to his foreign policy, said the country "should not go all-in" on its alliance with traditional ally the United

States and called for the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. He added that managing China and Russia relations was important, while noting that security cooperation with the US and Japan is necessary. Lee also advocated putting South Korea's interests first in response to US tariffs, more investment in artificial intelligence (AI), protection for unionised workers, and a four-and-a-half-day working week. There was no need for Seoul to rush to reach a trade agreement with Washington, Lee said during the two-hour debate.

South Korea has begun trade talks with the US and is seeking a waiver from the 25 percent tariffs that US President Donald Trump slapped on the country in April - after which Seoul was one of the first countries to hold face-to-face talks with Washington, following in the footsteps of Japan. "I think we should prepare

well for this situation delicately and competently," Lee added, also arguing that South Korea needs to nurture high-tech and renewable energy industries to overcome low economic growth. "We will focus on developing social freedom sovereign AI so our people can at least use something like ChatGPT for free like an electronic calculator," he said. Kim, candidate for the conservative People Power Party, vowed to create jobs and deregulate to foster businesses. Kim has also pledged to create a government agency dedicated to innovating regulations and to invest more than five percent of the budget in research and development.

Asia's fourth-largest economy contracted in the first quarter as exports and consumption stalled, amid fears over the impact of Washington's aggressive tariffs and political turmoil at home. Lee holds a lead

with 51 percent support in the latest Gallup Korea poll released, with Kim trailing far behind at 29 percent. Lee called earlier in the day for constitutional reform to allow a four-year, two-term presidency and a two-round system for presidential elections through a referendum. South Korean presidents currently serve a single five-year term. He also vowed to curb the presidential right to declare martial law and hold to account those responsible for the December 3 declaration. Former President Yoon had claimed at the time he declared martial law that antistate and North Korean forces had infiltrated the government. But senior military and police officials who were sent to shut down the country's National Assembly have testified that he ordered them to detain rival politicians and prevent the assembly from voting to lift his military rule order. — Aljazeera

These trees exist in only one place on Earth. Now climate change and goats threaten their survival

SOCOTRA, Yemen (AP): On a windswept plateau high above the Arabian Sea, Sena Keybani cradles a sapling that barely reaches her ankle. The young plant, protected by a makeshift fence of wood and wire, is a kind of dragon's blood tree - a species found only on the Yemeni island of Socotra that is now struggling to survive intensifying threats from climate change.

"Seeing the trees die, it's like losing one of your babies," said Keybani, whose family runs a nursery dedicated to preserving the species. Known for their mushroom-shaped canopies and the blood-red sap that courses through their wood, the trees once stood in great numbers. But increasingly severe cyclones, grazing by

invasive goats, and persistent turmoil in Yemen - which is one of the world's poorest countries and beset by a decade-long civil war - have pushed the species, and the unique ecosystem it supports, toward collapse.

Often compared to the Galapagos Islands, Socotra floats in splendid isolation some 240 kilometers (150 miles) off the Horn of Africa. Its biological riches - including 825 plant species, of which more than a third exist nowhere else on Earth - have earned it UNESCO World Heritage status. Among them are bottle trees, whose swollen trunks jut from rock like sculptures, and frankincense, their gnarled limbs twisting skywards. But it's the dragon's blood tree that has long

captured imaginations, its otherworldly form seeming to belong more to the pages of Dr. Seuss than to any terrestrial forest. The island receives about 5,000 tourists annually, many drawn by the surreal sight of the dragon's blood forests.

Visitors are required to hire local guides and stay in campsites run by Socotran families to ensure tourist dollars are distributed locally. If the trees were to disappear, the industry that sustains many islanders could vanish with them. "With the income we receive from tourism, we live better than those on the mainland," said Mubarak Kopi, Socotra's head of tourism.

But the tree is more than a botanical curiosity: It's a pillar of Socotra's ecosys-

tem. The umbrella-like canopies capture fog and rain, which they channel into the soil below, allowing neighboring plants to thrive in the arid climate. "When you lose the trees, you lose everything - the soil, the water, the entire ecosystem," said Kay Van Damme, a Belgian conservation biologist who has worked on Socotra since 1999.

Without intervention, scientists like Van Damme warn these trees could disappear within a few centuries - and with them many other species. "We've succeeded, as humans, to destroy huge amounts of nature on most of the world's islands," he said. "Socotra is a place where we can actually really do something.

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Biden's health condition was 'covered up' by aides

JOE Biden's time in public office is now behind him, but his age and mental acuity have become a litmus test for the next leaders in his party.

Audio was published on Friday from portions of interviews Biden gave to federal prosecutors in 2023, the latest in a stream of reports putting questions about Biden's health back in the spotlight. Months after former President Kamala Harris lost to President Donald Trump, a new book alleges that White House aides covered up Biden's physical and mental decline.

Several potential Democratic contenders for the 2028 nomination have been asked in recent days whether they believe Biden was declining in office or whether he should have sought reelection before a disastrous debate performance led to his withdrawal.

Many Democrats would prefer to focus on Trump's second term. Trump has done his best to prevent that – mentioning Biden's name an average of six times per day during his first 100 days in office, according to an NBC News analysis – and Republicans have followed his lead, betting that voters frustrated by Trump's policy moves will still prefer him over memories of an unpopular presidency, according to the Associated Press.

In the race for Virginia governor, one of this year's highest-profile contests, Republican Winsome Earle-Sears is running a pair of digital ads tying Democrat Abigail Spanberger to Biden, with images of the two hugging and the former president calling her a friend.

"The stench of Joe Biden still lingers on the Democratic Party," Democratic strategist Sawyer Hackett said. "We have to do the hard work of fixing that, and I think that includes telling the truth, frankly, about when we were wrong."

Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy of Connecticut told Politico this week that "there's no doubt" that Biden, now 82, experienced cognitive decline as president.

Pete Buttigieg, the former transportation secretary, wasn't nearly as blunt but still stopped short of defending Biden's decision to run. He responded "maybe" when asked on Tuesday whether the Democratic Party would have been better off if Biden hadn't tried to run for a second term.

The book "Original Sin," by journalists Jake Tapper of CNN and Alex Thompson of Axios, revives a core controversy of Biden's presidency: his decision to run for a second term despite voters, including Democrats, telling pollsters that he should not run again. Biden would have been 86 at the end of a second term had he won in November.

Late on Friday, Axios published portions from audio recordings of Biden's six hours of interviews with prosecutors investigating his handling of classified documents after his term as Vice President ended in 2017.

The Biden administration had already released transcripts of the interviews, but the recordings shed light on special counsel Robert Hur's characterisation of Biden as "a sympathetic, well-meaning, elderly man with a poor memory" and appeared to validate his claim that the then-president struggled to recall key dates, including the year his son Beau died of cancer in 2015.

Biden and his aides pushed back aggressively against Hur's report, which they characterised as a partisan hit.

Biden was at that time – early 2024 – still planning to run for a second term and fending off accusations that he was too old for another four years in the job, the AP report adds.

The recordings released by Axios include Biden's discussion of his son's death. His responses to some of the prosecutors' questions are punctuated by long pauses, and his lawyers at times stepped in to help him recall dates and timelines.

Biden and former first lady Jill Biden appeared on ABC's "The View" in a pre-emptive defence of his health and decision-making before the first excerpts of "Original Sin" were published.

He said he's responsible for Trump's victory but attributed Harris' loss, at least in part, to sexism and racism.

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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.



Echoes of Deceit: From USS Liberty 1967 to Pahalgam 2025

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

IN the shadows of geopolitics, history often repeats itself not as a farce, but as a chilling reenactment with newer actors and familiar motives. Two events, separated by nearly six decades, echo each other with uncanny similarity; the attack on the USS Liberty in 1967 and the recent orchestrated Pahalgam-style drama in Indian-administered Kashmir that led to an unwarranted attack on Pakistan on 7 May 2025. Both events were allegedly designed not only to create a smokescreen over deeper failures but also to achieve specific military and political goals through manufactured crises.

On June 8, 1967, during the Six-Day War between Israel and several Arab nations, the USS Liberty, an American Navy intelligence-gathering ship, was sailing in international waters near the Sinai Peninsula. Clearly marked and unarmed for combat, the ship was brutally attacked by Israeli fighter jets and torpedo boats. The onslaught lasted over an hour and left 34 American servicemen dead and 171 injured. Despite clear visibility of the American flag and repeated identification signals, the assault continued with disturbing precision.

The ship's survival against all odds was due largely to the courage and leadership of its captain, Commander William L. McGonagle. Despite being severely wounded early in the attack, he remained on the bridge, continuing to command the crew and maneuver the stricken vessel. His efforts, alongside the bravery of the crew, prevented the ship from sinking. McGonagle's steadfast command under fire earned him the Medal of Honor – the highest U.S.

military decoration – but in a highly unusual and controversial move, it was awarded in a private ceremony at the Washington Navy Yard, not at the White House, to avoid drawing public attention and diplomatic complications with Israel.

Survivors of the attack have long insisted that the assault was deliberate. One crew member, Petty Officer Ernie Gallo, stated, "There's no way they didn't know who we were. Our ship's markings were crystal clear. We were betrayed." Another survivor, Joe Meadors, declared, "It was murder. Cold-blooded murder." These voices have never been silenced, even as official narratives attempted to bury the truth under diplomatic necessity.

Now, fast forward to May 2025. A similarly suspicious pattern unfolded. On 6 May, Indian media outlets began broadcasting sensational news of a "major terror plot" being foiled in Pahalgam, alleging that Pakistani-based militants had attempted to launch a suicide attack on an Indian Army convoy. The news was suspiciously timed, coming just weeks before the Indian national elections and amid growing domestic unrest over economic downturns, farmer protests, and widespread criticism of the central government's authoritarian policies. Within 24 hours, without presenting concrete evidence or conducting any credible international investigation, the Indian government launched a unilateral aerial strike across the Line of Control, targeting what it called "terror infrastructure" in Pakistan.

What followed was a one-day but high-intensity war on 7 May 2025 between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. Pakistan retaliated swiftly and pro-

portionately, shooting down several Indian aircraft. Dozens of soldiers and civilians lost their lives on both sides. But the consequences were even more severe internationally. South Asia stood on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe. Global leaders called for restraint, and while the Indian government tried to build a narrative of "pre-emptive self-defense," neutral observers raised doubts about the legitimacy of the Pahalgam-style provocation.

The similarities between the USS Liberty incident and the 2025 Indian drama are striking. First, in both cases, the initial act-be it the attack on the Liberty or the alleged terror plot-was used to justify a disproportionate military response. Second, both incidents involved fabricated or distorted information being fed to the public and the international community. In the case of the USS Liberty, Israel claimed mistaken identity despite overwhelming proof to the contrary. In the 2025 case, India provided no forensic or independent verification of the so-called Pahalgam plot. Instead, state-controlled media was used to generate war hysteria that drowned out voices of skepticism.

Third, both incidents had strategic motives. Israel, in 1967, wanted to eliminate a witness and potentially drag the U.S. into its war. In 2025, the Indian ruling party appeared to be seeking electoral mileage by projecting a muscular national security image, diverting public attention from internal failures. The political benefits of military adventurism were clear in both cases.

Fourth, both attacks were launched against countries that were techni-

cally allies or at least not in active hostilities with the attacker. The USS Liberty was a U.S. vessel, attacked by a U.S. ally. Pakistan, in 2025, had been seeking regional peace and had offered several confidence-building measures, only to be met with aggression based on flimsy allegations.

Finally, in both incidents, the truth was buried under layers of diplomatic silence, media manipulation, and strategic obfuscation. The survivors of the Liberty attack spent decades seeking justice, only to be ignored by successive U.S. administrations that chose loyalty to Israel over accountability. Similarly, global powers and institutions today appear reluctant to question India's narrative, lest they jeopardize economic and strategic partnerships.

Yet, these parallels also offer lessons. Manufactured crises, however cleverly executed, carry the seeds of long-term instability. The attack on the Liberty damaged trust between American servicemen and their political leadership, while the 2025 attack on Pakistan has reignited regional tensions that will not be easy to cool down. If the international community fails to learn from these dangerous precedents, the next manufactured war may not be as containable.

Both incidents-USS Liberty and the Pahalgam episode-serve as cautionary tales of what happens when truth becomes the first casualty of strategic deception.

It is imperative for nations, especially in South Asia, to invest in transparent mechanisms of conflict resolution and to resist the temptation of using war as a tool for domestic political gain. Otherwise, history will continue to repeat itself, only with more tragic consequences.

Battle of the invisible kills

Air Vice Marshal (Retd) M Z Faisal

CONTESTED as a four-day battle, conflict, or war, South Asia saw a seismic shift in the doctrine of modern air combat. Around 40 PAF fighter jets roared like predators against the approximately 70 of the IAF. There were no close combats, no top gun theatrics, only invisible ghostly missiles screaming across vast beyond-visual distances. At the centre of the aerial combat, the Chinese-built PL-15 BVR missile reigned supreme, turning distance into dominance and striking the prey before it knew it was being hunted. Not attrition but annihilation. The IAF's pride and the reputation of its French-built jets burned away in the wake of a perfectly orchestrated strategy and technology.

