

Seven killed in accident
F.P. Report
ABBOTTABAD: At least seven passengers on Tuesday were injured in a traffic accident at the Interchange on Hazara Motorway near Abbottabad when two cars collided while returning from Mansehra. According to rescue sources, the injured were identified as 37-year-old Tariq, 40-year-old Hanifullah, and 28-year-old Sameer, all residents of Peshawar.

The Frontier Post

Govt unveils Rs17.573tr federal budget — allocates Rs2.55tr for defence amid security challenges; proposes 10% salary hike, 7% increase in pension

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday unveiled the Rs17.573 trillion growth-oriented federal budget for the fiscal year 2025-26.

Presenting the federal budget 2025-26 in the National Assembly, the finance minister highlighted that the budget for the upcoming fiscal year was the beginning of the strategy, especially chalked out to promote a competitive economy. "It will help increase foreign exchange reserves, reduce the fiscal payment imbalances, thus promoting the overall economic productivity," he said. The minister said the government has fixed the annual economic growth target at 4.2% while the inflation rate will remain 7.5% during the upcoming fiscal year.

Similarly, he said the fiscal deficit is expected to remain at 3.9% of the GDP, while the primary surplus is expected to remain 2.4% of GDP. The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) revenues have been targeted at Rs 14,131 billion for the upcoming fiscal year, showing an 18.7% increase as compared to the ongoing FY24. Out of the total federal revenues, provinces will get a share of Rs 8,206 billion, he added. Aurangzeb further said that the target for the federal non-tax revenues had been set at Rs 5,147 billion. The net revenues of the federal government will be Rs 11,072 billion. Target for federal government total expenditures has been set at Rs 17,573, out of which Rs 8,207 will be used for the markup payments.

The current federal government expenditures are Rs 16,286 billion, the finance minister said, adding that the government has proposed to allocate Rs 1000 billion for the annual Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). The finance minister said that in the budget FY26, the government will provide Rs 2,550 billion, and Rs 971 billion for the defence and civil services, respectively.

For pensions, he said an amount of Rs 1,055 billion has been allocated. Similarly, Rs 1,186 billion have been set aside for the subsidies for power



and other sectors. Likewise, the government has set aside Rs 1,928 billion in term of grants for BISP, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan and newly merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The finance minister underscored that the government is intended to increase the coverage the flagship initiatives of BISP under which the number of beneficiary families will be increased to 10 million. The government has increased the allocated amount for BISP by 21% to Rs 716 billion.

The finance minister said that the government had introduced several measures, due to which the macroeconomic indicators showed resilience. He said that the government had achieved 2.4 per cent of primary surplus, the inflation rate went down to 4.7 per cent as it was recorded at 29.2 per cent during the last two years. As compared to the current account deficit \$1.7 billion in the last year, the minister said that a current account surplus of \$ 1.5 billion was expected during the current financial year.

Senator Aurangzeb said that the rupee strengthened and remittances witnessed 31 per cent growth during the first 10 months of the current financial year and reached to \$31.2 billion, adding that it was expected that remittances would reach to \$38 billion by the end of the current financial year. The foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan were increased by \$2 billion, adding that the forex reserves were expected to reach \$14 billion by the end of the current fiscal year, he remarked.

Federal cabinet approves budget proposals

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet on Tuesday approved the budgetary proposals for the next fiscal year 2025-26. In a special meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the federal cabinet discussed the budget proposals and okayed the Finance Bill 2025.

The cabinet also approved the budgetary proposals for presentation to the National Assembly for its onward consideration. Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb is set to announce the annual budget at the National Assembly, who, a day earlier, presented the Economic Survey 2024-25, announcing that Pakistan's economy rebounded in FY2025 with a \$411 billion GDP and record investor confidence. He highlighted that real GDP grew by 2.68%, driven by a robust 4.8% rebound in industrial activity. The size of the economy surpassed the \$400 billion mark for the first time, while per capita income increased to \$1,824. Besides, the inflation dropped to a record low of 0.3% in April 2025, supported by exchange rate stability, tight monetary policy, and improved food supply.

