

PTA blocks Indian channels

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has blocked 16 Indian YouTube news channels, 31 YouTube video links, and 32 websites for disseminating false information and anti-Pakistan propaganda. This action has been taken in light of the prevailing regional situation to safeguard national security and protect Pakistan's digital ecosystem, said a news release.



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Crushing blow makes India realize Pakistan's preparedness, capabilities: PM



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday while stressing upon a display of unity in the aftermath of India's previous night gutless attack, said that a crushing blow delivered by the country's armed forces had made India realize the preparedness and capabilities of Pakistan.

Addressing a session of the National Assembly, the prime minister said in the darkness of night, India tried to infiltrate into Pakistan like it did in the past, but with the grace of Allah Almighty and with the prayers and support of the nation, the brave forces had given them a befitting reply.

In that cowardly attack, a number of people had lost their lives; including women and children.

The prime minister said that Pakistan had reports about an aerial attack by Rafale combat planes and the entire house and 240 million people of the country should feel pride that its armed forces were ready to counter the attack and destroyed their intruding combat planes.

The prime minister paid tribute to Air Chief Zaheer Ahmed Babar Sidhu, on behalf of the entire nation and the parliament for his vigilance and inspiring leadership.

He said last night, they had information about the nefarious designs of India who tried to carry out attacks with 80 warplanes, at six different places inside Pakistan, including in AJK, Bahawalpur, Shakargarh, and Sialkot, but Pakistan's eagles shot down five planes including three Rafale planes; one of which fell down in Bhatanda, besides a number of drones.

"The response left the enemy in disarray and make them realized the power, prowess and strength of Pakistan as a nuclear state, and it has made them sleepless. Our armed forces are battle-hardened force," he said.

He said their eagles were ready and had also locked communication system of the Indian war planes who had to return back to Srinagar.

The prime minister said the entire nation deserved congratulations on the great victory as their armed forces with their

NSC calls Indian aggression "act of war"

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The National Security Committee on Wednesday unequivocally condemning the blatant violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity by India, authorized the Pakistan armed forces to take corresponding actions to avenge the loss of innocent civilians in the Indian strikes.

"In consonance with Article-51 of the UN Charter, Pakistan reserves the right to respond, in self-defence, at a time, place, and manner of its choosing to avenge the loss of innocent Pakistani lives and blatant violation of its sovereignty. The Armed Forces of Pakistan have duly been authorized to undertake corresponding actions in this regard," according to a press release issued following the meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The forum offered Fateha for the souls of the innocent civilians martyred in India's strikes, extended its heartfelt condolences to the near ones of the martyrs and wished a speedy recovery to the injured.

The NSC deliberated upon the grave developments arising out of India's unprovoked, cowardly and unlawful "act of war."

The NSC unequivocally condemned these illegal acts as blatant violations of Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which manifestly constituted acts of war under international law. The committee observed that the deliberate targeting of civilians, including innocent women and children, by the Indian military constituted a heinous and shameful crime, that was in violation of all norms of human behaviour and the provisions of international law."

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professionalism and patriotism, acted in unison, after consultations and planning. The number of shot down Indian places could have been swelled.

The prime minister invited all the parties including main opposition PTI legislators to fully support their efforts in making Pakistan a great and invincible by showing unity.

He said that he was ready to sit with the opposition leaders in their chamber.

The prime minister said it was an opportunity to tell the world that they were one which was the only way to making Pakistan a great one among the comity of nations.

On April 22, in Pahalgam, he said, an incident took place in Jammu and Kashmir which had been under illegal occupation of India, but India, within a short period of ten minutes, registered FIR. The Indian media started false allegations against Pakistan and tried to misguide the world. On the other hand, the prime minister said, Pakistan had irrefutable evidences about India's involvement in Balochistan train hijack incident, fully backing terrorist organizations of BLA and TTP.

In the incident, a number of innocent people lost their lives while others were injured. The SSG unit with its professional skills saved innocent people and

took them to safe places.

"India did not condemn this incident but made a mockery of it which would be remembered in the history with repugnant words," he added.

The prime minister further apprised that he held conversations with a number of the global leaders over the escalating situation. In Kakul, he had openly stated that Pakistan had no relation with the incident and offered for an international probe commission to investigate the issue in a transparent and credible way, he said, adding but India had not accepted its offer.

The prime minister suggested adoption of a resolution by the national assembly to acknowledge



Pakistan shoots down five Indian jets

F.P. Report

LAHORE : Pakistan armed forces gave befitting response to the Indian strikes and shot down five fighter jets of the enemy of peace. According to security sources, the Pakistani Air Force is responding forcefully to Indian aggression. Sources have further stated that all Pakistan Air Force aircraft are safe. Two civilians were martyred and 12 civilians injured in Indian missile attacks. The civilians were martyred in Kotli. DG ISPR says that attacks were carried out in the darkness of night in Ahmedpur Sharqia, Kotli, Muzaffarabad, Bagh, and Muridke. According to the DG ISPR, India attacked from its airspace, and a strong response is being given to India's cowardly attack. A bright light covered the sky before the explosion in Bahawalpur. Sources say that the sound of an explosion was heard in Muzaffarabad, while the sound of an explosion was also heard in Bahawalpur. According to sources, there is a complete blackout in Muzaffarabad. The DG ISPR further said that India also targeted the Subhan Allah Mosque in Bahawalpur. In a cowardly attack, civilians were targeted in the mosque. Pakistan has started retaliating, Pakistan will give a befitting reply at the right time. After the cowardly strikes by India, Pakistan has closed its airspace and cancelled all flights. According to aviation sources, a regular NOTAM was also issued, closing the airspace for 48 hours. Aviation sources further said that flight operations from Islamabad International Airport have been suspended until further notice, while flight operations at Lahore Airport have also been suspended. More than 25 flights were cancelled, including to Qatar, Dubai, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Riyadh. Indian missiles hit three places inside Pakistan, said Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) DG Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry.

the services of the military leadership in the defence of the country.

Upon prime minister's request, the house also prayed for the high ranks

of those shaheeds in Jannah who lost their lives in the Indian attack.

Funeral of 7-year old martyred offered



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The funeral prayer for seven-year-old Irtaza Abbas Turi, son of Lieutenant Colonel Zaheer Abbas Turi, who was martyred in Dawarandi, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, due to unprovoked Indian cross-border aggression, was solemnly held today in Islamabad.

The ceremony was attended by the Honourable President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif; Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign

Minister, Senator Ishaq Dar; Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif; Information Minister; General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS); Admiral Naveed Ashraf, Chief of Naval Staff; along with a large number of senior serving and retired military officers, government & civilian officials, soldiers, and relatives of the martyr.

Following the funeral prayers, the Prime Minister condemned India's unprovoked aggression, stating that the deliberate targeting of innocent civilians,

including children, women, and the elderly, is a reprehensible act of cowardice. He emphasized that such reckless acts reflect the aggressive and hubristic mindset of the Indian government, posing a grave threat to regional and global peace.

The President & the Prime Minister affirmed that the valiant Armed Forces of Pakistan are resolutely confronting Indian forces across all fronts, delivering a strong and uncompromising response. They reiterated that these blatant violations of international law and humanitarian norms will be met with decisive action.

The President & the Prime Minister prayed, "May Allah grant eternal peace to the departed souls of this cruel act of aggression by India and bestow strength upon their families to bear this irreparable loss. Ameen."

Naqvi briefs US envoy on Post-attack situation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held an important meeting with the acting Ambassador of the United States, Natalie Baker, to discuss the evolving regional situation following India's recent attack.

The meeting took place in Islamabad on Wednesday and was attended by U.S. Political Counselor Zack Harkinrider and Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry.

During the meeting, Minister Naqvi gave a comprehensive briefing to the U.S. delegation on the aftermath of the Indian aggression, expressing Pakistan's serious concerns over the incident and its implications for regional peace. "India has put the peace and stability of South Asia at stake," said Mohsin Naqvi.

India strikes Pakistan but is said to have lost jets

Indian official confirms crash of three jets: NYT

Ali Sheikh

PESHAWAR: The New York Times has claimed that India has suffered heavy loss after initiating attack inside Pakistan. The NYT said India early Wednesday conducted several airstrikes on Pakistan, hailing a victory in the name of vengeance for the terrorist attack that killed 26 civilians in Kashmir last month.

The New York Times added that evidence was also growing that the Indian forces may have taken heavy losses during the operation. "At least two aircraft were said to have gone down in India and the Indian-controlled side of Kashmir, according to three officials, local news reports, and accounts of witnesses who had seen the debris of two," it added.

According to the US newspaper Pakistani military officials said that more than 20 people had been killed and dozens injured after six places were hit on the Pakistani side of

Kashmir and in Punjab Province.

In its own statement on Wednesday, the Pakistani government called the Indian strikes "an unprovoked and blatant act of war" that had "violated Pakistan's sovereignty."

Pakistani military officials said they had begun a "measured but forceful" response, and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif claimed that the country's forces had downed five Indian aircraft — a claim that could not be verified.

One Indian official confirmed the crash of three aircraft, but cautioned that the reasons were not clear. Two other Indian security officials confirmed reports that some Indian aircraft had gone down, but would not elaborate on the details. They all spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details of military action.

The two countries have fought repeated wars, with the disputed area of Kashmir as a prime flashpoint,

since Pakistan was cleaved off from India in 1947 at the end of the British colonial rule in the subcontinent.

French official says Pakistan downed Rafale jet

PARIS (CNN): A high-ranking French intelligence official told CNN today that one Rafale fighter jet operated by the Indian Air Force was downed by Pakistan, in what would mark the first time that one of the sophisticated French-made warplanes has been lost in combat. Pakistan claimed earlier today to have shot down five Indian Air Force jets in retaliation for Indian strikes, including three Rafales. Indian officials are yet to respond to the claim. The French official told CNN that French authorities were looking into whether more than one Rafale jets were shot down by Pakistan overnight.

India's coward midnight breach and Pakistan's right to retaliate

Kousar Khan

WHEN darkness cloaks the sky and humanity rests, India chooses that very hour to strike-not with honor, but with cowardice. On the night of May 6, the so-called "world's largest democracy" launched a brutal and unprovoked assault on Pakistani soil, proving once again that behind its grandstanding lies a rogue regime addicted to aggression and bloodshed. This wasn't warfare-it was state-sponsored terrorism dressed up in military fatigues, executed with the sole aim of sowing chaos, fear, and death among innocent civilians.

This unprovoked assault-sold to the world as "precision strikes on terrorist hide-outs"-struck at least nine locations, claiming 26 civilian lives and injuring more than 40 non-combatants. Neither schools nor hospitals were spared: their shattered windows testify India's disregard for every norm of

engagement.

India's justifications ring hollow. New Delhi claims "retaliation" for the Pahalgam attack of April 22, where 26 tourists lost their lives. Yet, in the weeks since that atrocity, India has produced no credible intelligence to link our homeland to those militants. Pakistan's call for an impartial, transparent investigation-endorsed by international observers-was met with silence. This isn't defense; it is a narrative manufactured in Delhi's election war rooms, designed once more to distract its people from domestic challenges.

The world has spoken-and its voices echo Pakistan's resolute assertion of sovereignty. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres condemned the assault, urging "maximum restraint" and reminding both sides of their responsibility to avert a catastrophic escalation. The Secretary-General's call carries the weight of a global conscience: no electoral advantage justifies the fascist actions of Lodi Regime.

Back home, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, our National Security Committee convened at the earliest hour. Standing shoulder to shoulder, civilian leadership and military command reaffirmed that Pakistan will never waver in defending its territorial integrity. Under the principles of self-defence enshrined in Article-51 of UN Charter, Pakistan Armed Forces were authorized to undertake measured but decisive counter-actions. According to DG ISPR, Pakistan's air defence systems were immediately activated and on high alert, successfully denying Indian aircraft further access to our airspace. In the skies above Muridke and along the Line of Control, Pakistan Air Force swiftly intercepted and neutralized six intruding Indian jets with unmatched precision. On the ground, artillery units responded decisively, targeting only confirmed Indian military positions. Civilian safety remained paramount, a prin-

ciple India shamelessly discarded. The responsibility for this escalation lies fully with India. Pakistan's measured retaliation was necessary, lawful, and restrained given the scale of Indian aggression. Any future fallout will be the direct consequence of New Delhi's reckless adventurism and criminal disregard for peace. As dawn breaks on May 7, Pakistan stands united, resolute, and unbowed. Schools along the border remain on alert, hospitals mobilized, and our armed forces vigilant. But our spirit remains unshaken. This is not just a military standoff-it is a moral reckoning. The world now sees India's true face, and Pakistan, as always, will rise above the chaos with courage, discipline, and unwavering resolve. In this testing times, the nation stands stronger than before and Pakistan Armed Forces has given a clear message: when sovereignty is threatened, Pakistan's defenders rise with unshakeable courage turning the tables on the aggressors.

Extremist Indian regime endangers regional peace

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday said that the extremist Indian regime had endangered the peace and stability of the entire South Asia region and its hostile actions would have dangerous consequences for the region.

Minister of Interior of Italy Matteo Piantedosi, along with his delegation, called on the president at Aiwan-e-Sadr and discussed ways to increase bilateral cooperation in various areas of mutual interest. President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

The president discussed with the Italian interior minister India's unprovoked military aggression against Pakistan that had targeted innocent civilians, including women, children and the elderly.

Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Senator Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Minister for Overseas Pakistanis Ch Salik Hussain, Minister of State for Interior Senator Muhammad Tallal

Chaudhary, and senior government officials were also present during the meeting.

The president said that Pakistan greatly valued its ties with Italy and remained determined to improve mutually beneficial cooperation in diverse sectors.

The minister expressed condolences to the families of the martyrs who lost their lives in the Indian attack on Pakistan last night.

He remarked that he would convey Pakistan's concerns to his government as well as the international community to end the current situation.

The visiting interior minister further stated that Pakistan and Italy were cooperating against human

trafficking and terrorism.

He said that there was great scope for economic cooperation between the two countries, adding that the 160,000-strong Pakistani diaspora in Italy was well integrated and contributing positively towards Italian society and their development.

The president thanked the Italian minister for visiting Pakistan during such a critical period.

Later, the president also witnessed the signing of two Memoranda of Understanding to increase cooperation on curbing illegal migration and facilitating legal migration and labour mobility for skilled and educated Pakistani workers to Italy.



China ready to play role in easing tension

BEIJING (APP): China stands ready to work with international community to continue to play a constructive role in easing the current tension between India and Pakistan, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said on Wednesday.

Responding to questions regarding current situation between India and Pakistan, the spokesperson said that China made it clear its position on the ongoing situation between two countries.

"China finds India's military operation early this morning regrettable," he said.

Lin Jian said that Chinese side is concerned about the ongoing situation. India and the Pakistan are and will always be each other's neighbors. They are both China's neighbors as well.

He remarked that China opposes all forms of terrorism and urged both sides to act in the larger interest of peace and stability, remain calm, exercise restraint, and refrain from taking actions that may further complicate the situation.

CM witnesses launch of modern IT system at UET Peshawar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, visited the University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Peshawar on Wednesday, where he participated as the chief guest in a ceremony marking the launch of a modern IT system at the university. Provincial Minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi, Chairman of the Higher Education Commission, senior officials from the Higher Education Department, university administration, and students attended the event. The Chief Minister formally launched the SAP-ERP-SLCM (Student Life Cycle Management) system. UET Peshawar has

become the first university in the country to implement this system. Under this modern system, the university's financial affairs, human resource management and payroll, procurement, supply chain management, and assets management have been fully digitized. Additionally, all student academic affairs - from admissions to graduation - including course registration, examinations, and fee management, have also been automated. In his address at the event, the Chief Minister congratulated the university administration and all partner institutions on the launch of this advanced digital system. He expressed his pleasure that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is leading other provinces in the digitization process. He

added that, in line with Imran Khan's vision, efforts are being made to make institutions self-sufficient and autonomous. Ali Amin Gandapur stated that his focus in the education sector is on quality rather than quantity, aiming to improve standards and prepare the youth to compete at the international level. He emphasized that digital transformation is no longer an option but a fundamental necessity, which is why his government is working to digitize all sectors. The Chief Minister said that through digitization and transparency, his government has achieved a surplus of 200 billion rupees. "When they assumed power, public universities were burdened with billions

in unpaid dues, which they have significantly cleared. All outstanding pension liabilities of universities will be settled in the upcoming budget", he added. He further stated that universities are being empowered for financial self-sufficiency and should focus particularly on this goal by effectively utilizing their assets. The Chief Minister said that his government is making substantial investments in the youth and will continue to provide opportunities - it is up to the youth to make the most of them. In his message to the youth, the Chief Minister urged them to adopt a positive mindset and behavior in life, warning that negativity is destructive. As a nation, he said, we must promote positive attitudes.



Strong protests held across all KMU campuses against Indian Aggression

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Massive protest demonstrations were held across Khyber Medical University (KMU) Peshawar's main and regional campuses against recent Indian aggression. A large number of students, faculty members, and administrative staff participated in the demonstrations, raising powerful slogans in favor of the Pakistan Armed Forces and strongly condemning India's state-sponsored terrorism against Pakistan. The protests were led by

VC KMU Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq and Registrar Inam Ullah Khan Wazir. Participants carried banners and placards inscribed with slogans against Indian brutality, violations of human rights, and the silence of the international community. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq said that India has crossed all moral and humanitarian boundaries by targeting innocent civilians, children, and mosques under the cover of night. He emphasized that the entire Pakistani nation-especially

its youth-stands firmly alongside the armed forces and is fully prepared to respond to any act of aggression. He further stated that Pakistan is a peace-loving country but defending the homeland against cowardly attacks and hostile ambitions is a national obligation. "The nation today stands united like a solid wall and is determined to thwart the enemy's malicious intentions," he added. Other speakers also labeled the Indian attacks as acts of state terrorism and called upon the international com-

munity to take notice of India's provocations and hold it accountable for its gross violations of human rights. The protests concluded with students, faculty, and staff singing the national anthem and chanting slogans in support of the armed forces. The demonstrations, held in a spirit of discipline and patriotism across all KMU campuses, aimed to send a clear message to India and the world: the Pakistani nation is fully prepared to counter any aggression with unity and resolve.



PESHAWAR: Officials, staff and students of Khyber Medical University Peshawar staging protest against Indian attack on Pakistan.

Social media is a powerful tool that can drive transparency: Asim

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Commissioner of the Right to Public Services Commission Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Judge Muhammad Asim Imam addressed to the students from the Institute of Management Sciences Peshawar to discuss their recent research study on the impacts and uses of social media in society. The students presented key findings from their study, highlighting both the positive and negative effects of social media on communication, educa-

tion, mental health, and public discourse. The study emphasized how platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok influence youth engagement, civic awareness, and misinformation trends. Commissioner commended the students for their rigorous analysis and innovative approach, stating "Social media is a powerful tool that can drive transparency, civic engagement, and public service delivery if used responsibly. This study provides

valuable insights for policymakers and institutions like ours to harness its potential while mitigating risks. He further emphasized the role of the Right to Public Services Commission in leveraging digital platforms to enhance governance, citizen feedback, and service accessibility. The discussion also explored potential collaborations between academic institutions and government bodies to promote research-based policy-making. The event concluded with a Q&A ses-

sion, where students shared recommendations on digital literacy campaigns and ethical social media usage. The Commissioner assured the participants that their findings would be considered in future initiatives aimed at improving public service delivery through technology. The Right to Public Services Commission KP remains committed to fostering dialogue between youth, academia, and government to build a more informed and digitally empowered society.

