

Youm-e-Takbeer today
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of Youm-e-Takbeer, Pakistan marks its historic achievement of becoming a nuclear power on May 28, 1998. While honoring this strategic milestone, the day also highlights Pakistan's remarkable strides in the peaceful use of nuclear technology for national development, health, energy, and agriculture.



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President asks parents to open doors to vaccinators

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday urged the countrymen, including the media, teachers, religious scholars and the community, to create awareness and extend their support to the polio vaccination drive and dispel the allied misconceptions to achieve a polio-free Pakistan.

"I call on parents to open their doors to vaccinators, ensuring every child receives the life-saving polio drops. I urge teachers, religious leaders, and community elders to champion this noble cause, dispelling myths and building trust. I appeal to the media to amplify the truth: the polio vaccine is safe, effective, and our best weapon," the president said in his message on the occasion of the countrywide polio eradication campaign launched on Monday targeting 45.4 million under-five children.

He reiterated his full support to his daughter and the First Lady, Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, whose tireless advocacy and efforts had galvanized Pakistan in this fight against polio. "Her call to unite parents, community leaders, and youth reminds us that eradicating polio is our shared responsibility," President Zardari said.

He said that over 400,000 dedicated frontline workers would go door-to-door across the cities, villages, and remote valleys to administer life-saving polio drops. This effort is a cornerstone of our mission to eradicate polio and secure a healthier future for our nation, he added. The president also paid tribute to the brave polio workers, who risk their lives to reach every child, often in the face of grave danger.

COAS meets Iranian Chief of General Staff

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of Pakistan, visited General Staff Headquarters, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. COAS held meeting with Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces. The two military leaders engaged in discussions on the evolving regional security landscape, with particular focus on strengthening bilateral defence ties.

Key areas of mutual interest included enhancing military-to-military cooperation, improving security mechanisms along the shared border, and exploring avenues for transforming the border regions into zones of trade and economic connectivity, thereby contributing to regional stability and prosperity. Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir was accorded a warm welcome upon his arrival, including a ceremonial guard of honour presented by a well-turned-out contingent of the Iranian Armed Forces.

PM, Azeri leader vow to grow ties

LANCHIN-AZERBAIJAN (APP): Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, and President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev on Tuesday during a bilateral meeting underscored the importance of coordinated efforts to promote regional stability, mutual prosperity, and principled positions on key international issues.

The prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, held a bilateral meeting with the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in the city of Lanchin, a Prime Minister's Office news release said. The meeting took place on the eve of the Trilateral meeting of Pakistan, Azerbaijan and Türkiye that would take place on Azerbaijan's Independence Day, adding a symbolic dimension to the exchange between the two leaders. The Prime Minister conveyed warm felicitations to President Aliyev and the people of Azerbaijan on this important national occasion.

The prime minister emphasized that people of both countries enjoy an eternal bond of friendship. The prime minister thanked Azerbaijan for its steadfast support during the recent Pakistan-India confrontation, in the face of Indian provocation and acknowledged the public expressions of solidarity from both the leadership and the people of brotherly Azerbaijan. He said that people of Azerbaijan celebrated the success of Pakistan in Maarka-e-Haq against India.

During the meeting, the two leaders reviewed the full spectrum of bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction over the upward trajectory of political, economic, defence, and cultural cooperation between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. They reaffirmed their shared commitment to diversifying the strategic partnership through investment in mutually beneficial avenues. The prime minister reiterated that both the countries had stood by each other on every occasion and would continue to do so.

Azerbaijan side agreed to exchange of delegations with regard to progress in investment of Azerbaijan in Pakistan. In this regard delegation level talks will be

organized very soon. The prime minister noted that holding this meeting in Lanchin, a city that reflects Azerbaijan's journey of resilience and restoration, carries deep symbolic and emotional significance for both sides.

The meeting concluded with both leaders reaffirming their commitment to the deepening of the Pakistan-Azerbaijan partnership and working closely to further advance shared objectives at the bilateral and regional levels. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Chief of the Army Staff, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Atta Ullah Tarrar and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi were also present.

Earlier, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday winded up his two-day bilateral visit to Iran and departed for Azerbaijan, on the third leg of this four-nation visit.

The prime minister left for Baku at the invitation of President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev. Following visits to Turkey, Iran and Azerbaijan, he will later proceed to Tajikistan. At Mehrabad Airport, Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni, Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amir Moghadam, Pakistan's Ambassador to Iran Mudassir Tipu, and senior diplomatic officials saw off the prime minister and his delegation.

During the two-day visit to Iran, Prime Minister Shehbaz met with Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and Iranian President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian. The meetings focused on Pakistan-Iran relations, particularly the promotion of trade and regional connectivity, besides covering regional issues, with appreciation for Iran's efforts to maintain peace in the region during the war imposed on Pakistan by India. Both sides also discussed the strengthening of strategic ties between the two countries, as well as the immediate cessation of Zionist oppression in Gaza and achieving a sustainable and lasting ceasefire.

4 dead, many injured as rains batter KP, Punjab

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: At least three people lost their lives and multiple others were injured as strong winds and thunderstorms lashed several parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab on Tuesday.

In Swabi District, a two-year-old child died when a boundary wall and roof collapsed in the Manki village, according to Rescue 1122 official Nabeel Khan. Nabeel told media that the incident occurred due to strong winds and storms, adding that the toddler's mother and another child were injured and taken to a hospital.

In another incident, he said the roof of a shed collapsed in Ziarat Cham Baba, trapping a mother and her son under the debris, who were pulled out of the rubble by locals and taken to a hospital. In Shangla District's Bisham tehsil, lightning struck a house, killing one person and leaving six others unconscious. Rescue 1122 official Rasool Khan Sharif said.

A young man was injured when a wall collapsed in the Rahimabad area due to a storm, according to a statement by the Nowshera Rescue 1122. The medical teams and ambulances reached the spot and took the person to the hospital, the statement added.

Separately, a total of seven people were injured in Peshawar in various rain-related incidents, according to Rescue 1122 spokesperson Bilal Ahmad Faizi. Two people were injured after a billboard of the Hayatabad Cricket Stadium fell on their car in Peshawar, Faizi said, noting that

rainwater inundated the roads in the city, causing inconvenience to people. A roof and wall collapse in Mattani village injured three people, while another person was injured in the collapse of a wall in the city's Garhi Qamardin area. A solar panel fell on Phandu Road and injured a person.

Meanwhile, at least one person was killed and eight others were injured in the rains across Punjab, according to Rescue 1122 spokesperson Farooq Ahmed. One person died due to lightning in Mianwali's Kala Bagh Bazaar. Another person was injured in Mianwali the wall of the Makarwal police station collapsed due to strong winds. In Rawalpindi, two children were injured by a falling object from the roof and one person was injured by falling from ladder.

A 22-year-old woman was injured after a mud house collapsed in Attock. In Gujranwala, a girl fell from the roof into the courtyard due to strong winds. A solar panel fell from the roof due to strong winds in Mialli, injuring one person.

A sudden cloudburst near Muzaffarabad's Bilgran area has left a trail of destruction, killing a woman and leaving several people missing. Heavy rains triggered a landslide, flattening houses and damaging a local mosque. Rescue teams are trying to control the situation, but several areas remain cut off. Meanwhile, heavy rain continues to lash Neelum Valley. Flash floods in streams have made the matters worse.

(Continued on Back Page)



LANCHIN: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting with President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev.

Zil Hajj moon not sighted, Eid on June 7

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee on Tuesday announced that the moon marking the beginning of Zulhajj 1446 AH was not sighted across the country. Consequently, the first day of Zulhajj will fall on Thursday, May 29, while Eid-ul-Azha will be celebrated across the country on Saturday, June 7.

The announcement was made by Chairman of the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, Maulana Syed Abdul Khabir Azad, following a meeting of the committee held in Islamabad. The session was convened to review moon-sighting reports and was attended by members of the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee as well as representatives from relevant government departments.

Simultaneously, meetings of zonal and district Ruet-e-Hilal Committees were held in their respective regions, including provincial capitals. Despite extensive coordination and observation efforts, no credible moon sighting reports were received from any part of the country.

Maulana Azad, addressing a post-meeting press conference, said, "Most areas across the country experienced overcast skies today, and no testimony regarding the sighting of the Zulhajj moon was received. Therefore, with consensus, it has been decided that Eid-ul-Azha will be observed on June 7."

He also emphasized the spiritual and communal importance of the occasion, urging all those who are financially able to perform the act of Qurbani (sacrifice) in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Maulana Azad praised the unity of the Pakistani nation in standing shoulder to shoulder with the country's armed forces and government during a critical phase of national defense. He said, "The nation stood united in the face of aggression and supported its armed forces and leadership with unwavering resolve. We are grateful to Allah Almighty for granting us a decisive victory in this just battle."

World must take note of Modi's remarks: FO

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday said that the hate-driven invocation of violence in the recent remarks of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's was deeply disturbing, urging the international community to take serious note of India's escalating rhetoric, undermining regional stability and the prospects for lasting peace.

"Pakistan has taken note of the recent remarks by the Prime Minister of India, delivered in Gujarat with the theatrical flourish of a campaign rally rather than the sobriety expected of the leader of a nuclear-armed state. The hate-driven invocation of violence in his remarks is deeply disturbing, not only for its content but for the dangerous precedent it sets in a region already burdened by volatility. We regret the continued erosion of maturity and decorum in Indian statecraft," Foreign Office spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan said in a statement.

He said that such statements blatantly violated the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter, which obliged member states to resolve disputes peacefully and to refrain from the threat or use of force against the sovereignty or political independence of other states.

"Pakistan views these remarks as a reckless provocation, intended to distract from the ongoing human rights abuses and demographic engineering in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir." The statement concludes with a call for the international community to take serious note of India's escalating rhetoric and its implications for regional and global peace.

Imran's sister offers 'give and take' formula

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Aleema Khan, sister of jailed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding chairman Imran Khan, has publicly appealed to the country's "unseen forces" for a "give and take" arrangement to secure her brother's release, offering to engage in direct dialogue.

Speaking to the media in Islamabad on Tuesday, Aleema claimed judges were "facing pressure" in the PTI founder's cases, citing incidents where allegedly his petitions were added to cause lists but mysteriously disappeared.

She also claimed that hidden directives were preventing judicial action. "I want to say to these unseen forces — whatever you are — don't hide. Come forward. Khan's sister are ready to sit with you. Tell us what he has done to you, what has he said, what wrong has he committed against you," she demanded.

She said that her brother remained defiant and steadfast, refusing to bow down even if jailed for life. "He told me, 'Even if I remain in prison forever, I will not submit to tyrants.'"

er-terrorism efforts spoke louder than any hostile soundbite. If extremism is indeed a concern for the Indian government, it would do well to turn inward — toward the alarming rise of majoritarianism, religious intolerance, and the systematic disenfranchisement of minorities under the increasingly brutal Hindutva ideology, the spokesperson added.

He reiterated that Pakistan remained committed to peace based on mutual respect and sovereign equality. However, any threat to its security or territorial integrity will be met with firm and proportionate measures, in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, he added.

The FO spokesperson said in his statement, "Pakistan has taken note of the recent remarks by the Prime Minister of India, delivered in Gujarat with the theatrical flourish of a campaign rally rather than the sobriety expected of the leader of a nuclear-armed state. The hate-driven invocation of violence in his remarks is deeply disturbing, not only for its content but for the dangerous precedent it sets in a region already burdened by volatility. We regret the continued erosion of maturity and decorum in Indian statecraft." He further stated, "Pakistan views these remarks as a reckless provocation, intended to distract from the ongoing human rights abuses and demographic engineering in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir." The statement concludes with a call for the international community to take serious note of India's escalating rhetoric and its implications for regional and global peace.

Aleema accused these forces of threatening judges and parliamentarians and urged them to engage directly rather than exert influence from behind the scenes. "Don't fear us — come and speak to us. We need to know what you want from Khan. If there's a give-and-take, let us know what it is," she added. She stressed that Imran only stood for democracy and had not acted against the interests of the country. "Why are you afraid of his release? He is not someone who would harm Pakistan," she said.

Speaking to the media outside the Islamabad High Court, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur launched a scathing attack on the federal government, judiciary, and political opponents. He strongly opposed the 26th Constitutional Amendment, calling it "unacceptable". "We were against it and will throw it in the dustbin," he said.

Gandapur claimed that the February 8 general elections were rigged, saying that "traitors conspired together to steal the elections". He announced that the next hearing of the case has been scheduled for June 5, just before Eid.

KP government unveils ambitious good governance roadmap

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Under the dynamic leadership of Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has achieved another significant milestone by launching the Good Governance Roadmap aimed at ensuring improved governance mechanism in the province. The Chief Minister formally inaugurated the roadmap, which focuses on three priority areas: better governance, stronger security and smarter development.

These sectors have been outlined with clear and tangible targets to be achieved over the next two years, setting the foundation for a unified framework that will guide all reform initiatives and improve public service delivery, institutional performance, and governance models in line with public expectations. This newly launched roadmap will consolidate and streamline all government efforts to improve service delivery across the



Launch of KP Good Governance Roadmap by Ali Amin Gandapur, Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 28th May 2025



sectors. According to details, the roadmap also outlines twelve additional sub-sectors where governance will be strengthened. These include health, education, urban and rural development, the economy, social protection, public-private partnerships, ease of doing business, economic growth, a robust legal framework, digital service delivery, governance calendar, merit-based recruitment, and employment opportunities in underdeveloped regions. To reinforce the security apparatus, the roadmap includes

the implementation of a Provincial Action Plan. For smarter development, it emphasizes the timely completion of mega projects, priority-based funding for public welfare initiatives, and promoting investment.

Over the next two years, the government aims to upgrade 250 Basic Health Units and Rural Health Centers, ensure 24/7 maternal health services at the primary level, supply more than 100 hospitals with essential medical equipment and medicines, and ensure polio vaccination access to every child in the southern

public-private partnership in the livestock sector, alongside the breeding of 10 million fish annually. Thousands of high-quality fruit orchards will be planted, and grafting of two million wild olive trees will be carried out in the agriculture sector. Work will commence on the Dera Ismail Khan to Peshawar Motorway, and the Peshawar New General Bus Stand project will be completed. In the minerals sector, four mineral zones will be created to support small-scale mining operations, and in housing, 14,000 residential plots will be developed in New Peshawar Valley.

In the energy sector, 130,000 low-income households will be shifted to solar energy. The tourism sector will see the development of more than 50 new tourist destinations and the launch of a home-stay program in seven tourist districts, along with ensuring the provision of basic facilities at tourist sites. Digitization efforts will include offering more than 100 services online through the

Dastak Portal and expanding digital systems across all government departments. Institutional reforms will involve restructuring of human resource policies across departments and the implementation of performance dashboards to ensure a merit-based system of rewards and accountability.

To support the achievement of these goals, all government departments have prepared individual action plans. A comprehensive and effective monitoring system has been established to oversee the implementation of the roadmap. The Chief Secretary's Office will directly supervise institutional reforms and administrative performance, while the Performance Management and Reforms Units will conduct continuous reviews using dashboards, geo-tagged evidence, and artificial intelligence tools. Additionally, quarterly review meetings will be held at the Chief Minister's Secretariat to assess progress and promptly address any challenges or obstacles.



KARACHI: Traders' hold protest against shortage of electricity at shaheen complex. —INP Photo

CM orders substantial increase in traffic fines to improve road safety

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has ordered a significant increase, up to ten times, in traffic fines to enhance public safety and bring discipline to the roads. Chairing a high-level meeting on traffic management and reforms, here on Tuesday, she expressed serious concern over the lack of improvement in the current traffic system and stressed the need for concrete, long-term measures. The CM said that parents of underage drivers will be held accountable for allowing their children to drive, and criminal cases will be registered in such incidents. She further directed that strict action be taken against motorists driving with broken or non-functional headlights, emphasizing that effective action taken before accidents occur is the true measure of success.

Highlighting the need for visible enforcement, CM Maryam Nawaz said vehicles with dangerous objects such as chains hanging from them will be stopped immediately, and one-wheeling and other forms of reckless driving will lead to criminal proceedings. She approved a proposal to ban the parking of goods-loaded trolleys on the sides of major roads and ordered the imposition of heavy fines for using mobile phones while driving. She also directed relevant authorities to remove traffic bottlenecks on Bedian Road and other key routes, and instructed that video and photographic evidence be attached to each challan to ensure transparency. As part of broader reforms, CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif approved the restructuring of the traffic police into five specialized

categories: Enforcement Officer, Traffic Regulator, Education Officer, Licensing Officer, and Public Service Officer. She also sanctioned the provision of modern patrol vehicles and state-of-the-art equipment to improve enforcement capacity. The CM announced that traffic challans will now be issued in-camera, and reviewed plans to remodel 372 key traffic points across Punjab, including 77 in Lahore, to improve road infrastructure. She also directed the installation of digital roadside screens for the early detection and management of traffic congestion. Reaffirming her commitment to public safety, CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that only firm, technology-driven, and preventative measures can ensure a safer and more efficient traffic system in Punjab.

PAA conducts e-Kacheri to address public grievances



F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) held an e-Kacheri session today at its Karachi headquarters, chaired by the Deputy Director General (Works and Development) Sumair Saeed. Senior officials from Engineering Services, Human Resources, Security, Commercial & Estates, and Communication & Navigation Services were also present to assist in responding to public concerns. Complaints raised by passengers included lost or damaged luggage, delays in airline compensation, bribery allegations against a ground handling agency,

and requests to replace armed security with facilitation staff at airport entry points. Employee-related grievances involved harassment by officials, illegal fee collection by security personnel from retainership staff, and contractors not paying full wages to workers deployed at airports. Infrastructure issues such as traffic congestion, porter shortages, and malfunctioning facilities were also discussed. In response to a query, the Chair stated that the consultancy phase is underway for upgrading Dera Ghazi Khan Airport, and runway expansion will be completed by the end of next year.

The Chair issued immediate instructions for urgent complaints, forwarded matters to relevant departments, and advised further investigation of localized issues. Complainants with complex concerns were asked to submit supporting evidence. He concluded by saying, "We value public feedback—it drives improvement. Grievances raised today will be swiftly addressed, and systemic reforms will be prioritized to enhance service quality." Updates on unresolved matters will be shared in future sessions and directive implementation will be closely reviewed.

Asfand appointed Green-Campus co-chair at TU Dublin



F.P. Report

DUBLIN: Asfand Bakht Yar, a native of Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, has been appointed as a Green-Campus Co-Chair at

Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin). This prestigious role underscores his significant contributions to environmental education and sustainability. Asfand, the son of veteran professor Bakht Yar Akhtar, is currently pursuing a PhD in Environmental Sciences at TU Dublin and also serves as a lecturer at the university. His research focuses on climate change education in higher education, a field of paramount importance to Pakistan given its vulnerability to climate-related challenges. In his new role, Asfand will lead TU Dublin's Green-Campus initiatives,

aiming to embed Sustainability across all aspects of the University. This includes advancing efforts in areas such as transport and travel, biodiversity, litter and waste, and energy. Green-Campus programme has been instrumental in fostering a culture of environmental responsibility, culminating in the Universities being awarded the prestigious Green Flag across the globe. Asfand's appointment is a testament to his dedication to environmental stewardship and education. He has established himself as a credible voice in the field.

Polio vaccination drive underway

LAHORE (APP): The third anti-polio vaccination campaign of 2025 has commenced on Tuesday across Punjab with Punjab Police deploying more than 18,000 officers and personnel to ensure the security of vaccination teams administering drops to children under five. According to Punjab Police spokesperson, Inspector General (IG) of police, Dr. Usman Anwar said that comprehensive security was being provided to all polio vaccination teams and workers across the province, including Lahore. The security arrangements include 457 inspectors, 1,013 sub-inspectors, 1,654 assistant sub-inspectors and more than 350 female constables actively participating in safeguarding the campaign, spokesperson added. In Lahore alone, more than 1,500 officers and personnel are engaged in securing polio workers. The police have mobilized vehicles and motorcycles from local stations for active patrolling in areas where the campaign was being conducted. IG Punjab directed dolphin force, PRU and local police teams to ensure vigilant patrolling in all union councils involved in the vaccination effort.

Regional Police Officers (RPO) and District Police Officers (DPO) have been instructed to personally monitor the security arrangements for polio teams. Dr. Usman emphasized that any negligence in protecting polio workers will not be tolerated and immediate legal action will be taken in the event of any untoward incident.

11 killed in road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 11 people were killed and 1,629 others injured in 1,377 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 682 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 947 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams. The analysis showed that 914 drivers, 63 underage drivers, 185 pedestrians and 541 passengers were among the victims of road accidents. The statistics showed that 281 road accidents were reported in Lahore which affected 357 persons placing the provincial capital.

Pak Army foiled Indian aggression within 4 hours: PA Speaker

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Assembly (PU) Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan has declared the Indian allegations regarding the Pahalgam incident as baseless and irresponsible. He said that blaming Pakistan for the death of 25 individuals without any evidence was not a responsible approach. "If India was truly serious, it would have collaborated with Pakistan or involved a third-party investigation agency," he remarked. Addressing the first convocation of Government Girls Graduation College, Manawan, here on Tuesday, he highlighted that Pakistan has made significant sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, which the global community acknowledges. Referring to the martyrs of the Army Public School (APS) attack, he said they are a testament to who the real

victims of terrorism in the region have been. He warned that if India is dreaming of war based on a false narrative, it must remember that Pakistan knows how to defend its homeland and can give a strong response to any aggression. Criticizing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the speaker said that promoting the dream of "Akhand Bharat" is putting regional peace at stake. Displaying images of Shivaji alongside maps claiming Pakistan, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka as part of India reflects a dangerous and extremist mindset, he added. He praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's effective leadership on international platforms, noting that his assertive stance helped isolate India diplomatically. "Even the G-20 nations were compelled to

acknowledge Pakistan's legitimate position," he added. Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan also paid tribute to Field Marshal General Syed Asim Munir and the Pakistan Armed Forces, stating that they professionally defended the country and foiled Indian aggression within just four hours. The speaker also congratulated the graduating students and emphasized that sustainable development is not possible without education. He credited former Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif's efforts in promoting educational development and empowering youth in decision-making, which are now yielding results. "It is the duty of every young person to make decisions based on logic, reasoning, and awareness to ensure a brighter future for Pakistan," he said.