The minister said that the government had taken a difficult decision, which resulted in macroeconomic stabilisation, and that was also recognised by the international rating agencies and national and international surveys. According to PCW, the investor's confidence was improved by 49 per cent and reached to 83 per cent, he said, adding that overseas chambers of commerce and industry echoed that the business confidence index witnessed historic improvement.

According to the Gallup, he said the local economy witnessed significant improvement and household financial outlook improved by 27.5 per cent

Highlights of PSDP 2025-26

Total outlay of the PSDP for the fiscal year 2025-26 is Rs 4.223 trillion.
The share of federal PSDP is Rs 1,000 billion while that of the provincial PSDP is Rs 2.869 tr.
Board of Investment will get Rs 1,105 million.
Rs70,388 million has been earmarked for Cabinet Division.
Rs2.783 billion for Climate Change Division and Environmental Coordination Division.
Rs50 million for Commerce Division.
Rs149.150 million for Communication Division (other than NHA).
Rs11.553 billion for Defence Division.
Rs1.786 billion for Defence Production Division.
Rs495 million was allocated for Establishment Division.
Rs18.580 billion for Federal Education and Professional Training Division.
Rs851 million for Finance Division.
Rs39.488 billion for Higher Education Commission.
Rs15.005 billion for Housing and Works Division.
Rs23 million for Human Rights Division.
Rs1.904 billion for Industries and Production Division.
Rs6.026 billion for Information and Broadcasting Division.
Rs16.227 billion for Information Technology and Telecom Division.
Rs1.179 billion was earmarked for Inter-provincial Coordination Division.
Rs12.908 billion for Interior Division.
Rs1.912 billion for Law and Justice Division.
Rs3.465 billion for Maritime Affairs Division.
Rs4.253 billion for National Food Security and Research Division.
Rs14.343 billion for National Health Services Regulations and Coordination Division.
Rs1.676 billion for National Culture and Literary Heritage Division.
Rs761 million for Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission.
Rs2.500 billion for Parliamentary Affairs Division.
Rs718 million for Petroleum Division.
Rs2.095 billion for Planning, Development and Reform Division.
Rs22.415 billion for Railways Division
Rs650 million for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Division.
Rs7.150 billion for Revenue Division.
Rs4.792 billion for Science and Technological Research Division.
Rs5.418 billion for SUPPARCO.
Rs503 million for the Special Investment Facilitation Council Division.
Rs133.424 billion for Water Resources Division.

during last quarter. The IPSOS survey revealed that local consumers' expectations grew and reached to 6-year highest level, he mentioned. Meanwhile, the other credit rating agencies, including Fitch, improved Pakistan's rating from CCC+ to B-, adding that the ADB, WB and IFC not only expressed confidence over Pakistan's economy but also

announced for providing huge financing. The finance minister further added that the government had also introduced several measures to enhance revenue collection in the country.

He said that tax to GDP was stood at 10 per cent, which was sufficient to run the government expenses, adding that it was a prerequisite to

enhance tax to GDP ratio to 14 per cent to attain sustainable growth. To harness the true revenue potential, under the leadership of the Prime Minister transformation plan for the Federal Board of Revenue was initiated, and digital transformation was the central point of it.

(Continued on Back Page)



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif signing document of Federal Budget 2025-26.

KP govt to present tax-free budget: CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, announced on Tuesday that the provincial government would present a tax-free budget and would not impose any new taxes during FY 2025-26.

Speaking about the province's financial discipline, KP CM Gandapur stated in a statement here that KP has not taken any new loans so far. However, a significant Rs 150 billion has been allocated for loan repayments, underlining the government's commitment to managing existing debt responsibly.

Highlighting development plans, the CM said the province is launching mega projects, with work already underway on the Peshawar-Dera Ismail Khan Motorway, a key infrastructure initiative aimed at improving regional connectivity. In a bid to empower youth, KP CM revealed that the government plans to further expand interest-free loan schemes, enabling young people to become financially self-reliant.