Meeting on exemption of stage carriage from Motor Vehicle Rules held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: An important meeting of the Cabinet Committee, chaired by Minister for Law Aftab Alam Advocate, was held in the committee room of the Law Department regarding the exemption of passenger vehicles from Sub-Rule 57(b) of the Motor Vehicle Rules 1969. The meeting was attended by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Revenue Nazir Abbasi, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Communication and Works Sohail Afridi,

Special Assistant on Transport Haji Rangaiz Khan, Special Assistant on Industries and Commerce Abdul Karim Tordher, Secretary of Law Department Akhtar Saeed Turk, Secretary of Transport Department Masood Younas, along with officials from other relevant departments. The meeting reviewed the implementation of decisions made in the previous session and several key proposals were discussed. These included granting a two-year exemption to ten-year-old passenger vehicles to operate on

motorways, reassessing their fitness after one and a half years, and establishing vehicle testing and fitness verification centers at the divisional level. It was also highlighted that 50 percent of vehicles at the provincial level are operating on permits issued by other provinces without any provincial permits, resulting in the transfer of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's financial resources to other provinces. Minister for Revenue Nazir Abbasi emphasized that the need for autonomous policy-making

at the provincial level is the need of the hour. On the occasion, Minister for Law Aftab Alam Advocate stated, that our top priority is public interest and transparent policy-making. Strengthening the fitness system is essential for ensuring passenger safety and providing quality travel facilities. Under provincial autonomy, we will introduce effective and practical policies in the transport sector. The meeting also discussed launching a public awareness campaign on vehicle fitness on motorways and highways.

KPPRA organises E-procurement training workshop

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In line with the directives of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Chief Secretary, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (KPPRA) has introduced the E-Pak Acquisition and Disposal System (E-PADS) to enhance transparency, efficiency, and accountability in public procurement processes across the province. As part of its commitment to effective digital transformation, KPPRA, in partnership with the World Bank-funded KP-

SPEED (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Spending Effectively for Enhanced Development) program, recently organized a three-day training workshop in Swat. The event brought together officials from key departments, including Communications and Works (C&W), Local Government, Higher Education, Public Health Engineering, Elementary Education, Health, Fisheries, Sports, and Swat University. The workshop aimed to familiarize participants with the KPPRA Act, procurement rules, and

procedures, while providing practical, hands-on training on the newly launched E-PADS software. Amanullah Khan, Director of KPPRA, led the sessions, offering insights into the software's advanced features and the broader benefits of adopting a digital procurement framework. Speaking at the workshop's inaugural session, Amanullah Khan emphasized that E-PADS has been rolled out across the province, meeting all regulatory requirements for efficient and transparent public procurement. He further highlighted

KPPRA's ongoing efforts to strengthen institutional capacity through similar training sessions in various districts, ensuring the smooth, province-wide adoption of the new system. Participants welcomed the initiative, noting that the new system will significantly streamline procurement processes, reduce paperwork, and improve accountability. They also encouraged KPPRA to organize additional training sessions at the district level to enhance awareness and support a seamless transition to digital procurement.

Barkwal flays Indian aggression, expresses solidarity with Armed Forces

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Agriculture Major Retired Sajjad Barkwal has strongly condemned India's aggressive actions and expressed unwavering solidarity with the Pakistan Armed Forces. He lauded the bravery of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF), stating, the people and armed forces

of Pakistan will jointly hand India a historic defeat. India's nefarious designs will be buried forever. In a statement issued from his office, Major Retired Sajjad Barkwal emphasized, India must understand that Pakistan knows how to defend itself and will protect its sovereignty, security, and dignity at all costs.

We have proven this in the past and reiterate the same resolve for the future. He further stated that the enemy must recognize its limits. India must stay within its boundaries, acknowledging Pakistan's strength and the unity of its people. Provincial minister warned India, stating, History stands witness to the humiliation and dis-

grace India has faced at the hands of Pakistan, and the same will recur in the future. The spirit of our soldiers and people remains ever-ready to counter demoralizing actions. He commended the performance of the Pakistan Air Force, calling it a testament to the nation's valor and defense capabilities.

KP govt activates Provincial Contingency Framework

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In response to Indian aggression, the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has activated the Provincial Contingency Framework to ensure province-wide emergency preparedness. Following an emergency meeting of the provincial cabinet on Wednesday, all field formations, emergency services, and line departments have been placed on high alert with instructions to implement pre-emptive readiness protocols. The government has

ordered the activation of District Emergency Coordination Committees (DECCs), involving Police, Health, Rescue 1122, Civil Defense, and Local Government representatives. Public shelters in schools, mosques, and community halls are being prepared, while emergency kits with food, water, and bedding are being stocked. All leaves have been cancelled, and no official or field officer is permitted to leave station. Ambulance, fire, and rescue services have been put on standby, and mock drills are being initiated.

Village and Neighborhood Committees are also being revived to assist local coordination. In a strong move against information warfare, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has instructed the departments concerned to ensure verified information is circulated in case of internet disruptions. Strict monitoring of misinformation, rumors, and sensationalist content is underway, and special measures in placed to counter propaganda, fake news, and foreign disinformation campaigns that may attempt to destabilize public morale.

Only designated spokespersons will be authorized to issue statements, and Public Awareness Announcements will be broadcast to urge the public not to trust unverified claims. The government emphasized that unity in public messaging is essential in times of crisis. Essential departments have declared emergencies, control rooms are being activated, and fuel, power, and food supplies are being secured. PESCO and TESCO have been alerted to prepare for possible blackouts.

India's unprovoked aggression: a blatant disregard for international laws

PESHAWAR (APP): The India's recent missile attacks on Pakistani territories are not only a grave violation of Pakistan's sovereignty but also a serious threat to peace and stability in South Asia. These attacks, carried out under the cover of night, have exposed India's militaristic mindset, irresponsible strategy, and blatant disregard for international law.

The missiles that struck civilian areas such as Kotli, Muzaffarabad, Sialkot, Muridke, Bagh, and Bahawalpur were not aimed at military targets but at innocent civilians, places of worship, and basic infrastructure. As a result of these attacks, 26 innocent Pakistanis were martyred and 46 injured. The severity of this cowardice act of aggression is highlighted by the fact that the Indian strikes occurred at a time when 57 international flights were passing through Pakistani airspace. Firing missiles in such conditions endangered not only Pakistani citizens but also international travelers, constituting a clear violation of global aviation regulations and warranting urgent attention from the United Nations and international bodies.

Furthermore, according to Pakistan military spokesperson Lt. General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, India also targeted the crucial Noshehri Dam section of the Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project. This constitutes an act of blatant Indian military aggression against vital water infrastructure of Pakistan, and is not only a provocation but a blatant breach of human rights and the laws of war. "Attacking such essential water infrastructure is classified internationally as a war crime. In response to these cowardly attacks, Pakistan has demonstrated complete professionalism and took defensive measures that were right by all means," said Professor Dr. AH Hilali, former Chairman, Political Science Department at University of Peshawar while talking to APP on Wednesday. According to defense sources, five Indian fighter jets—including Rafale, SU-30s, and MiG-29s—were shot down while intruding into Pakistani airspace. Additionally, several Indian

military posts across the Line of Control and one infantry brigade headquarters of the enemy were effectively targeted and neutralized. These retaliatory actions were carried out from within Pakistani territory with the aim of not just responding to the unprovoked aggression but sending a clear message to the world that Pakistan will not compromise on its sovereignty. Following these developments, an emergency meeting of the National Security Council was convened under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and took key decisions. The country's political and military leadership unanimously decided that under Article 51 of the UN Charter, Pakistan reserves the right to respond in self-defense—at a time, place, and manner of its choosing—to protect its sovereignty and to counter the massacre of innocent civilians. To this end, the armed forces of Pakistan have been granted full authority to take further action if necessary. Dr Hilali said that Pakistan's principles stance has gained considerable international support. US President Donald Trump condemned India's actions as "shameful," stating that escalating regional tensions to this extent was highly irresponsible. "The world now clearly sees that while Pakistan desires peace, it is by no means weak. A strong message has been sent to the enemy that "any future act of aggression will be met with an even more forceful and decisive response," Dr Hilali said. Pakistan's armed forces are fully prepared, the people are united, and the leadership has made it unequivocally clear that there will be no compromise on national sovereignty. Pakistan possesses the full capacity to respond to any aggression with strength, resolve, and strategy. If the enemy has not yet learned its lesson, the next strike will shake its very foundations. He said India will pay a high price for mistaking Pakistan's patience for weakness. Our silence is strategic; our strength lies in our action, he concluded.



In brief

Rally held against India F.P. Report

DIR: The Central Muslim League Lower Dir organized a rally in Timergara to express solidarity with the Pakistan Army. Traders, leaders of political parties, and the general public also participated in the solidarity demonstration. On this occasion, Central Muslim League President Haji Muhammad Zada, General Secretary Abu Haroon, Assistant Commissioner Zaid Safi, President of traders union Timergara Haji Anwaruddin, General Secretary Haji Laiq Zada, former PPP National Assembly candidate Alamzeb Advocate, General Secretary of Jamaat-e-Islami Shoaib Ahmad, and others addressed the gathering. They strongly condemned India's cowardly night-time attack on Pakistan, targeting religious seminaries and mosques, and the martyrdom of innocent civilians. The speakers said the Pakistan Army gave a strong and crushing response to the enemy by shooting down five aircraft, forcing them to retreat. They paid tribute to the Pakistan Army and Air Force for their brave defense. The speakers demanded the immediate release of Hafiz Muhammad Saeed and urged the government to allow the tribes to participate in jihad. They assured that the public stands shoulder to shoulder with the Pakistan Army and will not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for the country's security. They declared that every child of the nation is ready to die for the defense of the homeland.

Code Red imposed

CHINIOT (APP): Code Red has been imposed in Punjab Emergency Service District Chiniot. Rescue personnel have been put on high alert to deal with any emergency situation, and instructions have been issued to be ready for immediate rescue operations. All rescuers have been ordered to report to their respective stations immediately, while cancelling their leave. The Command-and-Control Room is monitoring the emergency situation under the supervision of District Emergency Officer Tahira Khan.

PAF crushed Modi's pride

QUETTA (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader and Member of National Assembly Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani praised the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) for downing five Indian warplanes, stating that the bold action shattered the arrogance of the Modi government. In a statement issued here on Wednesday, Raisani said, "The brave personnel of the Pakistan Air Force have given the enemy a powerful message that Pakistan will never bow down. Modi's aggression has been met with a decisive and timely response." He emphasized national unity in the face of aggression. "The entire nation stands united behind the Pakistan Armed Forces. We salute our martyrs and assure the enemy that every citizen is a soldier when it comes to defending our motherland." Raisani denounced India's overnight missile attacks on civilian areas, calling them a cowardly attempt to weaken Pakistan's resolve. He declared that every person in Balochistan, regardless of language, sect, or ethnicity, is ready to defend the country against India's conspiracies. "India is behind the terrorism in Balochistan, but Modi's plots will fail.

In wake of Indian aggression Commissioner Kohat holds DCC meeting

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah has in light of the directions of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, held an important meeting of the Divisional Co-ordination Committee (DCC) Kohat to discuss the situation arising after the Indian aggression on Wednesday.

The meeting beside others was also attended by the respective Deputy Commissioners, Police, Intelligence Agencies and other relevant Departments and Institutions.

In the meeting, each department and institution explained in detail about the preparations and measures taken in this regard. It was decided to establish Control Rooms in all the districts of the division, which will ensure continu-

ous and effective coordination with all district and divisional administrations and departments. The meeting also directed all divisional and district heads to remain present in their offices and cancel the leaves of all employees immediately.

Similarly, all departments were assigned their responsibilities and were directed to ensure emergency response as per the SOPs.

Meanwhile, a meeting of the Divisional Development Committee Kohat was also held under the chairmanship of the Commissioner Kohat Division, which beside the Chairman DDAC Karak Khurshid Khattak MPA and Chairman DDAC Orakzai Aurangzeb Orakzai MPA and representatives of other members was also attended by the Deputy

Commissioners of the concerned districts and heads of line departments.

The meeting besides reviewing in detail the Sectoral Abstract of ADP and AIP 2024-25, also discussed the performance and development strategy of all the departments step-by-step and gave a detailed briefing on the progress of proposed, new and ongoing schemes.

Commissioner Kohat strictly instructed all the departments to ensure timely completion of projects without compromising on the quality of work and wherever any problem or obstacle is come, it should be immediately brought to the notice of the elected members of the assembly or the divisional and district administration so that timely steps can be taken in this regard and unnecessary delay in the projects can be avoided.

Alternate Dispute Resolution Committee meets

F.P. Report

BANNU: Following the instructions of the provincial government Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a consultation session and an important meeting of the Alternate Dispute Resolution Committee was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Bannu Muhammad Fahim Khan today at his office.

In the session all the members of Alternate

Resolution Committee, district administration, concerned Officials were present.

The members of the meeting discussed the resolution of public disputes through the ADR Committee for getting immediate justice by cheap, easy and effective procedures.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Bannu Muhammad Fahim Khan said that the main purpose

of the establishment of the Alternate Dispute Resolution Committee is to resolve the public disputes, including civilian and criminal by local jirga, and local customs, to achieve fast and immediate justice in a period of a few months. The participants of the meeting also put suggestions to make the ADR committee more effective, so that society could be put on the path of development and prosperity soon.

Salman attends martyrs' funeral prayers

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique, along with thousands of citizens, participated in the funeral prayers for those martyred in the recent Indian attack in Bahawalpur.

He offered prayers for the safety and security of Pakistan and its people. Prominent officials, including Commissioner Bahawalpur Division,

Deputy Commissioner, District Police Officer, and other key personalities, were also present to pay their respects.

In his remarks, Khawaja Salman Rafique condemned India's aggressive actions, stating that the Modi government's targeting of Pakistani civilians is a clear violation of international laws.

He emphasized that such cowardly acts could not

break the resolve of the Pakistani people, who stand united with their government and armed forces in the face of aggression.

He criticised India's false narrative around the Pahalagam incident, describing it as a shameful attempt to destabilise peace in the region. The minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to peace and its determination to defend its sovereignty.

Multiple protest rallies held against Indian aggression

Haleem Asad

LOWER DIR: Multiple protest rallies and solidarity walks were held across Lower Dir on Tuesday and Wednesday as political parties, civil society, academic institutions, and residents came together to denounce unprovoked Indian aggression and express unwavering support for Pakistan's armed forces.

At the University of Malakand, a similar event was led by Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Rashid Ahmad. Addressing faculty, staff, and students, Dr. Ahmad condemned India's belligerent actions and urged the international community to hold Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi accountable for escalating tensions in the region. He praised the Pakistan Army and Air Force for their prompt and decisive response and affirmed the academic community's full support for the armed forces.

The walk concluded with prayers for national unity, security, and the freedom of the Kashmiri people.

In Samar Bagh and Munda, the district administration organized large-scale solidarity walks, drawing significant participation from citizens, civil society groups, and the local business community. Participants carried national flags and placards bearing slogans such as "Long Live Pakistan Army" and "Down with India." Speakers at the event described the walk as a public referendum against the enemy, vowing that the nation stood ready to defend the motherland at all costs. They stressed that India's hostile intentions would be met with a powerful and united response.

In Timergara, the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) staged a protest outside the local press club. Speakers, including district chief Sirajuddin, Maulana Huzaifa, Muzaffar Syed Advocate, and other local leaders, condemned what they termed a cowardly and midnight attack by the Indian government, resulting in civilian casualties. They emphasized that political parties had set aside their differences to stand

united in defense of the country's sovereignty. The leaders lauded the military's robust response and pledged full public support in the face of any future aggression.

Meanwhile, residents of the Adenzai subdivision held a protest rally against what they called India's "war hysteria" and destabilizing actions. Speakers accused India of attempting to block Pakistan's water rights in violation of international law and called on the United Nations to take immediate notice. They reiterated their commitment to standing alongside the armed forces and praised their effective defense strategies.

Across the district, a common theme emerged: unity, resilience, and readiness to defend the nation. Public participation in these events reflected deep-rooted national solidarity, as well as growing concern over India's increasingly provocative actions.

All events concluded peacefully with special prayers for the martyrs, the country's safety, and the liberation of Kashmir.

PFA discards 30kg unhygienic meat, 15 litres substandard cooking oil, other items

MULTAN (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) conducted inspections in Multan and Khanewal, targeting restaurants, grocery stores, meat shops, dairy vehicles, and beverage manufacturing units. Under the directives of the Director General of PFA, food safety teams inspected numerous food points and penalized businesses violating hygiene and safety standards.

The teams seized and discarded 30 kilogramme of unhygienic meat, 15 liters substandard cooking oil, 30 liters of low-quality beverages, 15 liters of adulterated milk and 20 kg of expired food items. In Multan, a meat shop near Aziz hotel, Chowk Sher Shah, was fined Rs. 40,000 for storing unhygienic meat in freezers and maintaining poor cleanliness. Near Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University, a bakery was penalized Rs. 50,000 for using rotten eggs in food preparation and for lacking valid medical certificates for its workers.

At M-5 rest area, two supermarkets were fined a total of Rs. 80,000 for selling expired food products. Additionally, two restaurants in the same area were fined Rs. 90,000 for using substandard spices and failing to provide water quality test reports. In Kabiirwala, a dairy transport vehicle was inspected and found to be carrying milk with low fat content. The adulterated milk was immediately discarded on-site. In Fazal Colony, Mian Channu, a beverage unit was fined Rs. 15,000 for using expired coloring agents and bottling drinks in reused branded bottles. Meanwhile, in Quli Bazaar, Khanewal, a restaurant was fined Rs. 50,000 after PFA teams discovered unhygienic conditions in freezers and prepared food being stored directly on the floor.



ABBOTTABAD: Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad Capt (Retd) Sana Ullah Khan presiding over a meeting regarding the emergency situation after Indian attack on Pakistan.

Indian aggression will not be tolerated: AJK PM

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Chaudhry Anwarul Haq, has said that Indian aggression will not be tolerated under any circumstances and reaffirmed his government's firm commitment to stand by the people living along the Line of Control (LoC) during these critical times.

The Prime Minister made these remarks while chairing a high-level emergency meeting convened to assess the situation emerging from recent Indian hostilities along the LoC. The meeting was attended by Senior Minister Colonel (R) Waqar Ahmed Noor, Minister for Information Pir Mazhar Saeed Shah, Minister for Health Dr. Nisar Ansar Abdali, Chief Secretary, Inspector General of Police, and other senior officials.

During the session, PM Anwarul Haq ordered the establishment of a Central Emergency Response Center, which will operate round-the-clock to coordinate emergency operations. The center will include divisional commissioners, DIGs, DCs, and SSPs, and will provide regular updates directly to the Prime Minister.