What did India want to achieve by putting the lives of 1.5 billion at stake? The Indian objectives can easily be analysed through the prism of Hindutva doctrine-portray Pakistan as the epicentre of terrorism and isolate it diplomatically, discredit Pakistan's military and assert regional hegemony, and systematically weaken Pakistan's economy.

Pakistan's objectives are equally clear: safeguarding its sovereignty and territorial integrity while inflicting sufficient damage on Indian military assets to restore conventional deterrence, keeping the strategic deterrence intact. Despite certain limitations of resources, the PAF's edge stems from centralised command, decentralised execution, rapid kill-chain, first-shot capability, advanced multi-role radars, AWACS, C² centres, net-centricity, and cyber-electronic dominance. Intangibles like training, aggressive mindsets, fearless initiatives, morale, motivation, and teamwork further elevate its edge. While pilots and engineers deserve rightful praise, the performance of the silent sentinels of air defence – those who detect, classify threats, direct tactical response, and support pilots throughout the aerial combat is equally commendable. Most importantly, the PAF leadership made a difference through their clear strategic vision, employment strategy of unleashing airpower with the offensiveness it demanded and fighting the odds with unwavering courage.

The central question stemming from 2019's Operation Bandar and 2025's Operation Sindoor is why India repeatedly fails to anticipate Pakistan's response and instead seems surprised. Did Indian policymakers incorrectly assume that Pakistan, facing internal political and economic challenges, would avoid a direct military confrontation? It is equally important to identify if Indians

Defence Staff framework, the air force's planning autonomy and strategic flexibility are often compromised. While such frameworks offer coherence, they risk subordinating air strategy to broader land-centric priorities. At the tactical level, the PAF's proactive defence and timely CAP positioning likely surprised the IAF, reversing attacker-defender roles. The 6-0 outcome raises questions on the IAF's ability to undertake multi-domain operations effectively. There seemed to be critical lapses in situational awareness-misjudging the PL-15's kill envelope and sub-optimal anti-BVR manoeuvres. Amidst all the shortcomings in the air-to-air domain, the IAF deserve the credit for striking their planned targets on the ground. After all, it is believed that "No matter how effective an air defence may be, some raiders will always sneak through".

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Pakistan must now ask

Why the IAF has repeatedly failed to outperform the PAF is a question that should command Prime Minister Modi's attention. On the bigger canvas, one plausible reason lies in how the Indian political hierarchy asserts itself on the military establishment and how, at times, it seems to veto their opinions. This assessment is amply supported by the demeanour of the Indian military leadership in joint meetings and how senior military leadership was reportedly shuffled during this contingency. Worst still is that those in India tasked with the national defence at the top think a fighter aircraft can easily be obscured behind a cloud. Another key reason for the IAF's underperformance may be its departure from Colonel John Warden's principle that "Air power must be used as a tool of independent strategy." Under the Chief of Defence Staff framework, the air force's planning autonomy and strategic flexibility are often compromised.

carried out these operations with the tacit approval of one or more major powers, and if so, then what kind of assurances did they get from them? What happened between US Deputy President JD Vance's statement, "fundamentally none of our business," to President Trump's announcement of "long night of talks mediated by the United States," and a "full and immediate ceasefire." Were the reported Israeli boots on Indian soil just about defence contracts and advisory, or was this entire adventure linked to shaping a much broader geopolitical script on the future Israel-Iran confrontation?

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if its conventional deterrence has been restored and how long the uneasy calm will hold. If the Indian narrative shifts from 'If only we had Rafales' to 'If only we had F-35', then there is a good chance of fragile peace for the next 4-5 years before history strikes again. If not, Pakistan must remain on high alert for the next 3-4 months and quickly take note of its weapon arsenal. The focus should be on fostering the defence against drone war and supersonic cruise missiles, alongside enhancing the number of PL-15 missiles. The flipside of this entire episode is that a dangerous new norm has been set, which witnessed enhanced space under nuclear overhang; the space to hit across international borders, use of supersonic missiles, airfield strikes, and armed drones hovering over the civil population. Any new (mis)adventure will likely witness a higher notch of fire and fury.

Do the people of the subcontinent deserve to live under the shadow of fear and hunger, paying the price for wars they never chose? Is it fair for India to stop the water of Pakistan, and assume that Pakistanis will happily die of thirst? How is it wise that one tragic act of terror ends up claiming hundreds more innocent lives, without even attempting a mature, humane solution? Is it not high time to say no to war and yes to dialogue, with open hearts and sealed hatred?

Writer is an independent writer. He may be reached at mzfaisal65@gmail.com

The evolving role of libraries: From shelves to digital hubs

Sheikh Muhammad Arshad

THE modest library is undergoing a stunning shift in the fast-paced, digital world of today. Modern libraries, which were once thought of as being peaceful spaces with books, have evolved into thriving community hubs that include cutting-edge technology, encourage inclusion, and serve as essential venues for education and social interaction.

The most obvious change is perhaps the transition from physical shelves to digital ecosystems. Large collections of e-books, audiobooks, online journals, and multimedia materials are available at today's libraries and can be accessed from any location with an internet connection, even at home or on the road. This change was crucial during the most recent pandemic, guaranteeing that information was available even when physical loca-

tions were closed.

However, libraries are more than just online databases. Today, they serve as innovation hubs, holding makerspaces equipped with robotics kits, 3D printers, and multimedia resources that encourage STEM education and creativity in people of all ages. These areas are also seeing the introduction of virtual reality and augmented reality, which provide engaging and instructive immersive experiences.

At the front of this change are inclusivity and accessibility. In order to reflect the varied communities they serve, libraries provide resources in multiple languages and are outfitted with accessible technologies for patrons with impairments. The objective is to guarantee that everyone has access to the resources they require, irrespective of their background or level

of competence.

In addition to technology, libraries are becoming more important community hubs. They provide social programs, cultural events, and workshops that unite individuals and promote lifelong learning and a sense of belonging. Many offer essential support services, such as lending digital gadgets to close the digital gap, assisting job seekers, and offering health information.

Additionally, contemporary libraries are using technology and data to tailor services, making programs and recommendations more pertinent to specific customers. Library services are now more accessible than ever thanks to mobile apps and web portals, which put a multitude of information at people's fingertips.

Funding limitations, digital divisions, and the requirement for continuous staff training are still

obstacles, of course. But thanks to creativity and community dedication, libraries have a bright future.

Essentially, libraries are now more than just repositories of books; they are vibrant, diverse, and creative establishments that change with the times. They serve as a reminder that community, creativity, and knowledge are more intertwined than ever. In order to create societies that are informed, connected, and empowered, we must continue to support and invest in our libraries.

By offering in-service trainings and hosting workshops and seminars for library professionals both online and in person, the department of libraries is fulfilling its crucial role in the improvement of libraries in the federal capital of Pakistan.

Writer is Director General Department of Libraries Islamabad

A double challenge is putting Trump’s credibility on the line

DONALD Trump this week faces two challenges — one at home and the other abroad — that will test his self-crafted mythology as a master dealmaker and his capacity to achieve real and enduring change.

The president is heaping pressure on the brittle Republican House majority to overcome internal divides to pass the “big, beautiful bill” that contains his top domestic priorities. And his so-far failed effort to bring peace to Ukraine will reach a new pivot point during a telephone call Monday with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has snubbed Trump’s initiative despite the administration’s deferential treatment.

Trump’s spending bill is his best chance to transform the country — at least using conventional and constitutional means — because changing the law will be more enduring than his blitz of executive orders. He means to cut taxes, fund his mass deportation plans and add tens of billions of dollars to defense spending.

But steep cuts to Medicaid and food assistance demanded by fiscal conservatives are alienating more moderate Republicans on whose seats the GOP majority depends. The fight therefore cuts right along the fault lines of the Trump coalition and could require a more forceful presidential intervention later this week.

It’s also a crunch time for a peace plan in Ukraine that promised everything but has so far delivered very little.

Even Trump has considered whether Putin is stringing him along in a peace effort that has so far consisted mainly of the new US administration squeezing the victim of the war — Ukraine — and choreographing the process to reward the aggressor.

After Putin snubbed a proposed summit in Turkey last week that Trump all but ordered Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to agree to attend, the US president declared that there’d be no progress until he personally sat down with the Russian leader, who launched an unprovoked and illegal invasion three years ago.

Monday’s planned call will therefore be the most serious examination of Trump’s credibility and sincerity in the Ukraine negotiations, as well as his willingness to impose even the slightest pressure on Russia.

There have been signs recently that the White House is growing frustrated.

Vice President JD

Vance, who berated Zelensky in the Oval Office in February, met the Ukrainian leader in Rome over the weekend, days after warning that Russia is “asking for too much.”

Trump’s belief that only he can influence Putin — a trait he shares with several previous presidents — could be exposed if Moscow doesn’t budge.

“If he can’t do it, then nobody can,” Trump’s envoy Steve Witkoff said Sunday on ABC News’ “This Week.” But this is a questionable premise: The president has often

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Trump’s big, beautiful bill is an attempt to enshrine sharp changes in the direction of government policy. It includes at least \$1.5 trillion in spending cuts to pay for extending his first-term tax cuts and to expand it to cover promises he made on the campaign trail, including exempting income from tips and overtime pay and raising standard deductions. The bill would catalyze a shipbuilding program amid an escalating rivalry with China and make a down payment on a space-based “Golden Dome” anti-missile shield. The stressed air traffic control system would get billions of dollars for upgrades. And the legislation throws cash at border security and detention facilities to prop up Trump’s hardline immigration plan. But the bill will exact a heavy cost — one that will complicate its prospects even if it passes the full House this week and will contour the political climate ahead of 2026 midterm elections. It imposes spending reductions and new limitations on Medicaid and federal food assistance. And some analysts warn that whatever most taxpayers gain from tax breaks, they will have already lost from price increases caused by Trump’s tariff wars. The implications of the legislation are weighing on House Speaker Mike Johnson’s tiny House majority and led to emotional confrontations in committee after months of grueling negotiations. Johnson forged a workaround to appease hardliners and managed to force the bill through the House Budget Committee on Sunday night after a tense weekend of negotiations. But the measure must pass other key hurdles this week ahead of a vote in the full House.
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excused Putin over his recalcitrance and vouched for his commitment to peace despite murderous attacks on Ukrainian civilians. And Witkoff has sometimes emerged from meetings with Putin reinforcing Russia’s position.

Still, at this point, with negotiations going nowhere, there may be merit in testing Trump’s claim that he can make a difference. Putin could be wary, for instance, of defying the US president to his face. If Trump turned hints on new sanctions into real threats, he might narrow Russia’s options. He could change Putin’s calculations further were he to offer new weapons shipments to Kyiv.

Still, the idea that Putin, for whom the conflict may be existential, will suddenly fold because of Trump’s magnetism is far-fetched. Even an agreement for the formal presidential summit that Trump has long craved would likely be the precursor to a lengthy process during which Russia would continue to fight.

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please conservatives could depend on swing voters and who also want adjustments to protect a cap on deductions of state and local taxes.

Trump has largely been willing to trust Johnson to enact his agenda. Still, he can be expected to crank up pressure on holdouts from either wing of the party as he wants a big bill to sign by the July 4 holiday — a hugely ambitious timeline.

The president’s patience is limited: “We don’t need ‘GRAND-

going to grow the GDP faster than the debt grows, and that will stabilize the debt-to-GDP.”

Democrats, grappling for an effective attack on the new administration, are seizing on Medicaid cuts, which they claim will benefit the wealthiest Americans.

“There is nothing wrong with us bringing the government in balance,” South Carolina Democratic Rep. James Clyburn told Tapper. “But there is a problem when that balance comes on the back of working men and women. And that’s what is happening here.”

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STANDERS’ in the Republican Party. STOP TALKING, AND GET IT DONE!” he warned on Truth Social last week.

Trump’s hold on the GOP grassroots means he can lean on GOP lawmakers who must answer to MAGA supporters at home. And during the confirmation process for controversial Cabinet nominees, he showed his willingness to unleash pressure campaigns by pro-Trump media personalities.

Some provisions of the bill, including big tax cuts and a hike in defense spending, have raised concerns that it would worsen the nation’s fiscal situation, which Trump repeatedly insists he is trying to fix. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget found that the bill, if passed in its current form, would add between \$3.3 trillion and \$5.2 trillion to the national debt over the next decade. And critics point out that Trump’s first-term tax cuts sent deficits booming.

But Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said on “State of the Union” on Sunday that the bill would create sufficient economic activity to defuse such concerns. “There is the growth, the potential growth of the debt.

But what’s more important is that we grow the economy faster,” Bessent told CNN’s Jake Tapper. “And so, we are

Connecticut Sen. Chris Murphy blasted the bill as an “absolute disaster” that would deprive the neediest Americans of health care. “We’re standing in the way of ... the most massive transfer of wealth from the poor and the middle class to the rich in the history of the country,” he said on NBC’s “Meet the Press.”

Still, since Republicans control both chambers of Congress, Democrats have little power to halt the legislation — even if it might provide a base for their future campaigns.

The internal dynamics of the Washington GOP might be complex, but they pale in comparison to the task that Trump faces with Putin — who, unlike Republican lawmakers, has no real incentive to make the president look good.

But Witkoff insisted on ABC that Trump was equal to the task, pointing to “the art, the elegance” of his dealmaking. “The president is the master at this. ... I’ve said many times that I follow his tactics because they work.”