He also declared an "education emergency" across the province, emphasizing that improving educational standards is a top priority for his administration. The upcoming budget reflects the provincial government's fo-

Saif flays Punjab CM for pursuing anti-farmer policies

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Barrister Dr. Saif, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations has stated that Kisan Itihaad has exposed the false claims of the fake federal government, particularly in Punjab, regarding agricultural development. He said that in the past year, wheat farmers alone have suffered a loss of Rs 2,200 billion.

Dr. Saif highlighted that the form 47 government's anti-farmer policies have led to a significant decline in agricultural production, with wheat production decreasing by 8.91%, cotton by 34%, and maize by 15.4%. He emphasized that the food import bill for the first ten months of the current fiscal year has reached \$7 billion, which is alarming for the national economy.

The Advisor said that agriculture was the backbone of the national economy, but the fake government was crushing this backbone while making false claims of development. He pointed out that anti-farmer elements were still occupying key positions in the federal and Punjab governments, and the Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz, was not paying attention to the plight of farmers.

cus on fiscal responsibility, public welfare, and long-term development.

Finance Minister Aurangzeb presented budget 2025-26 with total outlay of Rs17.8 trillion in the National Assembly on Tuesday. Federal government has set GDP growth target at 4.2 per cent in the budget 2025-26, media reported on Tuesday, citing budget document.

According to details, the current account deficit for

the next fiscal year is projected at 2.1 billion dollars, which equals -0.5% of GDP. The revised National Development Plan allocates over Rs4.223 billion for various development initiatives across the country. Of this amount, Rs2,869 billion is earmarked for the PSDP, while federal ministries and divisions will receive over Rs682 billion for their respective development projects.

Pakistan accelerates illegal aliens' repatriation

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Interior on Tuesday announced a significant acceleration in its efforts to repatriate individuals residing illegally within the country.

According to the Ministry, the latest phase of the Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Program (IFRP), which includes the repatriation of Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders, began on April 1, 2025. Since that date, a total of 216,103 illegal foreigners have been sent back to their respective countries. The Ministry stated that this recent surge is part of a broader campaign that started earlier. Since October 2023, a total of 1,102,441 illegal foreigners have been repatriated under the program. Officials emphasized that the campaign is ongoing.

The Ministry reiterated its advice to all illegal foreigners, including Afghan nationals, to leave Pakistan voluntarily. It assured that those returning are being treated with dignity, with special consideration given to women, children, and the elderly.

Ukraine says 'massive' Russian drone attacks hit Kyiv, Odesa

KYIV (AFP): Russia carried out "massive" drone attacks on Ukraine's capital Kyiv and port city of Odesa early on Tuesday, killing one person and hitting a maternity hospital, Ukrainian officials said, calling for further sanctions.

Moscow has kept up its attacks on Ukraine, which has hit back with strikes deep inside Russian territory, while peace talks held over the weekend failed to yield a breakthrough towards ending the three-year war. Aside from an agreement to exchange prisoners, progress has stalled and Russia has repeatedly rejected calls for an unconditional ceasefire.

"Russia lies every day about its desire for peace and attacks people every day. Time to impose sanctions. Time to support Ukraine with weapons. Time to prove that democracy has power," Andriy Yermak, head of the Ukrainian presidential office, said on Telegram. A 59-year-old man was killed in the Russian strikes on residential buildings in Odesa on Tuesday, and at least four others were wounded, said Governor Oleg Kiper.

"The enemy massively attacked Odesa with strike drones. There is damage to civilian infrastructure and fires," Kiper wrote on Telegram. "The Russians hit a maternity hospital, an emergency medical ward and residential buildings," he said, adding the maternity

hospital had been evacuated in time.

"Stay in shelters! The massive attack on the capital continues," Mayor Vitali Klitschko said on Telegram, adding in a separate post around 3am (5am PKT) that "a new batch of UAVs (drones) is flying to the capital". Four people were wounded in the attacks that hit at least seven districts, he said, with buildings and cars on fire.

Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine triggered the biggest European conflict since World War II, forcing millions to flee their homes and decimating much of eastern and southern Ukraine. Ukrainian cities are targeted by Russian air strikes almost daily. On Sunday, Russia launched a record 479 explosive drones at Ukraine, according to the Ukrainian Air Force.