Instructions were also issued for the creation of an Emergency Health Response Center and an Emergency Information Response Center under the Health Department and Information Department (PID), respectively. These centers will maintain 24/7 communication with the central response unit and keep authorities and the public fully informed on all developments. Meanwhile, former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Ambassador, Sardar Masood Khan, strongly condemned India's unprovoked and unjustified attacks on civilian populations in AJK, calling it a blatant violation of the UN Charter and international law.

"This is a criminal, unprovoked act of war. Pakistan has retaliated justly and robustly," said Khan. The Indian assault tragically claimed the lives of three civilians, including an 80-year-old muezzin, and critically injured an eight-year-old girl in Muzaffarabad.

Terming the incident as "naked aggression," Sardar Masood Khan stressed that Pakistan's response is legitimate under Article 51 of the UN Charter, which upholds a nation's right to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Khan urged the international community to take urgent notice and hold India accountable for endangering regional peace and stability.

Chairman DDAC visits rain-hit areas of Karak

F.P. Report

KARAK: In pursuance of the special directions of the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, Chairman of the District Development Advisory Committee (DDAC) Karak and MPA Khurshid Khattak has along-with the Deputy Commissioner Karak Shakeel Ahmed Jan and authorities concerned of the relevant depart-

ments, paid a detailed visit to the Union Councils Ghundi Mir Khan Khel, Palosa Sir and Sabirabad where they reviewed the destructions and losses of life and properties caused due to the recent torrential rains.

Mayor Azmat Khattak, Focal Person to MNA Faisal Jan and Ashiq Munir, GS Latif Khattak, Senior Vice President Alam Zeb Khattak, Joint Secretary Rashid Khattak,

Chairman Javed Khattak, Chairman Adnan, Chairman Zareen Khattak, Village Councilor Hafeez Khattak and PTI workers also accompanied the Chairman DDAC.

Khurshid Khattak directed the authorities concerned to immediately prepare a detailed report in this regard so that the provincial government can provide relief to the victims on an emergency basis at the earliest.

Rallies against India aggression held

Hafiz M. Aziz-ur-Rehman

HAFIZABAD: In a powerful display of national unity and patriotism, large-scale protest rallies were held across Hafizabad by various religious, social, business, and civil society organizations to condemn India's recent unprovoked aggression against Pakistan.

The central rally, which commenced from the Press Club Jinnah Hall, was led by Additional Deputy Commissioner Hamid Nasir Goraya, Assistant Commissioner Salman Akbar and Chief Officer Municipal Committee Ikramullah Sandhu.

A diverse and passionate crowd, including government officials, religious scholars, traders, journalists, educators, students, members of the Christian community, and representatives from various walks of life, participated in the event.

Carrying national flags and placards inscribed with slogans in support of the Pakistan Armed Forces, the participants vociferously condemned the Indian attack and expressed unwavering solidarity with the defenders of the homeland. Chants of "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Pak Army Zindabad" echoed through the streets as

the demonstrators pledged their readiness to sacrifice everything for the nation's defense.

Speakers at the rally, including members of the Peace Committee, local Ulama, and representatives of business and civic bodies, criticized India for its cowardly assault targeting innocent civilians, mosques, and civilian infrastructure under the cover of darkness. They lauded the Pakistan Armed Forces for their swift, professional, and resolute response, affirming that the nation's defense is in capable and courageous hands.

"The entire Pakistani nation, from children to elders, from men to women, stands united with our brave armed forces. Today, we have demonstrated not only our unity but also our collective resolve to defend our sovereignty at any cost," declared one speaker.

The rally participants affirmed their full support for the armed forces and emphasized that, if needed, they were prepared to stand alongside them in the face of enemy aggression.

The event concluded with renewed vows of loyalty to the country and prayers for peace, security, and the protection of Pakistan's territorial integrity.

Balochistan declares May as 'Drug-Free Month'

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan government has decided to observe May as drug-free month and in this regard, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti ordered to launch crackdown against the drugs mafia on daily basis across the province.

A high-level meeting chaired by Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti was held at the Chief Minister's Secretariat to review matters related to the Department of Social Welfare, Anti-Narcotics efforts, and the rehabilitation of drug addicts.

The meeting was attended by Parliamentary Secretary for Social Welfare Wali Muhammad Noorzai, Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir

Khan, Additional Chief Secretary for Planning and Development Hafiz Abdul Basit, Secretary Social Welfare Ismatullah Qureshi, Secretary Finance Imran Zarkoon, Principal Secretary to the CM Babar Khan, Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafqat and officials from the Anti-Narcotics Force.

It was decided that the month of May will be observed as "Drug-Free Month" across Balochistan. The Chief Minister directed law enforcement agencies to conduct daily operations against drug handlers and suppliers. He also emphasized that Quetta's city drains must be completely cleared of drug addicts.

Bugti instructed that Anti-Narcotics Force-run

rehabilitation center should treat as many addicts as possible. The meeting further resolved that several inactive government buildings will be handed over to the Social Welfare Department to be used as rehabilitation centers.

The chief minister directed the Social Welfare Department to enhance its capacity and broaden its rehabilitation efforts, with a performance report to be submitted within 15 days.

"Our goal is not merely to construct buildings but to use them effectively for the public good. We aim to free our youth from the menace of drugs and are committed to building a healthy and constructive society free from this curse", the chief minister said.

Ghous condemns Indian aggression

SARGODHA (APP): Chairman Provincial Zakat and Ushr Council, Rana Munawar Ghous, has strongly condemned the recent unprovoked and brutal attacks by Indian forces which resulted in severe loss of innocent Pakistani civilians.

Talking to APP on Wednesday, he expressed profound grief over the casualties and labeled India's actions as blatant violations of international laws and human rights.

"These cowardly strikes by India are not only an attack on our people but also on regional peace and stability," said Rana Munawar Ghous.

"Targeting non-combatants is a grave crime that reveals the true face of Indian aggression."

The Chairman Provincial Zakat and Usher Council Rana Munawar Ghous said in response to these assaults, the Pakistan Armed Forces delivered a powerful and calculated reply. He said the Pakistan Air Force successfully shot down five Indian fighter jets, showcasing the nation's capability and resolve to defend its borders, adding that the swift retaliation by Pakistan's defense forces has been hailed as a message of deterrence to any future hostilities.

He lauded the bravery and professionalism of the armed forces and extended his full support to the government and military leadership.

He praised the unity and determination shown by the Pakistani people in these trying times. "Our nation stands united. Our armed forces are the pride of our land, and our people are resolute in their love and loyalty to Pakistan. No enemy can shake our spirit," Rana Munawar Ghous stated.



WASHINGTON, DC : Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Kash Patel (L) and U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi speak during a press conference to announce the results of Operation Restore Justice on Wednesday in Washington, DC. During the operation, 205 arrests were made nationwide in five days in a joint effort with federal, state, and local partners to arrest accused child sex abuse offenders and combat child exploitation.

UAE mediating secret talks between Israel and Syria

BEIRUT / AMMAN (Reuters): The United Arab Emirates has set up a backchannel for talks between Israel and Syria, three people familiar with the matter said, as Syria's new rulers seek regional help to manage an increasingly hostile relationship with their southern neighbour.

The indirect contacts, which have not been previously reported, are focused on security and intelligence matters and confidence-building between two states with no official relations, a person with direct knowledge of the matter, a Syrian security source and a regional intelligence official said.

The first source described the effort, which began days after Syrian President Ahmed Sharaa visited the UAE on April 13, as currently focused on "technical matters," and said there was no limit to what may eventually be discussed.

The senior Syrian security source told Reuters the backchannel was limited strictly to security-related issues, focusing on several counterterrorism files.

The source said that purely military matters, particularly those concerning Israeli army activities in Syria, fell outside the scope of the current channel.

The intelligence source said UAE security officials, Syrian intelligence officials and former Israeli intelligence officials were involved in the mechanism,

among others.

They spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the situation.

Syria's presidency and the UAE foreign ministry did not respond to a request for comment. The Israeli prime minister's office declined to comment.

The mediation effort preceded Israeli strikes in Syria last week, including one just 500 metres (yards) from the presidential palace in Damascus, and Reuters could not establish if the mechanism has been used since the strikes occurred.

Israel has framed the strikes as a message to Syria's new rulers in response to threats against Syria's Druze, a minority sect that is an offshoot of Islam with adherents in Syria, Lebanon and Israel.

Informal mediation between Israel and Syria aimed at calming the situation has taken place in the last week via other channels, according to one of the sources and a regional diplomat. They declined to elaborate.

Syria's government has condemned Israel's strikes as escalatory and as foreign interference, and says the new government in Damascus is working to unify the country after 14 years of bloodletting.

The new rulers have also made repeated efforts to show they pose no threat to Israel, meeting representatives of the Jewish community in Damascus and abroad and detaining two senior members of

Palestinian Islamic Jihad, which participated in the October 7 2023 Hamas-led attack on Israel.

A letter sent by Syria's foreign ministry to the U.S. State Department last month, seen by Reuters, said "we will not allow Syria to become a source of threat to any party, including Israel."

Israel has struck in Syria for years in a shadow campaign aimed at weakening Iran and its allies, including Lebanese Hezbollah, who grew their influence after entering the country's civil war on the side of former President Bashar al-Assad.

Israeli military operations have escalated since rebels ousted Assad in December, saying it will not tolerate an Islamist militant presence in southern Syria. Israel has bombed what it says are military targets across the country and Israeli ground forces have entered southwestern Syria.

Reuters reported in February that Israel has lobbied the U.S. to keep Syria decentralised and isolated, framing its approach around suspicion of Sharaa - who once headed a branch of al-Qaeda before renouncing ties to the group in 2016.

The UAE government also has concerns about the Islamist bent of Syria's new leaders, but Sharaa's meeting with President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan last month went very well, the sources said, helping to assuage some of Abu Dhabi's concerns.

The sources noted the meeting lasted several hours, making Sharaa late for a subsequent engagement.

The backchannel with Israel was established days later, the sources said.

Damascus sees the UAE's ties with Israel, established in a historic U.S.-brokered deal in 2020, as a key avenue to address issues with Israel, given the absence of direct relations between the two states.

Israel's latest strikes in Syria followed days of clashes between Sunni Muslim and Druze gunmen triggered by a voice recording of unclear origin purportedly insulting the Prophet Mohammed, leaving more than two dozen people dead.

Syria's government has since reached an agreement with Druze factions in the Druze heartland region of Suweida to hire local security forces from their ranks, in a move that has so far reduced tensions.

The fighting posed the latest challenge for Sharaa, who has repeatedly vowed to unite all of Syria's armed forces under one structure and govern the country, fractured by 14 years of civil war until Assad's overthrow.

But incidents of sectarian violence, notably the killing of hundreds of pro-Assad Alawites in March, have hardened fears among minority groups about the now-dominant Islamists and sparked condemnation from global powers.

Cardinals enter Sistine Chapel for secret conclave to elect new pope

VATICAN CITY (Reuters): Catholic cardinals who will choose the next pope filed into the Sistine Chapel on Wednesday, before locking themselves away from the world to elect the man they hope can unite a diverse but divided global Church.

In a ritual dating back to medieval times, 133 cardinal electors will take an oath of perpetual secrecy under the gaze of the stern Christ depicted in Michelangelo's Last Judgement fresco, which adorns the chapel.

They will then hold their first ballot looking for a successor to Pope Francis, who died last month.

No pope has been elected on the first day of a conclave for centuries and voting could continue for several days before one man receives the necessary two-thirds majority to become the 267th pontiff.

There will be only one ballot on Wednesday. Thereafter, there can be as many as four votes a day.

The cardinals walked slowly into the chapel, taking part in a solemn Latin chant called the litany of the saints.

They beseeched nearly 100 men and women believed to reside in heaven to pray for them as they prepare to make what

arguably will be the most momentous decision of their lives.

After the cardinals have pronounced their oath, Archbishop Diego Ravelli, the Vatican's master of ceremonies, will pronounce the Latin command "Extra omnes!" (Everyone out!), telling all those not involved in the gathering to leave.

The chapel's heavy wooden doors will then slam shut.

The only expected signal from the cardinals during the conclave will come in the form of smoke from a chimney atop the chapel, as the clerics burn their ballots.

Black smoke will mark an inconclusive vote; white smoke and the pealing of bells will signal that the 1.4-billion-member Church has a new leader.

At a Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on Wednesday before entering the conclave, the cardinals prayed that God would help them find a pope who would exercise "watchful care" over the world.

In a sermon, Italian Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re told his peers they must set aside "every personal consideration" in choosing the new pontiff and keep in mind "only ... the good of

the Church and of humanity".

Cardinals in recent days have offered different assessments of what they are looking for in the next pope.

While some have called for continuity with Francis' vision of greater openness and reform, others have said they want to turn the clock back and embrace traditions. Many have indicated they want a more predictable, measured pontificate.

A record 133 cardinals from 70 countries were expected to enter the Sistine Chapel, up from 115 from 48 nations in the last conclave in 2013 - growth that reflects Francis' efforts to extend the reach of the Church.

No clear favourite has emerged, although Italian Cardinal Pietro Parolin and Filipino Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle are considered the front-runners.

However, if it quickly becomes obvious that neither can win, votes are likely to shift to other contenders, with the electors possibly coalescing around geography, doctrinal affinity or common languages.

Among other potential candidates are France's Jean-Marc Aveline, Hungary's Peter Erdo,

American Robert Prevost and Italy's Pierbattista Pizzaballa.

Re, who is 91 and cannot take part in the conclave, suggested the cardinals should look for a pope who respected the Church's diversity. "Unity does not mean uniformity, but a firm and profound communion in diversity," he said in his sermon.

The average length of the last 10 conclaves was just over three days and none went on for more than five days. The last conclave, in 2013, lasted just two days.

The cardinals will be looking to wrap things up quickly again this time to avoid giving the impression they are divided or that the Church is adrift.

Some 80% of the cardinal electors were appointed by Francis, increasing the possibility that his successor will in some way continue his progressive policies despite strong push-back from traditionalists.

Among their considerations will be whether they should seek a pope from the global south where congregations are growing, as they did in 2013 with Francis, from Argentina, hand back the reins to Europe or even pick a first U.S. pope.

Grisly Peru mining murders spotlight 'gold curse' in the Andes

TRUJILLO, Peru (Reuters): Peruvian mining sector worker Frank Monzón was aware of the risks, but the lure of gold deep in the Andean rock of northern Pataz province outweighed the danger. Now he and 12 others are dead in one of the country's worst mining massacres.

Authorities this week halted some mining activity in Peru's gold-rich north and sent in the military after police recovered the bodies of the 13 mine workers from inside the Lidmar mine after they were kidnapped by illegal miners last month and killed.

Lidmar was working in agreement with major local gold producer Poderosa (PODERCI.LM), opens new tab, Peru's second-largest producer.

The killings, by suspected gangs involved in illegal mining, have shaken the mineral-rich country, the world's no. 3 copper producer and no. 8 for gold, where soaring global prices of the precious metal have led to a boom in illegal activity and sparked clashes between big mines and wildcat operators.

Illegal mining, primarily

of gold, has surpassed even drug trafficking in terms of value, hitting some \$3-4 billion each year, according to Peru's government.

"He used to tell me that there were many deaths and I always kept telling my son 'leave this job, son, come back, don't work there, work somewhere else,'" said Abraham Dominguez, who identified himself as the father of one of the victims.

"For us as parents, it is such a great pain that we feel. It's our children, our blood. I thought maybe one day he would bury me, but instead, I am going to bury my son."

Into the night on Tuesday, relatives of the murdered mine workers, who had been security guards, said farewell to their loved ones, with burials in cities around the country.

In Trujillo, capital of the region where Pataz is located, relatives were scared to speak to the media as funerals were held, saying they feared reprisals from criminal gangs who authorities have blamed for the murders.

The white coffin of Monzón was carried by

friends and family and paraded through the streets of Trujillo before his burial. In northern Piura, Darwin Cobeñas was laid to rest in his humble hometown, while his family sobbed and prayed that his death not go unpunished.

"I'm only alive because my friend told me not to go," one local man in his 30s, who said he had worked before with some of the victims, told Reuters at Monzon's funeral. "He told me: 'A lot of things are happening, don't go'."

Patataz has become Peru's largest gold-producing region, in no small part due to artisan or informal mines, which operate under temporary REINFO permits.

However, with gold prices near record highs, illegal groups often muscle into the operations of small-scale miners or steal their production in collusion with criminal gangs, according to police and industry sources.

"Gold is a curse for Patataz," the mayor of Patataz, Aldo Mariño, told Reuters. He had traveled to Lima to speak with President Dina Boluarte and demand greater investment in his

remote region, an 18-hour drive even from Trujillo.

He said that despite the area's great mineral wealth, his community lives in poverty, without basic services and on deteriorating or unpaved roads.

"This has been going on for several years, with the difference that now everything has collapsed. It's due to the absence of the State," he said. "People continue to die."

Trujillo prosecutors investigating the deaths said on Tuesday that the workers had been dead for seven to eight days, citing forensic studies. Lidmar said in a statement its workers "were ambushed, cruelly tortured, and murdered by hitmen."

Poderosa has reported the deaths of 39 workers in recent years in attacks on its facilities or small mines that supply it with gold. And in the last four years, 15 of the company's high-voltage towers have been destroyed with explosives.

Peru exported \$15.5 billion in gold in 2024, a sharp increase from \$11 billion the previous year. It is estimated that around 40% of this likely came from illegal sources.

Federal Reserve faces tough balancing act between fighting inflation and spurring economic growth

WASHINGTON (AP): The Federal Reserve could keep its key rate unchanged for several more months as it evaluates the impact of President Donald Trump's widespread tariffs on hiring and inflation, some economists say, even as the White House pushes for a rate cut.

The Fed is nearly certain to keep its rate unchanged when it concludes its latest policy meeting Wednesday. Chair Jerome Powell and other Fed officials have signaled that they want to see how the duties — including 145% on all imports from China — impact consumer prices and the economy.

The central bank's caution could lead to more conflict between the Fed and the Trump administration. On Sunday, Trump again urged the Fed to cut rates in a television interview and said Powell "just doesn't like me because I think he's a total stiff." With inflation not far from the Fed's 2% target for now, Trump and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent argue that the Fed could reduce its rate. The Fed pushed it higher in 2022 and 2023 to fight inflation.

If the Fed were to cut, it could lower other borrowing costs, such as for mortgages, auto loans, and credit cards, though that is not guaranteed.

Trump also said Sunday he wouldn't fire Powell because the chair's term ends next May and he will

be able to appoint a new chair then. Yet if the economy stumbles in the coming months, Trump could renew his threats to remove Powell. A big issue facing the Fed is how tariffs will impact inflation. Nearly all economists and Fed officials expect the import taxes will lift prices, but it's not clear by how much or for how long. Tariffs typically cause a one-time increase in prices, but not necessarily ongoing inflation. Yet if Trump announces further tariffs — as he has threatened to do on pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, and copper — or if Americans worry that inflation will get worse, that could send prices higher in a more persistent way.