Yet early in Trump’s new term, there is not much evidence in his so-far fruitless peace brokering in the Middle East or Ukraine to support the administration’s incessant puffing up of the president. And until the “big, beautiful bill” lands on his desk, his legislative record is looking as unimpressive as it did during his first term.

Netanyahu should be an international pariah

Chris Doyle

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week accused French President Emmanuel Macron of spreading “blood libels” against Israel and standing “once again” with Hamas. All this came after Macron described Israel’s 10-week-old blockade of Gaza as “shameful.” Just what are the origins of the Netanyahu-Macron hostilities?

By any moral reckoning, Macron describing the horror of the Israeli blockade of Gaza as “shameful” was rather mild. “What the government of Benjamin Netanyahu is doing is unacceptable ... there is no water, no medicine, the wounded cannot get out, the doctors cannot get in. What he is doing is shameful,” Macron said. Like British ministers, he has used the word “unacceptable,” but not “condemnation.” The “C” word is not allowed. Macron has yet to penalize Israel for its horrific blockade against 2.3 million Palestinian civilians, with the entire population at risk of famine.

Last October, Macron called for an end to the sale of arms to Israel that could be used in Gaza. “The priority is that we return to a political solution, that we stop supplying weapons to lead the fighting in Gaza,” he said. Netanyahu delivered a riposte via video message, exclaiming “what a disgrace.”

Macron argued that “Mr. Netanyahu must not forget that his country was created by a UN decision.” Back came Netanyahu: “A reminder to the president of France: It was not the UN resolution that established the state of Israel, but rather the victory achieved in the war of independence with the blood of heroic fighters, many of whom were Holocaust survivors — including from the Vichy regime in France.”

Franco-Israeli tempers frayed again in November, when armed Israeli police barged into a French-owned church compound, the Pater Noster on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, detaining two French consulate employees. A senior French diplomat had to give up his planned visit to the site.

Macron proposed recognizing an independent state of Palestine in April. This was hardly radical — 147 states had already done so. Yet, for Netanyahu, this represented a “huge prize for terror.” Few counter, as they should, that Hamas, which Netanyahu was clearly referring to, would not see an independent Palestinian state as a victory, but its rivals the Palestine Liberation Organization and Fatah

would. It would reward those who have chosen to negotiate and not use force. The reality is that Netanyahu has always supported a “Greater Israel” ideology that claims all the land between the Mediterranean and the Jordan river as Israeli, as stated in the founding Likud charter.

Step into the fray, Yair Netanyahu, Bibi’s son, and darling of the Likud base. He responded to Macron on social media in a less-than-diplomatic manner. His father said that Yair was entitled to his “personal opinion,” but the tone was “unacceptable to me.”

But Netanyahu could not resist having a pop at France’s colonial record. “We will not accept moral preaching about establishing a Palestinian state that will endanger Israel’s existence from those who are opposed to giving independence to Corsica, New Caledonia, Earth and human rights

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French Guyana and additional territories.” UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer has been given fair warning of what is in store for him if London dares to join France in any recognition.

Macron is just the latest world leader to incur Netanyahu’s wrath. He is not even the first French president to fall out with him. In 2017, Nicolas Sarkozy was overheard telling US President Barack Obama: “I can’t stand him anymore, he’s a liar.” Obama retorted: “You may be sick of him, but me, I have to deal with him every day.” Netanyahu also ranted at President Francois Hollande for backing a “shameful” UNESCO

resolution in 2016. Netanyahu has barely had a decent relationship of genuine trust with any world leader, even in the US. He was not trusted by Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Obama or Joe Biden.

All this highlights the very low bar for angering Netanyahu. Macron did not even call what Israel is doing a genocide. He has not called for the severing of relations with Israel or for it to be sanctioned.

But Netanyahu likes to have an enemy lined up in his crosshairs. He is the ultimate exponent of the blame game — of blaming everyone but himself. He wants Israelis to indulge in this bunker mentality, to fall for the line that everyone and everything is against Israel, Israelis and the Jews, from the UN, the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice to the papacy, nearly every state on Earth and human rights

groups and aid agencies. Yet most Israelis, along with nearly everyone else, knows that it is Netanyahu, his policies and his partners in crime in this extreme right-wing government that are despised.

Even President Donald Trump, who most on the right in Israel saw as their hero, is not buying shares in Netanyahu.

The real question is why anyone is dealing with Netanyahu. Given his orchestration of the genocide in Gaza, war crimes and crimes against humanity, his use of genocidal language and the International Criminal Court arrest warrant against him, he should be a global pariah.

Is this the beginning of the end for Netanyahu?

THERE was a time when Benjamin Netanyahu appeared to hold all the cards. The Palestinian Authority was largely passive, the West Bank was relatively calm, Israel’s diplomatic reach was expanding, and the US seemed ready to bend international law to accommodate Tel Aviv’s desire for complete control over Palestine.

The Israeli prime minister had also, at least in his own estimation, succeeded in subduing Gaza, the persistently defiant enclave that had for years struggled unsuccessfully to break the suffocating Israeli blockade.

Within Israel, Netanyahu had been celebrated as the nation’s longest-serving prime minister, a figure who promised not only longevity but also unprecedented prosperity. To mark this milestone, Netanyahu employed a visual prop: a map of the Middle East or, in his own words, “the New Middle East.”

This envisioned new Middle East, according to Netanyahu, was a unified green bloc, representing a future of “great blessings” under Israeli

leadership.

Conspicuously absent from this map was Palestine — both historic Palestine, now Israel, and the Occupied Territories.

Netanyahu’s unveiling occurred at the UN General Assembly on Sept. 22, 2023. His supposedly triumphant address was sparsely attended and, among those present, enthusiasm was notably absent. This, however, seemed of little consequence to Netanyahu, his coalition of extremists or the broader Israeli public.

Historically, Israel has placed its reliance on the support of a select few nations that are considered, in its own calculus, to be of primary importance: Washington and a handful of European capitals.

Then came the Oct. 7 assault. Initially, Israel leveraged the Palestinian attack to garner Western and international support, both validating its existing policies and justifying its intended response. However, this sympathy rapidly dissipated as it became apparent that Israel’s response entailed a campaign of genocide, the extermination of the Palestinian people in Gaza and the

ethnic cleansing of Gaza’s population and West Bank communities.

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The US, under President Joe Biden, initially maintained unwavering support. However, as Israel failed to achieve its perceived objectives, Biden’s public stance began to shift. He called for a ceasefire, though without demonstrating any tangible willingness to pressure Israel. Biden’s staunch support for Israel has been cited by many as a contributing factor to the Democratic Party’s loss-

es in the 2024 elections.

Then, Donald Trump arrived. Netanyahu and his supporters, both in

ening of Yemen’s Houthis and more, without significant concessions.

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Israel and Washington, anticipated that Israel’s actions in Palestine and the wider region — Lebanon, Syria, etc. — would align with a broader strategic plan.

They believed Trump’s administration would be willing to escalate further. This escalation, they envisioned, would include military action against Iran, the displacement of Palestinians from Gaza, the fragmentation of Syria, the weak-

ening of Yemen’s Houthis and more, without significant concessions.

Initially, Trump signaled a willingness to

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Historically, Israel has placed its reliance on the support of a select few nations that are considered, in its own calculus, to be of primary importance: Washington and a handful of European capitals. Then came the Oct. 7 assault. Initially, Israel leveraged the Palestinian attack to garner Western and international support, both validating its existing policies and justifying its intended response. However, this sympathy rapidly dissipated as it became apparent that Israel’s response entailed a campaign of genocide, the extermination of the Palestinian people in Gaza and the ethnic cleansing of Gaza’s population and West Bank communities. As images and footage of the devastating carnage in Gaza surfaced, anti-Israeli sentiment surged. Even Israel’s allies struggled to justify the deliberate killing of tens of thousands of innocent civilians, predominantly women and children. Nations like the UK imposed partial arms embargoes on Israel, while France attempted a balancing act, calling for a ceasefire while suppressing domestic activists advocating for the same. The pro-Israel Western narrative has become increasingly incoherent and it remains deeply problematic. The US, under President Joe Biden, initially maintained unwavering support. However, as Israel failed to achieve its perceived objectives, Biden’s public stance began to shift. He called for a ceasefire, though without demonstrating any tangible willingness to pressure Israel.
.....

Israel and Washington, anticipated that Israel’s actions in Palestine and the wider region — Lebanon, Syria, etc. — would align with a broader strategic plan.

They believed Trump’s administration would be willing to escalate further. This escalation, they envisioned, would include military action against Iran, the displacement of Palestinians from Gaza, the fragmentation of Syria, the weak-

tial plans?

The latter explanation appears more plausible. Efforts to intimidate Iran proved ineffective, leading to a series of diplomatic engagements between Tehran and Washington, first in Oman, then in Rome.

The Houthis demonstrated resilience, prompting the US to this month curtail its military campaigns in Yemen, specifically the so-called Operation Rough Rider. On Friday, a US official announced that the USS Harry S. Truman would withdraw from the region.

Notably, Hamas and Washington last week announced an agreement, independent of Israel, for the release of US-Israeli captive Edan Alexander.

The culmination occurred when Trump last week delivered a speech at a US-Saudi investment forum in Riyadh, in which he advocated for regional peace and prosperity, lifted sanctions on Syria and emphasized a diplomatic resolution with Iran.

Conspicuously absent from these regional shifts was Netanyahu and his strategic “vision.”

Netanyahu responded to these developments by

intensifying military operations against Palestinian hospitals in Gaza, targeting patients within the Nasser and European hospitals. This action, targeting the most vulnerable, was interpreted as a message to Washington and Arab states that his objectives remained unchanged, regardless of the consequences.

The intensified Israeli military operations in Gaza are an attempt by Netanyahu to project strength amid perceived political vulnerability. This escalation has resulted in a sharp increase in Palestinian casualties and exacerbated food shortages, if not outright famine, for more than 2 million people.

It remains uncertain how long Netanyahu will remain in power, but his political standing has significantly deteriorated. He faces widespread domestic opposition and international condemnation. Even his primary ally, the US, has signaled a shift in its approach. This period may mark the beginning of the end for Netanyahu’s political career and, potentially, for the policies associated with his horrifically violent government.



Jam: Pakistan strengthens commitment to GIs, for sustainable export growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Monday said Pakistan strengthened its Commitment to Geographical Indications (GIs) for export growth, economic prosperity, and heritage protection.

The Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to promoting and institutionalizing its Geographical Indications (GI) regime during the National Conference on Geographical Indications Awareness, jointly organized by the Ministry of Commerce and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) at local hotel.

Delivering the keynote address, the Minister stated that GIs are more than just intellectual property tools—they are powerful instruments for protecting

cultural heritage, enabling rural development, and creating new export opportunities. “We stand at a critical juncture where Pakistan can elevate its identity in global markets—not just as a producer of commodities, but as a custodian of quality and heritage,” he said.

He highlighted that Pakistan has so far registered 20 GIs, including globally recognized products such as Basmati rice, Chilghoza pine nuts, Sindhri mangoes, and Multani blue pottery, while applications for international protection are underway in key markets such as the European Union. The Minister emphasized the need to build robust value chains based on certification, product specifications, branding, and traceability to deliver meaningful economic returns to producers.

The conference was

attended by a wide range of stakeholders from federal and provincial governments, development partners, registrars, chambers of commerce, academia, legal experts, and private sector end users.

The forum served to raise awareness on the role of GIs in national development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), enhance institutional coordination, and promote capacity building for GI identification, value addition, and marketing.

Mr. Khan noted that 200 products have already been identified as potential GIs in Pakistan, and appreciated FAO's continued support—particularly through the TRI-Chilgoza project—in identifying four potential GI zones for Chilghoza pine nuts across Gilgit-Baltistan, North and South Waziristan, Sherani (Balochistan), and Chitral. He stressed that the GI system can contribute not only to economic growth but also to ecological sustainability and community resilience.

He also shared that the Ministry of Commerce is working to establish a dedicated GI Registry and is in the process of developing a National Geographical Indications Protection Strategy, which will serve as a guiding framework for expanding and protecting GI products domestically and internationally.

In closing, the Minister called on all stakeholders to actively engage in the consultations and contribute to shaping an inclusive, effective GI ecosystem. “With the right policies and coordination, GIs can become a cornerstone of Pakistan's trade and development strategy,” he affirmed.

Chairman FTT backs govt crackdown on illicit cigarette trade

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman of Fair Trade in Tobacco (FTT), Ameen Virk, has hailed the government's ongoing campaign against the illegal cigarette trade, warning, however, against “externally driven” tax policy pressures that emerge only during budget season.

Speaking to journalists in Islamabad on Monday, Virk commended the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and federal authorities for their sustained enforcement against tax evasion and illegal tobacco sales. He called the campaign “essential and long overdue,” urging the government to continue these efforts without compromise.

“Pakistan loses nearly Rs. 400 billion annually due to illegal cigarette man-

ufacturing and widespread tax evasion,” Virk stated. “In a country already under severe fiscal pressure, such a loss is simply unsustainable.”

While applauding enforcement across the tobacco supply chain to protect legitimate businesses, Virk voiced concern over what he described as the “seasonal reappearance” of health advocacy groups. According to him, these organizations surface each year ahead of the federal budget, lobbying for tax hikes on legal tobacco products while remaining silent on the thriving illegal market throughout the rest of the year.