PTI holds demo outside ECP office for swift justice

KARACHI (PPI): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh, spearheaded by provincial president Haleem Adil Sheikh, held a protest outside the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Sindh office on Tuesday. The demonstration, following a rally from the Sindh High Court, saw PTI leaders, lawyers, and assembly members demanding immediate hearings for cases involving PTI Chairman Imran Khan, particularly focusing on the Al-Qadir Trust case. Leading the protest efforts, PTI Karachi President Raja Azhar joined Haleem Adil

Sheikh, alongside leaders such as Khurram Sher Zaman, Alamgir Khan, and Jamal Siddiqui. The assembly included PTI Parliamentary Leader Shabbir Qureshi and numerous Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) like Rehan Bandoqda and Sajjad Soomro. A substantial gathering of PTI lawyers and advocates also supported the cause. Haleem Adil Sheikh urged the scheduling of pending cases against Imran Khan and called for suspending assembly members allegedly seated through "fake" Form-47 results. He emphasized

restoring what he described as the "stolen mandate" of the nation, referencing Form-45 results. Sheikh alleged judicial manipulation, claiming the Supreme Court was used to deny PTI its reserved seats through biased judges. He argued that the party's mandate was previously stolen during elections and continues to be under threat, which he declared intolerable. On the Al-Qadir Trust issue, Sheikh claimed the delay in hearing Imran Khan's case contradicts assurances from the Chief Justice of the Islamabad High Court. He accused Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz

Sharif of wrongdoing, asserting illicit financial transactions facilitated by Malik Riaz. He also pointed out that PTI candidates, who he claimed were rightful winners per Form-45, have not seen their cases addressed by election tribunals. Sheikh held the ECP accountable for a "theft of mandate." Jamal Siddiqui hailed Imran Khan as a vital leader and urged the dismissal of all "false" cases against him, calling for his sentences to be suspended. He demanded the disqualification of what he termed "fake representatives" in assemblies via Form-47.

Youm-e-Tashakur marked at Pakistan embassy in Damascus

F.P. Report

DAMASCUS: In an impressive ceremony held at Pakistan Embassy Damascus, the Pakistani community in Syria celebrated the Youm-e-Tashakur (the Day of Gratitude) on 26 May 2025 to mark the success of Operation Bunyan-ul-Marsoos and pay tribute to valiant armed forces and nation of Pakistan. The Charge d'affaires of Pakistan to Syria H.E. Mr. Umer Hayat Khan hoisted the National Flag. A large number of Pakistani community, staff and students of PISOD, officials of Pakistan embassy, local elites and media representatives also attended the ceremony. In his keynote address, the Charge d'affaires apprised the audience



about Indian aggression and contours of Operation Bunyan-ul-Marsoos and stated that the entire Pakistani nation stood tall at a proud and historic moment where the nation has shown the world that no force, no aggression, and no provocation can undermine the foundations of our sovereignty

and unshakable national resolve. Mr. Umer Khan paid rich tribute to Pakistan's heroic armed forces; who stood as an unyielding shield to defend our sacred land. He emphasized that Pakistan has always desired for peaceful coexistence in the region, yet let it be known

with absolute clarity that any act of aggression against Pakistan will be met with a response that is stronger, swifter and more resolute than ever before. The CdA appreciated the invaluable support and love of Pakistanis for their motherland. He emphasized that Pakistan is a peace loving nation and respects international law. However, the valiant armed forces and people of Pakistan are always ready to defend our country against any aggression. On this occasion, it was reiterated that Pakistan is fully capable of defending its borders and its people and that the people of Pakistan stand in unity with their armed forces to fend off any aggression against their beloved homeland.

Australian HC delegation visits Skardu Airport



F.P. Report

SKARDU: A delegation from the Australian High Commission in Islamabad visited Skardu International Airport to review airport facilities, emergency response readiness, and security arrangements. The visiting team included Mr. Scott Gordon Macdonald-Golden, Second Secretary and Consul; Mr. Wali Muhammad, Manager Consular and Passports; and Mr. Nasir Abbas, Assistant Security Manager. The delegation was received by the Airport Manager, accompanied by

the Officer Commanding (ASF), Officer In-Charge Medical, and the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer (CFRO). The purpose of the visit was to gain familiarization with the airport's operational procedures and ensure adequate support and safety measures are in place for Australian nationals, particularly tourists traveling to the region. During the visit, the delegation toured the arrival and departure terminals, observed passenger handling procedures, and received briefings on

Skardu Airport's emergency preparedness and security protocols. The team also reviewed general passenger amenities and expressed satisfaction with the airport's cleanliness, organization, and service quality. Skardu International Airport, operated by the Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA), continues to play a pivotal role in promoting tourism in the northern region of Pakistan. The airport is fully equipped and ready to welcome both domestic and international travelers.

LDA seals 151 properties

LAHORE (APP): The Town Planning Wing of the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) on Tuesday sealed 151 properties during its on going operation against illegal commercial buildings. On the directives of Director General LDA Tahir Farooq, teams conducted enforcement actions across several localities, including Gulberg, Shadman, Shah Jamal, Gulshan Ravi, Main UBD Canal Road, PIA Housing Scheme and the Audit and Accounts Housing Scheme. Due to illegal commercial usage and non-payment of commercial conversion fees, 20 properties in Gulberg and 67 in PIA and Audit & Accounts Schemes were sealed. In Shadman, Shah Jamal, Gulshan Ravi, and Main UBD Canal Road, 43 additional properties were sealed. Furthermore, during a recovery drive, 21 properties were sealed in Wahdat Road and Mustafa Town. The sealed properties include a range of businesses such as private schools, clinics, laboratories, grocery stores, food outlets, hardware shops, electric stores, workshops, offices, and various other commercial establishments. The operation was carried out under the supervision of Chief Town Planner I Asad Uz Zaman and Chief Town Planner II Azhar Ali.

Progress of PHAF Residencia Peshawar Project reviewed

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A high-level meeting was held to review the progress of the PHAF Residencia Peshawar Project.

The meeting was chaired by the Honorable Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and attended by the Secretary Housing KP, Director General KP PHA, CEO/Managing Director Pakistan Housing Authority Foundation (PHAF), Ministry of Housing & Works, and the Chief Engineer PHAF.

During the meeting, the CEO/MD PHAF briefed the participants on the current status of the project. He informed that PHAF Residencia is a joint venture between the Federal Government and the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Construction of a permanent police station has commenced, while a temporary police station is already operational at the site.

Additionally, work on the main boulevard is actively underway.

The CEO further shared that the tender process for the construction of 885 housing units under Phase-I is currently in progress and is expected to be finalized within the next 10 to 15 days.

Upon award, construction activities will formally begin at the site.

The Director General KP PHA informed that tenders for the construction of the boundary wall and the main entrance gate have also been floated. These works are expected to be finalized within a week, after which execution will begin on site.

The CEO/MD PHAF emphasized the urgent need for police deployment at the site to ensure security. He also raised concern regarding the slow pace of the canal dualization work and requested the timely release of funds to the Irrigation Department to expedite the process.

In response, the Honorable Chief Secretary assured that police personnel will be deployed at the site upon receipt of a formal written request from PHAF.

Furthermore, it was decided that the ground-breaking ceremony of the PHAF Residencia Peshawar Project will be conducted at the project site by the Honorable Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, subject to his availability after Eid.

The Chief Secretary appreciated the collaborative efforts of both the Federal and Provincial agencies in executing this vital housing scheme.

He reiterated the full support of the Provincial Government in overcoming any challenges being faced.

Emphasizing that housing is a basic human need, he directed all stakeholders to ensure timely development of the project with all essential amenities for future residents.



PESHAWAR: Special Secretary Industries Commerce and Technical Education Department Muhammad Anwar Khan chairing meeting on Bestway Cement factory matters.

Matters relating to Bestway Cement Factory comes under discussion

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A meeting regarding the matters of Bestway Cement Factory was held on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Special Secretary Industries Commerce and Technical Education Department Muhammad Anwar Khan, here at Civil Secretariat in Peshawar.

The meeting reviewed certain issues faced by the cement industry group operating in the province. Relevant departments shared their perspectives on matters concerning the cement factory.

Bestway Cement representatives informed the forum that their group has been operating two plants in Hattar and Farooqia for a considerable period. They emphasized the need for resolution of issues related to the Departments of Minerals and Forests, which are currently hindering their operations.

Additional Director General Mines and Minerals; other officials from the Departments of Forestry and Environment, Minerals, and Industry; representatives of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade; and Brigadier (Retd.) Syed Kausar Hussain, Director of Bestway Cement, along with other factory management.

They stressed that addressing these concerns would allow their production to continue smoothly and without interruption.

Referring to other cement groups, they urged that Bestway Cement—which invested significantly in the province decades ago—should be treated with the same facilitative approach, within the bounds of legal frameworks.

They noted that the company is facing challenges in accessing raw materials due to certain issues with the Forest Department.

Officials from the Departments of Minerals and Forests presented their viewpoints in light of existing laws and their respective responsibilities.

The Special Secretary emphasized the importance of ensuring a fair and lawful approach toward the said industry. He stated that the government aims to promote investment in the province and is actively working to harmonize related regulations to encourage business development.

He directed that the concerns of the industrial group be reviewed from the perspective of investment promotion and that relevant departments extend maximum possible cooperation within legal parameters.

He further stressed the importance of equal treatment for Bestway Cement, similar to other cement groups operating in the region.

CS reaffirms commitment to polio-free future



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Ayesha Raza, Prime Minister's Focal Person (PMFP) for Polio Eradication, visited

the Chief Secretary's Office on Tuesday for a meeting with Shahab Ali Shah, Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, to discuss the province's ongoing polio eradication efforts. Anwar Ul Haq, Coordinator of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), Shafi Ullah Khan, Provincial Coordinator EOC KP, and other senior officials also attended the meeting. The discussion focused on evaluating the current status of polio eradication, identifying key challenges, and reviewing the effectiveness of the ongoing campaign.

The participants also discussed strategies to enhance coordination, improve campaign quality, and outreach.

Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah assured the full support of the provincial administration and reaffirmed the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's commitment to achieving a polio-free province.

PHC seeks response against reward system in Income Tax Dept

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has sought responses from the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the federal government, and other relevant authorities regarding a petition filed by non-cadre officials of the Income Tax Department, on Tuesday.

The petition, filed by Akbar Nawaz and other land revenue officials, challenges the FBR's decision to create a separate reward system for senior officials, allegedly ignoring non-cadre officials who play a crucial role in tax collection.

The counsel Ishaq Ali Qazi advocate argue that the petitioners have been collecting taxes for years and are entitled to rewards based on their performance.

However, a recent notification (SRO) issued in 2025 has created a separate reward system for CSP officers, which they claim is discriminatory.

The petitioners' lawyer, Ishaq Ali Qazi, argued that the reward system should be based on individual performance, regardless of the officer's status.

PHC Justice Azhar Minhas has issued notices to the FBR, the Ministry of Finance, and the federal government, seeking their responses to the petition.

KPFA bans China Salt, adulterated spices seized from universities canteens

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety & Halal Food Authority (KPFS&HFA) has carried out a major operation in Peshawar, targeting hostel canteens and eateries within prominent universities. The crackdown led to the discovery of banned China salt, adulterated spices, and non-food-grade utensils being used in the canteens.

According to KP Food Authority's spokesperson, food safety team inspected the hostel canteens and food outlets of the University of Peshawar, the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), and Khyber Medical College. The inspections revealed multiple violations of hygiene and food safety standards.

During the raids, banned China salt and substandard spices were confiscated from several canteens. Additionally, it was found that non-food-grade and unhygienic utensils were being used, posing serious health risks to students. Several food handlers were also discovered working without medical fitness certificates, which is a direct violation of food safety regulations.

The team took immediate action by discarding unsafe food items on the spot and imposing heavy fines on the violators. Warning notices and improvement directives were issued to the responsible food outlets.

The spokesperson further stated that formal letters have been sent to university administrations to enhance institutional oversight and ensure strict adherence to hygiene protocols on campus.

Director General of KP Food Authority Wasif Saeed commended the efforts of the food safety team and emphasized that all canteen operators must comply with hygiene standards or face strict legal consequences.

On this occasion, KP Minister for Food Zahir Shah Toru issued directives to ensure regular and rigorous monitoring of all educational institutions' canteens.

He stressed the importance of providing students with safe, healthy, and high-quality food.



PESHAWAR: A view of accumulated rainwater in Saddar area after heavy rain lashed city. — INP photo

Delay in renewal of Islamia College property agreements JAC urges government to take immediate notice

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A crucial meeting of the Cabinet members of the Joint Action Council (JAC) Islamia College Peshawar was held on May 26, 2025, under the chairmanship of Professor Dr. Dilnawaz Khan, President of JAC. The meeting was attended by the presidents and general secretaries of all associations and commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran.

During the meeting, serious concern was expressed over the delay in renewing property agreements of Islamia College.

It was noted that most commercial and agricultural land agreements expired in December 2024, yet new agreements have not been finalized. The JAC unanimously decided to appeal to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Chancellor of the College, Mr. Ali Amin Gandapur, to take immediate notice of this critical issue.

The council stated that the university is going through a severe financial crisis. Land grabbers are using various tactics to obstruct the signing of new agreements, resulting in significant financial losses to the institution. Faculty and staff have not been paid for several months, and students are facing increased tuition fees.

The JAC has given the administration a deadline of May 31, 2025, to resolve the issues, warning that if no progress is made, a future course of action will be decided on June 2.

The Joint Action Council demands immediate action against the land mafia and urges that Islamia College be given its rightful dues so that this prestigious educational institution can once again uphold its proud legacy.

Fitna of Khawarij under Indian patronage an attack on Islam

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan has been surrounded by internal and external tribulations of such intensity that history offers few parallels in recent years.

Among these trials, a prominent one is the fitna of the Khawarij, manifesting in figures like Noor Wali Mehsud, who, under the influence of India, is accused of distorting the teachings of Islam.

Recently, a video message by Noor Wali Mehsud surfaced in which he not only declared alliances and treaties with disbelievers especially Hindu disbelievers like India as permissible, but also attempted to justify them under the guise of religious wisdom, and unfortunately even labeled it as jihad.

This approach is not only against the teachings of the holy Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), but it also tarnishes the peaceful and enlightened image of Islam that Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) have bestowed upon us.

Claiming that alliances with disbelievers are a form of wisdom is merely an attempt to conceal the reality that has now become clear, he said with the covert support of anti-Islamic India, the Khawarij are forming an organized front against Islam and Muslims.

Brigadier (R) Mehmood Shah, former Secretary Law and Order of erstwhile Fata said that these elements are shedding the blood of Muslims through acts of terrorism not only in Pakistan but also in Afghanistan. "They attempt to legitimize foreign funding obtained for these nefarious acts by branding it as jihad."

Professor Dr. Abdul Ghafoor, former Director, Sheikh Zayd Islamic Centre told APP that Allah Almighty has clearly condemned such negative elements in the Holy Qur'an.

"In Surah Al-Ma'idah, verse 51, Allah says: 'O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are in fact allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you—then indeed, he is one of them. Indeed, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people.'" He said this Quranic verse clearly states that friendship or seeking help from disbelievers contradicts the fundamental tenets of Islam.

If Noor Wali Mehsud and others like him are breaking this Quranic principle, then whose teachings are they really following? When the light of the Quran is so clear, what purpose does wandering in darkness serve?

The answer lies in the hidden hands supporting this entire fitna, whose strings lead back to anti-Islamic nations like India.

The Director General of ISPR, Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, also recently stated in a press conference that India has been involved in state-sponsored terrorism for the past 20 years, and this has been proven time and again.

Furthermore, the prophecies of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about the Khawarij are perfectly applicable to today's situation. A hadith from Sahih al-Bukhari says:

"There will emerge people from my Ummah whose prayers you will consider insignificant compared to theirs, and they will recite the Qur'an but it will not go beyond their throats. They will leave the religion just as an arrow leaves the bow."

Dr. Ghafoor said this hadith applies word for word to the Khawarij of today. Outwardly, they chant Islamic slogans, engage in lengthy worship, and claim to recite the Qur'an, but in reality, they are outside the bounds of religion and enemies of the Shariah.

Dr. Ghafoor said their goal is only to spread chaos and discord. Their fatwas, strategies, and treaties are not only against Islam but are clear misguidance.

He said Khawarij have always used religion for their own gain, adding they twist religious terminology in such a way that ordinary Muslims fall into misguidance.

He said calling alliances with disbelievers "wisdom" and trying to provide it with religious justification is part of this same agenda, adding this mindset is rooted in fitna, deceit, and betrayal of the religion.

Brig. Mahmood said what Noor Wali Mehsud and his followers are doing today is not only a violation of religious principles, but also a clear contradiction of Islamic teachings.

"They mislead youth with false slogans, prepare them for suicide attacks, and then try to prove their jihad with the shattered bodies of those youth. Is this what Islam teaches?"

Dr. Ghafoor said the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe."

Moreover, if we observe today, India is pushing its agenda covertly in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the Khawarij groups are a manifestation of this effort.

These groups come with Islamic slogans, but in reality, they are tools of the enemies of Islam. India has not only used military and political tactics to weaken Muslims in the region but has also fueled religious discord to divide them internally.

He said Noor Wali Mehsud's recent statement proves that the Khawarij are now openly revealing their true nature.

They attempt to mislead Muslims by calling support from a disbelieving state like India a "wisdom," trying to portray their terrorism as "jihad."

Yet the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Whoever assists in the killing of a Muslim with even half a word will meet Allah with the words written on his forehead: 'Desperate for the mercy of Allah.'"

Therefore, recognizing such fitna, staying away from it, and condemning it is a religious obligation upon every Muslim.

Dr. Ghafoor said Islam teaches us justice, sincerity, and peace—not deception, discord, and bloodshed, adding all the actions of the Khawarij serve only to defame Islam and advance the agenda of Islam's enemies.

"And so the question arises: Noor Wali Mehsud—if you claim to be waging jihad against the disbelievers, then how do you justify receiving financial and military aid from the very same disbelievers, particularly India? Is this not blatant hypocrisy? If your 'jihad' is truly based on 'religious wisdom,' then cite even one recognized scholar, hadith expert, or jurist of Islam who has ever justified the killing of Muslims and alliance with disbelievers under the name of 'wisdom.'"

Dr. Ghafoor said Islam delivers a clear message ie loyalty, support, and alliances are reserved only for Allah and His Messenger (PBUH).

Dr. Ghafoor said forming alliances with disbelievers especially those who are secretly waging war against Islam and Muslims is outright betrayal and the consequence of this betrayal is nothing but disgrace in this world and the hereafter.



In brief

Woman, minor girl killed F.P. Report

MANSEHRA: A woman and a minor girl were murdered, allegedly in the name of honour in Phallra police jurisdiction of Mansehra district, police said on Tuesday. Police said, the woman had married by choice in 2021 through a court procedure. The double homicide has shocked the local community, raising concerns about violence against women in such cases. A case has been registered on the complaint of the deceased woman's mother-in-law. District Police Officer (DPO) Shafiullah Gandapur stated that special police teams have been formed and a search operation has been launched to apprehend the culprits involved in the killings.

Principal, teacher killed F.P. Report

SWABI: In a shocking incident in Swabi, two educators a school principal and a teacher were gunned down by unidentified assailants on Tuesday morning. It reports that Principal Aizaz Khan of a private school was travelling with Teacher Hamza on a motorcycle when they were ambushed in the Panch Pir Shagi Lar area. Unidentified gunmen, lying in wait, opened fire and fatally shot both men before fleeing the scene. Following the attack, Rescue 1122 transferred the bodies to Bacha Khan Medical Complex for post-mortem examination. Police arrived at the location and began collecting forensic evidence to aid in the investigation. It has been confirmed that both victims were first cousins, adding a tragic personal dimension to the targeted killing. The motive remains unclear as authorities continue their probe.

Mother, daughter killed F.P. Report

SHEIKHUPURA: In another horrific incident, a dumper crushed a mother-daughter duo to death on Lahore-Sheikhupura road. According to rescue sources, the incident occurred in Sheikhupura where a speeding dumper hit a motorcycle and killed mother daughter duo and injured her son. The rescue sources further said that the injured has been shifted to the nearby hospital. Earlier, a dumper claimed life of a wheelchair-bound man at Steel Mill Morh in Karachi. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic Shoukat Ali Khatian stated that the handicapped man was struck by a dumper while attempting to cross the road. The driver attempted to flee the scene but was assaulted by citizens and traffic officials blocked the dumper with vehicles to prevent his escape. The enraged citizens smashed the dumper's windows and attacked the driver, who was subsequently taken into custody, according to SSP Khatian. The fatal crash adds to Karachi's grim record of traffic accidents, with nearly 500 deaths reported in 2024 due to collisions involving heavy vehicles.

Man commits suicide F.P. Report

OKARA: A 50-year-old man Village Head committed suicide due to distress over domestic disputes. Aslam Pervaz, a resident of a nearby village in Hujra Shah Muqem, ended his life by shooting himself at his home. Upon receiving information about the incident, the police arrived at the scene. It was reported to the police that the death occurred due to a gunshot fired while cleaning the weapon.

Tribesmen seek permission of import of sheep via Torkham

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Dwellers of the Landi Kotal demanded of the Commandant Khyber Rifle, custom officials and other concerned authorities to allow import of sheep from Afghanistan via Torkham border before Eidul Azha.

In this connection a representative Jirga was held at Tehsil Chairman Office, Landi Kotal on Tuesday that was attended by scores of tribal elders, political elites and people from different walks of life.

Speaking on the occasion Tehsil Chairman Haji Shah Khalid, Malik Masel Khan, Banares Khan, Muhammad Khadem Afridi, Hamesh Khan Syed Makail Shah and others said that import of sheep on Chaman and other borders were permitted but restrained on Torkham border that was step mother behavior towards the locals.

Years back deficiency of sheep in local markets had been fulfilled with sheep, imported from Afghanistan but ironically the practice

was banned previously that was equilent to deprive the locals from executing the important religious rite, they added.

As compare to local sacrificial animals, sheep imported from Afghanistan are on reasonable price that persuades the salaried and low incomes people to perform the Sunnah Ibrahim, they remarked. They demanded of the Commandant Khyber Rifle to immediately allow import of sheep ahead of Eid-ul-Azha in the best interest of the tribesmen.

Scores of Gujjar elders announces to join GQM

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: A delegation of the Gujjar clan from Kabal, Swat, led by Qavi Khan, announced their formal inclusion in the Gujjar Qaumi Movement (GQM) during a meeting with the party's central president, Haji Zarin Khan Gujjar, at his residence in Chakdara on Tuesday.

The delegation, along with hundreds of family members, pledged full support for the movement's future political, social, and national endeavors. They also apprised Haji Zarin of the challenges and socio-political issues faced by the Gujjar community in their region.