Kathy Bostjancic, chief economist at Nationwide, said this could keep the Fed on the sidelines until September. "It's hard for them to cut sooner because they've got to weigh, what's the inflation impact?" Bostjancic said. "Is this going to be somewhat persistent and add to inflation expectations?"

Economists and the Fed are closely watching inflation expectations, which are essentially a measure of how much consumers are concerned that inflation will worsen. Higher inflation expectations can be self-fulfilling, because if Americans think prices will rise, they can take steps that push up costs, such as asking for higher wages.

For now, the U.S. economy is mostly in solid shape, and inflation has cooled considerably from its peak in 2022. Consumers are spending at a healthy pace, though some of that may reflect buying things like cars ahead of tariffs. Businesses are still adding workers at a steady pace, and unemployment is low.

Still, there are signs inflation will worsen in the coming months. Surveys of both manufacturing and services firms show that they are seeing higher prices from their suppliers. And a survey by the Federal Reserve's Dallas branch found that nearly 55% of manufacturing firms expect to pass on the impact of tariff increases to their customers. "The bottom line is that inflation will be rising significantly over the next six months," Torsten Slok, chief economist at the Apollo Group, said in an email.

Yet the tariffs could also weigh heavily on the economy, particularly because of the uncertainty they have created. Huge tariffs on about 60 other nations, announced April 2, were then postponed until July 9, but could be reimposed. Business surveys show that firms are postponing investment decisions until they have greater clarity.

Ryan Sweet, chief U.S. economist at Oxford Economics, said the uncertainty surrounding trade policy gives him "night ter-

rors."

"The economics of uncertainty are absolutely suffocating," Sweet said. "Businesses that don't know the rules of the road, their knee-jerk reaction is to sit on their hands. And that's what they're doing."

But if the uncertainty delays hiring, slows the economy and pushes up the unemployment rate, the Fed could quickly shift toward interest rate cuts. A sharp economic slowdown could eventually cool inflation by itself, economists say.

"If you felt like the economy was really slowing down, then I think that would probably take precedence (over inflation), because usually the way the committee thinks is that will also drag inflation somewhat with it," said Jim Bullard, former president of the Federal Reserve's St. Louis branch, and currently dean of Purdue University's business school.

In March, the Fed signaled that it could cut rates twice this year. But since then, the Trump administration imposed duties that Powell said last month were larger and broader than the Fed expected.

The duties, Powell acknowledged, could both slow growth and lift prices, which puts the Fed in a tough spot. It would usually cut rates to boost growth and hiring, while it would raise them to cool spending and inflation.

MOSCOW (AP): Russia's President Vladimir Putin is set to host the leaders of China, Brazil and other heads of states for festivities on Friday marking the 80th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

Victory Day, which is celebrated in Russia on May 9, has become the country's most important secular holiday. A massive parade through Red Square and other ceremonies underline Moscow's efforts to project its power and cement the alliances it has forged while seeking a counterbalance to the West amid the 3-year-old war in Ukraine.

"For Putin, this day is important as a demonstration how broad a coalition backing Russia is," said political analyst Nikolai Petrov.

The lineup of leaders coming to Moscow this year contrasts sharply to some past celebrations that drew top Western leaders at a time of friendlier ties between Russia and the West.

The festivities have been overshadowed by reports of Ukrainian drone attacks targeting Moscow and severe disruptions at all four of the capital's airports, with dozens of

flights delayed or canceled, stranding hundreds of passengers.

Tightened security around the celebrations also led to restrictions on cellphone internet service and reports of outages. Banks and taxi firms have preemptively warned customers about disruption to services over the holidays due to unstable internet access, and some shops and supermarkets have restricted deliveries due to potential network problems.

Putin described Chinese President Xi Jinping as "our main guest" at the Victory Day festivities when he discussed preparations for his visit with China's foreign minister. The Russian leader noted that he and Xi are to discuss both bilateral and global issues at their summit in Moscow.

Xi is coming for a four-day visit, and Putin's foreign policy adviser Yuri Ushakov said they would discuss trade and Russia's supply of oil and gas to China, as well as cooperation within BRICS — the bloc of developing economies that initially included Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa but has since expanded to more coun-

tries.

Putin and Xi have met over 40 times and developed strong personal ties to bolster their "strategic partnership" as they both face soaring tensions with the West.

China has offered robust diplomatic support to Moscow after the 2022 invasion and has emerged as a top market for Russian oil and gas, helping fill the Kremlin's war coffers. Russia also has relied on China as the main source of machinery and electronics to keep its military machine running after Western sanctions curtailed high-tech supplies.

While Beijing hasn't provided weapons to use in Ukraine, it has backed the Kremlin diplomatically, blaming the West for threatening Russia's security. China also has strongly condemned Western sanctions against Moscow.

Russia, in turn, has consistently voiced support for Beijing on issues related to Taiwan.

Last month, Ukraine reported capturing two Chinese soldiers who were fighting for Russia and claimed there were more than 150 others deployed alongside Moscow's forces. Beijing disavowed any official involvement,

saying it also told its citizens not to get involved in foreign conflicts. Reports suggested the men were mercenaries who had answered online ads.

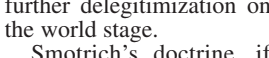
India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi 1, another top ally whom Putin has courted, had been expected in Moscow but he canceled his trip amid tensions with Pakistan after an attack in which gunmen opened fire on tourists in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

India, which has had persistent tensions with China, watched the strengthening of Russia-China relations with unease but sought to maintain close ties with Moscow. Russia is a major defense supplier for India since the Cold War, and New Delhi's importance as a key trading partner for Moscow has grown since the Kremlin sent troops into Ukraine. Just like China, India has become a key buyer of Russian oil following Western sanctions.

Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva also will be in Moscow for Victory Day, his first official trip to Moscow since the invasion of Ukraine. He twice visited Russia during his previous tenure as president in 2003-10.

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nations, must move beyond mere condemnation and take decisive political

The MAGA revolution may still fire up crowds in Bucharest and Belgrade – but its contradictions could just as easily burn those who embrace it.

to the present-day war on society fragmented. But Gaza and settlement expansions in the West Bank Smotrich's obsession with dismantling it signals a

countries" echoes the logic of the Nakba: remove the population, erase their his-

Smotrich's doctrine if

to act before that collapse consumes the lives of millions across the Middle East

World peace and security in the balance once again

This week, the world is celebrating the 80th anniversary of Europe's victory over Nazi fascism in the Second World War. However, after that victory was declared in early May 1945, all the warring parties — allies and foes, victors and vanquished — interpreted it in ways that best suited their narrative, or simply turned it into a purely ceremonial occasion.

Today, the world looks as splintered and conflict-ridden as it did in the late 1930s. The protagonists on all sides, whether democratic or autocratic, seem to be caving under the weight of disappearing trust, diminishing legitimacy, limited resources and ever more persistent global warming. Meanwhile, the glaring gap between rich and poor is increasingly prominent, with no real efforts being made to bridge it. Will anyone seek to save the era of relative peace, prosperity and rule of law-based order that has existed for the past 80 years?

For the victors in Europe who have been celebrating this week, the continent appears to be at the same point it was before the Second World War. The chaos overshadowing transatlantic relations, the war in Ukraine, the rise of ultranationalist and populist right politics, weak economic performance and ever lower satisfaction among the populace are a recipe for conflictive politics and an explosive, divisive narrative that could undermine European cohesion.

The victims of Nazi atrocities in Europe are being remembered at ceremonies this week. Veterans who fought in the war may be appearing for the last time due to old age, as their numbers continue to dwindle. The questions on everybody's mind are how much the war is remem-

bered and what lessons have been drawn from it.

Societies throughout the world and, alarmingly, the youth in particular, seem to know little about history and are at risk of repeating the mistakes of 80 years ago or tolerating new ones being made.

A simple reason for this is that the world system we live in seems to be under duress. One does not need to look very hard to see the killing fields dotting the world map today, accompa-

Mohamed Chebaro

down of the rules-based order established 80 years ago. The absurd failure of the international community to exert pressure on Israel and stop the killing, destruction and starvation of Gaza, regardless of the gravity of what Hamas committed on Oct. 7, 2023, is no less a crime than those committed during the Second World War and that inspire the Victory in Europe Day commemorations.

The same could be said

where. This friend voiced the concern, which is today shared by many people, that such wars are now tolerated and are even becoming normalized. For a moment, I felt unable to answer. Then I found myself repeating the need to keep engaging, believing and raising one's voice against carnage and injustice everywhere.

Later, when I looked at the figures as I was researching this article, it became clear that the task

budgets and funding for international agencies, major powers ought to double down on funding crucial peacemaking and peacekeeping organizations, regardless of their lack of immediate impact in many cases. President Donald Trump's blunders in his tariff, culture and other wars reduce certainty and weaken resolve everywhere. The US is \$1.2 billion in arrears to the UN's peacekeeping budget and maybe its funding will soon come to an end entirely.

In the complex world we live in, war and conflict are the products, not causes, of the global competition that has led to disorder. The origins of this disorder are primarily political, ideological or interest-driven. It could be attributed to historical rivalries, recent acts of instability or even political fragmentation and the rejection of globalization and the old international rulebook. This disorder is compounded by a less-than-upstanding tech realm that is fueling toxic narratives and distortions of truth, thus empowering the rising tide of populism and authoritarian right-wing politics disguised as ultranationalism.

But, in essence, it is primarily down to fear over-coming hope, resulting in a "me-first" mantra and all the prejudice and loss of faith, trust and moral purpose that comes with it.

Despite all that, despair could be the worst enemy for people all over the world. The Victory in Europe Day celebrations would be useless if people allowed themselves to be overwhelmed by the complexity and sheer volume of relentless, upsetting and challenging news stories. An "I don't care" attitude and loss of empathy, as witnessed in many circles today, could undermine the actions of those who sacrificed their lives 80 years ago.

Harvard talks free speech but silences Palestine

Lara Jirmanus

My sister was standing with a few other students under the dim glow of Harvard Yard's old lamp-posts, casually smoking and chatting. "Oh, you're Palestinian?" one of them asked as he leaned in to light his cigarette from hers. "My cousin is in the IDF [Israeli army]."

Then he placed the cigarette in his mouth backwards, the lit end burning between his teeth. "This is how my cousin smoked while shooting Palestinians at the border," he said. "So those idiots couldn't see the flame."

That evening, shaken, my sister called our parents and later reported the incident to her resident tutor. She searched for a way to file a formal complaint but found none. Arabs weren't considered a "protected class". In the charged political climate of late 2001, hate speech like this wasn't just tolerated — it was invisible.

More than two decades later, little has changed. A report released in April 2025 by the Harvard Presidential Task Force on Combating Anti-Muslim, Anti-Arab, and Anti-Palestinian Bias described a "deep-seated sense of fear" among Muslim and Arab students, faculty and staff. The campus climate, the report noted, was marked by "uncertainty, abandonment, threat, and isolation". Nearly half of Muslim students surveyed said they felt physically unsafe at Harvard while an overwhelming 92 percent of all Muslim students, faculty and staff revealed that they feared professional or academic consequences for expressing their personal or political views.

Harvard has fashioned itself as a free-speech warrior on the national stage for refusing to negotiate with the Trump administration on its sweeping demands for the university to drop its diversity, equity and inclusion measures and punish student protesters.

However, inside Harvard's campus walls, we have seen President Alan Garber oversee a systematic erasure of teaching, research and scholarship about Palestine, at a time when more than 51,000 Palestinians have been killed, and hundreds of thousands more have been forcefully displaced and are facing starvation under a relentless Israeli siege. Long before Harvard evaded a hostile takeover from our billionaire president, it capitulated to the demands of its billionaire donors in matters of student discipline, campus speech and academic freedom.

To please its right-wing donors, Harvard adopted a one-sided conceptualisation of campus safety, in which speaking up against Israeli state violence towards Palestinians is considered threatening. As a result, university administrators rush to address anti-Semitism on campus, as they should, but they also censor and eliminate speech and scholarship which is critical of Israel in the name of fighting antisemitism. Meanwhile, anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab racism, and Islamophobia are less than an afterthought. University administrators remain silent as students, faculty and staff experience doxxing, harassment and death threats for speaking up about Palestinian human rights. They have shared international students' information with the Department of Homeland Security, as students on nearby campuses have been abducted by masked Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers, detained and

deported for objecting to Israel's international law violations.

Beyond turning a blind eye to intimidation and abuse, the university's leaders also routinely take action to erase Palestinian speech, scholarship, advocacy and views.

Last year, the Harvard Corporation, the university's unelected governing body, overruled the faculty and barred 13 seniors from graduating for protesting the genocide in Gaza, breaking with decades of disciplinary precedent. The university has banned the only undergraduate Palestine advocacy group twice, through inconsistent enforcement of the university's ambiguous and "ever-evolving" event co-sponsorship policy, which, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) warned, "raise[s] the specter of viewpoint discrimination". In a little-publicised Title VI settlement from January, the US Department of Education found that Harvard failed to meaningfully investigate or sufficiently respond to 125 cases of discrimination and harassment reported through its anonymous reporting hotline, particularly those "based on Palestinian, Arab, and/or Muslim shared ancestry". Although President Garber has said Harvard should condemn "hateful speech" under the institutional voice policy, this did not apply to the gruesome "jokes" former Prime Minister Naftali Bennett made about giving students exploding pagers for interrupting his speech at Harvard Business School in March 2025.

The handful of teaching and research programs where faculty study Palestine at Harvard have been censored, eliminated, or are under threat of elimination. In a matter of months, Harvard cancelled a panel featuring Palestinian children from Gaza at Harvard Medical School, ended its only partnership with a Palestinian university, and eliminated the Religion and Public Life program at the Harvard Divinity School, which addressed Israel/Palestine as a case study. Harvard also dismissed the leadership of the Center for Middle East Studies, as an "offering of sorts to its critics", according to The New York Times.

The elimination of Harvard programmes about Palestine is especially chilling given that all of Gaza's universities have been demolished, more than 80 percent of its schools have been destroyed or damaged, and professors, teachers and students in Gaza have been systematically attacked. The UN calls this "scholasticide" — the systemic obliteration of education through the destruction of educational infrastructure and arrest, detention, or killing of students, staff, and teachers.

The erasure and elimination of knowledge production by Palestinians and about Palestine at Harvard and other universities chills speech in defence of Palestinian human rights in the US, and thus materially affects the safety of Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. At this time last year, campuses across the US experienced an unprecedented mobilisation in support of Palestinian freedom, which put a spotlight on the overwhelming public opposition to Israel's assault on Gaza. Eventually, the opposition to Israel's conduct against Palestinians became so vocal that then-President Joe Biden — an ardent supporter of Israel — threatened an arms embargo against Israel if the humanitarian situation in Gaza did not

improve.

Today, after Harvard and other universities suppressed protests against Israel's total war on Gaza, Palestinian suffering and death are met with growing silence in the US. As public and media attention drifts away from Gaza, the pressure on American leaders to intervene — or even acknowledge the scale of the crisis — has all but disappeared.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recently declared that "the humanitarian situation in Gaza is now likely the worst it has been in the 18 months since the outbreak of hostilities." Jonathan Whittall, the local head of OCHA, stressed that what's unfolding in Gaza no longer resembles conventional warfare. "People in Gaza are telling me they feel like it's the deliberate dismantling of Palestinian life in plain sight," he said. Malnutrition is surging as Israel has sealed the borders to food, medicine, and all humanitarian aid for over two months. Meanwhile, scenes that should shock the world — children's bodies thrown into the air by explosions, families burned alive — have become what Whittall called "everyday atrocities".

Both the Trump administration and Harvard's billionaire donors clearly understand the important role universities play in shaping US society and public opinion. As Harvard leaders proclaim their commitment to "viewpoint diversity", we can rest assured that we will hear more from speakers like Jared Kushner, who spoke at the Harvard Kennedy School last year about his plan to "finish the job" and develop Gaza's "valuable waterfront property", instead of Palestinian child amputees whose plight might make us feel uncomfortable or complicit.

It is heartening that hundreds of university presidents signed a letter opposing President Trump's attempted takeover of US higher education. But for decades, their institutions have eagerly bent to the will of billionaire donors. In just the past year and a half, these donors have shaped everything from campus speech to student discipline — even course syllabi. In this corrupt bargain, the concept of "campus safety" has been weaponised to suppress speech on what the UN and other human rights organisations have called genocide. The language of anti-discrimination has been twisted to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion programs — Harvard's own DEI office now quietly renamed the "Office of Community and Campus Life".

This moment cannot be separated from a broader history. It echoes the 1971 Lewis Powell memo, which outlined how corporations could infiltrate US institutions — especially universities — to align them with corporate interests. Today, the "Palestine exception" has become a key entry point for an ideological capture of higher education, decades in the making.

For Harvard and its peers to resist federal overreach while yielding to oligarchic donors is not resistance at all — it's surrender. If we don't fight both forces together, we may soon be unable to fight at all. If, as President Garber wrote, "the fearless and unfettered pursuit of truth liberates humanity," then he — and all of us — must demand that liberation without exceptions, caveats, or fear. For every single one of us.

A new regional order brings major challenges

If Francis Fukuyama can get it wrong about the end of history, I can take such a risk about the new regional order in the Middle East. Amid all its complexity, there might be a simple solution to the region's problems and it all boils down to coming to terms with the phenomenon of political Islam, with its various manifestations. Please note that I said "simple," I did not say "easy."

What I am trying to explain is that the new order may have one major challenge instead of a multiplicity of smaller ones. In every conflict in the region, if one digs deep enough, we find at its root an as-yet-unresolved relationship between religion and state. This is not specific to the Middle East, Europe struggled with this one for centuries. It may not even be a problem with religion; it is probably much more of a problem with the state. Religions have been there for centuries, states are the newcomers.

Relations between Islam and the state were much healthier in the liberal first half of the 20th century, before a new order of secular nationalists came about in the early 1950s and suppressed religion. Under the oppressive boot of military dictatorships, religion was radicalized and radicalism became contagious, spread-

ing across the region through Egyptian, Syrian and Iraqi militants.

There is little doubt that change is happening in the region. As if the advent of the US was not enough, the Gaza war has shaken up the region, with Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen all joining in through their nonstate actors — Islamist militias with links to Iran. These were the culmination of the Shiite revival that started in Iran in the 1950s, spreading through the region and becoming radicalized under suppression by the shah and Saddam Hussein.

The collapse of the Assad regime complicated matters but also made us revise our ideas. It all came too suddenly and challenged our perceptions and understanding of radical Sunni Islam. World leaders are sending their officials to snoop around and figure out the new Syrian leadership, while also meeting President Ahmad Al-Sharaa on the sidelines of international events.

Even the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was at the point of being resolved 30 years ago, when Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed the Oslo Accords. That was until it became a problem between the PLO and

Hamas, and it still is: the state represented by the PLO needs to find a way to coexist with a radicalized version of political Islam. It is true that Hamas won the 2006 elections, but that was almost two decades ago and a whole new generation has been born since. The EU and the US, which pushed for the elections to be held, had to reject the outcome and there have not been any elections since.

In Egypt, where the institution of the army has dominated politics since the 1950s, relations with the Muslim Brotherhood are also unresolved. Elections in 2011 after the so-called Arab Spring brought in Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood, but a massive popular revolt brought him down.