Kyiv has also carried out attacks on Russian territory, targeting transport and weapons production infrastructure. Russia's transport agency Rosaviatsia said on Tuesday that flight operations were temporarily restricted at Saint Petersburg's Pulkovo airport. Similar restrictions were imposed on at least 13 other airports overnight, with four in Moscow reopening on Tuesday.

Despite efforts by US President Donald Trump to reach a ceasefire agreement, a second round of peace talks in Turkey are at a standstill. The only concrete agreement reached at the talks over the week-

end was for release all seriously wounded or sick prisoners of war and those under the age of 25 — a deal that did not specify the number of soldiers involved.

While welcoming POW exchanges, Zelensky said last week said it was "pointless" to hold further talks with the current Russian delegation — who he previously dismissed as "empty heads" — since they could not agree to a ceasefire. On Sunday, the Russian army also claimed to have attacked the Ukrainian region of Dnipropetrovsk, which borders the regions of Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia, already partially under Russian control, a first in more than three years of conflict.

"Time for everyone to finally accept the fact that Russia understands only strikes, not rational words," Ukraine's Yermak said on Tuesday, in a thinly veiled criticism of the Trump administration. As a condition for halting its invasion, Russia has demanded that Ukraine cede the territories Moscow claims to have annexed and forswear joining NATO. It has also rejected a proposed 30-day unconditional ceasefire sought by Kyiv and the European Union, arguing that it would allow Ukrainian forces to rearm with Western deliveries. Ukraine is demanding a complete Russian withdrawal of from its territory and security guarantees from the West, describing Moscow's demands as "ultimatums".



No hike in passport fees

LAHORE (APP): The Directorate General of Immigration and Passports local chapter Tuesday said that the government is unlikely to increase the passport fees from next fiscal year 2025-26 as these were revised up last year.

Currently, the normal fee for a 36-page ordinary passport for 5 years is Rs 4,500, while the urgent processing fee is Rs7,500. Likewise, For a 10-year validity period, the fee for a 36-page passport is Rs 6,700, with an urgent fee it is Rs 11,200. Similarly, for a 72-page passport for 5 years, people will have to pay Rs 8,200 for normal processing and Rs 13,500 for urgent processing.

Youth found dead

KARACHI (PPI): In a series of alarming incidents across various neighborhoods of Karachi, two individuals have been injured by stray bullets, while others have been wounded in personal disputes and a robbery resistance, raising serious concerns about the city's public safety.

In Gulberg, Jahanzaib, son of M. Umar and 28 years old, was injured by a stray bullet at his residence in Moosa Colony near City College. He was promptly moved to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital (ASH) for medical attention.

Meanwhile, in North Nazimabad, 50-year-old Sughra, wife of Ejaz, was also hit by a stray bullet near State Bank Block A. She too was taken to ASH for necessary treatment. The police are actively probing both these cases to determine the sources of the stray bullets.

A separate incident in Mehmoabad saw Jahanzaib, son of Moin Khan aged 24, shot over a personal dispute in the L Area. He was brought to Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) for medical care. Investigations are ongoing to identify the motive and individuals involved in this conflict.

Adding to the day's distressing events, a security guard named Dilbar, son of Arz and approximately 25 years old, was shot while attempting to resist a robbery near Five Star Chowrangi Block C. He was also taken to ASH for treatment, and the police are pursuing leads to apprehend the perpetrators.

In a tragic occurrence at Hawksbay, the drowned body of Sultan, son of Akram and 20 years old, was discovered near the RO Plant. After completing legal procedures, his body was handed over to his family for final rites.

PFA inspects 790 food points

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Food Authority (PFA) continued its ongoing inspections at food outlets across major travel points during the Eid special operation, under the directions of Director General Muhammad Asim Javid.

PFA food safety teams inspected 790 food points located on motorways, GT Road, bus terminals and railway stations. Teams imposed Rs 956,000 worth of fines on 66 food businesses and issued improvement notices to 611 outlets over violations of food safety standards. Over 130 litres of substandard oil, soft drinks and snacks were seized and discarded on the spot.