Haji Zarin briefed the delegation on the 55-year history of the GQM, high-

lighting its role in uniting the Gujjar community and its unwavering support for national security and the Pakistan Army. He praised the leadership eras of the late General Zia-ul-Haq and former President General (Retd) Pervez Musharraf as favorable periods for the Gujjar community. The delegation vowed to actively promote the GQM's message across villages, towns, and cities and expressed full cooperation at all levels of party activities.

Cop laid to rest: Sepoy Sohail Khan of the Dir Levies, who lost his life in a road accident while on duty during the ongoing polio vaccination campaign, was laid to rest with full official honors in his native village, Ouch Gharbi.

Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan, Assistant Commissioner Adenzai Salimullah Ayubi, AAC Shahzad Abbasi, DSP Fakhr e Alam and Subedar Major Latif-ur-Rehman of Dir Levies attended the funeral. A well-dressed contingent of the Dir Levies presented a salute and guard of honor to the fallen cop.

On behalf of the provincial government, DC Arif Khan laid a floral wreath on the coffin and offered Fateha with the bereaved family. He expressed solidarity with the grieving relatives, saying the government, district administration, and health department stand united in their sorrow and acknowledge the sacrifice of the martyr.

KP CS urged to probe Solarization project

Fazal Haq

MARDAN: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Peshawar Region President and Member National Assembly (MNA) Muhammad Atif Khan has written a written request to the Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regarding the lack of progress in the investigation into the solarization of mosques and alleged embezzlement in other development projects in his constituency under Tehsil Municipal Administration Mardan.

The petition written by Atif Khan, states that a written petition was filed last year against alleged corruption and mismanagement in other projects, including the solarization of mosques in TMA Mardan but no progress has been made even after a year. Atif Khan has demanded that action be taken against those involved in the alleged misappropriation of development projects in TMA Mardan and that their report be made public.

In addition, the money should be immediately withdrawn from the contractors to whom the development project money has been released in advance or the incomplete projects should be completed within a month and orders should be issued to investigate the substandard work.

He warned that if this request is not implemented within a month, he will not only approach NAB but

also raise his voice at the national level as a member of the National Assembly. According to sources, an executive of TMA Mardan was immediately suspended upon receipt of MNA Atif Khan's request.

Residents flays inefficiency: People bombarded the Commissioner Mardan Division and other relevant officials with complaints against different government departments and other people related serious problems and issues in an open katcheri which was convened in Tehsil Katlang.

The event was attended by Commissioner Mardan Division Nisar Ahmad Khan, Deputy Commissioner Mardan Dr. Azmatullah Wazir, DDAC Chairman Zarshad Khan, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Eid Nawaz, Additional Deputy Commissioner Relief Iqbal Hussain Khattak, and Additional Assistant Commissioner Katlang Seher Anwar, along with officials from all relevant departments. A large number of citizens participated in the open forum who apprised the chair of their grievances.

Most complaints revolved around electricity load-shedding, illegal housing societies, encroachments, NADRA services, blockage of Irrigation channels, deteriorating road conditions, the need for hospital upgrades, lack of streetlights, shortages of school textbooks, and the issue of drug abuse.

Commissioner Nisar Ahmad patiently listened to all concerns, had them officially recorded, and issued on-the-spot directives to relevant officers to resolve several issues within a week.

Speaking to the media, he emphasized that the vision of the KP government is to bridge the gap between the administration and the public, ensuring relief at citizens' doorsteps. He stated that these open katcheris were aimed to facilitate direct communication between the people and senior officials. He also warned that delays in addressing public issues would not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Azmatullah Wazir reiterated that providing relief to the public is the district administration's top priority, and all necessary steps are being taken to address complaints. He highlighted that sustainable peace can only be achieved through mutual trust and cooperation between the public and law enforcement agencies.

He appreciated the public's solidarity with Pakistan's armed forces during the recent Pakistan India war, stating that standing with the military in difficult times sends a strong positive message. He further stressed the district administration's zero-tolerance policy against ice and other drugs, noting that all relevant institutions are actively engaged in eliminating this menace.

Tareen stresses equal access to modern education for youth

Saqib Mushtaq

LODHARAN: Jahangir Khan Tareen has said that a major part of the country's population consists of young people, and their potential can only be harnessed by ensuring equal access to modern education. He emphasized that providing youth with education aligned with the demands of the modern age is a pressing need.

He shared these views while reviewing the construction progress of Aamna Girls Degree College in Lodhran. Jahangir Tareen noted that today's world is shaped by a knowledge-based economy, where technology, creativity, and modern skills are fundamental for young people to find their place in the



global economy.

He further said "Our children are full of potential, Through quality education, we must enable them to meet the challenges of emerging technologies." Akbar Khan, CEO of the Tareen Education Foundation, briefed Mr. Jahangir Khan

Tareen during the visit. He informed him that the construction of both Aamna Girls Degree College and the Tareen Institute of Computer and Resources (TICER) is progressing rapidly and both projects are expected to be completed within the set timeline.



QUETTA: People filling their water pots from a supply point due to shortage of water in their area.

Various parties hold protest in Larkana F.P. Report

LARKANA: A protest was held in Larkana city for recognition of demands by various parties, including women. According to details, yesterday, a couple from Rohal Kalhoro village of Bakrani taluka of Larkana district protested in front of the Press Club with the Holy Quran against the alleged abuses of their husbands and wives.

On this occasion, a blind person Sheryl Kalhoro and his wife Shahzadi Khatoon cried out that influential people of the village Anwar Kalhoro, Sheryl, Mohabbat Kalhoro along with their friends entered our house and tried to kidnap our daughters Kashf, Babra, Humira and Safi. However, on our cries, neighbors reached and rescued us. However, when we went to file a report against them at the police station, the police threatened to kill us. Since the accused is influential, the police are not aware of playing any role. They further said that our daughters are in danger.

Jamaat Islah-ul-Muslimeen monthly meeting held: Jamaat Islah-ul-Muslimeen Larkana organized a 3rd monthly function of its branches in the Nodero Zone at Mustafa Eidgah, which began with the recitation of the Holy Quran.

On this occasion addressing the function, central leader Maulana Khalifa Muhammad Bakhsh Junejo Tahiri, provincial leader Maulana Khalifa Muhammad Sultan Channa Tahiri, district president Zamiruddin Malik Tahiri, Maulana Khalifa Muhammad Hassan Basri Tahiri, Khalifa Mumtaz Ali Chhawan Tahiri and other leaders said that the organization is based on organization, that is, maintaining discipline and that is the real beauty and need of the organization.

DIG reviews traffic management F.P. Report

BANNU: Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) paid a visit to the traffic police checkpoint and conducted a detailed review of the traffic system, the performance of personnel, and the facilities being provided to citizens. On this occasion, SP Traffic Warden Ehsanuddin, DSP Traffic Warden Darvesh Khan, and In-charge Traffic Warden Mumtaz Qureshi were also present.

During the visit, DIG Bannu Region Sajjad Khan met with traffic personnel and listened to their concerns. He issued instructions for the prompt resolution of public complaints. He emphasized the importance of using modern technology to maintain smooth traffic flow and ensure effective enforcement of traffic laws.

On this occasion, DIG Bannu Sajjad Khan stated that providing facilities to citizens is among the police's top priorities.

Three killed in Buner road mishap

F.P. Report

BUNER: As many as three killed including a woman after a speeding motor car fell into a gorge hundreds of feet deep at Banj Karha in the remote Chaghorzai tehsil of Buner district on Tuesday.

They deceased are said to belong to Punjab province Lahore. The deceased have been identified as 64-year-old Muhammad Rafiq, 16-year-old Waqas and a woman. It is presumed they belonged to same family, a father a mother and a son.

According to rescue sources and the district administration, the accident occurred due to over speeding and rough driving in a mountainous area.

Soon after the incident the local public, the rescue, the local administration and the police brought the bodies to the main road and shifted them to the Daggar Hospital for post-mortem in a rescue ambulance. The district and hospital authorities told, after fulfilling the legal requirements, the bodies will be shifted to native town as per the instructions of the legal heirs. It should be noted that Chaghorzai is a remote mountainous area and traffic accidents often occur due to over speeding and rough and careless driving in a mountainous area.

Women blocks road against closure of BISP office: Benazir Income Support Program (BISP)

beneficiaries protested against the closure of office at Pacha post office, and blocked road for all types of traffic.

The protest caused long queues of vehicles and those going to Pir Baba Daggar as well as those going to Pacha THQ Hospital faced severe difficulties. On this occasion, former ANP candidate PK 25 Afsar Khan met with Assistant Commissioner Gadezai Nasar Ali Khan and contacted higher authorities.

The women have announced to end the protest in the next 48 hours on the decision of the camp office and to protest again by blocking the road if the camp office is not restored as promised.

Jirga regarding 132KV transmission lines held

F.P. Report

ABBOTTABAD: A jirga was held at the Commissioner House to resolve issues related to the 132 kV transmission lines in Lower Kohistan, Kolai Palas and the Kohistan Upper. The Jirga was attended by the MNA, MPAs, and Deputy Commissioners from all the three districts of Kohistan, along with the General Manager, Dasu Hydropower Project and his team and provided a detailed briefing.

Addressing the grand jirga, Commissioner Hazara informed the local elders that implementation of all their demands related to local area development schemes, as mentioned in the agreement dated December 12, 2022, had already begun. Approximately, 50% of the allocated funds have been transferred

by WAPDA to the respective accounts of the Deputy Commissioners.

The Commissioner further explained that halting work on the 132 kV transmission line would adversely affect progress on the Dasu Dam, thereby impacting the country's reputation and development. He emphasized the project's timely completion is crucial for national economic growth and the work that was halted for the past couple of months has been restarted. The MNA, MPAs, and Jirga members assured that they will not halt the work under any circumstances, nor will they permit anyone else to do so. He directed WAPDA will immediately commence work on LADP projects that are ready, as a confidence-building measure.

He assured the jirga elders that all legitimate

demands would be addressed. He also announced that concerned Deputy Commissioners would hold project review meetings every 15 days in their offices, while he himself would chair monthly review meetings at his office, to be attended by the Kohistan MNA/MPAs and Deputy Commissioners of all three districts.

He further directed the Deputy Commissioners to keep the public informed by displaying project progress updates on boards outside their offices. In conclusion, all participants offered prayers for success. The elders reaffirmed their commitment to fully cooperate in the timely completion of the projects, pledging not to create any hindrances and to prioritize peaceful resolution of issues. Commissioner Hazara thanked all attendees for their participation.

Commissioner visits BHU

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat has on the second day of the Polio Campaign on Tuesday, along-with the Deputy Commissioner and District Health Officer Kohat, paid a surprise visit to the Basic Health Unit (BHU) Muhammadzai early in the morning.

The polio teams were supposed to leave at 7 am, but due to the absence of the UPEC Chairman, no team had left by 7:45 am. Taking notice of this, Commissioner Kohat directed the DHO on the spot to take stern action against the 3 officials of the said BHU including the UPEC chairman. He also expressed his dissatisfaction with the performance of the

polio teams of the said BHU and directed them to improve their performance. However, the performance of Basic Health Unit Sherkot was exemplary in the polio campaign and commended them.

Similarly, during a surprise visit to the Rural Health Center, Ustarzai Payan, the Polio Teams departed well in time, which he appreciated. Commissioner Kohat directed immediate action against the cleaning staff of the said health center on the complaint of the RHC Ustarzai in-charge.

Meanwhile, the Commissioner Kohat and Deputy Commissioner Kohat also visited the Government Higher Secondary School,

Ustarzai Payan. They also took serious notice of the absence of the Principal for leaving the school without sanctioning his leave from the competent authority some 45 days back. He also directed action against the 3 other absent teachers of the said school.

Commissioner Kohat expressed his deep anger over the poor cleanliness condition of the school and on the spot, the entire school was cleaned from the class-IV employees of the school. Furthermore, they beside observing the teaching methods in the classrooms of the school, also visited the intermediate examination hall and reviewed the arrangements.

Foolproof security directed

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: District Police Officer Lakki Marwat Muhammad Jawad Ishaq has said that a fool-proof security plan is being implemented in letter and spirit for peaceful conduct of the anti-polio drive as more than 1350 police officials have been deployed to guard vaccinators during

the five days polio eradication campaign.

Talking to this scribe, he said that he was himself supervising the implementation of the security plan to avert any untoward incident. He said that the sub divisional police officers and SHOs had been directed to sensitise cops about their national obligation of

protecting vaccinators during the immunization campaign.

In Bannu, over 2485 policemen have been tasked with guarding polio workers so that they could accomplish the assignment of vaccinating children against polio smoothly", claimed DPO Saleem Abbas Kulachi.



King’s invitation to Canada sends a message to Trump

LONDON (BBC): A decade ago, a portrait of the British monarch caused a row in Canadian politics. Now, the King is being invited to deliver the Speech from the Throne. What's changed?

In 2011, shortly after forming a majority Conservative government, Prime Minister Stephen Harper caused a national uproar when he sought to emphasise Canada's ties to the British monarchy. In one example, he replaced two artworks by a Quebec painter with a portrait of the Queen. Some rebuked the gesture as being out of touch with modern times. Canada has, throughout its 157-year-old history, sought increasing independence from the British monarchy, while still remaining a part of the Commonwealth. When Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau succeeded Harper four years later, the Queen's portrait went down, the Quebec paintings, back up.

Fast forward to 2025, and a paradoxical shift has occurred in Canada's relationship with the Crown. In a transparent show of Canada's sovereignty and independence against threats from US President Donald Trump, Prime Minister Mark Carney - a Liberal - has invited King Charles III to open the 45th Canadian parliament. The move is "a huge affirmation and statement about the uniqueness of Canada and its traditions," Justin Vovk, a Canadian royal historian, told the BBC - "a theatrical display that is meant to show what makes Canadians separate from Americans" and not, as Trump has often repeated, a "51st state".

Both countries are former British colonies, but America's founding fathers

took a different path and severed all formal connections to the Crown nearly 250 years ago. Canada's separation from the monarchy has been more gradual, and its ties have never been completely broken. Canada's parliamentary system is modelled after Britain's Westminster system. The British monarch is still formally the head of state, but their duties are often carried out by their Canadian representative, called the governor general. Loyalty to the Crown was seen as important to Canada's politicians in the 19th Century who wanted to maintain separation from the US, said Canadian royal historian and commentator Carolyn Harris.

That later changed in the 1960s, as Quebec - Canada's majority French-speaking province - began to assert its own distinct identity and threatened separation. This led to an era of politicians like Lester B Pearson and Pierre Elliott Trudeau who worked to untangle Canada from its British colonial past. In 1982, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau repatriated Canada's constitution, giving full legislative power to the federal government and the provinces, and removing it from British parliament. Ms Harris noted that Canada remained a constitutional monarchy throughout these periods. What fluctuated, however, was how much the prime minister of the day chooses to embrace that connection.

Carney's invitation to King Charles III signals that his government will be one that is much more supportive of the Crown, Mr Vovk said, marking "a very different tone" from previous Liberals. A British monarch has not delivered Canada's throne speech since 1977,

and has not opened a brand new session of parliament since 1957, making the King's upcoming visit a truly rare occasion. It comes at a consequential time for Canada. Carney heavily campaigned on standing up to Trump, after the US president spent months undermining Canada's sovereignty by saying it would be better off as a US state. Trump also imposed a series of tariffs that have threatened Canada's economic stability, given that the US is its largest trade partner by far. When announcing the visit last month, Carney called it "a historic honour that matches the weight of our times". He added that the King's visit "clearly underscores the sovereignty of our country". Both historians, Mr Vovk and Ms Harris, noted that the bulk of Canada's modern population is indifferent to the British monarchy. Some are even critical of it.

The coronation of King Charles III in 2023 made way for fresh scrutiny of the Crown's historic mistreatment of indigenous people in Canada, and questions on whether the new monarch will move towards reconciliation. Quebec politicians are also still calling for Canada to cut ties with the monarchy. The separatist Bloc Québécois party said it will again seek to scrap the need for elected officials to swear allegiance to the King. Some Canadians will be intrigued by the pomp and pageantry of the King's visit, Mr Vovk said, but its chief purpose is to send a political message from Canada to the world. It is also a way for Prime Minister Carney to improve the relationship with Trump, who is famously a fan of the British monarchy and its history.

Hungarian Opp leader walks to Romania

BUDAPEST (Reuters): Hungarian opposition leader Peter Magyar walked across the border to Romania after a week-long journey, in an attempt to win support of the ethnic Hungarians in Romania and appeal to conservative voters in the run-up to the 2026 elections.

Magyar's centre-right Tisza party emerged last year to mount the most serious challenge to nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orban since he rose to power in 2010. Most opinion polls now put Tisza ahead of Orban's Fidesz party with the next parliamentary elections due in early 2026. No date has been set yet.

Carrying Hungary's national flag, Magyar walked across the border with a group of supporters. "We are not going (to Romania) to escalate tensions or to cause any harm to our Hungarian brothers and sisters living there. We are going there to express our solidarity," Magyar said on May 14 when he set out on foot in hiking gear. On his way to the border, Magyar stopped in small towns to talk to rural voters, who have traditionally supported conservatively Orban. Orban's government provides financial support to ethnic Hungarian communities in Romania and in 2014 granted the right to vote to Hungarians living abroad. In the last election in 2022 94% of these voters supported Fidesz.

The latest poll by the Publicus think tank, published, showed Tisza with 43% support among decided voters in Hungary while Fidesz had 36%. Magyar announced his march on May 12 after Orban flagged he could cooperate with Romanian hard-right presidential candidate George Simion ahead of the May 18 election there. The RMSDSZ party representing ethnic Hungarians in Romania, said Simion's win would pose a threat to minorities' rights and urged its voters to support centrist Nicusor Dan who ended up winning the vote.

FBI announces new probes into leak

WASHINGTON (Reuters): The FBI will launch new probes into the 2023 discovery of cocaine at the White House during President Joe Biden's term and the 2022 leak of the Supreme Court's draft opinion overturning Roe v. Wade, a top official announced.

Dan Bongino, a rightwing podcaster-turned-FBI deputy director, made the announcement on X, saying that he had requested weekly briefings on the cases' progress. Both incidents have been popular talking points on America's right. The discovery of a small bag of cocaine in a cubby near the entrance to the West Wing two years ago drew excited commentary from Republicans, including Donald Trump, then the Republican presidential candidate, who said it was implausible that the drugs could belong to anyone beyond Biden and his son Hunter - even though the Biden family was away from Washington at the time.

A White House spokesperson at the time said that the allegations were "incredibly irresponsible." A spokeswoman for Biden declined to comment about the new probe. The May 2, 2022, publication of the Supreme Court's draft opinion in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, which ended the constitutional right to abortion, provoked condemnation from Trump, who called the source of the leak "slime" and demanded that the journalists involved be imprisoned until they revealed who it was. Previous investigations into both cases, by the Secret Service and the Supreme Court, respectively, ended without identifying who was responsible for the cocaine or the leak.

The Supreme Court and the Secret Service didn't immediately return messages seeking comment. Bongino has previously alleged, without presenting any evidence, that he was in touch with whistleblowers who told him they were "suspicious" that evidence from the White House cocaine bag "could match a member of the inner Biden circle."



GAZA CITY: Palestinians wounded in an Israeli attack seek treatment at al-Ahli Arab Hospital.

El Chapo, ex-drug smuggler on ballot to be judges in Mexico

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (Reuters): When residents in the state of Durango vote in Mexico's first judicial elections next weekend, Leopoldo Chavez will be on the ballot for federal judge - despite the nearly six years he served in a US prison.

Chavez was convicted on drug offenses: for smuggling over 4 kilograms of methamphetamines in 2015. Durango is part of Mexico's Golden Triangle, a cartel-controlled region growing marijuana and opium poppies. "I've never sold myself as the perfect candidate," Chavez said in a video he shared on Facebook. He said he had nothing to hide and had served his time. He declined to comment to Reuters.

In the nearby Pacific coast state of Jalisco, Francisco Hernandez is running to be a criminal magistrate even though the last time he served as a judge he was dismissed by the Federal Judiciary Council after an investigation into allegations of sexual abuse and corruption. He told Reuters the accusations were "slander and defamation." "Let the people judge me," he said. And in Nuevo Leon, Fernando Escamilla is hoping to become a federal criminal judge and says the legal work he did advising lawyers for members of the ultra-violent Los Zetas cartel should not be held against him. His knowledge of extradition law, on which he advised the capos, made him an asset, he told Reuters in an interview. "Does being an advisor on international or extradi-

tion law give you a bad public reputation? I don't think so, since that's the only thing that demonstrates that you have the ability and knowledge to handle these types of situations," Escamilla said.

Ahead of the elections on June 1, civil organizations, judge associations and some Mexican lawmakers are raising serious concerns about a vote that critics warn could jeopardize the country's rule of law. The controversial judicial overhaul was proposed by leftist former President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador and supported by his protege, President Claudia Sheinbaum. Both said it would root out corruption in Mexico's flawed judiciary and allow the people to decide who should be a judge. Around 5,000 candidates are vying for more than 840 federal positions, including all Supreme Court justices.

But with the vote just over a week away, Mexican rights group Defensorxs says it has identified about 20 people vying for positions that have criminal indiscretions, corruption allegations against them or past links to cartels, including a defense lawyer who represented drug kingpin Joaquin 'El Chapo' Guzman. An analysis by the Judicial Electoral Observatory (OJE), made up of non-profit organizations, has also flagged more than 130 candidates with a high probability of winning in the absence of opposing candidates, and criticized problems in the design of complicated ballots that feature hundreds of names

and may confuse voters. The reform, passed in September 2024, was criticized by then US ambassador Ken Salazar, who served during the administration of President Joe Biden, as a threat to Mexican democracy.

Critics say the reform, one of the most broad-ranging to be attempted in recent years by any country in the Western Hemisphere, risks removing checks and balances on the ruling Morena party and allowing organized crime groups greater influence over the judicial system. The reform reduces the number of Supreme Court judges to nine from 11, cuts the length of their terms to 12 years, abolishes a minimum age requirement of 35, and halves necessary legal practice to five years. It also scraps some benefits for judicial workers and creates a five-person disciplinary tribunal, which critics argue is insufficient to oversee a 50,000-member judiciary. Defensorxs president Miguel Meza said that the candidates his organization had flagged revealed grave flaws in the government vetting system, which was meant to verify eligibility criteria including: Mexican citizenship by birth, a bachelor's degree in law, "good reputation," and a record clean of serious crime. Meza said his organization has been making its way through the list of candidates and had identified other problematic names that they had yet to publish. Meza said aspiring judges were apparently not screened for foreign convictions or who they had legally represented.