There are similar complex relations between the state and political Islam in Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco. Unresolved relations between religion and state may become part of a global revolt against politicians.

But again, it is not a simple division between religious and secular people. There is significant overlap, with individuals sometimes crossing from one side to the other. The French debate over radical Islam is interesting, partic-

ularly the analysis of Olivier Roy, who says that it is not Islam that is radicalized, it is radicalization that is Islamized. I tend to agree with this and there is plenty of evidence to support it, with Marxists and nationalists having joined Islamist movements, particularly in the 1980s. For them, religion was seen as a useful tool to recruit followers, in the same way Latin American liberation theology used Catholicism.

Two cases are illustrative of this phenomenon. Firstly, the Hezbollah military commander Imad Mughniyeh initially trained with the PLO in Lebanon. Part of the reason for him shifting allegiance was the PLO's support for Saddam Hussein in the Iran-Iraq War. The second is the case of a Christian Palestinian member of the PLO's student brigade, Munir Shafiq. Shafiq was a Maoist who converted to Sunni Islam and had great influence through his writings.

Israel is also not immune to this problem of the relationship between religion and state. The main division in the country is between the religious and the secular elements of society, both of which can go to extremes. Radical religious parties can have far more influence because

of the particularities of the electoral system. Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, operation also helped radical Jewish politicians win more support. Radicals from both sides indirectly support each other.

Turkiye is a perfect example of this division between religious and secular tendencies. Even Iran is changing. I am told by Iranian friends that in some areas of Tehran you might think you are in Paris, with art galleries and music concerts attended by a mixed audience and with women barely wearing their headscarves.

I may have simplified a complex problem for the sake of understanding it better. A new order in the region will have to resolve the issue of the relationship between religion and state, but there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Every society will have to find its own way of dealing with this regionwide challenge.

A new order is not announced on state television or through communiques; it evolves by millions of individuals going through a process of revisiting their ideas. We do not need aid, we need to get our act together.

After more than 70 turbulent years in the history of the region, a new generation may be looking for something better.

Nadim Shehadi

Dr. Dania Koleilat Khatib

boosting its confidence and arrogance.

Hezbollah, targeted by Israel, feels very insecure. Today, the group's main aim is to secure its survival. Less than a year ago, it had full control of the country, but now its future as a political group is in doubt. Hezbollah has agreed to abide by Resolution 1701. It has agreed to disarm. However, precedents show that the stories of those who disarmed in the past did not have a happy ending.

Muammar Qaddafi was bombed after he gave away his chemical weapons stock. Iraq was invaded after Saddam Hussein destroyed his Samoud missiles. In Lebanon, the Lebanese Forces faced a

grim outcome after they disarmed at the end of the civil war.

Their leader, Samir Geagea, was imprisoned on bogus charges. Hezbollah definitely does not want to face the same fate as the Lebanese Forces.

Hezbollah is facing a dilemma. Its weapons are the reason it, and Lebanon, is being targeted. However, they are also its only negotiating card. If it gives them up, it has nothing, no leverage. The group's insecurity is understandable. However, the fate of the country cannot be jeopardized just to serve the interest of one group.

Israel has been targeting Hezbollah's leaders. On the other hand, the group's

transgressions throughout the years — and the fact it brought war to Lebanon because of its support front for Gaza — have created a lot of anger among the rest of the Lebanese. Hence, the group faces both internal and external threats.

Despite the fact it is weakened, Hezbollah still has support among the Shiite community. The group can portray any effort to contain it as an effort to corner this community.

This, of course, can lead to internal unrest, especially since the Shiites have suffered the bulk of the destruction wreaked by Israel. Though Hezbollah does not have enough firepower to fight a war with Israel, it has enough arms and grassroots support to

initiate a civil war. So, it has to be dealt with intelligently.

Israel is saying it is in Lebanon because Hezbollah is not fully disarmed, while the group is saying there is no guarantee Israel will stop its aggression if it were to disarm. We are in a chicken and egg situation. Which should come first? The best way to solve this conundrum would be a step-by-step approach. This would allow Hezbollah to save face and transition into a political party, without the appearance of having suffered a total defeat by Israel.

The US is demanding the group's disarmament "as soon as possible." This should go hand in hand with a full Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. A

timetable for both should be put on the table. The Lebanese military should immediately fill the positions vacated by the Israeli military.

Tying Hezbollah's disarmament to the Israeli withdrawal would compel the group to comply. How could it refuse to disarm if it would directly lead to the liberation of Lebanon from Israel?

Aoun is right to follow the path of dialogue with Hezbollah to solve the issue of its arms. However, to make sure he can accomplish his task successfully and without any internal clashes, the US should pressure Israel to offer a timetable for its withdrawal from Lebanon that is linked to the disarmament of the group.



PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 3,559.48 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bearish trend on Wednesday, losing 3,559.48 points, a negative change of 3.13 percent, closing at 110,009.03 points as compared to 113,568.51 points on the last trading day.

A total of 550,076,224 shares were traded during the day as compared to 420,552,852 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 30.121 billion against Rs 23.696 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 447 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 49 of them recorded gains and 356 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 42 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 53,673,828 shares at Rs 1.22 per share,

Bank of Punjab with 35,773,964 shares at Rs 9.18 per share and Sui South Gas with 26,711,578 shares at Rs 32.47 per share.

PIA Holding Company LimitedB witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 581.16 per share closing at Rs 6,392.75 whereas runner-up was Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited with Rs 240.55 rise in its share price to close at Rs 22,531.29.

Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 150.56 per share price, closing at Rs 8,824.44, whereas the runner-up Hoechst Pakistan Limited with Rs 109.41 decline in its per share price to Rs 3,185.00.

Rupee sheds 10 paisa against US Dollar

The Rupee on Wednesday depreciated by 10 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and

closed at Rs 281.47 against the previous day's closing of Rs 281.37.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 281.65 and Rs 283.15, respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs0.82 to close at Rs 319.82 against the last day's closing of Rs 319.00, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.96, whereas an increase of Rs 1.03 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 375.79 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 374.76.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 and 02 paisa to close at Rs 76.63 and Rs 75.03

respectively.

Gold prices increase Rs800 to 356,900 per tola

The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs.800 on Wednesday and was sold at Rs.356,900 against its sale at Rs.356,100 on the previous trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs.684 to Rs.305,984 from Rs 305,300 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat increased by Rs.627 to Rs.280,495 from Rs.279,868.

The rates of per tola silver and ten gram silver remained unchanged and closed at Rs3,482 and Rs.2,985 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$8 to \$3,385 from \$3,377 whereas that of silver remained stagnant to close at \$33.00, the Association reported.



ISLAMABAD: Political and Trade Counselor Daniel Arsenaault meeting with Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik.

All airports remain fully operational

F.P. Report

KARACHI: All airports across Pakistan remain fully operational, and the country's airspace continues to be open and secure for civil aviation activities.

Pakistan has formally conveyed its concerns to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) regarding the serious risks posed to civil aviation safety by India's reckless and provocative actions.

The Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA), through the safe and efficient management of national airspace, continues to ensure the secure and uninterrupted movement of both local and international commercial flights.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships, GFS Juno, Hyundai Hong Kong, MSC Positano and Silver Monika Container and Sun Flower oil/ Soya Bean oil, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal and Liquid Cargo Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile, two more ships, Alfred and Nave Cielo scheduled to load/offload Fuel oil and Gas oil, also arrived at the outer anchorage during the last 24 hours.

A total of eight ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a Gasoline carrier 'Pelegic Tarapon' left the port today morning, while three more ships, GFS Juno, Hyundai Hong Kong and MSC Positano expected to sail.

Cargo volume of 180,717 tonnes, comprising 103,971 tonnes imports cargo and 76,746 export cargo carried in 5,795 Containers (2,197 TEUs Imports & 3,598 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

Transparency key to increase revenue collection: Jameel

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Commissioner Inland Revenue, Peshawar Zone, Dr. Syed Farooq Jameel, emphasized that a comprehensive strategy and relentless hard work are essential for enhancing revenue collection. Addressing a special meeting with Additional Commissioners and Unit Officers at his office, he stated that integrity, transparency, and teamwork must be the guiding principles in the discharge of duties.

He remarked that the more revenue we collect, the stronger the country's economy will become, providing ample funds for development projects. He stressed the need to rise above personal interests and think in terms of national progress. To tackle economic challenges effectively, he said, we must demonstrate focus and expertise.

Dr. Jameel noted that tax officers can play a crucial role in creating a conducive environment for promoting a tax culture. He assured that officers who demonstrate strong performance will certainly be encouraged and appreciated.

However, he also issued a stern warning that any complaints regarding negligence, sluggishness, or corruption will be dealt with promptly and strictly.

He further stated that, in line with the federal government's policy and the directives of Chief Commissioner Yasir Ali, an effective and long-term monitoring system has been established at the zonal level to assess the performance and integrity of tax officers. He instructed Additional Commissioners to submit weekly performance reports of unit officers for his review.

SECP assures market stability amidst current situation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has convened an emergent meeting to assess the situation in the wake of geopolitical tension in the region.

In order to preserve market stability and investor confidence at this time, the SECP reaffirms its commitment to ensure continuity in capital market operations, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

The Capital Market Infrastructure Institutions (CMIIs), including Pakist-

an Stock Exchange, National Clearing Company of Pakistan and Central Depository Company also participated in the meeting.

They assured that robust and efficient risk management measures are in place for ensuring smooth functioning of Pakistan's capital markets.

In response to the current situation, the SECP has advised all CMIIs to immediately enhance their security protocols and operational continuity measures.

This includes strengthening cybersecurity defenses

es across all trading, risk management, clearing, and settlement systems and activating full business continuity plans.

The CMIIs were further advised to reinforce their physical security arrangements at all facilities.

The SECP remains vigilant and will issue further updates, as necessary.

Market participants are encouraged to continue operations as usual, with the SECP and CMIIs closely monitoring developments to safeguard market integrity.

CCP allows secure logistics group to acquire Trax Online

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved the 100% acquisition of Trax Online (Pvt.) Ltd. by Secure Logistics Group Ltd. under a Share Purchase Agreement. Both parties had submitted a pre-merger application in line with the Competition Act, 2010.

The CCP's review iden-

tified the relevant product market as Courier and E-Commerce Logistics Services in Pakistan, said a release on Wednesday.

The deal is a conglomerate merger with no horizontal or vertical overlaps. CCP concluded that the transaction will not result in dominance or lessen competition in the relevant market.

Secure Logistics Group Ltd. (SLGL) is a public listed company offering long-haul and medium-haul logistics, asset tracking, fleet management, and security services. Trax Online (Pvt.) Ltd. is a private company focused on warehousing and door-to-door delivery for e-commerce clients.

Govt to ease in regulations in compliance for business community



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The FPCCI Federal Capital Standing Committee on Corporate and Multinational Companies Affairs held its 4th meeting at FPCCI Capital office. Meeting was chaired by Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh President FPCCI and Convener Muhammad Shafique Swati convened the meeting by sharing TORs of the committee.

Mr. Tariq Khan Jadoon VP, Mr. Karim Aziz Malik Chairman Capital office and Malik Sohail Hussain Chairman Coordination also graced the meeting.

Maj (R) Kamal Mustafa,

Director RUDN Enclave discussed the current economic situation of real estate industry. He emphasized that government must declare hospitality sector as Industry and FPCCI can play vital role to facilitate this act.

Rashid Humayon Chairman CIBEO appreciated the efforts of committee also stated that self reliance and business development are the key factors of the economic success.

Mr. KWIBUKA Esdras from High Commission Republic of Rawanda, Islamic Republic of Pakistan stated that "collaboration among Rawanda and Pakistan in various sec-

tors is needed to boost their respective economy of both countries. Pakistan must work on relaxing trade rules and visa policies.

Chief guest, Mr. Tanveer Sultan Awan, Chairman Hajvairy Technologies (PVT) Ltd(Aviation & Allied Services) emphasized that FPCCI is a Bridge between the business community and the Regulatory bodies. Economic development is only possible if FPCCI focus on Research and Development to explore opportunities, business feasibility and for smooth trade among countries. There are macro factors

which effect the business at all levels. He added that there must be a neutral body that can resolve issues amicably.

President FPCCI, Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh concluded the meeting by appreciating the efforts of the committee and also thanked the all participants. He added that the economy is enhanced by implementing policies and actions that stimulate growth and increase productivity.

Dy. Convener Dr. Hayyam Qayyoom showed the video to the guests covering various sectors for foreign investments, expertise and technologies.

Ms. Ayesha Khan, Mr. Asim Abbasi, Dr. Joharia Azhar, Mr. Ifikhar Ahmed Awan, Agha Amjad, Mr. Shahid Sheikh, Mr. Arshad Janjua, Ch. Asad Allah, Ms. Mahnoor Qureshi and Mr. Hassan Zeb Khan shared their views regarding good governance, reducing corruption and creating stable business environment to attract the local and foreign investments. It's vital that expanding trade opportunities, ensuring access to finance and promoting sustainable practices also contribute to long-term economic strength.

PSW and DRAP conduct training on export module

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Single Window (PSW) and the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) jointly organized a significant training session on the export module at the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI).

The session saw strong participation from local exporters, especially from the pharmaceutical sector,

said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of ICCI, described the integration of DRAP into the PSW platform as a transformative step.

This integration is not just a digital shift, it is a strategic reform aligned with global trade facilitation goals. He also acknowledged the dedicated efforts of both PSW and

DRAP in making this reform a reality.

"This platform empowers exporters to navigate regulatory processes more seamlessly and at reduced costs," Qureshi added.

"With compliance simplified for over 800 pharmaceutical exporters and more than 400 API importers nationwide, we are entering a new era of efficiency and global

alignment."

Qureshi highlighted ICCI's continued commitment to supporting its members through this transition.

He urged all stakeholders to embrace the PSW system fully, participate in training and capacity-building initiatives, and utilize the exporter helpdesks being established for guidance and support.

Pakistan Army is the army of the state and our defender

Abdul Basit Alvi

Director General (DG) Inter Service Public Relation (ISPR) has maintained active engagement with youth and students, reinforcing transparency and communication. During a recent press briefing, he addressed a question by underscoring a vital principle: the Pakistan Army is an institution of the state, not affiliated with any individual or political party. He emphasized that the Army serves the state and operates upon request, extending continuous support to city governments and civil administrations. He also highlighted the Army's significant contributions to civil works across the country.

The Army also mirrors Pakistan's rich linguistic diversity. Personnel are recruited from across the country, representing a wide array of regional languages and dialects. Although Urdu serves as the national language and primary medium of communication, the military encourages linguistic inclusivity. Soldiers often speak in their native tongues—such as Punjabi, Pakhtu, Sindhi,

Balochi, and others—creating a multilingual environment. To promote understanding and operational efficiency, language training programs are offered where needed, ensuring effective communication across all ranks and units.

Cultural diversity is another vibrant aspect of military life. Soldiers bring with them the unique traditions, cuisines, customs, and practices of their regions, enriching the collective identity of the Pakistan Army. This multiculturalism is not only respected but actively celebrated through events such as cultural festivals, regional heritage days, and traditional ceremonies. These initiatives foster mutual respect, promote unity in diversity, and strengthen camaraderie among troops from all backgrounds.

Teamwork is essential to the Army's success and is grounded in mutual respect and shared purpose rather than individual ambition. Soldiers are taught to value the contributions of every team member, regardless of rank, ensuring that collaboration and coordination are prioritized. The Army's strict code of conduct,

which applies both in and out of uniform, emphasizes the importance of treating others with decency and respect. Arrogance and rudeness are not tolerated; instead, humility, selflessness, and a sense of honor are considered defining qualities of a true soldier.

At the heart of every Pakistan Army soldier lies a core principle: to serve the nation above personal interest. This sense of duty fosters a culture of selfless service, ensuring that the military remains a force not only of strength but also of integrity and humanity. Soldiers in the Pakistan Army remain dedicated to the collective mission, placing the nation's interests above personal recognition. By prioritizing national service over individual pride, they uphold humility and avoid actions that could compromise the Army's goals or tarnish its reputation.

Leadership within the Pakistan Army is grounded in integrity, empathy, and mutual respect. Officers and commanding personnel play a crucial role in shaping the values, behavior, and discipline of those under their command.

Leadership that emphasizes compassion and selflessness fosters a culture where arrogance is rejected, and professionalism prevails. Officers in the Pakistan Army are expected to lead by example, embodying the highest standards of conduct. They are accessible, fair, and supportive—providing guidance when needed and fostering a respectful, disciplined environment. This emphasis on respectful leadership sets a positive tone across all ranks, cultivating a culture of mutual regard and professionalism throughout the Army.

Military leaders are also trained to resolve conflicts through diplomacy, ensuring fairness and dignity in their interactions. They are attentive to the emotional and psychological well-being of their troops, and by prioritizing communication, empathy, and understanding, they help maintain a supportive and respectful atmosphere—free from unnecessary hostility or harshness.

The professionalism of the Pakistan Army extends beyond its internal operations to the international stage. Whether participating in peacekeeping mis-

sions, joint military exercises, or diplomatic engagements with foreign forces, Army personnel consistently represent Pakistan with honor and integrity. Their conduct adheres to international military standards, reflecting the Army's commitment to global norms of discipline and decorum.

The Pakistan Army has a longstanding and respected presence in United Nations peacekeeping operations, where its soldiers serve alongside multinational forces. In these diverse environments, Pakistani troops emphasize diplomacy, cooperation, and mutual respect, strengthening the shared mission of global peace and stability.

In addition to peacekeeping, the Army regularly engages in joint training and defense collaboration with foreign militaries. In all such interactions, Pakistani soldiers uphold the highest standards of professionalism and courtesy, reinforcing a positive image of the Army and the nation it represents. This dedication to respectful engagement underscores the Army's ethos—one that rejects arrogance and

embraces humility.

The Pakistan Army's reputation—both at home and internationally—is built on its consistent adherence to professionalism, discipline, and respect. Whether serving the public during crises, supporting humanitarian efforts, or representing the nation abroad, Pakistani soldiers demonstrate integrity in every aspect of their service. Their humility and respectful conduct inspire trust among the Pakistani people and earn admiration from the global community. Domestically, the Army is widely regarded as a guardian of the nation and a pillar of stability, owing to its steadfast commitment to national unity and its leading role in responding to challenges, from natural disasters to periods of political uncertainty. This trust is earned through the Army's humility, professionalism, and steadfast dedication to serving the people. On the global stage, the Pakistan Army's reputation for professionalism and respect has solidified its position as a highly regarded military force. Through peacekeeping mis-

sions, and diplomatic initiatives, the Pakistan Army is recognized for its discipline, outreach, and commitment to maintaining high standards of conduct in diverse environments.