The DG said that inspections were carried out in various cities, including Lahore 31, Faisalabad 89, Multan 89, Bahawalpur 64, Rawalpindi 58, Sargodha 56, Gujranwala 42 and Sahiwal 46, along with other cities. He said that PFA food safety teams also inspected service areas along motorways including Sukhiki 33, Sial Mor 31, Bhera 58, Burhan 16, Kallar Kahar 18 and Chakri 22, besides food points in Jhelum, Nankana Sahib, Shorkot, Gojra, Khanewal, Uch Sharif and Rahim Yar Khan. He added that food was found being fried in substandard oil at several known restaurants while expired and poor-quality items were confiscated and discarded during the operation. Scheduled and surprise visits are being conducted regularly to ensure food safety during peak travel seasons.

CM, US envoys discuss enhanced bilateral cooperation

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif met with US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A. Baker and US Consul General Kristin K. Hawkins, here on Tuesday. The CM extended a warm welcome to both diplomats and appreciated Natalie Baker's dynamic and constructive role in strengthening US-Pakistan relations during her tenure in Pakistan.

During the meeting, discussions focused on strengthening the long-standing Pakistan-US relationship and enhancing cooperation in areas of mutual interest. The CM also commended the United States for playing a positive and constructive role amid recent tensions between Pakistan and India.

CM Maryam Nawaz thanked Natalie Baker for

the US Embassy's support for Lahore Qalandars in the Pakistan Super League (PSL). She also expressed solidarity with the people of California, recognizing it as a sister state to Punjab. The CM described her recent meeting with the US Congressional Pakistan Caucus as both positive and productive.

She emphasized the importance of the United States as a key partner in promoting sustainable peace in South Asia. "Pakistan-US relations are built on shared values and strategic interests," she noted, reaffirming her commitment to further strengthening ties between Punjab and the state of California.

Highlighting Punjab's economic potential, she said, "Pakistan is emerging as a strategic partner

for the United States in various sectors, including textiles. Punjab, as the country's most populous and economically robust province, welcomes American investment and cooperation across multiple sectors, she added and also acknowledged the vital role played by the Pakistani-American community in bridging the two nations.

The CM stressed the importance of global collaboration to confront shared challenges such as climate change, food security, and sustainable development. "We view the United States as a key global ally in addressing these critical issues," she added. She further shared that Punjab has the distinction of launching Pakistan's first Women's Virtual Police Station.

PPP leader terms Budget 2025-26 people-friendly

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Punjab leader Usman Malik has hailed the federal budget for the fiscal year 2025-26 as a "people-friendly" and balanced financial plan, appreciating the government's decision to avoid imposing new taxes on the lower-income segments of society.

Reacting to the budget on Tuesday, Malik praised the government's move to increase salaries of government employees and reduce certain taxes, despite pre-

vailing economic challenges. "This is a laudable step which will positively impact the lives of public servants," he stated.

Highlighting key sectors, Malik said the government had taken a considerate approach towards agriculture, which is currently facing a crisis. "No additional taxes have been imposed on the agriculture sector, and the prices of fertilizers, agri-medicines, and pesticides have been sustained," he noted.

Touching upon the hous-

ing sector, Malik said that the reduction in taxes on property purchases would benefit low-income individuals and small investors aiming to build their own homes. "Housing is a major issue for the poor, and this tax relief will offer them some hope," he added.

Concluding his remarks, the PPP leader termed the budget as balanced and conducive to national growth. "It reflects the government's commitment to public welfare and economic stability," he said.

Interfaith Eid milan party held at Naulakha Church

LAHORE (APP): An interfaith Eid Milan Party was held at the Naulakha Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, aiming to promote harmony, mutual respect, and understanding among different religious communities.

The event was hosted by Reverend Dr. Majid Abel, with Provincial Minister Ramesh Singh Arora attending as the chief guest.

The gathering brought together religious scholars, leaders from various sects, social organizations, and government representatives in a show of unity and shared celebration. The event embodied the values of inclusiveness, religious coexistence, and social cohesion, as participants joined in celebrating the spirit of Eid in a warm and respectful atmosphere.