Venezuela ruling party keeps control of legislature amid opposition division

CARACAS (Reuters): Venezuela's ruling socialist party held its significant majority in the National Assembly in election, winning nearly 83% of votes according to the electoral authority, in a contest boycotted by some opposition leaders amid deep division among parties opposed to the government of President Nicolas Maduro.

Some of the country's major opposition leaders called for voters to abstain in protest of the official results of the July 2024 presidential election, which the opposition says it won but which authorities say was a Maduro victory. Legislative results will keep the ruling party in control of the attorney general's office and the top court, whose members are elected by lawmakers.

Authorities did not give a total number of seats which will be held by each party, but named 40 lawmakers from various parties who have won seats. A coalition

considered close to the ruling socialist party won 6.25% of the vote, while an opposition alliance won 5.17%. National Electoral Council (CNE) rector Carlos Quintero said in a declaration broadcast on state television. Turnout to choose 24 state governors and 285 lawmakers was 42.6% of 21 million eligible voters, Quintero said, similar to the turnout in the 2021 elections.

Opposition candidates won just one governorship, in the state of Cojedes, west of the capital Caracas, down from the four won by opposition parties in 2021. Opposition leaders Maria Corina Machado and Edmundo Gonzalez called on supporters to abstain from vote in protest at the official version of the 2024 election results and what they and rights groups say is a brutal crackdown on the opposition, including detentions this week. Machado, Gonzalez and their Vente Venezuela coalition posted photos throughout the day

of what they said were empty polling stations around the country, even as the government extended voting hours, saying turnout was high. Meanwhile, another opposition faction headed by two-time presidential candidate Henrique Capriles and Zulia state governor Manuel Rosales, urged people to vote to avoid the opposition being cut out of all governance.

Capriles was elected to the national assembly, while Rosales lost his governor's seat. The opposition and the international community, including the United States, have questioned the 2024 presidential result. Authorities have yet to share detailed tallies from that vote, blaming a cyber attack, while the opposition has published ballot box-level tallies which show a victory for its former candidate Gonzalez.

Gonzalez fled to Spain in September, while Machado is in hiding in Venezuela. A governor was elected to represent the new state of

Guayana Esequiba despite an order from the International Court of Justice that voting not take place in the region, which is the subject of a territorial dispute with neighboring Guyana.

Guyana's parliament passed a resolution strongly condemning the Venezuelan government's "defiance" of the ICJ order, saying it was a threat to regional peace and stability. The Venezuelan government has said it does not recognize the court's authority in the case. Local Guyanese media reporting from several places in the disputed region said no voting was taking place there. The US has increased sanctions on Venezuela since the 2024 elections and the Trump administration has given oil major Chevron until May 27 to wind down its operations there. Maduro, in power since 2013, has always rejected the sanctions by the US and others, calling them illegitimate and an "economic war."

Separatists’ sit-at-home protests lead to 700 deaths in Nigeria

LAGOS (Reuters): A sit-at-home order by banned separatist group Indigenous People of Biafra in Nigeria's southeast has led to the death of over 700 people in the region over the past four years, an intelligence consultancy said in a new report. The IPOB, campaigning for the secession of the southeast that is predominantly inhabited by the Igbo ethnic group, has been labelled a terrorist organisation by Nigerian authorities.

SBM Intelligence reported that the fatalities resulted from the killing of civilians who defied the weekly stay-at-home order and on other specific days, as well as from clashes between the IPOB and Nigerian security forces. "IPOB's enforcement tactics, including arson, looting and targeted assassinations, have created

a climate of fear," the SBM report said.

"While there was a high rate of compliance with sit-at-home orders in 2021 (82.61%), surveys reveal that actual support is much lower (29%) now, with many complying under duress." An IPOB spokesperson denied the group was responsible for the deaths. "Those causing the killings are the kidnappers and criminals recruited by government to blackmail and demonize IPOB," the spokesperson said.

The government did not respond to a request for comment. The IPOB launched the sit-at-home protest in August 2021 across the five states of Nigeria's southeast, using it as leverage to demand the release of its leader, Nnamdi Kanu, who is facing trial in the capital Abuja

on terrorism charges. The group suspended the weekly protest days later, citing a "direct order" from Kanu, who has been in custody since 2021, and reinstated it only on days the IPOB leader would be appearing in court. However, other armed groups claiming allegiance to IPOB and factions within the group have persisted in enforcing the weekly protest, launching attacks on government facilities and perceived pro-government individuals.

Despite IPOB's attempts to disassociate itself from the region's violence, the police have accused the group of involvement in several incidents, including a 2021 attack on a prison and the murder of over 30 travellers earlier this month. The IPOB denied responsibility for those two attacks.

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US reversing world's climate endeavor

THE House of Representatives of the United States passed a bill last week, which advanced a sweeping spending package that would roll back Biden-era tax credits for renewable energy projects. They include an early phasing out of a tax break for clean energy vehicles, moving up the timeline to end tax credits for new renewable energy power plants as well as requiring them to begin construction within 60 days of the enactment of the legislation and be in service by the end of 2028.

At the same time, the US Environmental Protection Agency announced on Saturday that it is working on a proposal to remove all existing restrictions on greenhouse gas emissions from coal- and gas-fired power plants in the country.

The EPA was reported as arguing in its proposed regulation that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from power plants that burn fossil fuels "do not contribute significantly to dangerous pollution" or to climate change because they are a small and declining share of global emissions.

It should be no surprise for the world what the Donald Trump administration will do on climate change since he signed an executive order for the US' withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on his first day in the White House on Jan 20, as he did during his first term.

"It is the policy of my administration to put the interests of the United States and the American people first in the development and negotiation of any international agreements with the potential to damage or stifle the American economy," said Trump's day-one executive order on global environmental deals.

As part of Trump's first day orders, the US also halted all financial contributions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, leaving the UN climate body with a 22 percent shortfall in its core budget. In 2024, US contributions totaled \$13.3 million.

Washington has not only turned a blind eye to the international obligations it has because of the huge amount of CO2 it has contributed during its industrial development, it has now also started to encourage the use of coal and gas in generating electricity by scrapping the limits on gas emissions from such plants.

Furthermore, it is trying to make things hard for renewable energy power plants, and even starts to add annual federal registration fees for EV and hybrid car owners. The fee will be \$250 for electric vehicles and \$100 for hybrids.

As one of the largest contributors of green house gas emissions and definitely the largest on a per capita basis, the US' withdrawal of its financial aid to emissions cutting projects will greatly compromise global climate actions. What the US government has done to roll back clean energy projects and encourage the use of fossil fuel in power generation represents a huge disservice to what the world has achieved in its fight against climate change.

"Interest of the US and American people first" has become a pretext for the Trump administration to shirk its due international responsibility as the world's sole superpower. With "make America great again" as the guide for its policymaking, Trump's US has become an irresponsible superpower without a smattering of vision about the future of humanity.

Without making its due contribution to the global fight against climate change and to global endeavors to address other common challenges facing humanity, how can the Trump administration put the interests of the US and American people first?

The extreme climate conditions caused by climate change such as droughts and flooding will not exempt American people from their devastation, nor will environmental pollution.

To address common challenges such as climate change and ecological destruction, joint endeavors of all countries are important. This is common sense.

That explains why China has proposed the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative. China has also proposed the building of a community with a shared future for humanity, which is meant to mobilize global resources for addressing common challenges in order to make human development sustainable. To the grief of the world, the US is reversing global endeavors against the common challenges facing humanity.

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The Fitna Al-khawarij's alliance with the enemies of Islam and Pakistan!

Aiman Khattak

IN the name of religion, the Fitna Al-Khawarij continue to spill innocent blood. Their violence, masked as jihad, is in fact a betrayal of Islam, both in spirit and in law. These agents of terror, operating from the shadows of foreign agendas, have declared war not only on the state but on the faith they claim to uphold. And today, with mounting evidence, their reality is no longer a matter of speculation: they are proxies not of belief but of India and its intelligence agency R&AW, and tools in a dangerous strategy to destabilise Pakistan.

Recently, a video surfaced on social media showing Khariji Noor Wali Mehsud, the self-styled leader of this group, shamelessly advocating for alliances with Hindu powers. Not only did he justify taking help from non-Muslim forces, but he dressed it up as a "strategic necessity" for their so-called jihad. This isn't just theological deviation it is a confession. It lays bare what many in the state and society have long understood: the Khawarij are fighting not for Islam, but for Indian objectives in the region.

For decades, the Khawarij have claimed religious legitimacy for their campaign of terror. They have attacked mosques, schools, security forces, and markets. They have gunned down clerics, bombed funerals, and

killed children in broad daylight. Now, as if to remove the last remaining doubt, they openly acknowledge support from the very powers historically hostile to Islam and Muslims.

The Quran, in Surah Al-Ma'idah, is unambiguous: "O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are [in fact] allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you then indeed, he is [one] of them." Now what can be said about those who not only form alliances with anti-Muslim forces but even label them as "Islamic wisdom"?

This isn't a theoretical concern anymore, their betrayal is being documented in real time. In recent weeks, compelling evidence has emerged on social media exposing the Khawarij's direct collaboration with foreign handlers. Footage shows them using sophisticated drones and quadcopters, clearly acquired through Indian support, to target both civilians and security forces in North Waziristan. Their operations are no longer underground; they are filmed, flaunted, and circulated with pride. These are not isolated incidents but a pattern of deliberate aggression backed by hostile powers.

But the question is, where are the principles of jihad in this? Where is the sanctity of life? Where is

the mercy that the Prophet (SAW) embodied?

This is not jihad. It is proxy warfare, funded and supported by a hostile neighbour that seeks nothing more than internal chaos in Pakistan. India have long maintained covert networks in the region. Today, the Khawarij are their loudest collaborators. Their weapons, strategies, and media campaigns are all aligned with Indian interests, not Islamic values.

It is, therefore, no surprise that Khariji Noor Wali Mehsud now praises the utility of alliances with Hindu forces. His words are not just misguided they are treacherous. They expose the group's true colours: enemies of Islam masquerading as its defenders.

But the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa especially those who have borne the brunt of this terror are neither fooled nor silent. Across North and South Waziristan, Bajaur, Kurram, and beyond, the public has made its position clear: this is a fitna, and the state must act with full force.

Community leaders, clerics, and common citizens have spoken that they stand shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces in demanding that this menace be eliminated. There is no ambiguity in the people's voice anymore: they are not freedom fighters, they are terrorists.

This clarity from the public must be met with unwavering resolve from the state. The war against the Khawarij is not just a military operation, it is a religious, moral, and national obligation.

India, meanwhile, must be called out on the global stage. Its covert support for terrorism in Pakistan, particularly through R&AW's financing of extremist groups, has exposed its duplicity. While it parades itself as the world's largest democracy, it funds and arms the murderers of Muslim children across the border. This duality must be condemned in the strongest terms.

The path forward demands unity, clarity, and resolve. Every Pakistani must recognise Fitna Al-Khawarij for what they are: enemies of Islam, enemies of Pakistan, and pawns in a foreign conspiracy. We must name them, shame them, and oppose them in every space whether in our mosques, our schools, or our media.

Moreover, to the people of Pakistan, especially the brave residents of the tribal belt: This is your moment to rise. Stand firm, resist their poisonous narrative, and support the security forces defending your homeland. Recognise the true face of these khawarij and expose them for what they are. Let there be no confusion, this is not a war of ideology; this is a war for survival. And in this war, neutrality is not an option.

Europe's rude awakening on confronting Israel

Osama Al-Sharif

EUROPEAN leaders are undergoing what can only be described as a rude awakening as they wrestle with how to respond to the devastating conflict raging in Gaza and the surge of anti-Israel protests sweeping their nations.

After nearly 19 months of escalating violence, Europe is finally waking up to its collective responsibility — not only as a political union but as individual states and a shared cultural community — to address what has become a deep moral wound in the conscience of humanity.

Israel has long represented a sensitive and vulnerable issue for European nations, shaped not only by the historical trauma of Nazi persecution but also by centuries of European antisemitism and oppression of Jewish communities.

While the UK took on the controversial role of transferring Palestine — the homeland of Palestinians — to the Zionist movement, many other European states failed to challenge this historic and contentious territorial handover.

Here we stand today: Decades after Israel occupied Palestinian territories, displaced millions, created a vast Palestinian diaspora and committed numerous violations against the rightful inhabitants, we now face a conflict that Israeli officials themselves acknowledge could result in millions being killed or expelled from their ancestral homes.

Oct. 7, 2023, marked a watershed moment. Yet

Israel's response to that attack cannot justify the deaths of more than 54,000 people, overwhelmingly civilians. With Israel's current plans to reoccupy Gaza, tens of thousands more could perish.

European leaders had already shifted from unwavering support for Israel to a more cautious and critical stance regarding its methods and goals. But when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu imposed a total blockade on humanitarian aid to more than 2 million Palestinians, the dam finally broke. Images of tens of thousands of civilians crowding desperately for scarce food under horrific conditions galvanized millions worldwide into protest.

Europe has long distinguished itself on the global stage as a defender of human rights. Gaza has exposed a glaring vulnerability in that reputation. The EU — Europe's crowning political achievement, embodying shared values — now finds itself trapped in an almost impossible position.

The EU has chosen to venture into uncharted political territory to uphold its fundamental principles while striving for unified action.

Several countries — Spain, Ireland and Norway (though not an EU member) — last year recognized Palestine as a state, bringing the total number of the bloc's countries acknowledging Palestinian statehood to 10.

More notably, the UK and France now stand on

the brink of recognizing Palestine. While this marks significant diplomatic progress, it changes little on the ground. Israel has threatened retaliation against countries that recognize Palestine. Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar warned that if major powers like Britain and France were to formally recognize Palestinian independence, Israel would respond by annexing occupied land in the West Bank. But Israel has already confiscated major portions of the West Bank, with far-right ministers promising continued expansion regardless.

Such Israeli threats were predictable. But Europe can and should go further to reinforce its evolving position. For the first time, European countries are seriously debating sanctions against Israel, including trade restrictions and arms embargoes. Meanwhile, Israel continues to authorize new settlements in the West Bank, repeatedly violating international law.

European nations can pursue three concrete actions: sanction Israel for violating international law in Gaza and the West Bank; recognize Palestinian statehood; and support international investigations into alleged Israeli war crimes and genocide.

Israel will resist all three measures. The most predictable response will be accusations of antisemitism. But such claims today lack credibility. Many Jewish voices have emerged condemning

Israel's actions in Gaza, drawing a clear distinction between historical Jewish suffering and current Israeli policies. Beyond this, the EU as a collective body holds significant leverage to compel changes in Israeli policy. However, the EU must act in unity. Currently, fewer than half of its members recognize Palestinian statehood.

Europe pioneered the recognition of Palestinian rights in the 1980s with the Venice Declaration. Since then, however, the EU has largely deferred to US leadership in the peace process, culminating in the Oslo Accords. Subsequently, the EU has provided billions in aid to the Palestinian Authority but has failed to prevent Israeli violations of those accords or the destruction of EU-funded Palestinian projects.

For the EU and European states to effectively confront Israel today, they must break free from US political dominance. The EU can still champion international bodies that uphold international law. While the US retreats from these legal foundations, the EU can emerge as a defender of the world order, advocating human rights and rules-based governance.

Europe's rude awakening may not immediately alter the trajectory of violence in Gaza. But it will make a difference. Israel cannot survive as a nation while ignoring international condemnation and the threat of sanctions for its actions. If it seeks to exist as a normal state, it must end its Gaza campaign and recognize Palestinians as equals.

Nuclear deterrence and national dignity: The legacy of 28 May

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

THE 28th of May 1998 stands as a solemn yet proud landmark in the annals of Pakistan's history-a day when the nation, in response to regional provocations and the overt display of aggression by its eastern neighbour, chose to proclaim its sovereign right to self-defence through the demonstration of nuclear capability. Chagai's hills echoed not merely with the thunder of nuclear tests but with the resolve of a people determined never to be subdued. It was a declaration that Pakistan would maintain strategic balance in South Asia, uphold its territorial integrity, and pursue peace from a position of strength. The world beheld a nation that had been tested time and again, now entering the nuclear club with dignity, under the firm leadership of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, and with the undying spirit of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and countless anonymous contributors to its nuclear programme.

India's five nuclear tests on May 11 and 13, 1998 at Pokhran, in blatant defiance of international expectations, were not only a challenge to regional stability but a direct threat to Pakistan's existence. This was not an ordinary adversary flexing its might. It was a historical rival that had already waged wars in 1947, 1965, and 1971, and maintained an enduring animosity since Partition. Pakistan, faced with a decision of existential proportions, could either capitulate to global pressure or assert its sovereign right to self-defense. History bears witness that it chose the latter - wisely, bravely, and resolutely.

The Holy Qur'an guides us: "And prepare against them whatever

.....

The road to nuclear capability was not paved overnight. It began decades earlier, most crucially after the 1974 Indian nuclear explosion euphemistically termed a "peaceful nuclear test." Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's call to action, famously stating, "We will eat grass, even go hungry, but we will get one of our own," set the course. Under the guidance of patriotic scientists like Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and institutions like the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), relentless efforts ensued, despite international sanctions and espionage threats. By 1998, Pakistan had achieved the technological capability to deter any nuclear adventurism.

When India dared to test, Pakistan responded with Chagai-I and Chagai-II on May 28 and May 30, respectively. The tests were not acts of aggression, but rather of restraint and responsibility, aimed at restoring strategic balance in South Asia. Nearly three decades later, on 7 May 2025, Pakistan was once again thrust into a moment of existential assertion. In what has come to be described as a manufactured yet perilous one-day war, the people and the armed forces of Pakistan responded with unity, valour, and an unyielding sense of purpose. Just as the nuclear tests of 1998 had secured Pakistan's external deterrence, the events of 2025 reaffirmed the nation's internal cohesion and operational readiness. Though provoked under the shadows of global intrigue, Pakistan emerged with honour, bearing its wounds with pride and saluting its martyrs with reverence. The spirit of Chagai lived on-not in uranium and plutonium alone-but in the hearts of those who defended the motherland with blood and resolve. Thus, the linkage between these two dates is etched in Pakistan's collective memory as chapters of defiance, sacrifice, and unwavering national dignity.

.....

you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy..." (Surah Al-Anfal, 8:60). This Divine injunction places upon every Muslim state a sacred duty to maintain deterrence against hostile forces. The leadership of Pakistan fulfilled this responsibility in letter and spirit, acting with wisdom and patience in the face of enormous international pressure.

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It began decades earlier, most crucially after the 1974 Indian nuclear explosion euphemistically termed a "peaceful nuclear test." Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's call to action, famously stating, "We will eat grass, even go hungry, but we will get one of our own," set the course. Under the guidance of patriotic scientists like Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and institutions like the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), relentless efforts ensued, despite international sanctions and espionage threats.

By 1998, Pakistan had achieved the technological capability to deter any

nuclear adventurism. When India dared to test, Pakistan responded with Chagai-I and Chagai-II on May 28 and May 30, respectively. The tests were not acts of aggression, but rather of restraint and responsibility, aimed at restoring strategic balance in South Asia.

Nearly three decades later, on 7 May 2025, Pakistan was once again thrust into a moment of existential assertion. In what has come to be described as a manufactured yet perilous one-day war, the people and the armed forces of Pakistan responded with unity, valour, and an unyielding sense of purpose. Just as the nuclear tests of 1998 had secured Pakistan's external deterrence, the events of 2025 reaffirmed the nation's internal cohesion and operational readiness. Though provoked under the shadows of global intrigue, Pakistan emerged with honour, bearing its wounds with pride and saluting its martyrs with reverence. The spirit of Chagai lived on-not in uranium and plutonium alone-but in the hearts of those who defended the motherland with blood and resolve. Thus, the linkage between these two dates is etched in Pakistan's collective memory as chapters of defiance, sacrifice, and unwavering national dignity.

The importance of strong defense is also emphasized in the sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). He said, "Tie your camel and trust in Allah" (Tirmidhi). This Hadith beautifully encapsulates the philosophy that while ultimate trust is placed in Allah, it is also imperative to adopt worldly means for security and survival. Pakistan did precisely that by fortifying its defenses through nuclear deterrence.

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Pakistan must also guard against the illusion that nuclear arms are a panacea for all threats. Hybrid warfare, cyberattacks, economic subversion, and internal discord are new battlefields. As the Holy Qur'an reminds us, "Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." (Surah Ar-Ra'd, 13:11). A strong missile or a mighty bomb cannot compensate for a divided society or a failing economy.

On the 28th of May each year, we salute our scientists, soldiers, statesmen, and all those silent hands who toiled in secrecy and sacrificed for the motherland. Let this day not just be a celebration of explosions, but of resolve - a reminder that Pakistan, when united and determined, can stand its ground against any global tide.

May Allah protect Pakistan and guide its leaders to act always with justice, wisdom, and fear of Him. "O you who believe, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah..." (Surah An-Nisa, 4:135). Let this resolve shape our future, just as it shaped our past.

Trump’s talk on Ukraine is cheap, but the Kremlin has set him a pivotal test

When it comes to ending the war in Ukraine, President Donald Trump’s statements and social media posts have become meaningless. Receding chances for a ceasefire and peace deal soon will depend instead on whether he finally finds the steel to reinforce his rhetorical lashing of President Vladimir Putin over the weekend with action. The Kremlin is betting he won’t.

It dismissed Trump’s frustration with the most intense Russian drone attacks on Ukraine as a symptom of “emotional overload.” And experience suggests Putin can get away with calling the US president’s bluff. After all, Trump’s Truth Social critique of the Russian leader as “crazy” on Monday was leavened with a characteristic rebuke of the victim — Ukraine and President Volodymyr Zelensky.

Still, the intensifying Russian attacks on Ukrainian civilians appear to be a deliberate Russian test for Trump, a week after his hyped call with Putin, which made no progress toward peace despite the White House spin.

There are two routes Trump can take, assuming he’s ready to abandon the embarrassing position of being constantly played by Putin.

He could impose new sanctions against Russia, which he previously argued would hamper diplomacy. He told reporters in New Jersey on Sunday this was “absolutely” a consideration. Trump could also save lives in Ukraine by emulating his predecessor Joe Biden and asking Congress to approve new shipments of arms and ammunition to the country.

But this option would mean a massive turnaround that would be embarrassing politically, since Trump’s opposition to spending billions of dollars in Ukraine is a foundation of his second presidency. And it would mean the president accepting that, as was the case for many of his recent predecessors, his belief that he could manage Putin was flawed.