In today's digital age, where information spreads quickly, managing the narrative is as crucial as any military operation. Among the various threats to national security, the spread of misinformation, propaganda, and disinformation can severely impact the reputation of institutions, governments, and even the nation as a whole. As one of Pakistan's most respected institutions, the Army has faced significant challenges in this area, as hostile narratives and misinformation are often used to undermine its efforts and tarnish its image. In this regard, Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, has played a pivotal role in countering misinformation and presenting the truth about Pakistan and its armed forces. His leadership, professionalism, and commitment to transparency have made him a key figure in combating harm-

ful propaganda and promoting a positive image of Pakistan and the Army, both at home and abroad. His clear, diplomatic communication has been essential in countering negative portrayals and fostering a balanced, accurate narrative.

Furthermore, his efforts to engage with the youth and encourage open dialogue have been particularly well-received, earning him praise from Pakistan's younger generation.

Court Notice

In the court of Muhammad Ismail senior civil judge/judge family court-I swat. Case # 57/FC. Institution 06/03/2025. Next Hearing date 12/05/2025. Mst. Saima etc VS. Shams uddin etc. Notice to: (1) Shams uddin s/o Fazal Akbar r/o tour tot kashwara tehsil Charbagh district Swat. Mob.0344-0187429 Presently Abroad. Whereas the above named defendant cannot be served in ordinary manner it is therefore proclaimed or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court on 12/05/2025. at 8.30 am. Ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against you. seal of the court.



In brief

Two riders taken to hospital after NW200 incident

LONDON (Agencies): Two riders have been taken to hospital after an incident during the Supersport qualifying session on the first day of practice for the North West 200 on Wednesday. One rider was transported to hospital by ambulance while the other was taken from the circuit by air ambulance. "Two riders were involved in an incident at Mill Road roundabout on the NW200 course six minutes into the Supersport qualifying session," read a statement from race organisers. "Both riders were injured in the incident and the on-course medical team attended the scene. The riders were subsequently transferred to hospital, one by road ambulance and the other by air ambulance." Red flags had been displayed to halt the Supersport session in the early stages of their practice and a lengthy delay ensued before the bikes were allowed back on the course to complete two laps before practice concluded for the day and the roads reopened. Earlier in the delay, the opening Superbike session was twice delayed by oil deposits on the circuit which required red flags to be displayed. Further practice is scheduled to take place on Thursday, with roads closing from 09:00 BST to 15:00, followed by three scheduled races on Thursday evening.

PSL X to continue as scheduled

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Pakistan Cricket Board has confirmed that HBL Pakistan Super League X will continue as planned with Islamabad United set to take on Quetta Gladiators later today at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium. The toss will take place at 7.30pm, with the first ball to be bowled at 8pm. Tonight's match sees the return of HBL PSL to Rawalpindi for four matches on 7, 8, 9 and 10 May. Thereafter the final group stage match is scheduled in Multan on 11 May. The Qualifier is set to take place in Rawalpindi on 13 May, while both Eliminator (1 and 2) and Final of the marquee event are to take place on 14, 16 and 18 May, respectively at the Gaddafi Stadium.

Simbine shrugs off 'nearly man' tag

PARIS (AFP): In-form South African sprinter Akani Simbine insists he is no "nearly man" despite missing a podium finish in the men's 100m at the last three Olympics by a combined total of just eight-hundredths of second. The 31-year-old finished fifth at the 2016 Rio Olympics before successive fourth places at the 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris Games. While he was three-hundredths of a second off the pace in Rio and four-hundredths away in Tokyo, he missed out on an individual Olympic medal in the French capital to Fred Kerley by just one-hundredth of a second. His participation at the world championships have seen him place fifth (2017), fourth (2019) and fifth (2022) in the 100m. Simbine did eventually bag a global medal by anchoring South Africa to Olympic silver in the 4x100m relay in Paris. He followed that up with world indoor bronze over 60m in Nanjing in March, a result that fired his season off and since then he has lined up three wins over 100m, including at the two opening Diamond League meets in China. "People say that I'm the nearly man, I don't see it like that," Simbine told reporters ahead of this weekend's world relays in Guangzhou.



RAWALPINDI: Hasan Nawaz and Rilee Rossouw get together.

Trump: 2026 WC an 'incentive' for Russia to end Ukraine war

WASHINGTON (Agencies): President Donald Trump has said that the opportunity to compete at football's 2026 World Cup could be an "incentive" for Russia to end the war with Ukraine. Russian national teams have been banned from international competitions by both FIFA and UEFA since 2022, days after the country's invasion of Ukraine. Qualification for the 2026 World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico began in 2023, with 45 spots up for grabs in addition to the host nations. Speaking alongside FIFA President Gianni Infantino at the first meeting of his administration's World Cup taskforce, Trump said he

was unaware that Russia would be excluded under current rules, but suggested that ending the war could pave the way for their reinstatement. "I didn't know that, is that right?" Trump said. "You want to explain that?" "That is right," replied Infantino. "They are banned for the time being from playing but we hope that something happens and peace will happen so that Russia can be readmitted." Trump responded: "That's possible. Hey, could be a good incentive, right?" "We want to get them to stop. We want them to stop. 5,000 people a week are being killed -- it's not even believable. We're going to get that war stopped."

European qualification for next summer's tournament officially started with the Nations League in March. A total of 16 UEFA nations will qualify for the World Cup. Russia haven't played a competitive fixture since a 2022 World Cup qualifying defeat to Croatia in November 2021. They have played 16 friendlies since then, winning 11 of them. Infantino said at a UEFA congress in April that he wanted to bring Russia back "in the football landscape because this would mean that everything is solved." UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin added: "When the war stops, [Russia] will be readmitted."

Amorim eyes European glory with 'worst' Man Utd team in history

LONDON (AFP): Ruben Amorim says nothing will change if he wins the Europa League with the "worst" Manchester United team in Premier League history. United are currently a lowly 15th in the 20-team table -- and only scraped through to the last four of the Europa League after a remarkable comeback against Lyon. But they now have one foot in the final after a 3-0 semi-final first leg win against Athletic Bilbao last week ahead of Thursday's return encounter at Old Trafford. An all-English final is in prospect should Tottenham Hotspur defeat Bodo/Glimt, giving the sides 15th and 16th in the Premier League at present a chance to win a continental trophy, with the considerable added bonus of qualifying for the Champions League. "In the end of this season, we can be the worst (United) team in Premier League history with a European title, so it will change nothing," Amorim told reporters on Wednesday. "We know that this season was really disappointing for everybody. Nothing is going to change," added United manager Amorim, who took charge of the fallen English giants after replacing the sacked Erik ten Hag in November. "Lose our mind" United may be well-placed but Amorim believes they must guard against their tendency to "lose our mind a little bit" if they are to reach a final that will be played at Bilbao's San Mames ground on May 21.

Casemiro's header and two goals from skipper Bruno Fernandes in Bilbao put them in a strong position in Spain, with the hosts reduced to 10 men following Dani Vivian's red card. All 133 teams in the competition's history to have scored three or more goals away from home in the first leg have gone through. But Amorim is taking nothing for granted and believes United must score at least one more goal to book their place in the final. "If you look at our season, anything is possible, so we have to understand one goal can change anything, the momentum of the game," he said. "One sending off, you saw it a week ago, so we are prepared to fight to win the game not thinking about the result. "Of course that matters and the way we are going to do things, especially when we start the game, but of course we are thinking about winning the game." Athletic face a tough task, but United have lost 3-0 at Old Trafford three times so far this season and were beaten 4-3 at Brentford last weekend. "I feel that we need to score to go to the next round, so that is clearly the way we are going to face the game," Amorim said. Athletic boss Ernesto Valverde insisted his side still have a chance of a stunning victory despite the absence of four key players. Vivian is suspended after his first leg red card, while Nico and Inaki Williams have been ruled out through injury, along with top scorer Oihan Sanctet.

Gladiators beat United by 109 runs after Rossouw, Nawaz tons

RAWALPINDI (Monitoring Desk): Quetta Gladiators defeated Islamabad United by 109 runs after posting a record total in their PSL 10 game on Wednesday. Chasing 264, the defending champions were bowled out for 154 in 19.3 overs despite Imad Wasim's 56 off 41 balls. Islamabad United were off to a horrible start as they lost their openers, Kyle Mayers and Sahibzada Farhan on the team total of two. Mohammad Amir dismissed both batters in the very first over of United's innings. Salman Agha became Amir's third victim after scoring just six runs, with the scoreboard showing 19/3 in three overs. The dismissal sparked a collapse that saw Mohammad Shahzad perish for 24, while Mohammad Nawaz managed to score just 10 runs before his dismissal. Haider Ali and Azam Khan made six runs each before their dismissal as Islamabad United were reduced to 58/7 in 7.1 overs. Following the dismissal of Jason Holder (3), Imad Wasim and Ben Dwarshuis offered some resistance with a 55-run stand to take the defending champions to 123 in 16.4 overs. Dwarshuis fell to Saud Shakeel on 24

while Imad Wasim was the last batter to be dismissed as Quetta Gladiators wrapped Islamabad United's innings for 154 in the last over. For the Gladiators, Mohammad Amir picked up three wickets, Mohammad Wasim Jr. and Abrar Ahmed took two wickets each, while Khurram Shahzad, Faheem Ashraf and Saud Shakeel chipped in with a wicket each. Earlier, the Gladiators posted 263/3 in their 20 overs, surpassing Multan Sultans' 262-run total in 2023. Finn Allen was the first batter to fall after scoring five off four balls. His opening partner, Saud Shakeel, was then joined by Rilee Rossouw, and the two took the side to 60. Shakeel was dismissed after scoring 23 off 18 balls, with the scoreboard showing 60/2 in 5.4 overs. It was then Hasan Nawaz and Rilee Rossouw show as they went on the offensive against the Islamabad United bowlers. The two added 134 runs for the second wicket to take Gladiators to 194 in 15.5 overs. Rilee Rossouw fell to Imad Wasim after smashing 104 off 46 balls, with the help of 14 fours and six sixes. Hasan Nawaz completed his ton with a four on the last ball of the final

over. He remained unbeaten on 100 off 45 balls, laced with four fours and nine sixes. Playing XIs Quetta Gladiators: Saud Shakeel (c), Abrar Ahmed, Hassan Nawaz, Mohammad Amir, Mark Chapman, Rilee Rossouw, Kusal Mendis (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jr., Faheem Ashraf, Khurram Shahzad, and Fin Allen. Islamabad United: Kyle Mayers, Sahibzada Farhan, Salman Ali Agha (c), Haider Ali, Azam Khan (wk), Muhammad Nawaz, Jason Holder, Ben Dwarshuis, Imad Wasim, Muhammad Shahzad, and Naseem Shah. The 10th edition of the Pakistan Super League kicked off on April 11 and will run till May 18. The six-team tournament will consist of 34 matches with Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium hosting 13 matches, including the two Eliminator and the final. Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium will host 11 PSL 10 matches, including the first Qualifier on May 13, while Multan Cricket Stadium will host five matches. Karachi's National Bank Stadium has hosted five games of the ongoing edition.

Haliburton stunner sinks Cavs as Pacers take 2-0 series lead

LOS ANGELES (AFP/APP): Tyrese Haliburton scored a dramatic three-pointer with just over a second remaining as the Indiana Pacers stunned the top-seeded Cleveland Cavaliers 120-119 to take a commanding 2-0 lead in their NBA Eastern Conference semi-final series on Tuesday. Haliburton's ice-cold 24-foot step-back three with just 1.1 seconds left on the clock completed a remarkable comeback from fourth seeds Indiana and leaves Cleveland in a daunting position as the best-of-seven series heads back to Indianapolis. Donovan Mitchell had almost single-handedly dragged an injury-depleted Cleveland to victory with a masterful performance, scoring 48 points in a game the Cavs led by 20 points midway through the third quarter. But Cleveland, missing injured starters Darius



Garland, Evan Mobley, and DeAndre Hunter, wilted visibly down the stretch as a dogged Pacers line-up refused to roll over and steadily chipped away at the Cavaliers' lead. Cleveland forward Max Strus looked to have put the Cavs on course for victory after draining his fifth three-pointer of the night to put the home side 117-110 up with just over a minute remaining. Indiana, though, closed with a 10-2 run in the final minute, culminating with

group has a belief in one another and we just keep executing and keep playing." Pacers point guard Haliburton finished with 19 points while Aaron Nesmith and Myles Turner scored 23 points apiece. Six Indiana players finished in double figures. Mitchell's 48-point performance was backed by Strus with 23 points while Jarrett Allen added 22. Cleveland coach Kenny Atkinson said his team had "ran out of gas." "We outplayed them for most of the game," Atkinson said. "We couldn't really separate ourselves. Every possession, they just upped their physicality. We ran out of gas." "But with fatigue comes decision-making, and we had some poor decision-making. That was part of the collapse." Game three in the series takes place in Indianapolis on Friday.

Canada to host 2026 World Squash Jr C'ships

ISLAMABAD (APP): Canada will welcome the global squash community from July 20 to 31, 2026 as the official host of the World Squash Junior Championships. This annual international event featuring the world's top junior athletes will be held at the Mark Sachvie Squash Center at White Oaks Resort and Spa in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, and will be supported by the brand-new Jack Aylott Center at Ridley College, said a press release. "Squash Canada is honored to be selected as the host of the 2026 World Squash Junior Championships," said Jamie Nicholls, Squash Canada Chief Executive Officer. "On behalf of Squash Canada and our event partners, we look forward to welcoming the global community to Canada for a celebration of the future of our sport. We thank World Squash for awarding us this prestigious event at such an important time. With our Olympic era upon us, squash has the wind at its sails, and we intend to build on that momentum with a truly memorable World Junior Championships." White Oaks, a Canada Select Five Star and CAA Four Diamond resort, boasts three restaurants, a renowned spa, a multi-storey fitness centre and racquet club. It will also showcase the all-glass Jonathon Power Court throughout the event. Complimenting

the primary venue will be Ridley College's brand-new Jack Aylott Center which features four stunning glass-back courts, plus the three-wall glass exhibition Caldwell Court. White Oaks last hosted the 2014 Women's World Team Championships and is the standing venue for the annual Canadian Junior Open held in December. The 2026 Championships will present a full slate of elite junior competition, featuring both the Junior Men's and Women's Individual Championships as well as the Junior Men's and Women's Team Championships. With over 200 of the world's top-performing Under-19 athletes expected to compete and delegations from all five Continental Federations, the championship will be a vibrant showcase of emerging international squash talent. World Squash Chief Executive Officer William Louis-Marie said, "World Squash is thrilled to partner with Squash Canada for the 2026 World Squash Junior Championships. Canada has a rich history in squash, and we are confident that their passion and expertise will create an outstanding experience for athletes and fans alike. This event will be a wonderful celebration of junior squash, and we are eager to collaborate with Squash Canada to ensure its success. Canada will host the World Squash

Junior Championships for the first time since the early 1980s, when Calgary staged the junior men's event in 1984 and Ottawa held the inaugural junior women's championship in 1981. The return of world juniors to Canadian soil follows a historic podium finish for Canada's junior women's team at the 2024 World Junior Championships in Houston, where the squad (Hermione Cao, Ocean Ma, Spring Ma and Maria Min) earned a bronze medal. The event will also tie in historic junior men's finishes as Nicholas Sachvie, a member of the 2010 bronze medal team, will serve as tournament co-chair alongside Matt Easingwood. "White Oaks is honored to host the 2026 World Junior Championships and looks forward to welcoming the global squash community to our facility," said Nicholas Sachvie. "This event holds a special place on the squash calendar and has served as a proving ground for the best squash players on the planet for over 40 years. We look forward to seeing the next wave of talent make their mark on the history of the sport." As Squash Canada and the squash world continue to prepare for our Olympic era, the 2026 World Squash Junior Championships will continue to serve as a launching pad for the future of the sport and its incredible athletes.

Rohit Sharma announces retirement from Test cricket



NEW DELHI (AFP): India captain Rohit Sharma on Wednesday announced his retirement from Test cricket ahead of the team's tour of England starting next month, but will continue to play the

shorter 50-over format. In 67 Tests, Rohit scored 4,301 runs including 12 centuries with a best of 212 against South Africa in 2019 and an average of over 40. He captained India in 24 Tests

with 12 wins, nine defeats and three draws. "Hello everyone I would just like to share that I am retiring from Test cricket," the 38-year-old Rohit wrote on Instagram. "It's been an absolute honour to represent my country in whites. Thank you for all the love and support over the years. I will continue to represent India in the ODI format." Rohit, who quit T20 internationals alongside Virat Kohli after India's World Cup triumph in Barbados last year, recently led the team to an ODI Champions Trophy title in Dubai. India will begin a five-Test series in England in June-July and the team now needs a new Test skipper. India's cricket board said, "Rohit Sharma has informed us of his decision to retire from

Test cricket. A legend of the red-ball game." "We will soon announce a new Test captain -- it's time for the next generation to rise." Rohit's last Test was in Melbourne last year when India lost to Australia by 184 runs. He stood down as captain in the fifth Test in Sydney due to poor batting form but India went on to lose the match and the five-match series 2-1. Jasprit Bumrah was Rohit's deputy in Australia and led the team in the first Test, which Rohit missed due to the birth of his second child, and the final Test. "Priceless" Rohit managed just 31 runs in five innings of his three outings Down Under and the Indian media speculated that he could retire from Test cricket

et after the series. The captain, nicknamed 'Hitman' for getting to big scores quickly -- especially in white-ball, also had a poor home series against Bangladesh and New Zealand late last year. Rohit's India won both the Tests against Bangladesh, but New Zealand handed a rare 3-0 whitewash to the hosts. Rohit began his Test career in 2013, but it was five years later that he came into his own in the five-day format as a swashbuckling opener and later took over as captain from Kohli. "As player and as captain, you were a joy and India will say a big thank you to you," veteran commentator Harsha Bhogle posted on social media. "That century in Chennai, that one at the Oval, both

priceless. You walked out against South Africa to open as if you had done it all your life. Will look forward to watching and, hopefully calling, some more great moments in your ODI career." After India's defeat in Australia, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) mandated national players to participate in the domestic Ranji Trophy, forcing Rohit and Kohli to take field. Rohit's batting woes continued as he made three and 28 against Jammu and Kashmir, but he was retained as captain of the ODI team. Rohit is currently playing the Indian Premier League T20 tournament with Mumbai Indians and has endured a patchy season so far, scoring 300 runs in 11 matches.



In brief

IRSA releases 164,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 164,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 207,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1446.30 feet which was 44.30 feet higher than dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 97,900 cusecs and 102,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1137.80 feet, which was 87.80 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 45,200 cusecs and 32,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 99,500, 63,200, 39,800 and 9,800 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 36,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 16,800 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Two dacoits injured, nabbed after cross-firing
ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's arrested two dacoits in injured condition following an exchange of fire during a late-night operation in the jurisdiction of Golra Police Station on Wednesday. A police spokesperson told APP that the suspects, identified as Hamza and Jawad, had snatched a motorcycle and were attempting to flee when the police set up a checkpoint in response to a snatching call. He said the suspects opened fire upon seeing the police, which was met with a prompt and brave response. Both suspects were injured during the cross-firing and taken into custody. He said a 30-bore pistol and the snatched motorcycle were recovered from their possession. He said thanks to precautionary measures, all police personnel remained unharmed during the exchange. DIG Muhammad Jawad Tariq appreciated the swift action and bravery of the police team and announced rewards in recognition of their efforts.