“These so-called public health champions, often funded by foreign donors,

become vocal just weeks before the budget,” he said. “Their timing raises serious questions about their neutrality and whether their agenda aligns with Pakistan's broader economic interests.”

Virk emphasized that tax policymaking is a sovereign responsibility and must be steered by economic experts and state institutions like the FBR—not NGOs or international advocacy groups.

“Public health is important,” he acknowledged, “but it should not be misused to justify policies that ultimately strengthen smuggling networks and erode government revenue.”

Citing international precedents from Australia,

the UK, and the US, he warned that overly aggressive taxation on legal tobacco products has fueled multi-billion-dollar black markets. “The global evidence is clear: excessive taxation decreases compliance and fuels illicit trade. Pakistan cannot afford to repeat that mistake.”

Virk reaffirmed FTT's support for formalizing the economy and eradicating unlawful trade practices. “Law-abiding farmers, manufacturers, and retailers are fully committed to cooperating with enforcement and regulatory bodies,” he said.

The way forward is to strengthen Pakistan's legal economy—not punish those already bearing the tax burden.

FBR organizes tax awareness session at CUST



F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), through its Taxpayers Services Wing, organized a tax awareness ses-

sion at Capital University of Science & Technology. The session was attended by the President Hammad Qureshi, Vice President Ammad Azhar, General Secretary Ammara Khan

and university students.

The FBR team included Second Secretary (Tax Education) Zafar Iqbal Khan, Inspector Salman Khaliq, Coordinator Zia Farooqi and staff Manzoor Hussain.

During the session, Second Secretary (Tax Education) Zafar Iqbal Khan gave a comprehensive presentation on the tax structure and overall working of FBR. He highlighted the various measures being taken by FBR to enhance the transparency and efficiency of the revenue collecting system. In his briefing, he urged students to become “Tax Ambassadors” by spreading awareness about tax responsibilities in their communities.

The session concluded with a detailed Q&A session, where participants asked questions directly from the speaker and gathered more information. On the occasion, souvenirs were also distributed among the students.

This initiative is part of FBR's ongoing efforts to foster a better understanding of the tax system among youth and promote a culture of tax compliance in Pakistan.

Unjust tax system obstructing economic growth: Zahid Hussain

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, the President of the Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, the President of All Karachi Industrial Alliance, the Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board, and the President and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain, said on Tuesday that Pakistan's current tax system stands as a formidable barrier to the economic growth, stifling innovation and entrepreneurship.

He said that taxation complexities and inefficiencies create a challenging environment for businesses, diminishing their potential to thrive and expand.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the flawed system hinders the vibrant spirit of economic progress, leaving many opportunities untapped in a country rich

with potential.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the system is rooted in injustice and inequality and continues to fuel fiscal deficits, rising debt, and balance-of-payment crises.

The business leader said the government is under pressure from the IMF to reduce the budget deficit and achieve a primary surplus under the \$7 billion loan programme.

However, he warned that the burden may again fall disproportionately on salaried individuals and the corporate sector, a fact that cannot be ignored and should be a cause for concern for all of us.

The tax target for the current fiscal year was initially set at PKR 12.9 trillion; later, it was revised downward to PKR 12.3 trillion, with a projected shortfall of up to PKR 1 trillion. He said additional tax-

ation seems inevitable to bridge this gap. The upcoming fiscal year's tax target is expected to be PKR 14.3 trillion.

The IMF is pressing for more revenue in the new budget. Still, he said it remains unclear whether the government will continue taxing compliant sectors or finally act against powerful groups that have long remained outside the tax net, referring to industries such as retail, real estate, and agriculture.

Mian Zahid Hussain emphasised that if the government truly intends to relieve the public and the salaried class, it must eliminate unnecessary tax exemptions and take action against tax evaders. He also stressed the need to address losses from state-owned enterprises, power, and gas sectors, which are straining public finances.

He acknowledged that certain industrial and trade

groups strongly resist current tax reform plans. However, he urged the government to engage these stakeholders through meaningful dialogue and integrate them into the tax system. He further advocated completely digitalising all business transactions to curb tax evasion and improve compliance. This move requires the active participation of all stakeholders.

The business leader said it is time to stop repeatedly targeting the salaried class. Instead, the government must go after those who earn billions but contribute nothing to national development.

Mian Zahid observed that a fair and uniform tax policy is essential for justice and economic stability. He said that only a non-discriminatory taxation system where every citizen contributes according to their income can ensure sustainable development in Pakistan.



RAWALPINDI: A view of sacrificial animals displayed by vendors for sale at market ahead of Eidul Adha at Bhatta Chowk.

Rupee sheds 10 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Rupee on Monday depreciated by 10 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.76 against the previous day's closing of Rs 281.66.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.25 and Rs 283.75, respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs 0.90 to close at Rs 316.63 against the last day's closing of Rs 315.73, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.94, whereas an increase of Rs 1.56 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 376.61 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 375.05.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 paise each to close at Rs 76.71 and Rs 75.12, respectively.

Food exports decreased

ISLAMABAD (APP): Food group exports from the country during the last 10 months of the current financial year decreased by 1.04 per cent, whereas food imports grew by 0.56 per cent as compared to the imports and exports of the corresponding period of the last year.

During the period from July-April, 2024-25, the food commodities valued at \$6.164 billion were exported as compared to the exports of \$6.229 billion of the same period of the last year, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

Meanwhile, food commodities worth of \$6.855 billion were imported during 10 months of the current financial year as compared to the imports of \$6.817 billion of the same period of the last year, it added.

In the last 10 months, the imports of the commodities, including wheat un-milled decreased by 100 per cent, tea 5.13 per cent, which went down from \$547.430 million to \$519.368 million during the period under review, the data revealed.

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bullish trend on Monday, gaining 40.49 points, a positive change of 0.03 percent, closing at 119,689.63 points as compared to 119,649.14 points on the last trading day.

A total of 425,372,280 shares were traded during the day as compared to 572,287,175 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 22.274 billion against Rs 29,026 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 465 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 222 of them recorded gains and 199 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 44 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Fauji

Foods Limited with 60,601,551 shares at Rs 16.28 per share, Crescent Star Insurance Limited with 20,056,727 shares at Rs 3.15 per share and At-Tahur Limited with 18,289,768 shares at Rs 46.13 per share.

PIA Holding Company LimitedB witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 1,245.77 per share closing at Rs 13,703.44 whereas runner-up was Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited with Rs 926.69 rise in its share price to close at Rs 10,193.54.

Bhanero Textile Mills Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 59.74 per share price, closing at Rs 700.26, whereas the runner-up Hoechst Pakistan Limited with Rs 50.96 decline in its per share price to Rs 3,198.04.

Gold prices increase

Rs4,000 to Rs342,500 per tola: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs.4,000 on Monday and was sold at Rs.342,500 against its sale at Rs.338,500 on the previous trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs.3,429 to Rs.293,638 from Rs 290,209 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat also increased to Rs.270,348.

The rates of per tola silver and ten gram remained unchanged and closed at Rs.3,410 and Rs.2,923.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$40 to \$3,241 from \$3,201 whereas that of silver went up by \$0.24 to \$32.52, the Association reported.

Mobile phone imports decreases 14.21%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The import of mobile phones into the country has witnessed a decrease of 14.21 percent during the first ten months of the current fiscal year (2024-25) as compared to the corresponding months of last year.

Pakistan imported mobile phones worth US \$ 1.254 billion during July-April (2024-25) as compared to the imports of US \$ 1.462 billion during July-April (2023-24), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

Meanwhile, on a year-to-year basis, the import of

mobile phones also dipped by 22.47 percent during the month of April 2025 when compared to the same month of last year.

The import of mobiles into the country during April 2025 was recorded at \$ 125.119 million against the exports of \$1161.384 million in April 2024.

On a month-on-month basis, the imports of mobile phones also decreased by 3.96 percent during April 2025, as compared to the imports of US \$130.274 million during March 2025, according to the data.

It is pertinent to mention

here that the overall merchandise exports from the country increased by 6.40 percent during the first ten months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding months of last year. Exports during July-April (2024-25) were recorded at \$26.896 billion against \$25.278 billion during July-April (2023-24), according to PBS data.

On the other hand, imports into the country went up by 7.55 percent by growing from \$44.900 billion last year to \$48.292 billion during the first ten months of the current year.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was report at the port where three ships, Sofia Express, Banglar Agrajatra and Marangas Asclepius carrying Container, Palm oil and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal and Engro Elengy Terminal respectively on Sunday.

Meanwhile another edible oil carrier 'Maersk Beaufort' with Palm oil also arrived at outer anchorage on same day.

A total of seven ships were engaged at PQA berths during

the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Sunny Honor and Ivan-6 left the port on Monday morning, while two more ships, Sofia Express and Bam Bam are expected to sail.

Cargo volume of 140,487 tonnes, comprising 95,487 tonnes imports cargo and 45,000 export cargo carried in 3,100 Containers (760 TEUs Imports & 2,340 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are three ships at Outer Anchorage of Port

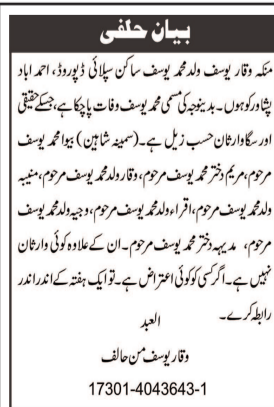
Qasim, out of them a gas carrier 'EM Zenith' & three more container ships, Hansa Africa, Seaspan Santos, MSC Martina are expected to take berths at FOTCO and QICIT respectively, while four container ships, MSC Guemsey, MSC Falcon-III, GFS Juno and Xin Lian Chang are due to expected arrive at outer anchorage today (Tuesday).

Missing Documents

I, Umer Jameel Shah s/o Qaiser Jameel Shah is the owner of under mentioned Plot located at DHA Peshawar whose file number is OLO/B/RES/3460, Plot Number 142, Sector i, Phase 1 DHA Peshawar. All original documents of above mentioned Plot are lost / missing somewhere in Peshawar. If anyone finds the documents, please contact me on this number. Umer Jameel Shah s/o Qaiser Jameel Shah. Contact No # 03009470123

Court Notice

In the court of Sana shah civil judge IV, Illaqa Qazi district Swat. Case # 229/1. Institution 05/12/2024. Next Hearing date 04/06/2025. Muhammad Iqbal etc.Vs Rozi khan etc. Notice to: (4) Liaqat Ali s/o Mian gul jan Gowardat tehsil Baidikt district Swat presently Abroad. In above mentioned case the respondent can't be served in the ordinary way, it is therefore proclaimed that if said respondents will not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 9:00 am dated 04/06/2025 ex-parte proceeding will be held against the mentioned respondents under my hand and seal of.





In brief

Exhibition football matches played

FAISALABAD (APP): The Faisalabad Football Association, in collaboration with District Sports Department, held under-14 exhibition football matches at Shahbaz Sharif Indoor Sports Complex, Kaleem Shaheed Colony, on Monday. Teams of four football clubs took part in the event. In the final, Al-Fateh football club beat La Sal football club by 7-5 goals. The chief guest, Coordinator to CM Punjab for Prisons Department & Chairman Faisalabad Football Association, Khushnood Awan, distributed prizes among winning teams. President Football Association Dr. Shahzad Mustafa, Finance Secretary and other officials were also present.

Fearnley advances at Geneva Open

LONDON (Agencies): British number two Jacob Fearnley continued his French Open preparations with victory over Dusan Lajovic to reach the second round of the Geneva Open. The 23-year-old defeated wildcard Lajovic of Serbia 6-4 6-1 to become the first British player to win a match at the tournament. The Scot will face Australia's Alexei Popyrin next. Fearnley rose to a career-high 54th in the world after reaching the Madrid Open's third round in April, having contested his first professional match on clay in Barcelona earlier that month. The French Open - the second Grand Slam of the year - begins on Sunday. Fearnley was ranked outside the top 600 at the start of 2024 but won four ATP Challenger titles to climb inside the top 100 by September. He has five wins from eight matches on clay - the surface used at Roland Garros for the French Open - since playing his first last month. Fearnley exchanged breaks of serve with former top-25 player Lajovic in each of the opening four games. But he took control of the match by breaking for a 5-4 lead and serving out the opening set, before dominating the second. Fearnley won six consecutive games following Lajovic's initial hold of serve to wrap up victory in 72 minutes. Later on Monday, Cameron Norrie faces Swiss player Dominic Stricker after the former British number one came through qualifying.

Guardiola cites shield to defend season

LONDON (Agencies): Pep Guardiola has defended Manchester City's trophyless season by saying they are only one of three English teams that could play in the Champions League next term to have claimed silverware. City edged past rivals Manchester United on penalties in the Community Shield last August but have since endured a miserable campaign, relinquishing their four-year hold on the Premier League trophy and being knocked out early in the Champions League. On Saturday, their season suffered another low as they were stunned by Crystal Palace in the FA Cup final at Wembley. It means for the first time in eight years, City will end a campaign without a major trophy but the Catalan referenced the Community Shield when discussing the only remaining target for them - Champions League qualification.