Welcoming the attendees, Reverend Dr. Majid

Abel emphasized that Naulakha Presbyterian Church has always stood for love, tolerance, and mutual respect among all religions. He urged society to collectively work towards a future free from discrimination based on color, race, or religion.

In his address, Minister Ramesh Singh Arora reaffirmed the Punjab government's commitment to interfaith peace and harmony, saying that promoting interfaith harmony is a top priority of the Punjab government. "We are committed to ensuring that people of all faiths feel safe, respected, and valued. The efforts of Naulakha Church in fostering interfaith unity are deeply commendable and contribute to making Pakistan a land of peace and love," the minister added.

Chairman of the Kul Masalik Board Maulana

Asim Makhdoom praised Reverend Abel's longstanding efforts and said that every festival celebrated at Naulakha Church serves as a powerful symbol of interfaith harmony.

Other distinguished speakers included Javed William (Head of Faces of Pakistan), Mufti Ashiq Hussain, Professor Syed Mahmood Ghaznavi, Liaqat Baloch, Ramzan Sialvi (Khateeb, Data Darbar).

All speakers highlighted the importance of unity, religious tolerance, and mutual respect. They also paid tribute to the Pakistan Army's successful execution of Operation Bunyanum-Marsoos, recognizing its role in securing peace and national integrity.

The event concluded with special prayers for peace, development, prosperity, and continued religious harmony in Pakistan.

Just 924 convictions in 60K women, child abuse cases

LAHORE (PPI): The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) on Tuesday voiced serious concern over the alarming conviction rates in cases of violence against women and children in Punjab in 2024.

According to HRCP information, reports indicated that despite the registration of over 60,000 First Information Reports (FIRs), only 924 suspects were convicted, whereas more than 2,300 were acquitted.

This stark disparity highlights critical deficiencies in police investi-

gations and accountability, undermining Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's commitment to safeguarding vulnerable communities.

The HRCP stresses the urgent need for reform in policing practices and prosecution processes to deliver justice effectively. The organization advocates for the incorporation of trauma-informed and gender-sensitive investigation techniques, alongside setting performance benchmarks for police officers based on the quality of their investigations.

Moreover, the HRCP

calls for enhanced support systems for survivors, ensuring they have access to the resources necessary for healing and justice. The proposal also includes the introduction of district-wise performance reports on prosecution and conviction rates, which should be made accessible to the public.

In light of these pressing issues, the HRCP underscores the importance of immediate and comprehensive reforms to uphold the rights of women and children and restore public trust in the justice system.

LGH provides medical services to 10,000 patients

LAHORE (APP): Under the directives of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Lahore General Hospital (LGH) successfully provided free, high-quality medical services to 10,033 patients in its Emergency Department during the four-day Eid-ul-Adha holidays. The services were delivered seamlessly without any slip fees or interruptions, ensuring accessibility for all. According to LGH sources on Tuesday, the hospital conducted 2,047 X-rays, 621 ultrasounds, and 513 CT scans during this period. Principal of Amiruddin Medical College, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Farooq Afzal, and Medical Superintendent Dr. Faryad Hussain credited the success to the guidance of Provincial Minister for Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education, Khawaja Salman Rafique. They emphasized that health professionals remain vigilant in delivering quality care and are committed to continuing their professional responsibilities. Dr. Faryad Hussain briefed Prof. Afzal that free dialysis was provided for patients with kidney diseases, alongside ongoing treatment in the women and children's departments. Prof. Afzal described medicine as a "messianic profession," noting that the joy of alleviating patients' suffering is invaluable.



KARACHI: Business community watching the 2025-26 federal budget live on television screen at Chamber of Commerce. —APP Photo

LWMC carried out cleanup operation

LAHORE (APP): A major clean-up operation has been completed, revealing how many contaminants were removed, how many liters of phenyl, rose water and how many kilos of lime were used.

CEO LWMC Babar Sahib Din told APP that on the instructions of the Chief Minister, the biggest clean-up operation of Punjab was completed on Eid and a new record was set by removing 315,669 tons of garbage in three days. In 9 divisions of Punjab, 74 percent more garbage was removed in the last 3 days of Eid. The maximum amount of garbage was removed in Lahore, 78,771 tons. 143,429 liters of phenyl, 30,563 liters of rose water were used.