Foolproof security arrangements

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police on Wednesday kept foolproof security and traffic arrangements in place for the Pakistan Super League (PSL) Season 10 matches being played here at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium. The 26th match of the mega cricket event between Quetta Gladiators and Islamabad United is scheduled to begin at 8 p.m. tonight. According to the police spokesman, some 6,000 officers and personnel of Rawalpindi Police were deployed on security duties, while 367 traffic wardens were on the city roads to maintain traffic flow. Elite Force, Dolphin Force and mobiles of respective police stations were patrolling the surroundings of the stadium. Snipers were deployed on the rooftops along with effective security of the teams' routes. All senior police officers were in the field to personally supervise the security arrangements. The police were ensuring foolproof security arrangements in coordination with the Pakistan Army, Rangers, other security agencies and the district administration, the spokesman said. He said cricket fans as usual would be allowed to enter the stadium after a walk-through gate and full body search, and without prohibited items including power banks, hands-free, air pods, food, and drink items.

Naqvi meets Italian Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi held an important meeting with Italian Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi here Wednesday. Mohsin Naqvi apprised his Italian counterpart on India's cowardly act of aggression carried out last night and highlighted the motives behind it. During the meeting, the need for meaningful efforts to de-escalate tensions was emphasized. The Italian Interior Minister expressed sorrow over the martyrdom of 26 civilians and extended condolences to the bereaved families.

Mohsin Naqvi stated that India blatantly violated international laws by targeting civilian populations. He said that Twenty-six civilians, including women and children, were martyred. He highlighted that Pakistan's armed forces gave a befitting response to Indian aggression and destroyed five enemy fighter jets. He said that Pakistan has been warning the world about India's dangerous designs from day one and held India responsible for destabilizing the regional situation.

During the meeting, both sides discussed trade, security ties and matters of mutual interest. It was agreed to further enhance cooperation with Italy in the areas of security, counter-narcotics, human traf-



ficking, and combating terrorism. The Italian Interior Minister reiterated his commitment to strengthening collaboration in counter-terrorism, human trafficking, and anti-narcotics efforts. Mohsin Naqvi stated that taking strict action against illegal immigration and its facilitators is Pakistan's top priority.

Both sides agreed to establish a Joint Working Group for developing a unified strategy against narcotics and organized crimes. The Italian Interior Minister said that an Italian team would soon visit Pakistan to strengthen border security.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi stated that Pakistan was ready to enhance cooperation with Italy in the field of combating drug trafficking. He further stated that over 3,000 criminals involved in illegal human trafficking and 500 facilitators were arrested last year.

It was also agreed to sign a declaration on transnational crimes and an MoU on migration and labor mobility between ten. The Italian Interior Minister appreciated the professional competence of Pakistani institutions in curbing human trafficking and narcotics.

Pakistan foils Indian cyber attacks: Shaza Fatima

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday said all relevant institutions, including PTA and technical wings, are fully active and have successfully thwarted recent Indian cyber attacks.

In an exclusive talk with a news channel at the Crisis Management centre,

she stressed that no cyber attack from India has been allowed to succeed, and Pakistan remains vigilant to prevent any such attempts in the future.

Condemning Indian aggression, the minister said India's attack on civilians under the cover of darkness was a cowardly act. "India has a history of launching such cowardly strikes, but our

forces have always responded in a befitting manner," she stated.

Shaza Fatima said that Indian aggression has claimed the lives of civilian innocent women and children, particularly in vulnerable areas. She reaffirmed that Pakistan had responded strongly and would continue to defend its sovereignty against any form of hostility.

Educational institutions closed, exams cancelled

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Punjab government on Wednesday announced the closure of all higher educational institutions in Rawalpindi and across the province.

The Punjab Higher Education Department has issued a notification confirming that both public and private colleges and universities will remain closed for the day.

All examinations scheduled for May 7 under the Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE), as well as universities and colleges in Punjab, have also been postponed. A new schedule will be announced later.

However, exams conducted by international examination bodies will proceed as scheduled.

The decision has been taken amid Indian attacks on the civilian population at Tuesday-Wednesday midnight, as a precautionary measure due to the prevailing security situation.

Pirzada strongly condemns Indian aggression

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Housing and Works, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada on Wednesday strongly condemned India's cowardly and unprovoked attack on Pakistan, calling it a blatant act of aggression that deserved the utmost condemnation.

Talking to the media, the minister stated, "Targeting mosques, places of worship, and innocent civilians is a cowardly act that violates all international norms and humanitarian values."

He warned that any attempt to wage war over water resources could endanger the peace and security of the entire region. "A water war will not only affect bilateral relations but will destabilize the whole region," he remarked.

Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada assured that Pakistan would give a strong and befitting response to Indian aggression.

Hanif Abbasi terms Indian aggression clear act of terrorism

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Hanif Abbasi on Wednesday said that India's unprovoked midnight attack targeting civilians including women, children, and mosques was a clear act of terrorism.

Talking to media, outside Parliament House, he strongly condemned India's so-called "operation Sindoor" as an act of cowardice and a blatant violation of international law.

Abbasi praised Pakistan's defense capabilities and congratulated the Pakistan Air Force on shooting down five Indian warplanes. He also acknowledged the support of countries like China,

Malaysia, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye, saying that they stood with Pakistan in its time of need.

Abbasi emphasized national unity, saying that when it comes to war, Pakistanis stand together regardless of their regional backgrounds. He saluted the Jawans at the Line of Control (LOC) and vowed that Pakistan would not spare Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, promising to take revenge for his actions.

Abbasi claimed that the international community was criticizing India's actions and that India had refused to investigate the Pahalgam incident as Pakistan offered for independent and transparent

investigation.

He also alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in India had increased terrorism and violence against minorities, both domestically and internationally.

Abbasi warned that if India were to stop Pakistan's water, Pakistan would take action to protect its interests. He urged the Indian people to save their country from destruction, emphasizing that Pakistan was a responsible nuclear power.

The minister said the Pakistan Army, Air Force, Navy, government and people of Pakistan remain united in their determination to defend their country and its sovereignty.

Schools, colleges in ICT to remain closed amid tensions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Following the growing tensions between Pakistan and India, the Islamabad district administration has announced the closure of all educational institutions in the federal capital for one day.

According to a notification issued here on Wednesday, in response to rising tensions along the Pakistan-India border, the Islamabad district administration has decided to shut down all educational institutions in the Federal Capital.

It stated that both government and private

schools and colleges will remain closed for one day due to security concerns. Officials stated that this decision was made to ensure the safety of students and staff amid the ongoing situation between the two countries.

The notice added that although regular classes will be suspended, examinations scheduled for Wednesday will still be held as planned. Authorities have advised students who are appearing for exams to remain in touch with their respective institutions for any updates or instructions. The administration fur-

ther said that the decision applies only to educational activities, and the institutions will resume regular operations based on the evolving security situation.

Islamabad police and local law enforcement agencies are also on alert and monitoring the situation closely.

Officials from the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) confirmed that they have been directed to follow the district administration's orders. A spokesperson for FDE said that the notification has been shared with all affiliated institutions.

Rally held to condemn Indian's aggression

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) on Wednesday organised a rally to condemn Indian aggression and express unwavering support for the defenders of the motherland.

The rally was led by Chief Executive Officer RWMC, Rana Sajid Safdar, and witnessed enthusiastic participation from officials of the Municipal Labour Union and hundreds of company employees.

The rally started from the RWMC's headquarters, Iran Road and culminated at Sixth Road. The participants carried national flags

and banners inscribed with slogans in support of the armed forces.

The atmosphere echoed with loud chants like "Long Live Pakistan Army", "Down with India", "We are proud of our army", and "Pakistan Zindabad".

Addressing the rally, CEO Rana Sajid Safdar stated that the entire nation stands shoulder to shoulder with its brave armed forces.

He strongly condemned India's continued provocations and aggressive behaviour, emphasizing that Pakistan is a peace-loving country but will never compromise on its sovereignty. Sajid added that RWMC

officials were united in defense of the homeland alongside the military. "This rally reflects our emotions – when it comes to Pakistan, every individual is a soldier," he said.

Addressing the gathering, Municipal Labour Union leaders gathering, declared their readiness to sacrifice their lives and resources for the nation. They affirmed that the whole nation was united against Indian aggression and that every "Pakistani is a soldier of the Pakistan Army." The rally concluded with special prayers for Pakistan's safety, progress, and the strength of its armed forces.

Rana strongly condemns India's cowardly attack on Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Prime Minister Youth Program Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan on Wednesday condemned India's cowardly attack, which was launched under the cover of darkness.

He stated that Pakistan's security forces have dealt a decisive blow to the enemy, sending a clear message that the country's defense capabilities are formidable and not to be underestimated.

He said the enemy will learn that Pakistan's defense capabilities are not to be underestimated, and our forces are fully equipped to protect our skies, land, and seas.

He said the Pakistani nation stands united in its resolve to defend the homeland, with all citizens rallying behind the country's defense.

He said the Pakistan Army has earned the nation's pride, and India has come to realize that Pakistan is not an easy target.

He added that India's aggression has crossed all boundaries, testing Pakistan's patience, and its targeting of urban areas is a blatant violation of international law and a direct threat to Pakistan's sovereignty.

The entire nation stands solidly behind Pakistan's armed forces, and India will face severe consequences if it continues to misconstrue Pakistan's desire for peace as a sign of weakness, he stated.

6 eateries shut down in ICT for causing air pollution

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration have launched a crackdown on food outlets contributing to air pollution and six restaurants located at Peshawar Mor have been sealed after complaints from residents prompted immediate inspection and action.

According to the spokesman of ICT administration, the authority has intensified its efforts against businesses causing air pollution. In a recent move, six restaurants at Peshawar Mor were sealed for emitting smoke during cooking that was polluting the surrounding environment. This action was taken by the Assistant Commissioner of Industrial Area after citizens reported the issue. According to officials, the restaurants were using cooking methods that released smoke directly into the air without proper filtration or ventilation systems.

In this regard, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, directed that all restaurants in the city be inspected to check their compliance with environmental safety measures. He said that businesses that contribute to pollution will not be allowed to operate without making necessary improvements.

"Air pollution affects everyone. Restaurants that do not take preventive steps will face strict action. No exemptions will be given," said the DC in a public statement.

Meanwhile, he urged residents to continue reporting outlets that cause pollution, promising swift action on all such complaints. The administration plans to carry out inspections across the city in the coming days to ensure all eateries are following environmental standards.

The sealed restaurants will remain closed until they meet the required conditions to reduce pollution. Authorities have also warned that similar action will be taken in other areas if violations are found. This initiative is part of the broader environmental protection drive in the capital, aimed at controlling sources of urban pollution. Smoke from unregulated restaurant kitchens is one of the factors contributing to poor air quality in the city.

Officials said the cooperation of the public is vital to ensure that food businesses maintain safe and clean operations. Complaints can be submitted to the district administration through helplines or official online platforms.



RAWALPINDI: A view of Government Associate College for Women, closed after the government announced the closure of all educational institutions due to the current situation. —APP Photo

Taliban detain 2 journalists

KABUL (Amu TV): Taliban intelligence has detained two journalists in the northern province of Takhar, local sources said on Wednesday. The two reporters, Asadullah Timur and Sayed Munir Hadaf, were affiliated with Tasweer, a local weekly publication. They were reportedly arrested on Wednesday, by Taliban intelligence agents in the provincial capital. The reasons for their detention remain unclear, and the Taliban have not publicly acknowledged the arrests.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Zulqaidah 09, 1446 — Thursday, May 08, 2025

Water network completed

MAZAR-I-SHARIF/ FARAH CITY (Pajhwok): Four water canals worth 42 million afghanis in northern Balkh province and a water supply network in western Farah province have been constructed and put into service, officials said on Wednesday. Sector Director of Balkh Municipality Ahmad Javed Mayar told a press conference that four water canals had been constructed in 5th, 10th and 11th districts of Mazar-i-Sharif city and put into use.

Commission approves 21 projects

KABUL (BNA): A meeting of the National Procurement Commission was held under the leadership of Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund, the Economic Deputy of the Prime Minister's Office.

According to the Economic Deputy's Office, 21 projects with a total cost of approximately 18 billion Afghanis were amended and approved during the session, and 27 other projects were submitted for approval.

After discussions, 18 projects were amended, 3 were approved, and 3 were canceled. In addition, three other projects were referred

to designated committees to negotiate pricing with the winning companies and report back to the commission's leadership.

On another note, due to violations, the Afghan Kandamak company was banned from participating in projects for two years, and Rafi Khalid Trading Company was banned for six months. Despite initially agreeing to the set terms and winning two projects, these companies withdrew from implementation, causing delays in national project execution.

Some of the amended and approved projects include: Part of the Qush-Tepa

Canal Shaflogh Dam in Chenartu District of Uruzgan Province

Phase one of the Nahr-e-Saraj Canal in Sangin District, Helmand Province

Second phase of the Kandahar-Spin Boldak Road

Equipment for electricity projects in various provinces

Provision of quality telecommunication and internet services in remote areas

It is noteworthy that the total cost of these projects amounts to approximately 18 billion Afghanis, funded by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

IE prioritizes uplift projects

PUL-I-ALAM (Pajhwok): The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) says the Islamic Emirate has prioritized reconstruction projects in the country and work has been launched on a building for ARCS at a cost of 20 million afghanis in central Logar province.

Officials say construction work on a standard building for ARCS on one acres of land has been kicked off and would be complete in six months.

At the opening ceremony, ARCS general director Maulvi Shahabuddin Dilawar explained Islamic Emirate had prioritized reconstruction across the country and was trying to modernize and put ARCS building in the province into use.

ARCS provides basic services in the country and is trying to further expand its services, he added.

According to Governor Maulvi Zia Ul-Rahman Madani, the Islamic Emirate has started important development projects in different sectors in the province. "Public needs to cooperate with the government in all aspects of implementing and monitoring ongoing construction projects", Madani added.

Meanwhile, Maulvi Mir Hashim Hizbullah, head of ARCS said the current building of the ARCS was not a standard one and that the construction of a new building would completely solve problems of the organization's employees and provides basic services to the people.

A building worth three million afghanis was built for a health center in Kulangar area of Pul-i-Alam city with financial support of ARCS and it was also inaugurated on Wednesday.

Returnees call for shelter

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): A number of families forcibly deported from neighbor countries to the province of Ghazni complain about lack of shelter and want the government to provide them land plots.

As the forced deportation of Afghan refugees from neighbor countries continues at a rapid pace, several returnee families in Ghazni say they have no homes or lands.

Ghulam Sarwar, who recently returned and is currently residing in a dilapidated house belonging to relatives in the Bahlol area of Ghazni City said unemployment and homelessness were their main challenges.

He said: "When we returned to the country, the government gave us some money, but there has been no further support. We need land. We are living in extremely harsh conditions."

Another returnee, Shah Mohammad, said he was originally from Ghazni but had no house there. He also sought land allotment.

Similarly, a woman named Shazia, whose husband has passed away and who had been living with her children in Iran, recalled she was forcibly deported

Township project for returnees inaugurated

PAKTIA (TOLOnews): The construction of 100 houses funded by Qatari women at a cost of over \$800,000 dollars has begun in the Rabat refugee camp in Gardez city, Paktia province.

Abdul Salam Hanafi, the deputy prime minister for administrative affairs, stated during the inauguration ceremony of the project that the technical work for building the township for returnees has been completed, and each family will be provided with a plot of land.

He added: "The survey and design of the townships have been completed, and various services are planned for these townships."

Meanwhile, Hamidullah Nomani, the acting minister of urban development and housing, announced the distribution of 2,000 jeribs of land for new returnees in



the province.

Nomani said: "This township will be built on 1,946 jeribs of land and will include 890 plots, of which 416 are allocated to families with five or more members."

Furthermore, the deputy minister of labor and social affairs urged neighboring countries to stop harassing Afghan refugees.

Officials from the caretaker government also claimed that Iran and

Pakistan are forcibly deporting Afghan refugees in violation of humanitarian, Islamic, and international norms, but the Islamic Emirate is fully prepared to facilitate the return of these refugees.

Invest in mining sector, Iranian firms urged



KABUL (Pajhwok): Iran's Ambassador in Kabul Alireza Bigdeli has called on Iranian firms to invest in Afghanistan's mining sector.

Bigdeli issued the call at a meeting here with Minister of Mines and Petroleum Mullah Hidayatullah Badri.

A statement from the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP) said the two sides discussed enhanced economic cooperation, expansion of bilateral

ties and greater collaboration in various sectors.

In particular, the officials focussed on investment in and the development of Afghanistan's mineral resources, the statement added.

Ambassador Bigdeli highlighted Afghanistan's nationwide security and rich mineral reserves as significant opportunities for deepening bilateral cooperation.

He expressed Iran's interest in facilitating

investment and joint ventures in Afghanistan's mining sector.

He also announced Iran's readiness to help boost the technical capacity of Afghan professionals in the field.

For his part, Badri welcomed the interest of Iranian firms in investing in Afghanistan's mining sector. He assured cooperation from his ministry in all relevant areas, the ministry said.

Olive factory produces 135,000 liters of oil last year

JALALABAD (Pajhwok): The Canal Company's olive oil factory produced 135,500 liters of oil last year in eastern Nangarhar province, and has just begun bottling and delivering the oil to markets, officials said on Wednesday.

Five decades ago, Canal Department established olive groves on 3,100 hectares of land, but more than half of them were destroyed during the civil war, and now only 1,720 hectares of land remain. In 2014, about 1,300 tons of olive oil was harvested, 30 tons of which were used to make pickled olives and the rest to make olive oil.

Head of trade and marketing for Wadi Agricultural Emirates Company Eng. Nadiullah Niazi told Pajhwok Afghan News the production and processing

of olive oil and pickles have been completed, but packing and bottling of oil has begun. In 1403 solar year, 135,500 liters of olive oil was produced, which will be packaged and marketed in 500,000 bottles, he added. According to him, they have launched efforts to market their products both inside and outside the country.

"We have exhibited Nangarhar olive products at industrial exhibitions in various provinces. We have also sent olive oil samples to China, Italy, and many other countries for foreign marketing. They have been tested in laboratories there and have been proven to be world-class quality oils".

He explained oil produced in olive processing factory affiliated with this organization is of high

quality, clean, and cheaper than other oils. Currently, it is easily available to residents in Nangarhar and Kabul, and this series will be extended to other provinces in the future.

The Nangarhar Olive Factory, which was built years ago during Mohammad Zahir Shah government to process olive groves, and about 500 people are employed there.

Atiqullah, a professional engineer who has worked in the olive processing sector for years, said that olive processing is carried out in several stages: the first stage is collecting the seeds from the orchards, the second stage is storing or evaporating the seeds, the third stage is extracting the oil from the seeds, and the last stage is packaging the oil in bottles.

Afghan deportees struggle to rebuild lives in Kabul camp

KABUL (TOLOnews): With the rise in deportation of Afghan migrants from neighboring countries, a camp in the 11th district of Kabul city has become a gathering point for hundreds of families.

These families residing in the camp have returned to their homeland empty-handed after living for years in neighbor countries. They now face an uncertain future.