There is another possibility — one that Ukraine and its European allies fear. Trump could throw up his hands and argue that neither side wants peace and it’s time for the US to walk away. Russia would then press on with its war of attrition and attacks on civilians. Its land grab would be validated, creating a disastrous precedent for European security and US disengagement.

This isn’t an academic prospect. An isolationist

streak running through the MAGA movement meant that recent hints by Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Vice President JD Vance that the US could step back seem like more than a mere negotiating tactic.

And one way to read Trump’s Truth Social post on Monday was as a smokescreen for a US withdrawal. “This is a War that would never have started if I were President. This is Zelenskyy’s, Putin’s, and Biden’s War, not ‘Trump’s,’” the president wrote.

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can be sure which way he’ll jump. One European diplomat said it was still difficult to say if the president’s condemnations of Putin really signaled a new approach but noted that Europe was obviously interested in more sanctions.

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FOR millennia Gaza served as a commercial hub and bridge between Egypt and the Eastern Arab World. Palestinian writer and activist Edward Said wrote about travelling from Cairo, where his family resided, through Gaza and Jerusalem en route to the Lebanese mountains to escape Egypt’s sweltering summers. Palestinian friends said their relatives living in Jerusalem would travel to Cairo via Gaza in winter to escape the cold.

Israel’s war in 1948 put an end to Gaza’s strategic geography and commanding role in commerce and travel. For most in the Arab world, the 72 per cent of Palestine Israel occupied as a “black hole” and the Palestinians who remained were snubbed. The large Gaza district was reduced to the narrow coastal strip.

The population of the strip swelled to 80,000 due to the expulsion of Palestinians from the conquered areas of the district and of 200,000 refugees from elsewhere. Although Israel first occupied the strip for six months between October 1956 and March 1957 due to the Anglo-French-Israeli war on Egypt, the territory was administered by Egypt the rest of the time until mid-1967. Gazan farmers grew vegetables and fruit and tended livestock. Foreign visitors lodged at Mrs. Nassar’s Marna House. A train linked Gaza to Cairo and the wider world. Flour, rice, fertilizers, clothes, cement, equipment, cars, trucks and belly dancers were imported from Egypt. Gazan educators, engineers, and medics travelled via Cairo to the Gulf for work. Gazan businessmen carried on a lucrative trade with Egypt and students flocked to universities in Cairo and Alexandria.

The Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA sheltered, fed, educated, and trained refugees and employed thousands in its administration.

After conquering the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza in June 1967, Israel rendered the strip dependent, de-developed its economy and employed Gazans to work in mainly menial jobs in Israel at low rates of pay and without social insurance. Gaza’s dependence increased after Israel withdrew its soldiers and settlers in 2005 but retained air, land and sea control of the territory.

Hamas seized control in mid-2007 from Fatah, dividing Gaza from F a t a h - d o m i n a t e d Palestinian Authority (PA) enclaves in the West Bank. While the PA boycotted Hamas, Israel waged war on Gaza in 2008-2009, 2014, and

— CNN

Gaza, from prosperity to below the poverty line

Michael Jansen

2021, and severely restricted the flow of food, building materials, medical supplies, and commercial goods into Gaza which never recovered from each bout of warfare.

Gazans opened a brief window of independence and economic normalcy by digging more than 1,000 tunnels at Rafah beneath the border with Egypt. Through the tunnels Gazans freely imported everything, including cars, livestock, clothing, food, and fuel while Gazans could enter and leave Gaza. A tunnel economy emerged, creating tunnel millionaires. Hamas collected taxes on imports, businesses, and the wealthy. However, tunnel independence ended in 2013 when the Egyptian military closed the tunnels after the 2011 fall of Egypt’s 30-year president Hosni Mubarak.

Since then, Israel has exerted full control over supplies entering Gaza.

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

Gazan consumption has been kept at a minimal level. Today Gaza has 2.3 million people of whom 1.6 million are of refugee stock. An estimated 81 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, according to the UN. Since the ongoing war began in October 2023, the International Labour organisation reported the economy has shrunk by 85 per cent and unemployment has risen to 80 per cent. In consequence, the ongoing 19-month war and repeated periods of blockade have taken a heavy toll on the population, depriving Gazans of nutritious food and essential medicines and lowering their resistance to starvation and disease. Israel’s recent authorisation for 90 trucks to enter Gaza last week is castigated by UN and aid agencies as being totally incapable of meeting Gazans’ needs which are enormous and enduring.

While aid agencies boost supplies during ceasefires and blockades are not in force, they cannot store enough to meet needs when supplies cease. This year, supplies began to run out at the end of April but there was no relaxation of the blockade. The situation at present is dire, forcing bakeries and communal

kitchens to close and hospitals and medical facilities to ration medicines and dressings for wounds.

Disrupted aid deliveries of water, food, medicine, and fuel and the lack of imports of fresh fruit and vegetables have left most Gazans in want and malnourished. Like all the other peoples of the coastal region, Gazans are used to the “Mediterranean diet” which includes fresh salads, vegetable stews, vegetables stuffed with meat and rice, yoghurt, milk and cheese. Gazans are not used to relying on uncertain meals of rice and tinned vegetables when they can access these ingredients. They are not only being starved of the food they are used to consume but meals which provide what is needed for balanced diets and nutrition. The UN children’s agency UNICEF has reported that 9,000 children have been treated for malnutrition this year while hundreds more could not reach

medical centres due to insecurity and displacement. The US-Israeli creation of the so-called Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, set to become operational at the end of this month, has been rejected by the UN and aid agencies as a solution for Gaza’s starving Palestinians. This mechanism will provide supplies for only a portion of the population at the outset before expanding. Not all Gazans will be covered. This mechanism will vet recipients, the six hubs for distribution are to be in the south, forcing Gazans living in the north to be displaced to the south or starve. US mercenaries and Israeli troops — who are seen as enemies by Palestinians — will impose security.

The situation is desperate and getting worse. The UN Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) said last week that at least 244,000 Gazans face Phase 5 classification for “extreme deprivation of food. Starvation, death, destitution, and critical levels of acute malnutrition are or will likely be evident.” All Gaza is in Phase 4, characterised by “large food consumption gaps and excess mortality,” IPC said.

Golden Dome: The next theater of strategic conflict?

US President Donald Trump unveiled his long-promised missile defense shield initiative in early 2025, codifying what was then known as the “Iron Dome for America” through an executive order shortly after returning to office. The initiative, which Trump repeatedly touted during his campaign, represents a bold and controversial shift in American national security policy.

At a press conference at the White House last week, flanked by Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth and Gen. Michael A. Gueltein, the US Space Force’s vice chair of space operations and the newly appointed head of the project, Trump described the initiative — now branded as “Golden Dome” — as a major leap forward in American missile defense and a historic breakthrough in space-based deterrence.

Trump framed it as the completion of President Ronald Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative, which was introduced more than 40 years ago. Whereas Reagan’s vision in the

1980s was aspirational — described at the time as a long-term research and development program — Trump’s is the real deal because the technology now exists to realize that vision. The president noted that space-based sensors and interceptors will be deployed and operational before the end of his term in 2029.

The president said the Golden Dome would serve as an integrated defense shield against “any and all missile threats,” promising protection from projectiles launched from across the globe — or from space itself. The objective, as Hegseth said, is to “rebuild our military capability and reestablish deterrence.” The architecture will incorporate land, sea, air and space-based platforms, and Canada will be part of it. As Politico noted, Trump’s reliance on Canada is crucial, especially to track and neutralize potential missile launches from Russia or China.

But as bold as the announcement was, it immediately drew fierce criticism from scientists, arms control advocates

and US rivals, as did the Strategic Defense Initiative under Reagan. While the Trump administration heralded the initiative as a technological breakthrough and a national security imperative, its critics warned of potentially devastating implications: an escalation of great power competition, the erosion of global arms control frameworks and an arms race in space.

The central legal question is whether the Golden Dome violates the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, the foundational international agreement governing space activities.

This treaty explicitly prohibits the placement of “nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction” in orbit or on celestial bodies.

However, the treaty does not ban conventional weapons — an omission that arms control experts now regard as a critical loophole.

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Dr. Amal Mudallali

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Though Trump did not explicitly mention China or Russia during his Golden Dome announcement, the initiative is widely viewed as targeting these two adversaries. With tensions with Beijing rising over Taiwan and Moscow’s global influence diminished by war and sanctions, Washington appears to be recalibrating its defense posture with China as the primary long-term competitor.

Nonetheless, Russia remains a concern. Despite its weakened geopolitical position, it maintains a powerful nuclear arsenal and significant space capabilities.

As one arms control expert put it, “Russia may be the junior partner in the threat equation, but it’s still a partner.”

While the Trump administration insists that the Golden Dome is purely defensive, opponents say the deployment of space-based interceptors effectively weaponizes space, destabilizes deterrence and encourages adversaries

to develop or deploy similar capabilities.

The Arms Control Association has condemned the plan as a costly “strategic blunder,” calling it “deeply flawed, technically complex and counterproductive.”

The group urged the administration to negotiate a follow-on agreement with Russia to maintain New START limits until a broader treaty can be secured.

The initiative has stirred controversy in Congress. Democrats have slammed the project as wasteful and misaligned with national priorities. With \$25 billion allocated in the 2025 budget and estimates ranging from \$161 billion to more than \$540 billion over two decades (according to the Congressional Budget Office), critics are questioning the cost-benefit ratio.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren, backed by 42 Democratic lawmakers, called for an investigation into the defense contracts awarded for the project. Accusations of profiteering have surfaced, particularly involving Elon Musk and his company



Pakistan Pavilion shines at Expo 2025 Osaka: Minister

F.P. Report

OSAKA, Japan: The theme of Pakistan pavilion at Expo 2025, Osaka is inspired by unique natural treasure Pink Rock Salt, found only in the Salt Range of Pakistan, said Jam Kamal Khan, Federal Minister for Commerce, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, while talking to media today at Expo 2025, Osaka. During the media briefing, he outlined the vision of Pakistan's participation in World Expo 2025, Osaka; which encapsulates Pakistan's goals for sustainable growth, cultural harmony, and economic

prospects. The event was attended by both Japanese and international media.

Sharing insights on the broader vision of participation, the Honorable Minister emphasized that Pakistan cannot remain absent from global platforms like Expo 2025 Osaka, where the world comes together to exchange ideas and to address challenges collectively. He stated that Pakistan has made its presence felt with a bold and unified theme that reflects the country's commitment to sustainability, creativity and exemplary craftsmanship.

He narrated that with the

theme "Universe in a Grain of Salt," Pakistan's pavilion presents a compelling narrative rooted in nature. Highlighting the Pavilion's symbolic use of pink rock salt-one of Pakistan's most iconic natural resources-the Minister explained, "Salt, in its purity and strength, represents our timeless connection to the earth. Through it, we are sharing a vision of sustainability and nature-centric progress with the world."

"The Pavilion was built on 100% energy conservation and minimal carbon emissions, aligning perfectly with the broader theme of Expo 2025: 'Designing

Future Societies for Our Lives,'" he added. "Our message is both simple-future societies must be born from nature and must remain linked to it."

The media talk also offered a closer look at the growing impact of the Pakistan Pavilion, which has become one of the most visited pavilions at Expo 2025. Drawing attention with its architectural references to pink rock salt and natural materials, the Pavilion tells a story of wellness, nature, and cultural reflection.

"The Pavilion has touched a nerve, it's about reconnecting with nature,

and with each other," the Minister noted. "It's more than design; it's a message of balance and renewal."

Minister Jam Kamal Khan also shared details of Pakistan's vibrant lineup of upcoming events at the Expo, including the Pakistan Food Festival, Cultural Performances, Trade-Related Conferences, and the National Day celebrations on August 14.

These events aim to foster cross-cultural dialogue, celebrate Pakistan's creative energy, and highlight the country's dynamic trade potential.

The Honorable Minister also highlighted Pakistan's

potential in sectors like textiles, food and agriculture, minerals, digital services, and clean energy. He encouraged international business community to explore investment and joint ventures, underlining Pakistan's young workforce, strategic location, and ongoing policy reforms.

"We are at a turning point," said Minister Jam Kamal Khan. "Pakistan is ready to engage more deeply with the region and the world, and Japan is a key part of that vision."

The event wrapped up with a media Q&A and group photo session, providing attendees with a



clearer sense of Pakistan's vision, not just for trade,

but for meaningful global engagement.

Ambassador visit Royal FrieslandCampina's Hqrs



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Ambassador Syed Haider Shah visited Royal FrieslandCampina's headquarters in Amersfoort for an in-depth exchange with Jan Derck van Karnebeek, Global CEO Royal FrieslandCampina, on RFC's ongoing and future initiatives in Pakistan.

Earlier Karnebeek visited Pakistan in April and had a productive engagement with the Prime Minister of Pakistan that served to deepen the dialogue on RFC's operations and strategic direction in Pakistan.

Karnebeek shared concerns regarding the imposition of 18% sales tax on packaged milk in Pakistan,

noting that this has led to a significant increase in the consumer price of safe packaged milk. The situation has led to a significant decline in the sale of safe packaged milk, thereby hampering the company's capacity to improve farmers' livelihoods and serve to nutritional needs of consumers. In contrast, the continued tax exemption for loose milk discourages the development of formal supply chains. 'No other country in the globe has imposed a tax to the tune of 18%, regardless,' he added.

Karnebeek also highlighted FrieslandCampina's ongoing efforts to position Pakistan as a regional export hub for dairy products. The company has

already begun dairy exports to the Middle East and other countries, which are being scaled further via distribution partnerships. Building on this momentum, RFC is now also exploring market entry into other countries including China.

The Ambassador reaffirmed the Embassy's full support for FrieslandCampina's efforts to boost dairy exports from Pakistan and advance formal, traceable supply chains.

The Ambassador along with Trade and Investment Counsellor, Mr. Muhammad Shafiq Haider Virk, also visited a FrieslandCampina member dairy farm to learn about their cutting-edge, sustainable dairy practices.

PSX turns bullish, gains 111 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 111.79 points, a positive change of 0.09%, closing at 118,332.91 points as compared to 118,221.12 points on the last trading day.

A total of 690,389,276 shares were traded during the day as compared to 635,535,311 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 23.828 billion against Rs 18.576 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 459 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 211 of them recorded gains and 210 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 38 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 267,623,259 shares at Rs 5.89 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 31,561,718 shares at Rs 1.30 per share and PTCL with 20,008,328 shares at Rs 24.28 per share.

PIA Holding Company LimitedB witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 2,206.95 per share closing at Rs24,276.48 whereas runner-up was Khyber Textile Mills Limited with Rs 209.67 rise in its share price to close at Rs2,306.37.

Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 471.19 per share price, closing at Rs10,284.04, whereas the runner-up Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited with Rs100.00 decline in its per share price to Rs23,000.00.

WCCIS and SIMAP sign MoU

SIALKOT (APP): In a significant move to boost women entrepreneurship and industrial collaboration, the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot (WCCIS) on Tuesday officially signed MoU with the Surgical Instruments Manufacturers Association of Pakistan (SIMAP).

According to a spokesperson, this collaboration was expected to significantly strengthen the ecosystem for women-led enterprises in Sialkot, aligning with broader national goals of economic empowerment and sustainable industrial development.

The partnership marks a strategic effort to foster inclusive economic development, encourage innovation in the surgical instruments sector, and create new avenues for women-led businesses in Sialkot.

The MoU was a milestone for women in business and the surgical sector. SIMAP representatives echoed the sentiment, expressing optimism about the potential of the partnership to stimulate economic activity and broaden the talent pool driving the industry forward.

The agreement outlines joint initiatives including capacity-building programs, training workshops, market access support and mentorship opportunities aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs to actively participate in and contribute to the surgical instruments supply chain.

Chairman SIMAP Zeeshan Tariq, President Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot Dr. Maryam Nouman, Senior Vice President (SVP) WCCIS Gulzaib Waqas Awan, VP Rubina Naveed and Women entrepreneurs were also present on this occasion.

Every sector must contribute to economic revival: Aurangzeb

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday emphasized that every sector must contribute to stabilizing and growing Pakistan's economy, stating that the burden cannot be allowed to fall solely on the formal sector and salaried class.

Speaking during a high-level meeting with a delegation from the Pakistan Association of Large Steel Producers (PALSP), led by Patron-in-Chief Abbas Akbar Ali, the minister underlined the need for collective responsibility in

driving economic recovery, said a news release.

The delegation raised critical challenges facing the steel industry, including high energy costs, regulatory inconsistencies, and the need for a stable policy environment to ensure long-term investment and growth. They also highlighted the impact of taxation policies on formal businesses and sought government support to level the playing field.

The minister acknowledged the industry's concerns and reiterated the government's commitment to supporting productive

sectors of the economy.

He noted that the steel sector plays a pivotal role in infrastructure development and job creation, and assured the delegation that their input would be factored into ongoing budgetary meetings and policy discussions. He further explained that the government is pursuing a broad-based strategy to expand the tax base, reduce reliance on over-taxed segments, and bring the undocumented economy into the fold.

In this regard, he noted that the Prime Minister is personally leading regular meetings aimed at strength-

ening economic governance and enforcing equity across sectors.

The minister appreciated PALSP's constructive engagement and encouraged continued dialogue between industry and government to align reforms with practical ground realities.

He reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring that economic policy is transparent, inclusive, and growth-oriented.

The meeting concluded with mutual agreement to remain in contact and collaborate on sector-specific policy improvements in the months ahead.

Lahore Chamber's SVP calls for innovation

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman has said that innovative and ethical business leadership is important to ensure a sustainable economic future for Pakistan.

He expressed these views while addressing the 4th Forman International Conference on Business & Innovation 2025 here at Forman Christian College University (FCCU) on Tuesday. Dr. Jonathan S. Addleton, Rector of FCCU, Dr. Shoaib Nazir, Chairperson of the School of Management and Dr. Rao Raza Hashim, Dean of the School of Management also spoke on the occasion.

Engineer Khalid Usman said he praised FCCU for organizing an event that brings together academia, industry and international delegates under one roof. He appreciated the university's services to excellence in education and character development and termed the conference a reflection of its progressive academic vision.

He said that innovative and technology-driven business leadership for a sustainable future holds

exceptional relevance for Pakistan's current economic and industrial landscape.

LCCI SVP said that this conference presents a vital platform for scholars, researchers, entrepreneurs and professionals to exchange ideas and explore practical solutions to today's business challenges.

Engineer Usman said that innovation is no longer an option in the modern economic environment, but an essential for growth, competitiveness and long-term stability. He said that business leadership must go beyond profit-making to embrace ethical conduct, technological adaptation and a sense of social responsibility.

"We are witnessing around the world how economies like Germany, South Korea, Japan and the Nordic countries have flourished by investing in education, ethical business practices and close collaboration between academia and industry. These countries serve as exemplary models for Pakistan to follow," he added.

LCCI SVP stressed the importance of empowering youth, saying that universi-

ties must work hand-in-hand with the business community to prepare students not only for the job market but to become job creators and visionary leaders.

He said that LCCI believes that the foundation of Pakistan's economic resilience lies in bridging the gap between education and industry. "We are fully committed to supporting institutions like FCCU in promoting a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship and ethical leadership."

Offering his full cooperation, he said that LCCI is ready to provide platforms for internships, collaborative research, mentoring initiatives and policy engagement to ensure that academia and industry move forward together.

He said, the journey to a prosperous Pakistan begins with the young minds in the universities and research centers.

"We must invest in these minds today so they can lead tomorrow, not only as capable managers but as responsible, visionary leaders committed to building a better nation," he concluded.

Rupee sheds 12 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 12 paise against the US Dollar in the inter-bank trading and closed at Rs 282.17 against the previous day's closing of Rs 282.05.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.65 and Rs 284.30, respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 1.18 to close at Rs 320.16 against the last day's closing of Rs 321.34, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.96, whereas a decrease of Rs 0.87 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 381.83 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 382.70.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 paise each to close at Rs 76.82 and Rs 75.23, respectively.

PTCL Group partners with NETS International

F.P. Report

KARACHI: We're glad to announce that Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) Group, consisting of PTCL and Ufone 4G, has joined forces with NETS International to modernize our IT Core Routing Platforms by deploying a state-of-the-art Cisco IT Core Routing Solution.

This strategic initiative underscores our unwavering commitment to delivering superior IT services by leveraging the latest advancements in network infrastructure.

The deployment of Cisco's industry-leading routing technology will bring transformative benefits with significant impact on our operations. With advanced data processing capabilities and reduced latency, users can enjoy a seamless digital experience that enhances overall satisfaction.

The collaboration will seamlessly integrate with PTCL and Ufone 4G's existing Cisco ACI-based Software-Defined Networking (SDN) infrastructure, optimizing network efficiency and operational agility. Additionally, our customers will benefit from enhanced service reliability,



ty, resulting in smooth streaming and gaming experiences.

Together, we are excited to embark on this journey that will keep PTCL Group at the forefront of the telecommunication sector, providing our customers with cutting-edge connectivity.

Jafar Khalid, GCTIO of PTCL and Ufone, emphasized the importance of this initiative: "This modernization project reflects our relentless pursuit of innovation and excellence. By deploying state-of-the-art Cisco routing solutions, we are enhancing our network's efficiency and ensuring a superior digital

experience for our customers."

Jahangir Ahmad, MD of NETS International, expressed enthusiasm for the partnership: "We are thrilled to continue our collaboration with PTCL and Ufone. This project is a major milestone, and we are confident that the new Cisco Core Routing Platform will redefine network performance and reliability."

Muhammad Nadeem, CEO of NETS International, underscored the significance of the initiative: "The IT Core Routers Tech Refresh & Modernization project is a game-changer for PTCL and

Ufone. Our expertise, combined with Cisco's world-class technology, will establish new benchmarks in Pakistan's telecommunications & IT sector."

With this strategic modernization initiative, PTCL Group is reinforcing its leadership in Pakistan's telecom industry, ensuring a future-ready network that can support the rapidly evolving digital landscape. By partnering with NETS International and Cisco Systems, Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) Group is setting new standards for network excellence, operational efficiency, and customer experience.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships, Eleni-T, Nave Cielo and Al-Daayan carrying Container, Gas oil and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, FOTCO oil Terminal and Port Gas Power Terminal respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile four more ships, Valence, ZJ Pacific, Pacific Gas and ND Thelxis scheduled to load/offload Container, Cement, LPG and Coal also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

A total of seven ships

were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a container ship 'MSC Guernsey' left the port on Tuesday morning, while two more ships, Gloria and OBE Lotus, were expected to sail.