Likewise, 29,87,268 kilograms of lime were sprayed. Out of the total 12,000 received complaints, 11,880 complaints were resolved immediately. The Punjab government distributed more than 11.971 million free bags on Eid-ul-Adha, 1,684 altars, 816 dump sites, and 3,970 union council camps were set up.

Two drug peddlers arrested

LAHORE (APP): Shera Kot police on Tuesday apprehended two alleged drug peddlers in separate operations and recovered a huge quantity of cannabis from their possession.

According to a police spokesperson, the suspects — identified as Waseem and Ghulam Hassan — were taken into custody from Bakramandi Stop and Babu Sabu Chowk, respectively. Law enforcement officials seized a total of 2.4 kilogrammes of cannabis during the raids.

Cases have been registered against the accused, who have been handed over to the investigation wing for further legal proceedings. added the spokesperson.

Superintendent of Police, Iqbal Town Division, Dr Muhammad Umar lauded the efforts of the Shera Kot police and reiterated that no leniency would be shown to individuals involved in the destruction of the younger generation. "Elements responsible for endangering the future of our youths do not deserve any concession," he added.

IHC disposes of 1415 cases in one month

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has disposed of 1415 cases in the month of May 2025, said a performance report issued here.

According to the report, the single and division benches of the IHC disposed of a total of 1415 cases from May 1 to 31.

Justice Inaam Ameen Minhas came first by disposing of 274 cases, Justice Muhammad Azam Khan disposed of 181 cases, while Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani concluded 134 cases. According to the report, Acting Chief Justice Sarfraz Dogar disposed of 83 cases, Justice Tariq Mahmood Jahangiri 59, Justice Babar Sattar 71, Justice Sardar Ijaz Ishaq Khan 52, Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir 65,

Justice Saman Rafat Imtiaz 71, Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro 80 and Justice Muhammad Asif concluded 113 cases.

According to the report, the division bench comprising Acting Chief Justice Sarfraz Dogar and Justice Muhammad Asif disposed of 9 cases, Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani 134 cases. And the division bench comprising Justice Sardar Ijaz Ishaq Khan disposed of 2 cases, the division bench comprising Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani and Justice Saman Rifat Imtiaz disposed of 25 cases, the division bench comprising Justice Tariq Mahmood Jahangiri and Justice Saman Rifat Imtiaz disposed of 9 cases, the division bench comprising Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro and Justice Muhammad Azam Khan disposed of 3 cases, and the division bench comprising Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro and Justice Inaam Ameen Minhas disposed of 1 case.

Punjab govt transfers various secretaries

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government has transferred various secretaries, here on Tuesday.

According to a notification, Secretary to Government of the Punjab, Housing Urban Development & Public Health Engineering Department, vice Capt. (Retd.) Asad Ullah Khan (PAS/BS-21), transferred. The post of Secretary, HUD & PHE Department shall remain upgraded from BS-20 to BS-21 as personal to Capt. (Retd.) Noor-Ul-Amin Mengal (PAS/BS-

21). Secretary to Government of the Punjab, Home Department was transferred with immediate effect and posted as Secretary to Government of the Punjab, Housing Urban Development & Public Health Engineering Department, vice Capt. (Retd.) Asad Ullah Khan (PAS/BS-21), transferred. The post of Secretary, HUD & PHE Department shall remain upgraded from BS-20 to BS-21 as personal to Dr. Ahmed Javed Qazi and as long as it is held by him.

Govt presented a true pro-poor budget: MPA

LAHORE (APP): Parliamentary Secretary and Member Punjab Assembly (MPA) Muhammad Hassana Riaz has termed the federal budget 2025-26 as a "true pro-poor" financial plan, praising the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government for presenting a relief-oriented budget in difficult economic circumstances.

Talking to APP following the budget speech by Federal Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday, Riaz said the government employees, who contribute significantly to the national

tax revenue, have rightfully been given relief through a 10 per cent salary increase and reduction in income tax on salaries.