Lack of shelter and job opportunities are their fundamental challenges. These families are preparing to return to their

respective provinces.

Hijratullah, a returnee from neighbor country, told TOLOnews: "We are going to Kunduz, but our future there is uncertain. The education of our children is another concern we have."

Mohammad Jan, another returnee from neighbor country, said: "We need financial aid to build a shelter. We are facing many problems."

These migrants, who have spent 40 to 50 years in neighbor country, cite lack of housing, limited job opportunities, and poverty as their main challenges.

Nisar Ahmad, who returned to the country after 45 years, said: "We are going to Khanabad district of Kunduz. We have neither land nor shelter there."

Farzana, a deportee from neighbor country, said: "We don't own land and my husband is still abroad. Now we are forced to live in a rental house. We want land and a place to live."

It is noteworthy that currently, between 800 to 1,000 migrants arrive daily at this camp from neighboring countries. The

authorities at Baba Jan Camp said efforts are being made to facilitate returnees.

Abulais, the security officer of Lawai Baba Jan camp, said: "We have made arrangements in this camp. We provide tents and blankets, food is also prepared for them, and there is a health section with both male and female doctors."

Meanwhile, the UNHCR reported that in the month of April, more than 280,000 Afghans have been deported from neighbor countries.

Nimroz villagers mourn lives lost to no health coverage

ZARANJ (Pajhwok): Tucked away 30 kilometers from Zaranj city, the capital of southwestern Nimroz province, Baynaz village is home to just a handful of families who are struggling to survive in mud houses on sun-scorched and barren land without even basic facilities.

The residents of this isolated settlement live under constant shadow of hardships, primarily due to the lack of basic public services—most critically, healthcare.

Despite the fact that healthcare is a fundamental human right, the elderly men and women of Baynaz lament long-standing neglect by successive governments. There is no clinic, no doctor, and no infrastructure to support even the most basic medical needs.

Polio's toll on an unprotected generation

Among the most heartbreaking stories are those of children paralyzed due to the absence of polio vaccination.

Sadees, a young man from the village, drag two barrels of water back home. His labored movement is a stark reminder of a missed opportunity—he was born healthy but contracted polio at the age of six because there was no vaccination campaign in the village.

"In our village, there was no vaccine, no doctor, no clinic. If I had been vaccinated or if we had access to healthcare, I wouldn't be like this," he says, his voice trembling with emotion.

In the same courtyard, his sister Faiza, now 25, also lives with paralysis in one leg, similarly caused by lack of vaccination during childhood. She walks with the aid of a stick and shares that neither she nor her brother have gone to school or participated in community life due to their disabilities. "We don't leave the house. We didn't go to school. We're illiterate," she says quietly.

Their mother, Farzana, emerges from the house and joins the conversation. With a heavy heart, she

says, "This isn't a new problem. It's been like this for years. Our village has been forgotten."

She recounts the helplessness families face when someone falls ill: "If a child gets sick with diarrhea or vomiting, they die here. Pregnant women die on the way to the city. We're poor and have no transport to reach the hospital."

Farzana adds that even now, polio campaigns don't reach Baynaz because the area is inaccessible by road and no health worker is willing to make the journey.

A mother's grief

Gul Bashra, another villager, lost her 18-year-old daughter during childbirth. The young woman experienced severe bleeding but could not be transported to Zaranj because it was midnight and no vehicle was available. The family brought in a traditional midwife, but the bleeding worsened, and the young mother died.

"She had just gotten married. We did what we could, but could not save her," Gul

Bashra says, her voice cracking with sorrow. She adds that many other women in the village face a similar fate due to the absence of healthcare services.

No government has helped us

Fatima, another resident, echoes the community's frustration: "There's no clinic, no school, no road. We've been forgotten. No government has done anything for us."

She warns that most childbirths in the village happen at home, often resulting in complications that put women's lives at serious risk.

As a result of such hardships, 11 of the 25 original families in Baynaz have been forced to leave the village in search of a better life.

Ghulam Nabi, the head of the village council, confirms that the village lacks every basic facility. "We used to have 25 families. Now, only 14 remain. The rest migrated to Iran because of drought, unbearable heat, and child mortality."

He adds, "Summers are

brutal. Children get sick every day. There's no doctor or medicine. In many cases, their illness becomes life-threatening."

A broader crisis across Nimroz

Baynaz is not alone in this struggle. Residents of Ziyarat Sakhi (20 km from Zaranj) and Mawlawi (15 km from the city) face similar difficulties.

In Ziyarat Sakhi, Sayara Baloch explains how poverty and the absence of a local clinic prevented her from accessing medical help during childbirth. "I lost my baby after heavy bleeding during labor. By the time I got to the city, it was too late."

She urges the government to establish at least a basic clinic or deploy mobile health teams to serve the village's more than 50 families.

In Mawlawi village, Gul Bibi lost two grandchildren due to the lack of timely healthcare. "Last year, my grandson had severe diarrhea. We tried pharmacy medicine, but he died in the



night from dehydration and heat. There was no one to help."

Tears welling in her eyes, she pleads with the Islamic Emirate to send mobile health teams to rural communities.

Health officials: Resources limited

Dr. Yalda Fayaz Waseq, an obstetrician at Nimroz Provincial Hospital, acknowledges the crisis: "Most rural women give birth at home due to the dis-

tance to clinics. Without medical support, complications like bleeding and blood pressure issues become fatal."

She notes that these maternal deaths often go unrecorded.

Maulavi Abdullah, director of Nimroz's Public Health Department, concedes that previous governments did not prioritize these regions. While mobile health teams once visited remote areas with NGO

support, those operations have now been scaled back.

He also confirmed the recent opening of a long-delayed 100-bed provincial hospital, built with assistance from an Arab charity.

"We aim to expand healthcare to remote areas," Abdullah said, "but we need support from NGOs, local businesses, and the community. Many rural clinics exist, but doctors are unwilling to work in those conditions."

Indian aggression against Pakistan

Emergency meeting of KP Cabinet held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: An emergency meeting of the provincial cabinet was held here Wednesday in the backdrop of India's unprovoked aggression against Pakistan with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, in the chair. Speaker of the Provincial Assembly and leader of the Opposition in the Assembly also attended the meeting on special invitation besides the cabinet members, Chief Secretary, Inspector General of Police, Additional Chief Secretaries and administrative secretaries, Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners participated in the meeting via video link.

The cabinet offered fate-ha for the elevation of ranks of the martyrs, speedy recovery of the injured and safety and security of the nation. The cabinet expressed sympathy with the civilians affected by Indian aggression and pledged every possible support for their relief and rehabilitation.

Advisor to the Chief Minister on Information & Public Relation, Barrister Dr. Muhammad Ali Saif while briefing media persons about the emergency

cabinet meeting informed that the cabinet strongly condemned the unprovoked Indian aggression and expressed grave concern over this blatant act of hostility. The cabinet, he said, reaffirmed an unwavering commitment to the defence of Pakistan and pledged that every sacrifice will be rendered for the protection of the homeland.

Barrister Dr. Saif said that the cabinet assured full cooperation and support to the security forces in giving a befitting response to the Indian aggression. The cabinet, he further said, was briefed on the evolving situation and the steps proposed to be taken for handling any eventuality, which were endorsed by the cabinet.

The cabinet termed India's belligerent actions as highly condemnable and regrettable, particularly denouncing the cowardly targeting of civilian population under the cover of darkness. This act, he said, was termed as a flagrant violation of international law and norms. Sending a clear message to India, the cabinet declared, "We stand fully united and prepared to defend every inch of the beloved country at all costs".

"We believe in the prophecy of Ghazwa-e-Hind and that victory will

be for the Muslims. It will be our honor to be a part of it," the Chief Minister remarked, adding, "As Muslims, martyrdom is the highest honor, and we are always ready to embrace it."

The Advisor said, the cabinet expressed solidarity with the people of Kashmir and Punjab, assuring them of all possible support, and emphasized that the entire Pakistani nation is united in the defense of the motherland – 250 million people stand as one army.

The cabinet further observed that PM Modi's aggressive policies are not only endangering Pakistan but the security of Indian people and their country as well, Barrister informed. The aggressive posture of India's fascist regime poses a constant threat to regional peace. "India must not take our desire for peace as a weakness—we will always respond in the same coin, rather more than that" the cabinet warned.

The provincial cabinet paid rich tributes to Pakistan's security forces for their instant and forceful response to Indian aggression and expressed full solidarity with them on behalf of the people and government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He said the cabinet

called on the international community to take urgent notice of India's hostile behavior as this was risking the security of the entire region.

Barrister Dr. Saif further informed that the cabinet pointed out that PTI founder Imran Khan being the most popular leader of the country must be released and included in all consultations at this critical juncture so that a truly united strategy is adopted against the hostile India. The cabinet recalled the commitment of their leader Imran Khan wherein he had vowed to fight upto the last against any aggression by India. Therefore, the cabinet members stated that such a popular leader like Imran Khan cannot be excluded from any efforts to unitedly fight against Indian aggression. The cabinet also said that the inclusion and consultation of Imran Khan was a must for the unity and cohesion of the nation.

The cabinet also vowed never to ignore the terrorist and at the same time will remain vigilant to foil the nefarious designs of the anti-nation elements, informed the Advisor. "For us, Pakistan comes first above everything else and we will defend every inch of our homeland" the cabinet, he said, resolved.

NSC calls Indian aggression "act of war"

Continued from Front Page

"Attacking its innocent people is neither tolerable nor acceptable to Pakistan. India, against all sanity and rationality has once again ignited an inferno in the region, the responsibility for ensuing consequences shall lie squarely with India."

The committee discussed the coordinated missile, air and drone strikes by Indian armed forces on the night of 6/7 May 2025, on multiple locations within Pakistan's sovereign territory, including Sialkot, Shakargarh, Muridke and Bahawalpur in Punjab, Kotli and Muzaffarabad in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

The top national security body said that the unprovoked and unjustified attacks deliberately targeted the civilian areas, on the false pretext of presence of imaginary terrorist camps, resulting in the martyrdom of innocent men, women, and children, and causing damage to the civilian infrastructure, including mosques. The committee observed that India's act of aggression also caused grave danger to commercial airlines belonging to brotherly Gulf countries, endangering the lives of thousands of on-board passengers. Besides, the N e e l u m - J h e l u m Hydropower Project was also deliberately targeted in violation of international conventions.

It was reiterated that Pakistan had been emphatically rejecting Indian allegations claiming the presence of terrorist camps on its territory.

Moreover, immediately after April 22, 2025, Pakistan made a sincere offer for a credible, transparent and neutral investigation, which unfortunately was not accepted.

Besides, the international media personnel had already visited these "imaginary terrorist camps" on May 6, 2025, and more visits were planned for May 7, 2025.

"However, apprehensive of its falsehood being exposed, and without a shred of evidence about its claims, the Indian leadership, bereft of any morality, has now gone to the extent of attacking innocent civilians in order to satiate its delusional thoughts and short-sighted political objectives."

The NSC said that the Pakistan's armed forces, in line with the exercise of the right of self defense and response framework outlined in NSC statement dated April 22, 2025, resolutely defended the territorial integrity of Pakistan, including Azad Jammu and Kashmir, against the Indian aggression, while also bringing down five Indian fighter aircrafts and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles in the process.



KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah addressing Pakistan Zindabad Rally organized by different political parties.

SC sets aside decision against military trials of civilians

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Wednesday accepted intra-court appeals challenging an earlier verdict that had declared the military trials of civilians unconstitutional, effectively setting aside the decision by a majority of five to two.

A seven-member larger bench of the apex court, headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan, delivered the reserved verdict, overturning the October 2023 ruling by a five-member bench that had restrained the military from trying civilians in connection with the May 9 violence under the Pakistan Army Act.

The majority of the judges — five out of seven — ruled in favour of the appeals, thereby allowing

military courts to proceed with trials of civilians accused of attacking military installations.

The bench was constituted to hear intra-court appeals filed by the federal government and other petitioners seeking to restore military trials for individuals accused of inciting or participating in the May 9 riots, which followed the arrest of former prime minister Imran Khan.

According to the short order, the apex court ruled that the earlier judgment declaring the military trial of civilians as unconstitutional "stands nullified."

The court had earlier reserved its verdict after concluding arguments from all sides, including the Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) and the petitioners' counsel.

The initial verdict had

stirred significant legal and political debate, with rights activists and several political parties arguing that civilians must be tried in ordinary criminal courts in accordance with constitutional guarantees of fair trial and due process.

However, the federal government maintained that those accused of attacks on sensitive military installations, such as the Corps Commander House in Lahore and GHQ in Rawalpindi, should be tried under the Army Act due to the gravity of the offences.

In response to the October ruling, the government had filed intra-court appeals under Article 184(3) of the Constitution, requesting that the matter be reconsidered in the interest of national security and justice.

The detailed judgment is expected to be issued in the coming days, providing the court's reasoning behind reversing the earlier ruling.

Background

On May 9, 2023, following the arrest of PTI chief Imran Khan, protests erupted across the country, resulting in attacks on military installations and public property. In the aftermath, dozens of civilians were arrested, and the government announced its intent to try them in military courts.

The move was challenged in the Supreme Court, and in October 2023, a five-member bench had ruled the decision unconstitutional. The government then filed intra-court appeals, which have now been upheld by the larger bench.

India's 'unprovoked attack' on Pakistan targeted civilians: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar said on Wednesday that civilians were targeted during the midnight "unprovoked attack" by India at several locations in Pakistan.

"We expected an attack from India which is an aggressor, targeting ordinary citizens during the late-night strikes," the minister told various international media outlets following the missile strikes by India inside Pakistan.

The minister confirmed that several casualties were reported including the killing of a woman and a child.

He dismissed India's claim of striking at the terrorist camps in Pakistan, terming it a "fabricated story".

Tarar mentioned that yesterday, the foreign and local journalists were taken to the areas adjoining the Line of Control, where they were briefed about the ground situation about India's false claims about terrorist camps.

He said India has no

evidence of Pakistan's involvement in the Pahalgam attack, which is 200 kilometers away from the Line of Control. The Pahalgam incident is actually a failure of Indian

and continue to fight terrorists in our western regions and borders till this day," he added.

India is involved in the killings of Sikhs in the United States, Canada, and

India admits defeat by raising white flag at LoC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar on Wednesday stated that India had effectively admitted defeat by raising the white flag at the Line of Control. Speaking to the media at the Pak-China Friendship Centre in Islamabad, Tarar praised Pakistan Air Force (PAF) for its swift and powerful response following Indian missile strikes that targeted civilian areas in Punjab and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. He told reporters that the PAF had shot down five Indian fighter jets and a drone. Tarar added that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was closely monitoring the situation. The minister emphasized that the entire Pakistani nation stood united and firmly supported the armed forces. He said the Pakistani Armed Forces had given a tough response to the aggressors.

security forces, he added.

He condemned India's targeting of civilian population in Pakistan as "extremely regrettable".

Tarar stressed that Pakistan was a frontline state in the war against terrorism. "We have sacrificed over 90,000 lives

Australia, he said, adding that Pakistan has solid evidence of India's involvement in terrorism, citing the case of Kulbhushan Jadhav, an Indian naval officer who was found involved in subversive activities in Pakistan.

"Pakistan is a guarantor

of global peace and a wall between terrorists and the world," he noted.

He affirmed Pakistan's continued fight against terrorism, citing an operation carried out by security forces in Balochistan earlier in the day.

He said Pakistan should not be underestimated and vowed a befitting response to India.

He announced that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has summoned a meeting of the National Security Committee today.

He informed that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held meetings with ambassadors from several countries and contacted world leaders to present Pakistan's point of view.

As a responsible state, Pakistan offered a transparent and impartial investigation into the Pahalgam incident, he said in response to another query.

"We are never the aggressors," he said, highlighting Pakistan's capability to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

India's aggression to entail consequences: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that India had committed a grave mistake last night by resorting to aggression and thought that Pakistan would back off, but India would have to face the consequences of its actions. In a televised address to the nation, the prime minister said "India forgets that Pakistani nation had the brave sons who always fought for the respect and defence of the motherland by shedding the last drop of their blood."

He said the entire world witnessed that within few hours, their enemy though large in numbers was bowed down after Pakistan Air Force eagles shot down five Indian combat jets and reduced them to pile of fragments and ashes which was once considered as their pride.

"It (response) has the thunderous sound of squadron leader MM Alam that struck the enemy strongly," he observed.

The prime minister said India's cowardly attack took

lives of 26 innocent people while injuring 46 others including women and children.

He referred to funeral prayer of Shaheed Irtaza Abbas, 7 years old, who lost his life after hit with a splinter in his home where he was present with his mother and a brother.

"A tender flower withered away and attained shahadat," he said, adding the nation paid tribute to shaheds and their families and prayed for the recovery of the injured.

The prime minister said that they had resolved that each drop of blood would be accounted for.

"The timid enemy is attacking innocent people. Pakistan has proved how to respond with solid blow," he added.

The prime minister said that in one-hour fight on the Line of Control, PAF pilots while flying inside territory and with display of bravery and professionalism, reduced enemy's jets to ashes. In conventional warfare, Pakistan also proved its superiority over its enemy.

He said that he along with the entire 240 million people of the country saluted Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Babar Sidhu, Naval Chief Admiral Naveed Ashraf and every officer and soldier of Pakistan.

The prime minister regretted that accusations against Pakistan with regard to Pahalgam attack were unreasonable.

As a peaceful country, he said, Pakistan had offered an international transparent and credible probe which was acknowledged by the world, but India obliterated all the international laws and norms by resorting to aggression.

Under the international laws and the UNSC resolutions, Jammu and Kashmir had been and would remain as a globally recognized dispute until Kashmiris exercised their right to self-determination in a free and impartial environment in accordance with the UN resolutions.

Israeli strikes kill 38 in Gaza, medics say

CAIRO/GAZA (Reuters): Israeli airstrikes on a school housing conflict-displaced families and close to a crowded market and restaurant in Gaza City killed at least 38 people on Wednesday, local health authorities said.

Medics said two strikes targeted the Karama School in Tuffah, a suburb of Gaza City, killing 15. Later in the day, an Israeli strike near a restaurant and market in the city killed at least 23 people, including women and children, medics said.

There was no immediate Israeli comment.

Reuters footage of the scene near the market showed wounded men

being rushed away on the back of pickups and carts. Ambulances sped down shattered streets and a woman in tears carried a baby away from the scene, with two young children beside her.

"The blood was like a lake, oh my baby, pools of blood," she can be heard screaming.

Ahmed Al-Saoudi said he witnessed the airstrike near the market.

"People come to the market to get what they need if they can find it ... Neither the people nor the animals were safe. Neither the young nor the old," he said.

An image posted on social media showed what

appeared to be a family of three - mother, father and son - lying dead on the street in pools of blood. The young boy was carrying a pink backpack. Reuters could not immediately verify the image that was purportedly from the scene near the restaurant.

Two Israeli airstrikes on another school, housing displaced people in Bureij camp in central Gaza, killed at least 33 people, including women and children, on Tuesday, local health authorities said. The Israeli military said it struck "terrorists" operating from a command center in the compound.