Sahibzada, Hales, Shadab confirm second spot for United

RAWALPINDI (Monitoring Desk): Islamabad United produced a vintage performance to barnstorm into the top two, relegating Karachi Kings to the Eliminator in the process. Needing to beat Kings by about 49 runs to guarantee two bites at qualification for the final, they managed it with consummate ease as Sahibzada Farhan and Alex Hales combined for a 153-run opening stand in 69 balls to post 251 for 5. Kings' response was restricted to a flash in the pan for the top two before United's spinners triggered a collapse, Kings slumping from 80 for 1 to 114 for 8 as United sealed a 79-run win.

United were put in to bat, and made their intentions plain from the outset. Farhan struck three fours in the opening over, with Hales going one better with two fours and a six off Khushdil Shah in the second. The two were in competition with each other more than they

were with Kings' bowlers, taking turns to flay them around the Pindi ground. The pair signed off the powerplay with 17 off Abbas Afridi to surge to 76, and if two quiet overs post powerplay gave Kings hope they were dragging the game back, the following three disabused them of that notion severely.

Hales hoicked Hasan Ali over long-off for six before Farhan - having reached a 28-ball fifty - smeared him over square leg. The tenth over saw Aamer Jamal cop even worse punishment from Hales, who battered him for three sixes and a four in an over which fetched 24. United had reached 130 at the halfway mark, well on their way to the imposing total they required for a top two finish.

There would be no respite as Khushdil's third over went for a further 20 before a miscued lap from Farhan ballooned to short

fine leg off Mir Hamza. He departed for 73 off 41, but Hales would motor along; by the time he ran down the stumps and yorked himself, he had blitzed his way to 88 off 35. United had enough wickets in the tank to keep slogging away, and benefited from Kings' largesse as they put down at least six chances amid one of the more egregious fielding displays of a tournament which has seen its fair share. Shadab Khan played the most active role in maximising United's target towards the end, three fours and as many sixes decorating a 19-ball 42.

Karachi needed 204 to secure a second place finish, and that's what they seemed to be shaping up for at the outset. David Warner and Tim Seifert took an over to settle before they starting finding their shots, picking up a pair of boundaries each over to keep them on track.



RAWALPINDI: Sahibzada Farhan and Alex Hales put on a rapid century opening stand.

Sikandar Raza leaves PSL 10

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Zimbabwe all-rounder Sikandar Raza has left the Lahore Qalandars squad ahead of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 10.

Following his departure, the Qalandars have signed Bangladesh all-rounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz as his replacement for the remainder of the tournament.

According to reports, Sikandar Raza left for England to join the Zimbabwe squad for a historic Test match against the host nation.

In a statement released by Lahore Qalandars, team director Sameen Rana lauded Raza's invaluable presence in the squad.

"Sikandar [Raza] is more than just a player; he's family.

His commitment, energy, and passion have inspired everyone in the squad.

We will miss him deeply, but we're also proud to see him represent his country in such a historic match," Rana said.

The Zimbabwe all-rounder expressed gratitude to the franchise, saying that the team was very close to his heart.

"It's never easy to say goodbye. But national duty comes first, and I have a responsibility towards Zimbabwe. I will be watching every ball from afar and cheering on my brothers in green. Qalandar for life," Sikandar Raza said.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has granted Mehidy Hasan Miraz a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for his participation in the PSL 10.

He is set to join Lahore Qalandars, who are scheduled to play the Eliminator on Thursday.

Ahead of his arrival in Pakistan for the tournament, the Bangladesh all-rounder called it an exciting opportunity in his career.

"It is technically the second time I have got a call-up to a franchise league. Nonetheless, it is a good opportunity for me to compete at a very high level.

PSL is one of the top tournaments going around.

I have done well in the past in the BPL, so I am confident that I can give my best," he said.

Pakistani Squash star Ahsan Ayaz to play in US tournaments

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani squash sensation Ahsan Ayaz is set to showcase his skills in two prestigious back to back tournaments Atlanta Open 2025 and Aftab Jawaid Memorial Mens Open 2025 in the United States next month.

Ayaz, who won his 2nd PSA title after securing victory in the Colleyville Open during the 2024-25 PSA Squash Tour, said he will participate in the 26th Atlanta Open 2025 (June 4 to 8) and Aftab Jawaid Memorial Men's Open 2025 Houston (June 11 to 15).

Last year Ayaz, was also invited as Guest of Honour in the final of the HBL Pakistan Super League (PSL) Season 9 at the National Bank Stadium, Karachi, which saw

Islamabad United edge past Multan Sultans in a thrilling last-ball finish, winning by two wickets.

"I'm fully prepared for the tournaments and I want to make my country proud by performing my best in both events," he told APP.

In recognition of his contributions to sports, Ayaz was also presented with the prestigious HBL PSL Hamaray Heroes Award.

Ayaz, an acclaimed squash champion from Peshawar, was honored with the prestigious Pride of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Award 2025 during the sixth Metrix Pakistan Youth Summit held earlier this year in the provincial capital.

Beyond his athletic achievements, he is deeply

committed to philanthropy. He actively supports patients battling liver and kidney diseases and works to empower disadvantaged youth. Through his influential social media presence, he advocates for mental health awareness and the promotion of sports culture in Pakistan.

A certified US Squash Level 3 coach, Ayaz is currently based in Houston, United States. He holds an MBA in Project Management from Ascencia Business School (UAE) and a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from the University of Peshawar.

"I want to make Pakistan proud, not only as an athlete but also as a humanitarian and mentor for the nation's youth," he said.

BCCI denies reports of withdrawal from Asia Cup

NEW DELHI (Agencies): The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has refuted the reports of withdrawal from all events organised by the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) due to regional tensions, as previously reported by Indian media.

In a statement issued to Indian news agency IANS, BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia clarified that no discussion regarding India's participation in any Asian Cricket Council (ACC) event has taken place at any level within the board.

"Since this morning, it has come to our notice about some news items concerning BCCI's decision not to participate in the Asia Cup and Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup, both ACC events. Such news is devoid of any truth. As of now, BCCI has not even discussed or taken any such steps regarding the upcoming ACC events, let alone communicated anything to the ACC," Saikia said.

He further added that the board's current focus remains on the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) and the upcoming series against England, for both men and women. "The Asia Cup matter or any other ACC event has

not come up for discussion at any level," he reiterated.

The clarification comes in response to media reports on Monday claiming that the BCCI had formally informed the ACC of its intention to withdraw from both tournaments, citing ongoing diplomatic tensions between India and Pakistan.

Saikia emphasized that any official decision on ACC events would be publicly communicated through the media. "As and when any discussion takes place and an important decision is reached, the same will be announced officially," he said.

Earlier, The Indian Express reported that the BCCI has officially communicated its decision regarding the withdrawal to the ACC, confirming its withdrawal from the upcoming Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup scheduled to be held in Sri Lanka next month, as well as the biennial Men's Asia Cup in September.

"The Indian team cannot participate in a tournament organised by the ACC, which is currently led by a Pakistani minister. That is the sentiment across the board," a BCCI official was quoted as saying.

Sources quoted by the Indian outlet claim the

BCCI's move is aimed at diplomatically isolating Pakistan cricket.

Earlier this month, India's head coach Gautam Gambhir called for a complete boycott of cricketing ties with Pakistan, including in ACC and International Cricket Council (ICC) events.

Notably, the ACC is currently chaired by Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) head Mohsin Naqvi, who also serves as the country's Interior Minister.

India is slated to host the Men's Asia Cup in September 2025 in the T20 format, with teams including Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, the UAE, Hong Kong, and Oman expected to participate. India are the defending champions, having won the 2023 edition held under a hybrid model due to political sensitivities between the two neighbours.

That model, in which India played all its matches in Sri Lanka instead of Pakistan, was also applied during the ICC Champions Trophy earlier this year. India played its fixtures in Dubai, while Pakistan hosted the remainder of the tournament. India ultimately won the title on March 9.



PARIS: Fiona FERRO of France during the Roland Garros 2025 - Qualifying, day 1 on May 19, 2025 at Roland Garros.

More misery for Messi and Miami with Florida derby defeat

FORT LAUDERDALE, United States (Agencies): Lionel Messi's growing frustration and Inter Miami's miserable run of form continued with a 3-0 loss at home to Orlando City in Major League Soccer on Sunday.

The Florida derby defeat leaves Miami with just one win from their last seven games in all competitions and they slip to sixth in the Eastern Conference with Orlando leapfrogging them.

Messi had just two shots on target in the entire game and even scuffed a free-kick from his favorite spot as his own form slumped with that of his team.

"Now we'll truly see if we're a team in difficult times,

because when everything's going well it's very easy," Messi told Apple TV following the defeat.

"When difficult times come, that's when we have to be more united than ever, be a true team, and pull ourselves together," he added.

Messi also questioned the refereeing but in truth the loss had little to do with officiating and much to do with shambolic defending, a disjointed midfield and punchless attack led by the rapidly fading Luis Suarez.

Orlando grabbed the lead in the 43rd minute with a goal of absurd simplicity — goalkeeper Pedro Gallese launched the ball down the middle of the field and Luis Muriel ran clear and slotted past Oscar Ustari.

The visitors were getting plenty of joy from going direct against a Miami back-line which was all at sea and Argentine Martin Ojeda should have done better when he found himself clear on goal but blasted over the bar.

Miami's veteran keeper Ustari then made a fine double save to deny Alexander Freeman and an Ojeda follow up shot but then the 38-year-old found himself to blame for Orlando's second goal.

The ball fell to Marco Pasalic on the edge of the box and his low shot went through the hands and legs of Ustari.

Miami coach Javier Mascherano then threw on attacking players in a bid to retrieve something from the



game but it was largely in vain.

In the fourth minute of stoppage time Duncan McGuire broke down the left and his low cross was slotted home by Icelandic forward Dagur Thorhallsson to wrap-up an

impressive performance from the visitors.

Miami have conceded 20 goals and scored 11 in their last seven games with their only victory coming against the New York Red Bulls on May 3.

Mascherano said his team had started as planned before the goal changed the tone of the game.

"I'd say for 25 or 30 minutes we had it completely under control playing in the opponent's half, but this is how it is, clearly. I'm not going to deny what the result is," he said.

"Unfortunately, we can't afford the mistakes we make; that's clear, but it's pointless for me to come here and tell this story, because it keeps happening. So, clearly, we as a coach-

ing staff are failing in many of these ways, and we have to try to find a way around them so we don't continue failing and so the team starts getting results," he added.

Miami's MLS campaign was going well until their exit to the CONCACAF Champions Cup at the hands of the Vancouver Whitecaps and Mascherano admitted the team's morale had been hit.

"Clearly, something has happened where the team has lost a lot of confidence. We have had a drop in level individually and collectively and it's clear one way or another we have tried with different schemes, different names, and still today we are hurting. We will keep trying to find a way."



In brief

HEC pushes forward new LLB curriculum

ISLAMABAD (PPI): A three-day meeting of the National Curriculum Review Committee for Law, organized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, has concluded with a pivotal decision to revamp the Bachelor of Laws (LLB) curriculum. The meeting was led by Dr. Amjad Hussain, Director General Curriculum HEC, with significant contributions from Mr. Hassan Raza Pasha, Member of the Pakistan Bar Council, Barrister Usama Malik, Director of the Directorate of Legal Education Pakistan (DLE), and Dr. Aziz U Rehman, Dean of Quaid-Azam University School of Law. Mr. Hidayatullah Kasi, Deputy Director (Curriculum) HEC, managed the sessions as Secretary. The committee has given initial approval for a new four-year LLB program, redesigning the curriculum to align with international standards and meet Pakistan's legal education needs. The curriculum will now proceed through the necessary legal channels for final implementation.

Wife's murderer arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Dhamial Police on Monday arrested a man who had murdered his wife a week ago. According to the Rawalpindi Police spokesman, the accused had stabbed his wife to death with a knife over a domestic dispute. He had gone into the hiding after the incident. The police used all resources including human intelligence to trace and nab the accused.

6 suspects arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police on Monday nabbed four drug dealers with more than 6 kilograms of the contraband items. According to the police spokesman, the operations were carried out in the areas of New Town, Wah Cantt and Mandra police stations. Some 5.23 kg charas and 800 grams heroin were recovered from the detained suspects, the spokesman said.

Meeting reviews revenue matters

RAWALPINDI (APP): A meeting regarding revenue matters was held here at the Deputy Commissioner's office on Monday with Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Shahryar Shirazi in the chair. The meeting was attended by assistant commissioners, Tehsildars, Naib Tehsildars and Patwaris of the Rawalpindi Division, a DPR news release said. Shahryar Shirazi directed all the ACs to hold revenue-related meetings every month, and that all the authorities should be in direct contact with the ACs and send reports about revenue-related cases in the court to them. He said that under the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, transparency was being brought in the working of the Revenue Department, with the introduction of modern technology, computerization and digitization. The aim, he said, was to cleanse the department of corruption and improve its performance. For that all the ACs concerned along with the staff of the Revenue Department should perform their duties with dedication in order to provide maximum facilities to the public. The Punjab Government was also working round the clock to provide relief to the common man, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and States and Frontier Regions, Engineer Amir Muqam meets with the nominated Ulema Committee representing the affectees of the Diamer-Bhasha Dam. —APP Photo

Abbasi meets German envoy to strengthen bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi held a significant meeting on Monday with German Ambassador to Pakistan, Alfred Grannas, focusing on enhancing diplomatic, economic, and industrial cooperation between the two countries.