Cargo volume of 173,665 tonnes, comprising 104,458 tonnes imports cargo and 69,207 export cargo carried in 5,601 Containers (1,530 TEUs Imports & 1,190 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during the last 24 hours.

There are seven ships at

Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them five ships, ZJ Pacific, Sakizaya Unicorn, Pacific Gas, ND Thelxis and Valence & another ship 'MSC Ulsan-III' scheduled to load/offload Cement, Soya Bean Seed, LPG, Coal and Container were expected to take berths at MW-2, FAP, EVTL, MW-4 and QICT respectively, while three more container ships, FSL Kelang, APL Phoenix and Maersk Cairo are due to expected arrive at outer anchorage today (Wednesday).

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Gold prices decrease Rs.3,600 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed a decrease of Rs.3,600 on Tuesday and was sold at Rs.347,900 against its sale at Rs. 351,500 on the previous trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs.3,086 to Rs.298,268 from Rs. 301,354 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat came down by Rs.2,829 to Rs.273,422 from Rs. 276,251.

The rates of per tola silver and ten gram declined by Rs.60 and

Rs52 and were traded at Rs.3,448 and Rs.2,956 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$36 to \$3,295 from \$3,331 whereas that of silver went down by \$0.60 to \$32.90 from \$33.50, the Association reported.



In brief

Azarenka dominates in lightning win

PARIS (Agencies): Victoria Azarenka raced into the second round of the French Open with a 48-minute 'double bagel' victory over Belgium's Yanina Wickmayer. At 35 years old, the Belarusian is the oldest player in the Open era to win a Grand Slam main-draw match 6-0 6-0. She also becomes the first woman to score a Grand Slam double bagel - winning a match without dropping a game - in three different decades. Wickmayer, who is currently ranked outside the world's top 1,000 and has said she will retire after Wimbledon this summer, held just one game point during the match. Two-time major winner Azarenka hit 15 winners and won 49 of the 66 points on offer, while Wickmayer was undone by 26 unforced errors. Only Maria Sharapova and Kim Clijsters - with six each - have won more Grand Slam matches with a 6-0 6-0 scoreline than Azarenka's five since 2000. It was her first double bagel win at a major since the 2016 Australian Open. Azarenka will face former Australian Open winner Sofia Kenin after the American defeated France's Varvara Gracheva 6-3 6-1.

Prop Cole to retire

LONDON (AFP): England and British and Irish Lions prop Dan Cole said on Tuesday he will retire at the end of the season aged 38. Cole came through Leicester's academy before becoming his country's second-most capped player on 118 appearances, behind team-mate Ben Youngs. The tight-head won three Six Nations titles and featured at four Rugby World Cups. He also played three Tests on two Lions' series and made his first England appearance in November. "It has not been an easy decision at all," Cole said in a Leicester statement. "I have been to-ing and fro-ing; however, I think this is the best time for me to finish playing. I don't want to be the old guy, just sat around and hanging on to something for too long," he added. Cole's Leicester sit second in the Premiership table with one game of the regular season to play.

Rizwanullah stars with bat & ball

KARACHI (PPI): In the ongoing PCB Inter-District Under-19 One Day Cricket Tournament (Karachi Region) organized by the Pakistan Cricket Board, the results of three matches were announced yesterday. The matches featured brilliant centuries by Huzefa Ahsan, Sufyan Usmani, and Abdul Sami, along with Rizwanullah's all-round performance and aggressive bowling by Naqab Shafiq, M. Zaid Hasan, and Saad Sakhawat. At the KCCA Stadium, Zone Six defeated Zone Four by 208 runs. Zone Six scored 302 runs for 3 wickets, with Huzefa Ahsan remaining unbeaten on 114 and Abdul Sami scoring 102 runs. Zone Four was bowled out for 94 runs, due to Naqab Shafiq's aggressive bowling figures of 5/22 and Saad Sakhawat's 4/16. At the Gulberg Gymkhana Ground, Zone Seven defeated Zone One by 6 wickets. Zone One was all out for 110 runs, with Muhammad Zaid Hasan taking 5 wickets. Zone Seven chased down the target with the loss of 4 wickets. At the Agha Khan Gymkhana Ground, Zone Five defeated Zone Three by 9 runs. Zone Five scored 249 runs, including Sufyan Usmani's 113 runs. In response, Zone Three managed to score 240 runs. Rizwanullah took 4 wickets.

Sadia Iqbal regains No. 1 spot in ICC Rankings

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan spinner Sadia Iqbal has regained the number one position among bowlers in the ICC Women's T20I Rankings, released Tuesday. Sadia regained the number one position, after Sophie Ecclestone missed her team's recent T20I series. Meanwhile, West Indies captain Hayley Matthews has moved up to a career-best-equaling second position in the ICC Women's T20I Batting Rankings after a valiant show against England.

Matthews, who top-scored in the three-match series with 177 runs that included an unbeaten century (100) in the first match in Canterbury and was named the Player of the Series, has overtaken India's Smriti Mandhana and Australia's Tahlia McGrath to reclaim second position, which she



had last occupied in December last year.

Former England captain Heather Knight, who contributed 109 runs including an unbeaten 66 in the third match in Chelmsford, has moved up seven places to 17th, while skipper Nat Sciver Brunt is up five slots to ninth after aggregating 92 runs and leading her side to a 3-0 series washout. Sophia Dunkley is up eight places to 29th.

In the bowling rankings, England spinner Sophie Ecclestone has slipped from first to

fourth after missing the series as she was recuperating from an injury and played domestic cricket during the past week.

She has been replaced on the top of the charts with other left-arm spinner Sadia, while India's Deepti Sharma and Australia's Annabel Sutherland have taken the second and third positions, respectively.

Sadia was briefly number one in October last year during the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in Dubai, when she had become the first from her country to grab the top spot.

England's new-ball bowler Lauren Bell has advanced 13 places to a career-best sixth position after finishing with a series-topping seven wickets. Linsey Smith (up 37 places to 41st) and Issy Wong (up 32 places to joint-62nd) are others progressing in the bowling rankings.

Van Dijk 'praying' for supporters injured at parade

LONDON (Agencies): Liverpool captain Virgil van Dijk says he is "praying for a speedy recovery" for those injured when a car ploughed into supporters at the club's trophy parade.

About 50 people - including four children - were injured when a car rammed into crowds during Monday's Premier League trophy parade in central Liverpool. A 53-year-old British man from the Liverpool area has since been arrested.

Liverpool City Metro Mayor Steve Rotherham says there are four injured people in hospital that are "very, very ill". "My thoughts and prayers are with everyone affected," wrote Van Dijk on social media. "Praying for a speedy recovery for everyone who suffered injuries. We are with you all."

Van Dijk posted a picture of the city's Royal Liver Building alongside his message. Former Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp added on social media: "Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who are injured and affected."

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer said at a news conference on Monday:



"Liverpool stands together and the whole country stands with them". Ex-Liverpool manager and player Kenny Dalglish said he was "shocked, horrified and deeply saddened" by the incident.

Liverpool's chief executive officer Billy Hogan said: "I would like to extend our heartfelt thoughts to all those who've been affected by this appalling incident."

"This weekend was one of celebration, emotion and joy spread across the city in our entire fanbase, and it ended in unimaginable scenes of distress with this appalling incident."

Tens of thousands of supporters were on the streets of Liverpool on bank holiday Monday to

celebrate the side winning the Premier League.

Water Street was closed to traffic for the parade. However, eye witnesses said the car ignored 'road closed' signs. The car ploughed into supporters at about 18:00 BST, approximately 10 minutes after the bus containing Liverpool's players, staff and the Premier League trophy had departed.

Police say they are not treating the incident as terror-related. Twenty-seven people were taken to hospitals around the city after the incident. Eleven remained in hospital as of Tuesday afternoon. All were in a stable condition and appeared to be recovering well, said Detective Chief Superintendent Karen Jaundrill.

Scaroni wins in Alps as Roglic quits Giro d'Italia



BRENTONICO SAN VALENTINO (AFP): Christian Scaroni won stage 16 of the Giro d'Italia while Isaac Del Toro wobbled but clung on to first overall as several contenders fell or faltered on a crash-filled day in the Alps.

One of those was the former winner Primoz Roglic whose troubled race ended in abandonment after suffering a fourth crash in this year's race. Richard Carapaz was also involved but was able to continue.

Scaroni and fellow Italian and Astana team-mate Lorenzo Fortunato, the two survivors of a long breakaway, crossed the line holding hands at the end of a mountainous 203-kilometre push from Piazzola sul Brenta to San Valentino.

"We spoke about it. He said he would give the stage to me. He's an incredible mate," said Scaroni.

Scaroni became the first Italian to win a stage on this year's Giro, while Fortunato tightened his hold on the king of the mountains classification.

Behind them, Carapaz,

Derek Gee and then Simon Yates, one after another, launched late attacks that Del Toro could not match.

The 21-year-old Mexican plugged away and did enough to save his pink jersey, but his overall lead dropped to 26 seconds over Yates and 31 seconds over Carapaz.

On a day when pre-race favourite Roglic, who had started the day in 10th nearly 4min off the lead, crashed out and Juan Ayuso, who had been third overall, cracked, Gee rose to fourth, 1min 31sec off the lead.

Ayuso, in theory the leader of Del Toro's Team UAE, lost the thread on the penultimate climb, Santa Barbara. He crossed the finish line almost 15 minutes after Scaroni and dropped out of the top 10.

His collapse left the other UAE riders, including Simon Yates' twin Adam, free to protect Del Toro. Heading toward the final climb, Del Toro rode in a Yates sandwich, sitting in Adam's slipstream while Simon tracked behind.

Rain jacket

Two other riders were

forced to withdraw on Tuesday after crashes. Josh Turling of Ineos dropped out after hitting a guardrail while Italian Alessio Martinelli plunged into a ravine during a descent.

Martinelli's team Bardiani said the 24-year-old was conscious when he was taken away by ambulance and was in "stable" condition.

On a day of intermittent showers, former Tour de France winner, Egan Bernal of Ineos, crashed on a descent when another rider's rain jacket appeared to become tangled in his wheel. He changed bikes and rode on, climbing to sixth overall.

Roglic, a five-time Grand Tour champion including the 2023 Giro, had already crashed three times in this year's edition and said before the start that he had struggled to train on Monday's rest day.

"I still came to the start today and I couldn't even ride the bike yesterday, so I'll just see if I can ride," he said. It is the fifth time in his last nine Grand Tours he has failed to finish the race.

Tuesday's stage opened a mountainous final week on the Giro. Wednesday brings a 155km run from San Michele all'Adige to Bormio that organisers rate three out of five for difficult.

Friday and Saturday offer two five-star days with a string of huge climbs which will decide who can enjoy a triumphal entry to Rome at the end of a flat final stage.

Match officials named for T20I series

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Cricket Board on Tuesday announced that Sri Lanka's Ranjan Madugalle, who is a member of ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, will lead the playing control teams for the three-match T20I series between Pakistan and Bangladesh in Lahore.

Madugalle, who has also officiated the most international cricket matches (804) across three formats as Match Referee, also led playing control teams in seven matches of the recently concluded HBL PSL X, said a press release.

For the first T20I, Asif Yaqoob and Rashid Riaz - both part of the PCB International Panel of Umpires, will be the on-field umpires. Ahsan Raza, member of ICC Elite Panel of Umpires will be the third umpire, while Faisal Khan Aafreedi - an ICC International Panel Umpire, will act as the fourth umpire.

In the second T20I, Rashid Riaz will join Faisal Khan Aafreedi to perform the on-field duties while Ahsan Raza will be the third umpire. Asif Yaqoob will be the fourth umpire.

For the third T20I, Ahsan Raza will be joined by Asif Yaqoob to perform on-field duties, while Faisal Khan Aafreedi will be the third umpire. Rashid Riaz will work as the fourth umpire for the final T20I of the series.

Mehsood achieves another milestone



ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani martial artist Irfan Mehsood has achieved another milestone as his four more Guinness World Records have been approved.

"I broke one Norwegian and three Italian Guinness World Records," he said in a statement. He said he broke the Norwegian world record of 32 push-ups by doing 35 push-ups with the fingers of the hand while holding an 80-pound weight.

"I'm the first Pakistani to set 150 Guinness World Records," he claimed.

Irfan has set the most world records at 70 in the push-ups category, set the most world records with 100 pounds, 80 pounds, 60 pounds and 40 pounds.

He has also set records for martial push-ups, squats, jumping jacks, step-ups, knee strikes, elbow strikes, side jumps, high jumps, star jumps, etc.

He has broken world records in 20 countries so far including the United States, Britain, India, China, Norway, Germany, France, Finland, Philippines, Spain, Italy, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Pakistan and Syria.

Irfan's 20 students have also set Guinness World Records and he has also received the Presidential Award for Excellence in 2023.



LAHORE: Bangladesh captain Litton Das and Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha pose with the trophy, Pakistan vs Bangladesh.

Pakistan, Bangladesh clash in T20I series from May 28

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan are all set to take on Bangladesh in the three-match T20I series commencing from May 28 (Wednesday) at the Gaddafi stadium.

All three T20Is will be played at Lahore's iconic Gaddafi Stadium with the second T20I to be played on 30 May (Friday) and the third and final T20I of the series is scheduled for June 1 (Sunday). The T20Is will begin at 8pm, with the toss taking place at 7.30pm local time.

It will be the first T20I series to be hosted by the Gaddafi stadium after going through a complete renovation earlier this year.

Salman Ali Agha will lead Pakistan, while Litton Das to captain Bangladesh. Both sides had two training sessions at the Gaddafi Stadium under lights on Monday and Tuesday evening.

On head-to-head in Pakistan, both sides have featured in four T20Is with Bangladesh touring Pakistan for T20I in 2020. Pakistan have won three T20Is, while one match

was washed out. Over-all in five bilateral series, Pakistan have edged out Bangladesh four times with the visitor's only win coming in 2015.

Earlier, Mike Hesson was appointed Pakistan's white-ball coach, while Salman Ali Agha, who has so far led the team in nine T20Is, will continue to lead the Men in Green.

Salman Ali Agha expressed the hope to do well against the visitors, adding "We had a very productive practice session yesterday and the boys are doing well as a unit. A lot of our players are coming off strong performances in the HBL PSL X, which is one of the most competitive T20 tournaments in the world. That form and momentum are something we are hoping to carry into this series."

"Bangladesh are a quality side with talented players and we are expecting a good challenge from them. I believe fans are in for some thrilling cricket over the next few days," he said, adding, "I would

like to urge fans to turn up in big numbers and support not just us, but the spirit of the game."

Bangladesh captain Litton Das had similar opinion and said "We have had a good training session and we are familiar with the conditions here. The players are looking forward to the series. Everyone is focused and understands the challenge Pakistan poses, especially in their home conditions."

"This series is a great opportunity for every player to step up. We are trying a few combinations in the build-up to the T20 World Cup next year and this tour is a valuable part of that process," Das added.

On the other hand, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has unveiled the five-member commentary panel for the series. Former Test captains Aamir Sohail and Ramiz Raja, Test cricketer Bazid Khan and former Bangladesh international cricketer Athar Ali Khan alongside Mike Haysman. Zainab Abbas will be the series presenter.

Djokovic powers through Roland Garros opener

PARIS (AFP): Novak Djokovic made a clinical start to his latest pursuit of a record-breaking 25th Grand Slam title at the French Open on Tuesday, while women's contenders Coco Gauff and Mirra Andreeva successfully got their campaigns under way at a windy Roland Garros.

The 38-year-old Djokovic had little trouble in seeing off 98th-ranked American Mackenzie McDonald 6-3, 6-3, 6-3, three days after becoming only the third man to win 100 ATP titles with his victory in Geneva.

"I don't know how many more Grand Slams I've got left in my body," said Djokovic, seeded sixth and playing in Paris for the first time since winning Olympic gold last August.

"I'm just trying to enjoy every moment in this magnificent stadium." The three-time French Open champion lost his opening matches in both Monte Carlo and Madrid earlier in the clay-court season, but was dominant against McDonald, with his only hic-cup coming when he failed to serve out the second set in the eighth game. The Serb, who withdrew injured before the quarter-finals in 2024, will meet a Frenchman in either Corentin Moutet or Clement Tabur in round two.

Djokovic is on the same half of the draw as world number one Jannik Sinner and last year's runner-up Alexander Zverev, who saw off American teenager Learner Tien 6-3, 6-3, 6-4.

World number three Zverev is hoping to go a step further than 12 months ago when he lost the final to Carlos Alcaraz in five sets, his third defeat in as many Grand Slam finals. His preparation has been far from ideal after his plane was struck by lightning on the journey to Paris following a last-16 loss in Hamburg.

The 19-year-old Tien, who knocked out Daniil



Medvedev en route to the Australian Open last 16 in January, was overpowered on Court Suzanne Lenglen.

Zverev, who has reached at least the semi-finals in each of the last four French Opens, will next face Dutchman Jesper de Jong.

Former US Open champion and five-time Grand Slam runner-up Medvedev was dumped out in the first round for the sixth time in Paris, losing a dramatic clash with Cameron Norrie 7-5, 6-3, 4-6, 1-6, 7-5.

Grigor Dimitrov retired injured for a fourth consecutive Grand Slam tournament, calling it quits due to a leg injury when leading American Ethan Quinn by two sets to one. Ninth seed Alex de Minaur, a quarter-finalist at each of the past four majors, started well with an accomplished 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (8/6) win over Serbia's Laslo Djere.

Miami champion Jakub Mensik came through an entertaining match against Frenchman Alexandre Muller, repeatedly taunting the home crowd during a 7-5, 6-7 (5/7), 7-5, 6-3 victory.

Gauff, Andreeva impress In the women's draw, 2022 runner-up Gauff brushed aside Australia's Olivia Gadecki 6-2, 6-2.

In the women's draw, 2022 runner-up Gauff brushed aside Australia's Olivia Gadecki 6-2, 6-2. Gauff, the 2023 US Open winner, has not won a tournament since last year's WTA Finals but reached the finals at both Madrid and Rome this month. The 21-year-old American has reached the quarter-finals or better in each of her past

four visits to Roland Garros. "I knew it wasn't going to be a clean match with how windy it was," said the second seed, who initially forgot her racquets which had to be collected by a ball boy.

"Honestly, it was two different matches depending on which side of the court you were on." Rising Russian star Andreeva is eyeing her maiden Grand Slam crown after WTA 1000 titles in Dubai and Indian Wells and recovered well after falling 3-0 down to Spaniard Cristina Bucsa in the first set.

The 18-year-old quickly overturned the double-break deficit and eventually cruised to a 6-4, 6-3 victory over the world number 98.

"With time I played better and better, so I felt like closer to the end of the match was playing good, not like in the beginning," said the sixth seed. Andreeva, who reached the semi-finals last year, will play American Ashlyn Krueger in the second round on Thursday.

Third seed Jessica Pegula also made serene progress with a 6-2, 6-4 success against Romania's Anca Todoni as the American returned to Roland Garros after missing the 2024 edition due to injuries.

Two-time former Australian Open champion Victoria Azarenka hammered Belgium's Yanina Wickmayer, who will retire after Wimbledon, 6-0, 6-0 on Court 6, while Magdalena Frech knocked out three-time Grand Slam finalist Ons Jabeur.



In brief

Drug paddler received 9 years imprisonment

RAWALPINDI (APP): According to details, the accused Muhammad Taj was arrested by Saddar Wah Police in December 2023 after 4 kg and 20 grams of hashish was recovered from him. In view of solid evidence and effective prosecution, the court sentenced the accused along with imposing fine of Rs 80,000. The City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani while appreciating the legal and investigation teams directed for further accelerating the crackdown against the menace of drug paddling. "All steps are being taken to eradicate the scourge of drugs", said CPO Syed Khalid Hamdani.

IRSA releases 260,780 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 260,780 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 296,539 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1474.42 feet which was 72.42 feet higher than dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 167,600 cusecs and 155,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1157.10 feet, which was 107.10 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 39,659 cusecs and 16,500 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 210,820, 142,697, 118,207 and 48,800 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 40,900 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 21,984 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Police held 4 drug dealers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Police have arrested four drug dealers and recovered more than 05 kilograms of drugs from their possession during crackdown here on Tuesday. According to police spokesman, the raids were conducted on the orders of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Mehmood Hamdani. The operations took place in the areas of Waris Khan, Chaklala, Wah Cantt, and Saddar Wah police stations. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani commended police teams and said "we are fully committed to take strict action against drug dealers to eliminate drugs from society". He added that the crackdown will intensify in the coming days as part of the ongoing drive to make Punjab drug-free.

Rawal Park decorated

RAWALPINDI (APP): Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) continuously carried out the beautification of the garden city while colourful flowers and plants were planted in the green belts and parks of the city. Director General PHA Ahmed Hassan Ranjha on Tuesday told the media that fine-looking flower vases and small beds of beautiful plants have also been primed at the Rawal park. He said that hands-on steps were taken for the beauty of the city, and PHA was committed to providing the best kind of hygienic and environment-friendly mesosphere to the residents. Ranjha said that efforts were underway to make the city Clean and Green according to the mission of the Punjab government, adding, "Rawalpindi will be made the most beautiful city in Punjab."



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong jointly inaugurate the Pakistan Side Secretariat project.

Danyal stresses media literacy and credible journalism

RAWALPINDI (APP): Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Danyal Chaudhary, emphasized the critical role of credible information and media literacy in shaping a progressive society during his keynote address at the Media Literacy Summit 2025.

The event was held at Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU), where he called for collaborative efforts among writers, journalists, and media professionals to counter misinformation and sensationalization in mainstream media.

Danyal underscored the need for collaborative efforts to ensure diverse, truthful, and responsible journalism. He called the media literacy as an important element of democracy.

"Media literacy is not merely an option but a cornerstone of society," he said. Highlighting the importance of credible journalism, he urged students to uphold ethical reporting. While giving some examples of successful Pakistani journalists, Danyal maintained that journalism is a

profession of speaking and highlighting the truth.

He encouraged the next generation of media professionals to build their careers on authenticity and fact-based reporting. The Parliamentary Secretary assured full support from his ministry to FJWU in initiatives aimed at enhancing media education. "We must work collectively to create platforms where the next generation can benefit from credible information," he said.

Earlier in her welcoming remarks, Dr. Bushra Mirza, Vice Chancellor FJWU highlighted the key initiatives taken by her university for mentoring and career counseling of students.

She underlined the importance of media literacy particularly in the transitional stage where regular media is phasing to the digitalized world. "With the powerful technology and its enhanced impacts, there is a dire need of literacy synchronizing the users and media tools to combat its harmful effects", she said while highlighting the objectives of the summit.

The Vice Chancellor while referring to the fake

news broadcasting by Indian media during the recent clash, said that the fact checking has become of more vital importance for which one must have certain skills and the credible information. Appreciating the efforts of the Communication and Media Sciences Department of the university, the VC announced for holding more symposiums and conferences to come in future.

Renowned senior journalists including Hamid Mir, Muhammad Malick, Dr.Sabookh Syed and creative writers including Saji Gul, Dr. Rana Uzair addressed the conference in which they highlighted the areas of improvement for media literacy. They also responded to various queries from the students and faculty members during interactive question answer session.

The summit brought together media experts, educators, and students to discuss challenges and opportunities in modern journalism, with a focus on combating misinformation and promoting media literacy as a tool for societal development.

Ayaz condemns attack on Polio team

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday strongly condemned the firing incident on an anti-polio team in Nushki.

The Speaker paid tribute to Police Constable Abdul Waheed who was martyred in the attack.

He extended heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the family of the martyred officer.

"The sacrifice of Police Constable Abdul Waheed will always be remembered," Ayaz Sadiq said.

"I stand in solidarity with the bereaved family of the martyr," the Speaker said.

Terming the attack as intolerable, the Speaker said, "An assault on teams dedicated to ensuring a safe future for our children is unacceptable."

"Those attacking the mission for a healthy and secure future of our children will be dealt with an iron hand," he added.

He also prayed for the elevation of the martyr's ranks in the hereafter and strength for the grieving family.

1,600 cops deployed for polio team security

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police have deployed more than 1,600 police officials across Rawalpindi to ensure the safety of health workers during the seven-day anti-polio campaign.

According to police spokesman, the security plan was prepared on the instructions of City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani.

Police personnel will work closely with 218 polio teams operating in different areas of the city.

Mobile police units are also patrolling the streets to provide extra security, while senior officers are regularly visiting the teams in the field to check arrangements and guide the staff on duty.

SSP Operations Kashif Zulfiqar said the police are fully committed to provide foolproof security to all health workers involved in the campaign.

Nation proud to be Nuclear Power: Aleem Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the eve of Youm-e-Takbeer, Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan on Tuesday expressed pride on behalf of the nation in every individual who played a role in making Pakistan the first Islamic Nuclear Power.

Paying tributes to the architects of Pakistan's nuclear deterrent, he extended heartfelt appreciation to the nuclear scientists, defense experts, engineers, technicians and the political leadership for their collective efforts. He emphasized that this year's Youm-e-Takbeer brings dual pride in the context of the recent "Marqa-e-Haq," as Pakistan's nuclear capabilities have delivered tangible strategic outcomes, said a press release.

Calling May 28 a historic and unforgettable day, Abdul Aleem Khan said that Youm-e-Takbeer is a moment to offer gratitude

to Almighty Allah and reaffirm the belief that those who trust in Almighty are never left hopeless.

In his congratulatory message, the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party President Abdul Aleem Khan highlighted that despite possessing strong nuclear capabilities, Pakistan has always prioritised regional peace, maintained a balance of power and played a responsible role, which has garnered international appreciation. He acknowledged the invaluable contributions of the Pakistan Armed Forces in safeguarding national defence, particularly referencing their resounding victory over the enemy on May 10.

Leaders of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party at both Central and Provincial levels also extended congratulations to the nation on Youm-e-Takbeer. They paid homage to the martyrs and

veterans, asserting that vibrant nations remember the sacrifices and achievements of their forefathers. In a joint statement, IPP Secretary General Mian Khalid Mehmood, Provincial President Rana Nazir Ahmed Khan, Secretary General & MPA Shoaib Siddiqui, Lahore President Malik Zaman Naseeb, Women's Wing President Dr. Javeria Suhrawardy and Punjab Vice Presidents Mian Junaid Zulfiqar and Yasir Arafat Chaudhry stated that the purpose of nuclear strength is deterrence not aggression. Pakistan's nuclear capability has effectively restrained hostile ambitions, they added. They mentioned that even after a quarter of a century, adversaries have not dared to look at Pakistan with ill intent and the nuclear status of the country has helped to maintain regional strategic balance.

FIA cracks down on human trafficking & visa fraud

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has launched a series of successful operations across Pakistan to stop human trafficking, visa fraud, and illegal money transfers (hawala/hundi).

Dozens of suspects have been arrested, and fake passports, forged documents, and large sums of money have been recovered.

At Karachi Airport, FIA immigration officers stopped three passengers from leaving the country using fake or suspicious travel documents. The suspects were identified as Khalid Baloch, Muhammad Arif, and Amin.

Khalid and Arif were using Pakistani passports with fake work visas to travel to Qatar. Investigations showed they were originally from Iran and had obtained Pakistani passports illegally by paying Rs. 110,000 each to agents.

In a separate case, an Afghan citizen named Amin was caught trying to fly to Saudi Arabia using a

fake passport and protector certificate. He had entered Pakistan illegally through the Chaman border.

All three suspects were handed over to the Anti-Human Trafficking Circle for further investigation.

In Multan, FIA arrested Ahmad Nazir, a wanted man who had taken Rs. 850,000 from a citizen by promising a job in Dubai but disappeared without sending the person abroad.

Another suspect, Kamran Akram, was caught on Bosan Road for running an illegal hawala business and helping people travel abroad through illegal means. Authorities recovered 13 passports, laptops, phones, and other evidence from him.

FIA Gujranwala arrested Muhammad Imran Butt and Wajid Ali Shah for their involvement in illegal money transfers. They were caught with Rs. 1.9 million in cash, hawala receipts, bank slips, and mobile phones.

In another major case, FIA arrested four human traffickers—Muhammad

Tariq, Muhammad Yameen, Muhammad Owais, and Akbar—for taking large amounts of money from people by promising jobs abroad.

Tariq collected Rs. 4.5 million by offering a job in Spain and tried to send the victim to Europe via boat.

Yameen took Rs. 675,000 for a job in Dubai but cut contact after the victim arrived. Owais took over Rs. 1.25 million and sent a man to Bahrain, where he was forced into hard labor.

Akbar received more than Rs. 5 million for a job in Italy but failed to deliver and went missing.

All suspects have been arrested, and further investigations are underway to catch their accomplices.

The FIA has warned the public to avoid falling into the trap of fake agents and to use only legal and verified methods for going abroad. The agency has vowed to continue its crackdown until these criminal networks are completely dismantled.

International moot on Quality Teacher Education concludes

ISLAMABAD (APP): The two-day international conference on the theme of Quality Teacher Education concluded successfully here at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) on Monday.

Vice Chancellor of the university and Chairman of NACTE, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood was the chief guest, while Professor Dr. Qazi Waseem, Vice Chancellor of Karachi Metropolitan University, was the guest of honor. Other notable speakers included Professor Dr. Sajid Ali from Aga Khan University, Dr. Shamsa Aziz, Secretary of NACTE, and Dr. Naveed Sultana, Chairperson of the Secondary Teacher Education Department at the Open University.

In his address, Dr. Nasir Mahmood described teacher training as a cornerstone of

national intellectual and academic development, and praised the organization of the conference as a commendable academic effort.

He expressed gratitude to the organizers, education experts, partner institutions, and all participants for their key roles in making this academic gathering a success.

Dr. Mahmood emphasized that teacher education is fundamental to the intellectual and academic growth of any nation and that such scholarly forums play a vital role in making the process more effective.

Dr. Qazi Waseem highlighted that bringing together more than 250 education experts was a major achievement, and noted that the conference significantly contributed to the development of quality and contemporary teacher education programs.

The conference included parallel sessions and panel

discussions that covered key topics such as teacher education, curriculum, licensing, career development, and policy-making.

The event was organized by the Secondary Teacher Education Department of the university in collaboration with the National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (NACTE) and the Higher Education Commission (HEC).

Sponsors of the conference included Global Partnership for Education (GPE-KIX), College of Education – Ziauddin University, Virtual University, University of Gujrat, and Sarhad University. All partner institutions deserve appreciation and congratulations for this successful initiative, which will undoubtedly serve as a milestone in promoting quality education.

DC inspects cattle market, reviews Eid arrangements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon on Tuesday visited the Zia Masjid cattle market to inspect facilities and briefed the media on the measures in place.

Talking to media persons, the DC said that this year, six official cattle markets have been set up in Islamabad to facilitate residents during Eid-ul-Azha.

Meanwhile, a new market has been introduced in sector I-12 to reduce crowding in other parts of the federal capital. He said that the administration is working to ensure that all markets are managed properly.

Each market has been divided into sections to keep small and large ani-

mals in separate areas. A 24-hour livestock support camp has also been established at every site to assist traders and visitors.

To manage traffic and prevent congestion near the markets, special parking arrangements have been made. The supply of water at these sites has been handed over to contractors, who are responsible for ensuring availability throughout the day and night, he added.

In an effort to handle complaints on the spot, magistrates have been deployed at all cattle markets. DC Memon stated that these officials are there to resolve any issues faced by buyers or sellers.

The administration has also taken action against

those found violating regulations. Several contractors were arrested for overcharging traders. According to the deputy commissioner, these arrests were made to discourage exploitation and ensure that traders are treated fairly.

As many as, six teams have been formed to oversee all cattle markets in Islamabad. These teams are responsible for enforcing rules and monitoring activities at each location.

Strict orders have been issued banning the sale of animals on roads, in streets, or on link roads. Authorities have also urged the public not to bring animals onto greenbelts or open spaces not designated for cattle trade.

NA Committee reviews poverty alleviation programs progress

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety in its ninth meeting held here Tuesday reviewed the progress on poverty alleviation programs and the challenges hindering smooth service delivery.

Chaired by Mir Ghulam Ali Talpur, the session focused on implementation timelines, inter-institutional coordination, and critical gaps in operational capacity.

The Committee identified the absence of defined timelines in the sub-committee's report as a major obstacle to project execution and decided to summon the Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan and heads of private banks in the next meeting to set clear deadlines.

Delays in a key pilot project were attributed to system integration

issues, with completion expected by July. On social welfare initiatives, the Committee evaluated the Prime Minister's Ramadan Relief Package, which reached 2.7 million of the 3.5 million eligible families through CNIC-based biometric verification and digital wallet disbursements.

While the State Bank's regulatory framework was commended for secure fund transfers, the Committee raised concern over 1,100 unfilled vacancies at BISP due to the ongoing federal hiring freeze. The Ministry of Finance was urged to resolve the issue promptly to avoid disruption in services. The Committee also instructed the Ministry to provide a detailed report on all foreign-funded initiatives, despite there being no active USAID-linked projects at present.

Stressing the need for a national

poverty reduction framework, the members called for integration of federal, provincial, and NGO efforts while ensuring adherence to national security protocols. With less than 1,000 of 18,000 NGOs officially registered, the Committee called for enhanced oversight to prevent fund misuse.

On the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund's (PPAF) Memorandum of Association, recommendations were deferred pending judicial review, but a copy of the summary was ordered to be submitted to the Prime Minister's Office for Committee review. The meeting concluded with a consensus on establishing clear timelines, fostering collaboration across ministries, and observing judicial due process in all pending matters. The session was attended by members of the National Assembly, ministry officials.

1 killed, 8 wounded in clash

KABUL (Pajhwok): A man has been killed and four women and as many men have been injured as a result of a clash between two families in central Kapisa province, an official said on Tuesday. Police spokesman Abdul Fatah Faiz told Pajhwok the clash erupted over the division of a thoroughfare in Koh Band district. However, he said, intervention from security forces helped resolve the dispute between the families in Malan Khel Dara Nama village.

1,413 carats emeralds sold

PARAKH (Pajhwok): The Department of Mines and Petroleum in Panjsher has sold 1,413 carats of emerald for \$171,090, an official said on Tuesday. Mohammad Qasim Amir, director of the department, said more than 101 traders from Panjsher, Kabul, Kapisa, Parwan, Kandahar and Paktia provinces took part in the auction. He said the emeralds sold had been extracted from sites in Hisa-i-Awal district. Emerald mining in the province resumed in August after two years of suspension.

Asia is comparable to a living body composed of soil and water. The heart that beats inside the body is Afghanistan. The destruction of Afghanistan would be the destruction of Asia. And in its progress and prosperity lies the well-being of Asia. - Allama Iqbal

Baradar links tariffs on imports to quality guarantee

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs has said about 1,500 new factories were established and Afghanistan achieved self-sufficiency in 138 industrial and manufacturing sectors since the Islamic Emirate's return to power.

Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar was addressing a gathering marking the launch of the fourth national and international exhibition of the Industrial Week in Kabul.

The exhibition was opened today at the Afghanistan International Exhibition Center in Kabul.

Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar said they had witnessed countries strengthening their infrastructure, overcoming unemployment and finding good markets for their products through industrial revolution."

He added that the Industry Week was not just a symbolic title, but a

movement, change, and strong determination that Afghanistan must move from an import-based economy to a productive, export-based, and self-reliant economy.

According to him, with the return of the Islamic Emirate, the industry sector has made significant progress. So far, about 1,500 new factories have been established, employing nearly seventy thousand compatriots.

Mullah Baradar said that Afghanistan has currently achieved self-sufficiency in 138 industrial and manufacturing sectors.

"This achievement is not only an important step in overcoming unemployment, but is also of paramount importance for economic stability and strength".

According to him, the Islamic Emirate has prioritized the construction of industrial parks in various

provinces for the industrialization of the country, and the process of issuing land ownership certificates to industrialists will begin in the coming days.

He said that these industrial parks will not only provide an environment for production, but will also provide employment opportunities for tens of thousands of people.

Mullah Baradar said: "To support the private sector, the Islamic Emirate has increased customs tariffs on imported goods that are locally produced and can meet the needs of the countrymen; in addition, all Emirati institutions have been asked to give priority to domestic products and products in their purchases and procurement processes, even if their quality is somewhat lower than foreign products."

He also added that with the arrival of the Islamic Emirate, a good environ-

ment has been created for investment in the country; currently, domestic and foreign investors have practically invested in electricity, mining, agriculture, industry, transport, infrastructure, communications, health and many other sectors, and many facilities have been created for them in this regard.

Addressing the industrialists, Mullah Baradar said: "You must guarantee the quality, price, and quantity of your products. I promise you from this platform that in order to support domestic production, we will increase the tariff on imported goods to the level of self-sufficiency."

Deputy Prime Minister for Administration Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi also addressing the gathering, saying the Islamic Emirate fully supported domestic production.

Hanafi added that in order to support domestic

production, tariffs have been imposed on imported goods that are also produced domestically.

He also expressed his hope for further growth of Afghanistan's industry.

Minister of Industry and Commerce Nooruddin Azizi said that all Afghan products were of high quality and no one should consider them to be of low quality.

Azizi added that currently, the level of production in the country has increased and many common goods that used to be imported are now produced domestically. He emphasized that an industrial revolution will take place in Afghanistan.

The head of the Chamber of Industries and Mines, Sherbaz Kaminzada, said that the country's industrialists will offer domestic products to compatriots at a 25 percent discount in the near future.



According to him, the development of industry is one of the priorities of the Islamic Emirate, and the country's industry has grown significantly since the Islamic Emirate regained power.

The fourth national and

international exhibition of the Industry Week was organized to introduce the capabilities, capacities and achievements of the country's national industry, where hundreds of domestic companies will showcase their industrial and

agricultural products in food, medicine, dairy, construction materials, handicrafts, carpets, plastics, battery manufacturing, iron and steel, and dozens of other fields. The exhibition will continue for a week.

DABS holds meeting on TAP power project



KABUL (Pajhwok): Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) says it held a technical meeting regarding the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) electricity transmission project.

According to reports, the TAP project will transfer 1,000 megawatts of electricity from Turkmenistan to Pakistan via Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is expected to earn 100 million US dollars annually in electricity transit fees paid by Pakistan.

The project agreement was originally signed in 2015 between the leaders of Afghanistan, Turkmenistan

and Pakistan in Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan.

A statement from DABS noted the technical meeting was attended by DABS leadership, as well as representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Economy, Industry and Commerce and Water and Energy.

Discussions focused on the electricity transfer from Turkmenistan to Pakistan through Afghanistan.

Chief Executive Officer of DABS Dr. Abdul Bari Omar described TAP as a vital regional project, emphasising the importance of national unity and

transparency in all key national projects.

He stressed the need for well-coordinated decision-making and implementation efforts.

The statement added the meeting involved a comprehensive review of previous TAP agreements, clarification of the project route map, identification of necessary facilitation for project implementation and planning for future meetings.

A joint committee, led by DABS, has been formed to oversee this project in accordance with a decision by the Office of the Prime Minister.

Cabinet okays plan to regulate street vendors

KABUL (Pajhwok): The cabinet approved the plan to regulate street vendors and considered it worthy of approval after the Islamic Emirate leadership announced a 40% fee reduction.

In a statement, spokesman for the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Zabihullah Mujahid said the 21st cabinet meeting was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Al-Haj Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund.

In this meeting, important economic, social, and cultural issues were discussed and decisions were made, the statement added.

"The meeting approved the plan to organize vendors and considered it acceptable after the PM approved a 40 percent fee discount".

According to the statement, the cabinet meeting also approved the report of the Economic Zones Evaluation Committee and assigned the Ministry of Industry and Commerce to coordinate and advance the results of this report with the relevant ministries.

Taliban arrest religious scholar

KABUL (Amu TV): Taliban intelligence forces have detained a religious scholar in Kabul, according to local sources familiar with the matter.

Sirajuddin Nabil, a religious scholar, was arrested on Sunday in the Qala-e-Fathullah area of Kabul. The reason for his detention remains unclear. Taliban have not issued a statement regarding the case.

The arrest comes amid growing concerns over the Taliban's treatment of religious figures perceived as ideologically or politically independent. Earlier this week, Taliban authorities in Helmand sentenced another cleric, Bashir Ahmad Hanafi, to eight months in prison and banned him from international travel for two years.

Last week, Taliban detained Abdul Qadir Qanit, a religious scholar, who has been arrested for the fourth time. Observers say the recent detentions may signal a broader crackdown on dissenting or non-aligned religious voices within Afghanistan.

Afghan migrants in Iran: Deportation process intensifies

KABUL (TOLONews): A number of Afghan migrants in Iran have once again expressed concern over the "intensification of forced deportations" of Afghan citizens from the country.

They have called on the host country and the caretaker government of Afghanistan to address the demands of migrants and halt the deportation process.

Safar Barz, an Afghan migrant in Iran, told TOLONews: "Unfortunately, the Iranian government has made the deporta-

tion process very rapid and severe, and it does not make a clear distinction between those who have legal documents and those who are undocumented."

Enayat Alokozai, another Afghan migrant in Iran, said: "The forced deportation of Afghan migrants by the Iranian government has intensified once again. The Iranian government is

determined to expel all Afghan migrants, even though they have repeatedly appealed to international organizations and the Isla-

mic Emirate government to pressure Iran to stop the deportations. However, it seems these efforts have been ineffective."

Some activists in the field of migrant rights emphasize the need for dialogue between the caretaker government and the host country to resolve the challenges faced by Afghan migrants in Iran.

Juma Khan Pouya, a migrant rights activist, told TOLONews: "Host governments must be compelled, based on international doc-

uments, to refrain from deporting individuals at risk and from forcibly deporting all migrants."

Nazar Nazari, another activist in the field, said: "There is a need for a series of talks between Iran and Afghanistan to reach a lasting solution to this crisis. These talks must be conducted in a manner that satisfies both sides."

Previously, UN reported that since 2023, Iran and Pakistan have forcibly repatriated more than three million Afghan migrants.

Kabul Municipality starts work on overpass project in Baraki

KABUL (TOLONews): The Kabul Municipality has announced the initiation of preliminary construction work for a motor overpass at Baraki Square, one of the most congested areas of the capital.

Nematullah Barakzai, a representative of the Kabul Municipality, stated that the overpass will be completed within two years at an estimated cost of around 1.5 billion afghani.

Barakzai said: "One section of this overpass will

connect the Naderia High School area to the Traffic Square. It will be approximately 470 meters long, supported by around 525 pillars, and have a height of about 5.5 meters. The other section will connect the Deh Bagh area to the Parwan-e-Du locality, measuring approximately 700 meters in length, with 400 pillars and a similar height of about 5.5 meters."

Several residents of the capital praised the launch

of such projects and also voiced their expectations from the Kabul Municipality.

Ghausuddin, a resident of Kabul, told TOLONews: "Once the overpass is built, it will create great convenience for citizens. This project will beautify the area and reduce traffic congestion."

Dadullah, another Kabul resident, said: "Constructing the overpass is a very good initiative. It will help people reach their

workplaces faster. However, the construction work should proceed quickly."

Meanwhile, another important project is also underway in central Kabul. Officials from the Kabul Municipality have reported the commencement of earthwork on the road from Joy-e-Shir to the Kabul underground.

The road will be 783 meters long and 32 meters wide and is being built at a cost of 62 million Afghani.

Families get help to start businesses

GARDEZ (Pajhwok): The Department of Labour and Social Affairs says 240 impoverished families have been helped to set up small businesses in southeastern Paktia province.

Qari Mohammad Rahim Nasrat, director of the department, told a gathering the families were given pushcarts and items needed for tailoring, embroidery and poultry farms.

He added essential equipment had been distributed to families in Gardez, the provincial capital, as well as the Syed Karam, Ahmad Aha, Ahmadkhel, Wazi Zadrar and Zurmat districts.

He explained: "Among the 240 families, 41 were beggars identified by a special committee. The remaining families include those headed by persons with disabilities, widows or extremely poor individuals."

The initiative worth nearly 2.8 million afghanis



was funded by the Equality for Peace and Development Organisation (EPDO), the official added.

Meanwhile, Director of Economy Maulavi Anwar Rashid said several other organisations had pledged to implement similar projects for vulnerable families during the current year.

He urged beneficiaries

to make good use of the support to improve their families' economic conditions.

Ahmad Gul, who is disabled in one arm and is the sole supporter of a six-member household, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "I'm unable to work, but my wife has now been helped with a tailoring business, which will help res-

olve our livelihood issue."

Zardad, a resident of Syed Karam district, said such small businesses could significantly help many families in meeting their basic needs.

He called on the relevant departments and aid agencies to continue such initiatives and ensure support for more deserving families.

Taliban flog 31 people in 5 days

KABUL (Amu TV): Afghan Taliban have publicly flogged at least thirty one people, including two women, over the past five days in four provinces, according to statements released by the Taliban-run Supreme Court.