The meeting focused particularly on the modernization and upgradation of Pakistan's railway system to align it with the latest international standards and technologies.

Minister Abbasi expressed Pakistan's commitment to benefiting from Germany's extensive experience and technical expertise, emphasizing the

goal of equipping Pakistan Railways with both improved infrastructure and cutting-edge facilities. This, he noted, would enable the provision of safe, fast, and high-quality travel services for the public.

During the meeting, both sides discussed opportunities for technological exchange, infrastructure development, and industrial collaboration in the railway sector.

They also explored the potential for future joint ventures and agreed on the importance of elevating Pakistan-Germany relations to new heights for the mutual benefit of their economies and people.

Minister Abbasi invited Ambassador Grannas to

visit the historic Golra Railway Station Museum, a significant initiative aimed at preserving and promoting Pakistan's railway heritage.

The Ambassador warmly welcomed the invitation and reaffirmed Germany's commitment to continued cooperation in this area, expressing optimism for more collaborative ventures in the future.

This meeting marks a positive step forward in enhancing economic, industrial, cultural, and technological cooperation between the two nations. It is expected to play a key role in improving Pakistan Railways and strengthening Pakistan-Germany bilateral relations.

ANF arrests three smugglers

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting five operations across the country, recovered as many as 516.51 kg of drugs worth more than Rs 3.9 million and arrested three suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Monday.

He informed that 6.110 kg of ice tactfully hidden in raw sugar had been recovered from a passenger visiting Saudi Arabia at Islamabad International Airport. As many as 1.6 kg of hashish was recovered from a passenger travelling in public transport at the Islamabad Motorway Toll Plaza.

Similarly, 4.8 kg of hashish was recovered from a vehicle near Sohrab Goth, Karachi and the accused was arrested. 480 kg of suspected narcotics hidden for smuggling were recovered in an uninhabited area near Gandhi Jungle, Chagai. As much as 24 kg of hashish hidden for smuggling in bushes was recovered near Shahrah-e-Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Road, Karachi. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and further investigations are underway.

Over 38,000 drivers fined

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has fined over 38,000 drivers for illegal parking during the ongoing year as part of a campaign to maintain traffic flow, improve the integrated traffic system, and ensure strict adherence to traffic laws.

An official told APP on Monday that indiscriminate action was taken against violators involved in illegal parking, and several vehicles were impounded at various police stations for occupying footpath areas and causing obstructions.

He said a special squad has also been formed to crack down on illegal parking in shopping malls, markets, and commercial centers across the city to ensure road discipline.

Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Captain (retd) Syed Zeeshan Haider issued special instructions to all zonal DSPs, emphasizing strict enforcement of traffic laws to reduce violations and ensure a smoother traffic system.

CTO Zeeshan directed that actions against those obstructing traffic flow must be made more stringent and effective, and that parking will only be allowed in designated areas.

CTO Zeeshan said violators in no-parking zones will not be given any leniency, and encroachments on footpaths will not be tolerated under any circumstances. CTO said pedestrians have the right to use footpaths without hindrance, and visitors to commercial centers will be provided with all possible facilities.

Zeeshan said citizens were urged to cooperate with the police by following traffic laws to help ensure the smooth operation of the city's traffic system.

Ambassador of Qatar calls on Interior Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with the Ambassador of Qatar, Ali Mubarak Ali Essa Al-Khater in Islamabad. During the meeting, discussions were held on bilateral relations and matters of mutual interest. Moreover, recent visit of Interior Minister to Qatar and the situation after the ceasefire between Pakistan and India was also discussed.

Mohsin Naqvi stated that Pakistan has always been an advocate of peace and desires sustainable peace in the region. He said the recent visit to Qatar was highly successful. He added that During meetings with Qatar's Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, and Interior Minister, there was a mutual agreement to enhance bilateral cooperation. He highlighted that In-depth discussions were held on counter-narcotics, counter-terrorism, security cooperation, and training programs. The Interior Minister emphasized that strengthen-

ing cooperation with Qatar in all sectors is a priority for Pakistan. He further stated that senior Qatari officials would visit Pakistan soon for a follow-up visit. He also stated that a high-level delegation led by the Federal Interior Secretary will also visit Qatar, which will include heads of all departments under the Ministry of Interior.

Mohsin Naqvi underscored that Qatar is a trusted partner of Pakistan, and relations with Qatar are an asset and we are proud of it. Federal Interior Secretary Muhammad Khurram Agha and other senior officials were also present on the occasion.

Mohsin Naqvi visits Jinnah square Murree Road Underpass Project : Approximately 90% of the work on the Jinnah Square Murree Road Underpass Project has been completed.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, accompanied by Minister of State for Interior Talla Chaudhry, paid an early morning visit to the

project site. Mohsin Naqvi reviewed the progress on the construction work.

Interior Minister directed that all construction activities be completed within the stipulated time-frame and emphasized that work on all sections of the project should continue simultaneously around the clock (24/7). He stated that the construction of the underpass will provide a signal-free corridor from the airport to Murree and Kashmir, saving both time and fuel for citizens.

On this occasion, Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa gave a briefing regarding the project. He apprised that construction activities are in their final stages and that the roof of the Jinnah Square Murree Road Underpass has been completed. He further added that work on horticulture and electrical work has also commenced, while the drainage system, road work, and asphalt paving are progressing rapidly.

Air ambulance service on motorways underway: Aleem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan has stated that efforts are currently underway to introduce Air Ambulance Service on Motorways and National Highways across the country.

He added that this facility was aimed to ensure that those injured in traffic accidents can be transported to hospitals in the shortest possible time. He expressed these views during his visit to the Expo Center following the conclusion of the Kazan Forum at Tatarstan, said a press release issued on Monday.

The minister pointed out that Kazan's development model was highly impressive and offers valuable insights that can

be adopted across various sectors in Pakistan.

He highlighted the efficiency of Air Ambulance Service in Kazan, noting that such initiatives could greatly aid Pakistan in establishing similar services, fostering mutual learning and experience-sharing between the two countries.

Abdul Aleem Khan emphasized that the high mortality rate resulting from road accidents during travel was a matter of serious concern and it is the Government's responsibility to ensure that the injured ones are promptly transported to nearby medical facilities. He added that continuous improvements are being made in Pakistan's transportation infrastructure and efforts are underway to raise pub-

lic awareness about e-tagging and other automated facilities.

The Minister described the Kazan Forum as beneficial for Pakistan, particularly in the context of advancements in the Communications Sector through collaboration among participating countries. He underscored the importance of enhancing land connectivity from Pakistan to Central Asian States and mentioned that productive discussions took place on this front during the Kazan Forum.

In their visit to the Expo Center, Kazan, Minister for Communications and the Pakistani delegation were briefed on the operational procedures and supporting infrastructure of Air Ambulance Service.

Authorities urge precautions as heatwave intensifies

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi currently grapples with a severe heatwave, with temperatures soaring to a scorching 40 degrees Celsius which has created challenging conditions for the city's residents.

The continuous rise in temperature, caused by the absence of necessary rainfall has prompted health authorities to issue urgent advisories to mitigate the risks associated with the extreme weather.

Dr. Asif Arbab Niazi, CEO District Health Authority Rawalpindi, has emphasized the gravity of the situation and said that the prolonged dry spell has intensified the heat. He urged the citizens to take preventive measures.

"Reduce outdoor activi-

ties, particularly during the peak heat hours of the day, regularly use head covers or umbrella while walking in direct sunlight", he said.

To prevent the adverse effects of the heatwave, Dr. Asif urged the residents to maintain high fluid intake containing electrolytes, prioritizing water and traditional drinks such as Lassi and Shikanbeene, which help fill up essential salts lost through perspiration.

He also recommended taking multiple cool showers throughout the day to lower body temperature and reduce the risk of heat-related illnesses.

The CEO called for special attention to recognize the symptoms of heatstroke, a potentially life-threatening condition.

"In case of an emergency, immediate first aid should be administered by moving the affected person to a shaded area, ensuring proper ventilation, and using cool water sponging to bring down their body temperature before seeking medical assistance", he said.

The Meteorological Department had earlier issued warnings about the impending heatwave, and local health authorities remain on high alert to address any emergencies.

"Citizens, particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly, children, and outdoor laborers, have been encouraged to stay informed and adhere to safety measures", said Dr. Asif Niazi.



ISLAMABAD: A view of smoke emitting after fire erupts at Margalla Hills in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo

FIA cracks down on fugitive criminals in operations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has made significant breakthroughs in two separate operations targeting white-collar crime and violent offenders.

In a major anti-corruption drive, the FIA Anti-Corruption Circle Islamabad arrested two individuals — Imdad Ali, a Principal Appraiser at Pakistan Customs, and his accomplice Sabir Ali — for their alleged involvement in large-scale financial misconduct.

According to initial investigations, the suspects caused a loss of over PKR 814 million to the national exchequer through under-invoicing. Between 2019 and 2021, Sabir Ali's company imported 29 shipments of American-branded ice cream using falsified and under-valued invoices,

with the support of customs officer Imdad Ali. Their pre-arrest bails were cancelled by a Special Central Court, after which both were taken into custody for further interrogation.

In a separate set of operations, FIA Immigration Sialkot, in collaboration with Interpol, apprehended three fugitive suspects wanted for heinous crimes including murder and attempted murder. The arrested individuals — Aftab Afzal, Arman Goraya, and Muhammad Amin — were captured in the United Arab Emirates and subsequently deported to Pakistan via Sialkot Airport. They were wanted by Punjab Police under serious criminal charges. Interpol Islamabad had earlier issued red notices for their arrest.

Aftab Afzal had been wanted since 2022 in a murder case registered at Cantonment Police Station, Gujranwala. Arman Goraya was sought in a 2024 murder case by Alipur Chattha Police and Muhammad Amin was accused of attempted murder in a 2020 case registered at Saddar Police Station, Toba Tek Singh.

Following their arrival, FIA handed the suspects over to Punjab Police authorities. These arrests were made possible due to effective coordination between Interpol Abu Dhabi, Interpol Islamabad, and FIA Immigration Sialkot.

According to the FIA spokesperson, both operations reflect the agency's firm commitment to bringing financial criminals and dangerous fugitives to justice.

Minister leaves for Iran

KABUL (Pajhwok): A delegation led by Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum Mullah Hedayatullah Badri has left for Iran to participate in the second international conference of mineral experts and researchers. Badri would meet with representative of various companies and traders. Badri would discuss strengthening bilateral cooperation, Afghanistan's mining potential, and available investment opportunities in the mining sector.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Zulqaidah 22, 1446 — Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Young man murdered

JALALABAD (Pajhwok): A young man has been killed and one person has been arrested in connection with his murder in eastern Nangarhar province, an official said on Monday. Police spokesman Syed Tain Hamad told Pajhwok Afghan News the young man was taken to Lalmi area by the accused and then brutally killed him there and his body was thrown into a well. He said the accused confessed to his crime in the 3rd police district on Monday.

WHO reports efforts for healthcare

KABUL (TOLOnews): The World Health Organization (WHO) in its monthly report of April 2025, said it delivered healthcare support across Afghanistan, reinforcing primary, secondary, and tertiary services.

During the month, the organization stated that it provided medical health services to 178,796 mostly for women patients, distributed 197 medical kits equal to 241 metric tons, and

trained 423 health workers to enhance service capacity and resilience.

The report also mentioned Afghan returnees from Pakistan and Iran, stating that health screening services were delivered to 194,898 by the organization.

Since the start of the current year 2025, the WHO recorded 64,658 cases of ARI-pneumonia, 47,827 cases of Measles, 34,973 cases of AWD with dehy-

dration, 5,591 cases of Malaria, 1,218 cases of Covid-19, 246 cases of Dengue fever and 178 cases of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) in the country.

In April, along with other medical services, the organization also provided Antenatal and Postnatal Care for 11,149 women, additionally, almost 7 thousand women received family planning and awareness services.

Five killed, two wounded in traffic accident

KUNDUZ CITY (Pajhwok): Five people have been killed and two others injured as a result of a traffic accident in northern Kunduz province, an official said on Monday.

Police spokesman Jum-maddin Khaksar said the accident took place when a corolla-type vehicle veered off the road and overturned in Imam Sahib District last night at 2:30am.

He said five people died and two others were injured in the accident.

According to Khaksar, security forces reached the scene and evacuated the injured to the zonal hospital. The accident occurred due to reckless driving, he said.

Special market for returnees inaugurated

JALALABAD (Pajhwok): The Department of Labour and Social Affairs has constructed a special market named "Refugee Bazaar" in the capital of eastern Nangarhar province to create job opportunities for returnees.

Labour and Social Affairs Director Maulvi Faridullah Haqqani told Pajhwok Afghan News the market had been built with financial support from the Gulbahar Charity Foundation.

He said his department registered daily members of returning families, who had the capacity to work and possessed technical and vocational skills, at the Torkham crossing — an exercise aimed at providing them with employment opportunities.

He assured the returnees would be given all necessary facilities in line with directives from the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) supreme leader.

He explained the market had 11 shops of fabrics, footwear and other items. More returnees would get jobs in the near future, he promised.

Elyas Totakhel, head of the Gulbahar Charity Foundation, said the initiative was not temporary and efforts were underway to provide employment opportunities for more returnees in the area.

Rahmat Wali, who ran a footwear business in Pakistan, and has been allotted a shop in the market. He said he would strive to increase his business to reduce locals' reliance on imported goods.

Last week, the International Organisation for Migration reported that more than 128,000 Afghans had returned to their homeland from Pakistan in 42 days.

173 drug addicts send for treatment

TAKHAR (BNA): Officers from Takhar's Counter-Narcotics Department collected 173 drug addicts from Taloqan city last week. The individuals have been transferred to a dedicated 500-bed addiction treatment camp in the province.

Khalid Durani, Head of Publications at the Takhar Police Headquarters, stated in an interview with Bakhtar News Agency, "These addicts will be returned to their families after completing their treatment."

Local residents and families of the addicts have expressed their gratitude towards the police for this initiative, emphasizing the need for ongoing and expanded programs to address the drug crisis in their community.

NSIA to send teams to Iran for refugee IDs



KABUL (Pajhwok): The National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA) says it has completed preparations to send teams to Iran to verify the identities of Afghan

refugees. In a statement, the NSIA said Deputy Director of Population Registration, Maulvi Mohammad Nabi Nusrat, met with representatives from the Ministries

of Foreign Affairs, Refugees and Repatriation, and Finance regarding the deployment of the teams.

Nusrat emphasized that providing identity verification and population regis-

tration services for Afghan refugees in Iran is a top priority for the authority.

He added that all preliminary steps have been finalized, and the teams will be dispatched soon.

Three-day book exhibition begins in Balkh province

MAZAR-I-SHARIF (Pajhwok): A three-day book exhibition has been launched by the Information and Culture Department in northern Balkh province to mark the Book Reading Week, an official said on Monday.

At a ceremony in this regard, Information and Culture director Ata Mohammad Saho said the exhibition was organized with support of publishers and booksellers, on the occasion of Book Reading

Week and to promote the culture of reading and will last for three days.

Nearly 20 publishing houses and booksellers participated in the exhibition, displaying over book 10,000 titles, he added.

Some officials from publishing associations welcomed the holding of such exhibitions and considered them important for promoting the culture of reading.

Abdullah Hanafi, head of a publishing association, said the society was con-

nected to books and reading books could be beneficial for intellectual development of youths.

The government should support publishing societies so they could offer good, quality books to the market, Hanafi added.

He asked officials of the Information and Culture Department to provide a special space for publishing associations so they could permanently display books.

Fawad Alami, a participant, welcomed the event

and explained organizing book exhibitions was beneficial for promoting the culture of reading.

Alami urged officials to expand such book exhibitions to districts and villages in addition to the city, so people could become familiar with the culture of reading books. According to the Department, currently there are 60 government and private libraries and bookstores in the province and about 15 of which are operating in different districts.

Day-long street book exhibition in Ghor organized

FEROZKOH (Pajhwok): On the occasion of Book Week, the Information and Culture Department on Monday organized a day-long street book fair to promote the culture of reading in western Ghor province.

Dozens of cultural figures, youths from different walks of life participated in the exhibition.

Information and Culture Director Maulvi Abdul Hai Za'em said thousands of books were on display at the exhibition to promote the culture of reading and encourage book reading among the youth.

He asked the youth to attend the exhibition and increase their knowledge.

Also, visitors, students, and school officials in Ghor welcomed the exhibition and emphasized a society that turns to reading book



will experience positive cultural, scientific, and social changes.

"Those who read books will have a clearer mind. I invite everyone to continue reading", Maulvi Muhammad Arif Zakir,

principal of Sultan Shahabuddin High School in Ghor, added.

Gharibullah Farooqi, a student, urged youths to read books and increase their knowledge instead of spending time on social

media.

According to officials, thousands of books from various fields, including culture, history, economics, literature, society, religion, and politics, are put on display in this exhibition.

Paktia dairy products hard hit by powdered milk

GARDEZ (Pajhwok): A number of dairy cow farmers in southeastern Paktia say the rising cost of animal feed, the widespread availability of powdered milk and low-quality dairy products have severely affected their businesses, leaving them on the verge of collapse.

Abdul Qadeer, who owns a dairy farm in the provincial capital, Gardez, told Pajhwok Afghan News that due to the high prices of animal feed and the poor state of the dairy market, he had been forced to reduce the number of cows.

He called on the Department of Agriculture and aid organisations to establish dairy-processing centres and to impose a ban on the sale of powdered milk and yoghurt.

He said: "The main issue is the absence of dairy-processing and packaging facilities. Even if someone sets up a farm, it quickly fails. 'I currently have 40 cows, but I am incurring losses because powdered milk is cheaply available in the market, and we cannot compete with it.'"

Another farmer, Qalandar, also said that he had very few cows remaining on his farm due to the rising cost of animal feed and poor market conditions. He added: "I sold

some of my cows because the feed is expensive, and powdered milk is being sold in the market. We cannot sell our milk at such low prices."

Both farmers warned that if the government did not address their concerns, they would be forced to shut down their businesses.

Mehrab Gul, a dairy vendor in Gardez, confirmed the availability of powdered milk was harming the market for locally-produced dairy products.

He said: "Because powdered milk is of low quality, it is cheaper and that's why shopkeepers sell it. We urge the government will ban

powdered milk to support local farmers."

Abdul Basir Kochi, the livestock manager at Paktia's Department of Agriculture, said 15 standard farms across the province were registered with the department.

The farms collectively produced hundreds of kilograms of milk daily, he said, adding efforts were underway to establish a standard dairy-processing centre.

The official revealed the authorities were considering slapping a ban on the sale of powdered milk to improve the market for domestic products.

MoF called the resumption of debt clearance by WB as a major financial development, hoping it would contribute to the re-launch of stalled development projects, generate job opportunities and yield positive outcomes for the national economy.

Residents of Khogyani demand basic services



GHAZNI (TOLOnews): Residents of Khogyani district in Ghazni province say they have been deprived of essential infrastructure and public services for years.

They report that the lack of access to basic living necessities has subjected them to numerous hardships.

Mohammad Naem, the district governor of Khogyani, stated: "No major projects or essential infrastructure have been implemented in our area to address the people's needs. Even roads have not been built so far. We have submitted our requests to Kabul."

Sayed Akbar, a resident of the district, said: "We walk one kilometer just to fetch drinking water. Our orchards and trees haven't seen water. Our area is very poor in terms of water resources — there's drought, and no wells are being dug because the land is all stone."

In addition to these issues, residents complain about a lack of healthcare and educational facilities.

They say that not only is access to necessary medical services lacking, but due to the shortage of schools, some children are deprived of education or must travel to the city of Ghazni to attend school.

Lutfullah, a teacher in the area, said: "We have only four schools in the entire district. The area is large, and many children are deprived of education and have no access to educational centers."

Mohammad Idris, a student, said: "Our request to the Islamic Emirate is to build more high schools for us. We only have four, and they are very hard to reach."

Rahmatullah, another resident of the province, said: "We suffer because our patients lie here for

days and nights without care. We don't have the resources to take them elsewhere. Our request is for more hospitals to be established here."

Meanwhile, local officials in Ghazni say the caretaker government is committed to addressing the issues of residents in underprivileged areas.

Hamidullah Nisar, head of information and culture in Ghazni, said: "The local administration of Ghazni, and the Islamic Emirate overall, are striving to provide services to the people, especially to the most deserving communities and to support them."

Khogyani is considered one of the conflict-affected districts of Ghazni. Over the past two decades, the absence of significant development and public service projects has left residents with limited access to essential living facilities.

Oilseeds crop cultivation project launched



KANDAHAR (TOLOnews): An oilseeds crop cultivation project has been launched on 550 acres of land in Kandahar.

This marks the first time such a project is being implemented in the province, following research conducted jointly by Afghan and Turkish experts.

The project involves the cultivation of plants such as sunflowers, which contain over 50% oil content. Officials say the implementation of such initiatives will not only support farmers but also boost domestic edible oil production.

Sadr e Azam Osmani, deputy director of the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, stated: "I assure you that the Islamic Emirate and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock are committed to strengthening the country's agricultural sector and making it fully

self-reliant."

Fazil Akin Erdogan, a representative of Turkey's TIKA Foundation in Kandahar, said: "Very soon we will begin seeing positive results from the seeds imported from Turkey. In the second phase, we plan to start oil production in Kandahar based on the yield from this cultivation."

Farmers, in turn, are calling on the Islamic Emirate and international aid organizations to support them not only with improved seeds, but also by helping them find markets for their harvests.

Mohammad Dawood, a farmer in Kandahar, said: "The government has now banned poppy and other narcotic crops that we used to grow. We've shifted to alternative crops, and we ask the government to help us with both improved seeds and marketing of our products, especially for the farmers of Panjwayi district."

Another farmer, Dawood Shah, added: "We urgently need improved seeds and chemical fertilizers. Our irrigation systems also require repair. We need support in order to achieve good harvests." The project has a total investment of \$150,000, and the cultivated plants will also be distributed to other provinces across the country for promotional and expansion purposes, in addition to southern Afghanistan.

WB resumes debt repayments in Afghanistan

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Ministry of Finance (MoF) says the World Bank (WB) is set to resume the disbursement of outstanding loans in Afghanistan, with nearly 11 million US dollars to be paid to companies in the first phase.

Following the return of

the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) to power in 2021, several international institutions had suspended operations in the country.

This led to a halt to numerous development projects and left various firms with unpaid dues, the min-

istry said in a statement.

MoF said the World Bank reopened its office in Kabul, following continued engagement and negotiations between ministry officials and bank representatives.

The statement added the bank was fully prepared to

commence the process of repaying its outstanding debts in Afghanistan.

The World Bank owes approximately \$50 million to Afghan logistics and construction companies, based on verified data. This amount is to be disbursed in four installments, in coordi-

nation with MoF and allocated to the respective companies.

In the first phase, which began today, WB would directly release \$10.8 million to eligible firms. The remaining \$39.1 million will be paid in three subsequent phases via MoF.

MoF called the resumption of debt clearance by WB as a major financial development, hoping it would contribute to the re-launch of stalled development projects, generate job opportunities and yield positive outcomes for the national economy.



BEIJING: Deputy Prime Minister, Senator Ishaq Dar, arrived in China on his three day official visit.

Court freezes assets of two govt officials

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Accountability Court Peshawar Judge Rajab Ali has confirmed the freezing of assets of two government officials allegedly involved in the Kohistan financial scandal, on Monday.

The court's decision comes after the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) filed applications seeking to freeze the assets of the two suspects. During the hearing, NAB's prosecutor informed the court that the suspects, Mumtaz Khan and Muhammad Riaz, were allegedly involved in the Kohistan financial scandal. The prosecutor further stated that NAB is investigating a massive financial scandal worth billions of rupees in Kohistan.

The assets frozen include 7 luxury vehicles and various properties in Islamabad. The suspects have allegedly acquired farm houses, residential homes, and flats in Islamabad under the names of benamidars (proxy owners). NAB's investigation revealed that the suspects had amassed significant assets through illicit means. The Director General of NAB had previously ordered the freezing of the suspects' assets. The Accountability Court has confirmed the freezing of the suspects' assets, upholding NAB's orders.

Iran summons British envoy

TEHRAN: Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has summoned the United Kingdom's charge d'affaires over what it called "suspicious and unwarranted" arrests of several Iranian nationals.

The UK earlier this month accused several Iranian nationals of offences without offering evidence, wilfully refrained from informing Iran's embassy in time, and prevented consular access contrary to international norms, the ministry said in a statement issued late on Sunday, according to state media. It also accused the British government of harbouring "political motivations to exert pressure on Iran" with the arrests. The UK government responded with a terse statement released hours later, which said its Foreign Office has summoned Iran's ambassador Ali Mousavi "in response to three Iranian nationals charged under the National Security Act".

"The UK government is clear that protecting national security remains our top priority and Iran must be held accountable for its actions." The diplomatic spat comes two days after British police charged three Iranians with suspected espionage for Iran's intelligence services under the country's National Security Act of 2023.

Mostafa Sepahvand, 39, Farhad Javadi Manesh, 44, and Shapoor Qalehali Khani Noori, 55, were accused of conduct likely to assist a foreign intelligence service between August 14, 2024 and February 16, 2025. They appeared before a Westminster Magistrates' Court on Saturday, where they were also charged with engaging in surveillance and reconnaissance with the intention of committing or supporting serious violence against a person in the UK. — Aljazeera

KP CM vows to promote higher education

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The 10th meeting of the Senate of the University of Swat was held here on Monday with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair. Provincial Minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi, relevant officials from the Higher Education Department, and other Senate members attended the meeting.

Annual Report of the University of Swat for the year 2023-24 was presented in the meeting. The relevant authorities also briefed the meeting about the implementation status of decisions made in previous Senate meetings. The draft of the University of Swat Statutes 2024 was discussed and referred to the relevant committee for further review.

Moreover, the Strategic Plan 2024-30 for the University of Swat was presented. The Chief Minister directed that the plan be

sent to the Task Force established in the Higher Education Department for further improvement. He directed to ensure inclusion of all academic departments of all public sector universities in the scholarship programs, adding that the provincial government has significantly increased the scholarship fund to benefit a greater number of students. The Chief Minister further directed that more investment should be made in those departments of public universities which attract more student enrollments. He emphasized the need to promote disciplines with higher market demand in public universities.