The punishments, carried out between May 22 and May 26, took place in the provinces of Kabul, Laghman, Paktia, and Badakhshan.

The individuals were accused of offenses including adultery, fleeing from home, aiding in escape, theft and same-sex relations, the court said. Each person received between 10 and 39 lashes and was sentenced to prison terms ranging from seven months to three years.

The floggings are part of a broader pattern. From April 20 to May 20, the Taliban flogged at least 81 people, including 15 women, in public across more than 14 provinces.

Human rights organizations have condemned the continued use of corporal punishment by the Taliban, calling it a violation of international law and a breach of basic human dignity.

Afghan citizens, too, have voiced outrage, describing the punishments as "cruel and inhumane."

Taliban have defended the floggings, claiming they are legal under their interpretation of Islamic law.

Those punished were accused of offenses ranging from theft and illicit relationships to drug-related crimes and "immoral conduct."

In addition to floggings, Taliban carried out four executions in the provinces of Farah, Nimruz and Badghis in April under the principle of qisas, or retributive justice — a move that also sparked widespread international criticism.

Uterine TB: Hidden threat to Afghan women

KABUL (Pajhwok): For many, tuberculosis (TB) is considered solely a lung disease. However, a gynaecologist warns this illness can also affect the uterus and may be a hidden cause of infertility, recurrent miscarriages and menstrual disorders in women.

Dr Najm-ul-Sama Shafajo, head of the Afghan Gynaecologists Association, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "TB can affect all parts of the body, including the uterus... It can directly infect the uterus."

According to her, symptoms may be mild or unclear, but the most common signs include

menstrual irregularities, cessation of menstruation, abnormal bleeding, infertility, miscarriages and anaemia.

She added: "If a woman has uterine TB, it can block her fallopian tubes. If the bacteria reach the ovaries, they can damage the ovarian tissue or reduce egg production."

She continued: "We see women who are very young — for example, 19 or 20 years old — with a zero egg count. We are shocked to see such results in someone so young. When we conduct tests, we find they have uterine TB or genital TB."

The bacteria are often trans-

mitted through the consumption of dairy products.

Dr Shafajo added the only effective way to combat the disease was by strengthening the immune system, stating: "When the immune system is strong, no microbe — including uterine TB — can infect you."

She explained the patient's history-taking process often revealed the woman had been unable to conceive or had experienced multiple miscarriages.

Despite undergoing extensive treatment, she remains unable to become pregnant — with uterine TB frequently being the root cause.

Dr Shafajo emphasised the diagnosis and treatment of the disease were available in Afghanistan, eliminating the need for patients to seek care abroad.

Regarding diagnostic procedures, she said samples such as blood or sputum were cultured, and the uterine tubes examined. The results are then evaluated accordingly.

She said: "Typically, among the women who visit us — often due to infertility or recurrent miscarriages — we conduct tests. Out of 10-12 patients tested daily, 4-5 test positive for uterine TB."

According to Dr Shafajo, women diagnosed with this disease can conceive and bear children following appropriate treatment.

For prevention, she advised boosting the immune system to reduce the risk of contracting such illnesses.

She stressed the importance of childhood vaccinations, including the TB vaccine, and maintaining proper hygiene when consuming dairy products, especially milk.

Treatment duration varies, depending on the severity of the infection and may take three to six months. In some cases, up to

12 months or even two years may be needed. Patients often experience weight loss during treatment but typically regain it after recovery.

Dr Shafajo advised patients to stay well-hydrated and consume plenty of vegetables and fruits during their treatment.

Patients share experiences

Frozan Stanakzai, a 35-year-old resident of Kabul, told Pajhwok she had been trying to conceive for three years and was recently diagnosed with uterine TB.

Having suffered from severe menstrual pain and irregular periods, she was unable to

become pregnant despite extensive treatment over the past three years. Her condition remained undiagnosed until recently.

Meanwhile, Mohammadullah Hamidi, who brought his wife to Kabul from Faryab province for treatment, said that although they have been married for two years, they still have no children.

He noted they had spent a considerable amount of money on treatment, but her wife's uterine TB was diagnosed after a long time.

He expressed hope his spouse would recover and would be able to conceive.

IHC judges’ transfer case: AGP conclude arguments

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court’s constitutional bench on Tuesday adjourned the hearing of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges’ transfer and seniority case until May 29. During the proceedings, Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan concluded his arguments pleading the court to dismiss the petitions challenging the judges’ transfers and declare other related petitions as inadmissible. The five-member bench, headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, heard the petitions filed against the transfer and seniority of judges at the IHC. Justice Mazhar observed that the counsels representing the petitioner judges had withheld certain key facts from the court, failing to mention details regarding their representations and the decisions made in response.

The Attorney General argued that the transferred judges were not newly appointed and therefore did not require taking a fresh oath. He referenced previous Supreme Court judgments stating that seniority is determined from the date of appointment. Responding to a query from Justice Shakeel Ahmed, the Attorney General clarified that the explanation regarding the oath was issued by the Law Secretary to remove ambiguity in the notification issued after approval of the advice.

The Attorney General maintained that the seniority of transferred judges was determined by then IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq, who

exercised full discretion in the matter. No objections were raised by the chief justices or registrars of the four high courts regarding the transfer of judges. In response to further queries, the Attorney General stated that the transferred judges had requested their seniority to be determined based on whether they were required to take a fresh oath. He also emphasized that Article 200 of the Constitution clearly outlines the procedure for judicial transfers and grants this authority to the judiciary, not the executive.

Justice Naehm Akhtar Afghan questioned the principle behind selecting Justice Sarfraz Dogar for transfer, noting that although he was 15th in seniority at the Lahore High Court, he became the most senior judge at the IHC after transfer. Justice Panhwar questioned whether the IHC chief justice was authorized to determine seniority of judges transferred from other high courts. The Attorney General responded that since the judges had already been transferred to the IHC, the chief justice of that court held the authority.

Justice Panhwar noted that it still needed to be determined whether the transferred judges were to be considered part of the IHC or their original courts. Justice Shakeel Ahmed asked the Attorney General to assist the court on three critical questions: If the transfers were permanent, were they made under Article 175A of the Constitution? Who would evaluate the performance of additional judges transferred from the Balochistan

High Court — the chief justice of BHC or IHC? And what impact did the transfers have on the IHC’s administrative committee, considering seniority?

The Attorney General argued that Article 175A, introduced through the 18th Amendment, did not repeal Article 200, thus judicial transfers under the latter remain valid. Justice Shakeel Ahmed remarked that Article 200 stipulates transfers must be in the public interest. The Attorney General said that temporary transfers entitled judges to additional allowances, while permanent transfers did not. Furthermore, no objections were raised by the judges regarding the nature of their transfers, and their consent was obtained.

The bench directed submission of minutes from Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) meetings held on January 17 and February 10. The Attorney General explained that the January meeting approved the appointment of two additional judges to the IHC, while the February meeting concerned the elevation of Justice Aamer Farooq to the Supreme Court. Justice Afghan asked whether Justice Dogar was included in the IHC list during the February meeting. The Attorney General confirmed his inclusion but said his name was not discussed. The court concluded proceedings for the day, with the constitutional bench adjourning the case until May 29. The petitioners’ counsels are expected to present their rebuttal arguments at the next hearing.

Pakistani team will travel to US

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: A high-level Pakistani diplomatic team led by former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto will travel to the US to expose the false Indian war narrative.

The delegation, formed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, will depart for the United States on June 2 under the leadership of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Important meetings have been scheduled in New York, where the Pakistani delegation will meet with the United Nations Secretary-General.

Following the New York visit, the diplomatic team will travel to Washington, where it is set to hold meetings with senior officials from the Trump administration. The Pakistani delegation will brief US officials on India’s false war narrative and the ongoing Indian atrocities in Kashmir. Members of the UN Security Council will also be informed about India’s misleading stance.

Armed Forces reaffirm resolve on Youm-e-Takbeer

PESHAWAR: The Pesh-RAWALPINDI:On the 27th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer, the Armed Forces of Pakistan, along with the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Services Chiefs, extend heartfelt felicitations to the people of Pakistan.

Youm-e-Takbeer commemorates the momentous occasion in 1998 when Pakistan emerged as a nuclear power—restoring the strategic balance in South Asia and asserting its sovereign right to self-defence. This historic achievement epitomizes the nation’s resolve, unity, and unwavering pursuit of a dignified and peaceful existence.Pakistan’s strategic capability is a national trust, reflecting the collective aspirations of its people. The commemoration of Youm-e-Takbeer is a tribute to the foresight of visionary leadership, the brilliance of our scientists and engineers, and the countless contributions of all those who rendered Pakistan’s defence unassailable.

This day underscores Pakistan’s steadfast commitment to preserving its sovereignty and territorial integrity. It affirms our doctrine of credible minimum deterrence, rooted in the principle of maintaining peace and strategic stability in the region.The Armed Forces of Pakistan reiterate their unflinching resolve to defend the motherland against all threats across the full spectrum of conflict. As responsible custodians of the nation’s strategic assets, we reaffirm that our nuclear capability remains solely for defensive purposes and stands as a guarantor of peace.Let this day renew our collective pledge to remain vigilant, united, and resolute in our commitment to the security, progress, and prosperity of our beloved homeland.

Russia seizes villages in Ukraine, drone attacks ease

KYIV (Reuters): Russian forces have captured four villages in Ukraine’s north-eastern Sumy region, the local governor said, the latest battlefield setback for Kyiv as it seeks to hold territory and avoid handing Moscow the advantage in any peace talks.

The Russian advances follow some of the biggest drone and missile attacks on Ukraine since the full-scale war began in early 2022, although the level dropped markedly overnight from Monday to Tuesday. Ukraine has also fired dozens of long-range drones into Russia in recent days, forcing some Moscow airports to close temporarily.

Ukrainian forces used Sumy region as a launch pad to seize a chunk of Russia’s neighbouring Kursk region last year before being largely driven out by April. The area has been pounded for months by Russian guided bomb attacks and other strikes. "The enemy is continuing attempts to advance with the aim of setting up a so-called 'buffer zone'," Sumy Governor Oleh Hryhorov wrote on Facebook.

He said the villages of Novenke, Basivka, Veselivka and Zhuravka had been occupied, adding that residents had long been

evacuated. Russia’s Defence Ministry said on Monday it had taken the nearby village of Bilovody, implying a further advance in the more than three-year war.

Though Russia’s offensive activity is concentrated in the eastern Donetsk region, Moscow’s inroads into northeastern Ukraine show how it is stretching Kyiv’s forces on multiple fronts.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy repeatedly warned that Russia is preparing new offensives against Sumy as well as the northeastern Kharkiv and southeastern Zaporizhzhia regions.

"There is much evidence that they are preparing new offensive operations. Russia is counting on further war," he said on Monday, without elaborating. Zelenskyy has accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of dragging his feet over peace talks, after representatives from the warring parties met in person earlier in May for the first time in three years.

Russia launched an unprecedented drone barrage against Ukraine at the end of last week, firing more than 900 drones as well as missiles over three nights, prompting US President Donald Trump to label Putin as "crazy".

Syria, Israel in direct talks focused on security

DAMASCUS (Reuters): Israel and Syria are in direct contact and have in recent weeks held face-to-face meetings aimed at calming tensions and preventing conflict in the border region between the two longtime foes, five people familiar with the matter said.

The contacts mark a significant development in ties between states that have been on opposite sides of conflict in the Middle East for decades, as the US encourages the new Islamist rulers in Damascus to establish relations with Israel and Israel eases its bombardment of Syria. They also build on back-channel talks via intermediaries since Islamist rebels Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham toppled Syrian strongman Bashar Assad in December, said two Syrian and two Western sources, as well as a regional intelligence source familiar with the matter.

The sources spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject for two nations with no official ties and a history of enmity. The direct talks and their scope have not been previously reported. On the Syrian side, the sources said contacts have been led by senior security official Ahmad Al-Dalati, who was appointed governor of the province of Quneitra, which borders the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, after the fall of Assad. Earlier this week, Dalati was also put in charge of

security in the southern province of Sweida, home to Syria’s Druze minority.

Reuters could not determine who participated on Israel’s side, though two of the sources said they were security officials. Three of the sources said there had been several rounds of in-person meetings in the border region, including in territory controlled by Israel. Israel’s foreign ministry and Syrian officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Earlier this month, Syrian interim president Ahmed Al-Sharaa confirmed indirect talks with Israel that he said were aimed at calming tensions, a striking admission that followed a Reuters report that the UAE was mediating such talks. Israel has occupied the Syrian Golan Heights since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and took more territory in the aftermath of Assad’s ouster in December, citing lingering concerns over the extremist past of the country’s new rulers.

It has also waged a campaign of aerial bombardment that destroyed much of the country’s military infrastructure, while at the same time lobbying Washington to keep the country weak and decentralized. But the bombing and the criticism have subsided in recent weeks. On May 14, a meeting between US President Donald Trump and Sharaa in Riyadh upended decades of US Syria policy, and signalled to Israel’s right-wing

government that it should work to reach understandings with Sharaa. The regional intelligence source described Trump’s engagement with Sharaa as a pivotal part of a realignment in US policy that upset Israel’s post-Assad strategy of exploiting Syria’s fragmentation.

The relative calm in May has also seen a reduction in tensions around Sweida, which saw days of bloody clashes between Druze armed factions, some of which enjoy Israeli backing, and Sunni Muslim fighters last month. Amid the violence, Israel had launched a series of airstrikes, including one just outside the presidential palace overlooking Damascus, which it framed as a warning over threats against the Druze, an offshoot of Islam with adherents in Syria, Lebanon and Israel.

While the direct talks are currently focused on joint security, such as preventing conflict and reducing Israeli incursions into Syrian border villages, two of the sources said they may help pave the way for broader political understandings. "For now, they are about peace, as in the absence of war, rather than normalization," said the person familiar with backchannel talks.

Trump indicated after meeting Sharaa that the Syrian leader was willing to eventually normalize ties with Israel, while adding that it would take some time.



GAZA: A general view showing destruction in the area after heavy strikes of Israel.

Saif hails hearing of Imran’s case

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, stated that the decision to schedule the hearing of Imran Khan’s cases on June 5 is a welcome development. He expressed hope that Imran Khan would be honorably acquitted from all cases and released.

In a statement issued after a protest outside the Islamabad High Court, Barrister Dr. Saif said that the 26th Constitutional Amendment has paralyzed the judicial system. He emphasized that the chains of this amendment must be broken to ensure immediate justice for Imran Khan. He further said that Imran Khan’s release is not only essential in the fight against terrorism but also in the context of ongoing tensions with India, as Imran Khan is the most popular leader in the country and the only one capable of uniting the nation.

He reiterated that justice delayed is indeed justice denied. The unnecessary delays in the hearings indicate that these cases are baseless and fabricated. If there were any truth in them, the hearings would not have been postponed. Barrister Dr. Saif further claimed that the real motive behind the delays is to keep Imran Khan imprisoned.

He said that Imran Khan is a constant source of pressure on the fake government, and they fear their downfall upon his release, which is why they are preventing it.

He added that Imran Khan is the most popular leader in the country. If he cannot get justice, how can an ordinary citizen expect it? Imran Khan has served as the Prime Minister of Pakistan, and the treatment being meted out to him is unacceptable and goes against the principles of justice. Barrister Dr. Saif also said that even in jail, Imran Khan is not being provided with the facilities he is entitled to. The fake government is using every tactic to break him, but Imran Khan is not someone who can be broken, as he is fighting not for personal gain but for the nation’s cause. He concluded by saying that despite all the tactics used by the government, Imran Khan is only becoming stronger.

IHC disposes of KP CM’s contempt plea

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday disposed of the contempt plea of Chief Minister KP Ali Amin Gandapur after he was allowed to meet PTI founder in jail.

Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir heard the case filed by Gandapur. During the hearing of the petition, lawyer Raja Zahoor-ul-Hassan Advocate said that the meeting had taken place. An order should be issued to allow the meeting as per the schedule. As the budget will be announced soon, so meetings are needed for the consultations, he said.

Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir told the jail authorities that he is the Chief Minister and has many matters to deal with. He should be allowed to meet.

ASJ grants pre-arrest bail to 3 PPP leaders

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Additional Session Judge (ASJ) Asmat Ullah Wazir granted interim pre-arrest bail to three persons including Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) provincial president Syed Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha, former provincial minister Ziaullah Afridi, and Shah Zulqarnain in a case related to a protest in Assembly Chowk and allegedly targeting PTI’s camp, on Tuesday.

The three politicians were accused of leading a protest in Assembly Chowk and targeting PTI’s camp. The counsel including Gohar Rehman, Lajbar Khan and Shakeel Gillani advocates argued that the petitioners were peaceful protesters and that the police had unjustly charged them with batons on the instructions of the provincial government. The court granted interim pre-arrest bail to the three politicians after hearing initial arguments and sought the case record.

PPP condemns FIR against workers, will register counter-FIR: Provincial president PPP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Syed Mohammad Ali Shah has condemned the registration of FIR against him and

leadership for staging a peaceful protest against corruption, lawlessness and bad governance in the province.

Addressing a news conference here at People’s Secretariat on Tuesday, he said that he has obtained bail before arrest (BBA) in the case registered against him and other party leaders for the peaceful protest staged on Monday. Besides, former federal minister Najmuddin Khan, PPP parliamentary leader in KP Assembly Ahmad Karim Kundi, MPA Arbab Zarak Khan, Omar Khitab, ex.MPA Malik Tehmash Khan and Tahir Abbas, other party leaders were also present on the occasion.

The provincial chief PPP said that the rally was completely peaceful and even not a single flower pot was broken by the party workers. Therefore, the use of force against them was totally unjustified and uncalled for. He said that the tear gas shells were fired by people in plain clothes in the same manner the PTI workers are using against the police force in their protests. He said that they are consultant legal experts to file a counter FIR and will nominate Chief Minister Ali Amin

Gandapur as main accused in it.

Syed Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha said that the programme of the protest against the provincial government was announced 20-25 days ago and its purpose was to protest the corruption scams of the PTI government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He was thankful to all PPP leaders and workers for massive participation in the protest demonstration from across the province. He said that if Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur is thinking that he and his cabinet members will indulge in corruption and make billions of rupees in solarization, education and health sector and they will remain silent spectators, then he is living in the paradise of fools.

He said that PPP has decided to stage protest against corruption and corrupt practices and will no stone unturned in exposing the corruption of the provincial government and vowed to raise the issue on all forums. He announced that their protest against corruption, lawlessness and bad governance under ‘Save KP’ Campaign will continue and will be extended to district and tehsil level across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Israeli forces raid foreign exchange shops; one dead

WEST BANK: Israeli forces have raided money exchanges across the occupied West Bank, using live fire and tear gas as they stormed the city of Nablus, killing at least one Palestinian and wounding more than 30. Exchange shops in the cities of Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron Arrabeh, el-Bireh, Bethlehem, Jenin and Tubas were attacked on Tuesday, residents said.

In the northern city of Nablus, Israeli soldiers raided a foreign exchange belonging to the Al-Khaleej company and a gold store, according to local media reports. They also fired smoke bombs in the centre of Jenin, and streets were closed in Tubas and Bethlehem in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Ramallah-based Ministry of Health said one man was killed and eight injured by live ammunition during a raid in Nablus.

The Palestine Red Crescent Society said it treated 20 people for tear gas inhalation and three injured by rubber bullets. The raids on foreign exchanges came as Israel continued its intensified military campaign in Gaza, killing more than 54,000 Palestinians since the war began on October 7, 2023, as tens of thousands of people starve in the besieged enclave.

Israeli Army Radio on Tuesday said Israel conducted the raids on foreign exchanges on suspicions that the shops supported “terrorism”. The radio station also said the operation resulted in the confiscation of large amounts of money designated for “terrorism infrastructure” in the West Bank. “Israeli forces are taking action against Al-Khaleej

Exchange Company due to its connections with terrorist organisations,” a leaflet left by

Israeli forces at the company’s Ramallah location read.

Al Jazeera’s Hamdah Salhut said Israeli authorities have not released an official statement yet but an official talked to the Israeli media about the raids. “This official said earlier that Israel ‘believes’ – not that it has any evidence or proof – but ‘believes’ that these cash exchange places are funnelling money to what they call terror organisations,” said Salhut, who was reporting from Amman, Jordan, because Israel has banned Al Jazeera from reporting from Israel and the West Bank.

“The people who own these shops say they were not given any sort of proof by the Israeli military,” she added. Salhut said it was the fourth time such raids have taken place since the start of the Israeli genocide in Gaza. — Aljazeera

4 dead, many injured

(Continued from Page 1)

Authorities have shut down the Neelum Highway between Barian and Mirpura due to safety concerns. Residents have been urged to stay put and avoid risky area as emergency services are working round the clock to rescue those caught in the floodwaters.

Meanwhile, a powerful windstorm accompanied by rain swept across various parts of the country, including the federal capital, on Tuesday afternoon, causing widespread disruption and raising safety concerns among citizens.

In Islamabad, strong winds persisted for an extended period, toppling trees and billboards. The intense weather conditions prompted motorists to take shelter under bridges to protect their vehicles from a possible hailstorm. Motorcyclists also sought refuge under flyovers to shield themselves from the strong gusts.

A family stranded inside a popular shopping mall in

the federal capital after completing their Eid ul Adha shopping described the situation as tense. “There was a panic among visitors who were hesitant to leave the mall, fearing that a billboard or tree might fall on their car while on their way back home,” they said. “We were also expecting a hailstorm after the intense windstorm, but thankfully, it didn’t happen”, they added.

Another resident, who was driving through Blue Area when the storm struck, shared a similar account. “The wind was so strong it shook the car. I had to wait under a flyover until things settled down,” he recalled. The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) had earlier issued a weather advisory forecasting windstorms and rain-thunderstorms in upper and central parts of the country from May 27 to 31, with occasional intervals.

According to the PMD, moist currents were continuously penetrating the upper and central regions,

and a westerly wave was expected to enter the upper parts of the country on May 28. As a result, windstorms, rain, and isolated heavy falls with possible hailstorms were anticipated in a wide range of areas, including Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Peshawar, Swat, and several other cities and districts across Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan.

The advisory warned that windstorms, dust-thunderstorms, hailstorms, and lightning may damage loose structures such as electric poles, trees, vehicles, and solar panels. The farmers have been advised to plan their agricultural activities accordingly, while the general public, travelers, and tourists are urged to take precautionary measures during this period. The PMD has also directed all relevant authorities to remain on high alert and take necessary steps to prevent any untoward incidents.