Ali Amin Gandapur instructed that a quota be allocated for university graduates in the business loan schemes under the provincial government's Ehsaas Rozgar Program, stating that university graduates could benefit more effectively from this scheme.

He also instructed the concerned authorities to

take steps to promote the field of Hotel Management at the University of Swat and to propose projects in the next fiscal year's budget to provide futsal facilities in ten universities of the province. Additionally, he directed for the construction of a guesthouse, auditorium, and an indoor gymnasium in girls' hostel at the University of Swat.

The Vice Chancellor briefed the Senate on the University of Swat's performance over the past three years, stating that currently 9,059 students are enrolled in BS programs, 756 in MPhil and MS programs, and 315 scholars in PhD programs. Moreover, over 18,000 students are studying in colleges affiliated with this university.

The briefing also mentioned that the University of Swat ranks 10th in the province according to the Times Higher Education ranking. The university has also established linkages with various national and international institutions, the authorities concluded.

Air Chief visits residence of Sqn Ldr Usman Shaheed

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Air Chief Marshal Zabeer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force visited the residence of Squadron Leader Usman Yousaf Shaheed in Rawalpindi to offer Fateha and to convey his condolences to the bereaved family.

The Air Chief paid rich tribute to Squadron Leader Usman Yousaf Shaheed, who gave the supreme sacrifice and embraced martyrdom in the line of duty during the recent enemy attack on an operational Air Base of Pakistan Air Force. Chief of the Air Staff assured the family of the Shaheed officer that the services and sacrifices of our martyrs will forever be etched in the nation's memory and honored with unwavering reverence. He also offered Fateha for the elevation of the martyr's ranks in heaven and prayed that Allah



Almighty grant patience to the bereaved family.

Later, Air Chief Marshal Zabeer Ahmed Baber Sidhu visited Combined Military Hospital Rawalpindi, where he met with injured personnel from Pakistan Air Force, Pakistan Army as well as civilians who sustained injuries during the conflict. He also received a comprehensive medical briefing on their condition and interacted with the wounded personnel, lauding their resilience

and unwavering courage in the face of adversity. He directed the hospital staff that the best possible medical care and administrative support be provided to the injured personnel.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief of the Air Staff reiterated Pakistan Air Force's steadfast resolve to defend the aerial frontiers of Pakistan at every cost and to uphold the legacy of valour & commitment demonstrated by its personnel in the line of duty.

Putin agrees with Trump to work with Ukraine

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russian President Vladimir Putin, after a call with US President Donald Trump on Monday, said that efforts to end the war in Ukraine were on the right track and that Moscow was ready to work with Ukraine on a memorandum about future peace accord.

Putin thanked Trump for supporting the resumption of direct talks between Moscow and Kyiv, and said that Trump noted Russia's support for peace, though the key question was how to move towards peace. "We have agreed with the president of the United States that Russia will propose and is ready to work with the Ukrainian side on a memorandum on a possible future peace accord, defining a number of positions, such as, for example, the principles of settlement, the timing of a

possible peace agreement," Putin told reporters near the Black Sea resort of Sochi.

If appropriate agreements are reached, then there could be a ceasefire, Putin said, adding that direct talks between Russia and Ukraine "gives reason to believe that we are generally on the right track." "I would like to note that, on the whole, Russia's position is clear. The main thing for us is to eliminate the root causes of this crisis," Putin said. "We just need to determine the most effective ways to move towards peace."

Taking to his Truth Social network, Trump said Russia and Ukraine had agreed to "immediately" start ceasefire talks. "Just completed my two-hour call with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. I believe it went very well," he added. "Russia and Ukraine will immediately start negoti-

ations toward a Ceasefire and, more importantly, an END to the War."

Trump added that the "tone and spirit of the conversation were excellent." The Vatican — where Pope Leo XIV was recently elected as the first American pontiff — would be "very interested" in hosting the Russia-Ukraine talks, Trump added. After the European leaders' phone call with Trump on Sunday, French President Emmanuel Macron said on X: "Tomorrow President Putin must show he wants peace by accepting the 30-day unconditional ceasefire proposed by President Trump and backed by Ukraine and Europe." Putin is wary of a ceasefire and says fighting cannot be paused until conditions are met, including a halt to Western arms for Kyiv. European leaders say Putin is not serious about peace.

SBP launches 'go cashless' campaign for Eidul Azha

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has initiated a nationwide "Go Cashless" campaign to promote digital payments and reduce reliance on cash transactions within cattle markets during the upcoming Eidul Azha. This strategic initiative, in line with SBP's goal of fostering digital financial inclusion throughout Pakistan, was officially launched today, May 20, 2025, and will run until June 6, 2025, or Eid night.

In partnership with the banking industry, the campaign aims to streamline the sale and purchase of sacrificial animals in 54 designated cattle markets across the country. Following the success of last year's digitalization efforts, this year's campaign seeks to further expand digital adoption among market participants.

Within these cattle markets, digital payment solutions can be utilized for various transactions, including the purchase of sacrificial animals, payment for necessities such as water and feed, and settlement of parking fees. To support both merchants and buyers during this period, the SBP has temporarily raised transaction limits, effective from May 19 to June 15, 2025: Branchless Banking Level-1 Accounts, Asaan Account/Asaan Digital Account, and Merchant Accounts: Daily transaction limits have been eliminated, and the per-month limit has been increased to PKR 5,000,000.

The public is strongly encouraged to take advantage of these convenient and secure digital financial services during the Eid-ul-Azha period. By participating in the "Go Cashless" campaign, individuals can contribute to a more efficient and inclusive financial ecosystem in Pakistan.

Nine Bills pass through Senate

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Senate of Pakistan passed nine significant bills on Monday, following extensive debates and discussions. These bills, which had already been approved in the lower house of Parliament, cover a broad range of issues, from child marriage prevention to amendments in national laws concerning trade organizations and motor vehicle safety.

One of the most contentious pieces of legislation, The Islamabad Capital Territory Child Marriage Restraint Bill, 2025, was presented by Senator Sherry Rehman. While the bill garnered significant support, it also faced strong objections from some members of the Senate. Senators Kamran Murtaza and Attaur Rehman raised concerns over the bill and suggested referring it to the Council of Islamic Ideology for further review. Despite these objections, the bill was passed after a heated debate.

In addition to the child marriage bill, several other key legislative changes were approved, including: The Trade Organizations (Second Amendment) Bill, 2025, presented by Shahadat Awan.

The Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) (Amendment) Bill, 2023, introduced by Samina Mumtaz Zehri, which aims to strengthen the legal framework for the investigation and prosecution of rape cases. The University of Innovation and Technology Bill, 2023, presented by Umer Farooq, which seeks to establish a new institution focused on fostering innovation in higher education.

The Provincial Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2024, and The National Highways Safety (Amendment) Bill, 2024, both introduced by Senator Mohsin Aziz, aim to improve road safety and regulation of motor vehicles in the country.

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2022, put forward by Senator Muhammad Abdul Qadir, which seeks to streamline the operations of the CPEC Authority. The Provincial Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2023, presented by Shahadat Awan.

Sindh Ministers visit Chinese automobile company



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon and Provincial Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, Chery Holdings Group has agreed to set up electric vehicle charging stations throughout Sindh.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that an EV charging station will be established every fifty kilometers across all districts of Sindh. He added that these charging stations will greatly benefit owners of electric motorcycles, cars, and trucks. He said that the transport system in Sindh is being modernized and that their vision is to promote environmentally friendly electric vehicles.

Chery Holdings Group has confirmed that EV charging stations will be built in Sindh. The construction of these stations will provide job opportunities to the people of Sindh as well. Apart from this, an assembly plant for EV mini trucks is being established in Karachi.

Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the establishment of charging stations and assembly plants will

mental sustainability in Pakistan. Due to the initiatives of Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, Chery Holdings Group has agreed to set up electric vehicle charging stations throughout Sindh.

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Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the establishment of charging stations and assembly plants will

create employment opportunities for the local population and make electric vehicles available at affordable prices. Provincial Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah stated that Chinese investors have assured full cooperation on solar energy projects in rural areas of Sindh. The solarization of homes will help reduce the energy crisis and serve as a significant milestone in promoting environmentally friendly energy solutions.

He said that solar systems are being provided to poor families to help meet their daily energy needs. The solarization of homes will enable ordinary people to easily fulfill their electricity requirements. Provincial Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah said that the solarization of homes will help the common man save on expensive electricity bills and significantly reduce problems like load shedding. It will also boost the local economy, create new employment opportunities, and contribute to the socio-economic development of rural areas.

Three siblings died after consuming poisonous breakfast

Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: In a heart-wrenching incident, three siblings, including two sisters and a younger brother died after consuming poisonous food during breakfast in the Azakhel area of Nowshera. The incident occurred in the Daudzai neighborhood of Akhkhel Bala, where a family was found unconscious after breakfast, on Monday.

According to details, Bakht Sher, a resident of Azakhel, his wife and their three children, 8-year-old Mariam, 6-year-old Hareem, and 4-year-old son Yuman, had breakfast together. Shortly after, the mother and children fell unconscious, and the children succumbed to the poisoning.

The mother, was rushed to Qazi Medical Complex Nowshera, where she is currently undergoing treatment in the intensive care unit. Her condition is reported to be critical. The bodies of the three children were shifted to the hospital

for post-mortem examination and later handed over to their family. The funeral procession of the children was attended by a large number of people, who were seen mourning the loss of the young lives.

The incident has sent shockwaves throughout the community, with many expressing grief and sadness over the tragic loss of the three siblings. The authorities have initiated an inquiry to determine the cause of the poisoning and identify those responsible. The food consumed by the family is being analyzed to determine the nature of the poison.

Condolences have poured in from all corners of the community, with many expressing sympathy for the bereaved family. The incident has highlighted the need for greater awareness about food safety and the importance of taking precautions to prevent such tragedies.

The incident has left the community in mourning,

and many are calling for measures to be taken to prevent such incidents in the future. The tragic loss of the three siblings has sent a wave of grief throughout the region, and the community is coming together to support the bereaved family.

Farmer killed over land dispute: A farmer on Monday was killed and another injured in exchange of fire between two groups over a land dispute. The police spokesman said that the incident took place in the Jiwana Shareef area under Qila Didar Singh police station.

A man, namely Yusuf Warrich, got critical injuries as his rival groups opened indiscriminate firing when he was working in the field with others, he said, adding he succumbed to his injuries on the way to the hospital. Another person received injuries in the incident, the spokesman said. The police registered a case and started an investigation.

Reserved seats in Parliament; SC continues hearing of appeals

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court's Constitutional Bench on Monday adjourned the hearing of the case related to reserved seats in the parliament till May 20. The eleven-member bench, headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan, was hearing appeals filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) regarding allocation of reserved seats.

The full bench included Justices Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Naeem Akhtar Afghan, Musarrat Hilali, Hashim Kakar, Shahid Bilal Hassan, Salahuddin Panhwar, Aamer Farooq, and Ali Baqar Najafi.

During the proceedings, senior lawyers Hamid Khan and Faisal Siddiqi appeared before the court. Hamid Khan informed the bench that he had submitted miscellaneous applications. However, Justice Aminuddin Khan remarked that the court had not yet received those applications and advised him to check with the advocate-on-record. Justice Aminuddin Khan noted that two judges had rejected themselves after receiving the applications, and the current eleven-member bench was formed as per their decision.

Addressing Advocate Faisal Siddiqi, Counsel for the Sunni Ithad Council, Justice Musarrat Hilali remarked, "Two members decided not to issue notices

IHC dismisses petition against ITNE Chairman

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) dismissed a writ petition filed against the Chairman of the Implementation Tribunal for Newspaper Employees (ITNE) by Ghulam Murtaza Mughal, son of Faqir Muhammad. Justice Babar Sattar of the IHC announced the judgment on 13th May 2025, rejecting the petition which was filed under Article 199 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973. In the petition, Mughal had challenged an earlier order by the ITNE, seeking gratuity benefits for 20 years of service instead of the 10 years awarded. However, the court found that the petition lacked merit, particularly in light of the petitioner's conduct following the original proceedings.

on their own. Why are you trying to persuade us further? Once judges have objected themselves, what remains?"

Faisal Siddiqi argued that, traditionally, a review petition should be heard by the same bench that delivered the original ruling. "Since the original case was heard by a 13-member bench, it should also hear the review," he added. Justice Aminuddin Khan responded that following the 26th Constitutional Amendment, a smaller bench could now hear review petitions.

He added that even if the original bench comprised 13 members, an 8- or 9-member constitutional bench could now legally review the case. Siddiqi argued that the jurisdiction of constitutional benches was case-specific. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail advised him to read Articles 191A, 185, and 188 in conjunction.

Justice Aminuddin Khan noted that Advocate Siddiqi was offering extended arguments only on procedural objections. Justice Mazhar further stated that all available judges were included in the constitutional bench, and two voluntarily recused themselves. "This bench was formed from the remaining available judges. When the Practice and Procedure Act was challenged, the full court sat, and questions were raised as to who would hear appeals against those judges. Each judge gave their own view at that time."

Faisal Siddiqi proposed adjourning the case and referring it back to the Judicial Commission, which could appoint two more judges to the bench. Justice Mazhar responded by questioning whether the two judges who had already dismissed the application could sit again.