He acknowledged the challenging economic situation of the country, stating, "Although Pakistan has emerged from a crisis, the economy is still under pressure. However, due to the consistent efforts of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and his financial team, inflation has been brought down and foreign exchange reserves have improved."

Riaz expressed optimism that the economy is now set

to take off, given the positive indicators and prudent financial policies.

Commenting on national security, he justified the increase in the defence budget, citing the historical Pakistan-India conflict and continued aggressive rhetoric from the Indian leadership. "A strong defence system is essential, and enhancing the defence budget is a timely and strategic decision," he added.

He also welcomed the government's move to restrict non-filers from making major financial transactions, including purchasing property and vehicles.

Mayor demands Rs100 billion development grant

KARACHI (PPI): Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Tuesday called for allocation of Rs100 billion development grant in the upcoming budget for Pakistan's commercial and financial hub Karachi.

He emphasized the remarkable waste management operation during Eid-ul-Adha, where 146,801 tons of waste were cleared in three days, underscoring the city's urgent need for federal and provincial support.

Speaking at a press conference at the KMC head office, Mayor Wahab praised the tireless efforts of sanitary staff and officials who worked relentlessly under extreme heat. The operation included setting up 96 collection points across 25 towns and seven districts, with a 24-hour helpline managing 3,699 complaints, 97.4% of which were promptly resolved.

Wahab highlighted the city's unique challenges, stressing the need for genuine empowerment and support from political parties, including MQM and Jamaat-e-Islami, to ensure Karachi receives its fair share from the Parliament. The mayor invited political figures to collaborate constructively rather than engage in divisive rhetoric, urging them to focus on the city's progress.

In a bid to end the "politics of division," Wahab referenced past issues of "China cutting" and "road cutting," advocating for a unified approach to Karachi's development. He announced the commencement of drain cleaning operations from June 20, highlighting proactive measures to maintain the city's cleanliness.

The mayor also addressed the crackdown on the "charbi mafia" with the

Karachi Police, leading to significant arrests. He acknowledged improvements in waste management compared to previous years, particularly in problematic areas like Lyari and New Karachi. Emphasizing the city's needs, Wahab called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to facilitate Karachi's development, with the hope that Mustafa Kamal and PPP would champion the cause in the cabinet and National Assembly. Wahab underscored the importance of continued diligence from waste management staff and highlighted ongoing development schemes worth Rs. 37 billion submitted to the Sindh government. He concluded by stressing the importance of unity and action over divisive debates, envisioning a future where Karachi's infrastructure and services reflect its status as a major urban center.

PHC extends PTI lawmaker’s bail till 18th June

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court extended the protective bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Muhammad Iqbal Afridi until June 18, 2025, and barred authorities from arresting him, on Tuesday.

A two-member bench comprising Justice Sahibzada Asadullah and Justice Dr. Khurshid Iqbal heard the case.

The counsel Bashir Wazir advocate informed the court that the petitioner is MNA, faced multiple registered cases but lacked details, hindering his ability to appear in court.

The lawyer expressed concerns about potential arrest before his client could appear in court.

The Assistant Attorney General stated that there were no cases or inquiries against Iqbal Afridi in the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), and the federal government's report was pending.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) prosecutor indicated that they would submit their report on the next hearing.

The Additional Advocate General revealed a case registered against Afridi in Dir.

PHC extended Afridi's protective bail until June 18, 2025, and sought a response from the federal government on the next hearing.

The court directed authorities to refrain from arresting Iqbal Afridi until the next hearing.

Federal Budget 2025-26 widely hailed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

PESHAWAR (APP): Federal Budget 2025-26 has widely been hailed by the people of all walks of life in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tuesday.

Senior academician and former Chairman Political Science Department at University of Peshawar, Professor Dr. AZ Hillali, ex Information Officer Misal Khan, former Chairman Economics Department Zilakat Malik and traders leader Jalil Jan welcomed an increase and pension of Federal Government's employees in the budget and termed it relief oriented.

Information Officer (Retd) Misa Khan said that despite financial constraints, the Federal Government deserved full credit and appreciation for presenting a goal-oriented budget in which maximum relief was provided to all segments of the society.

He said that increase in salaries and pension of the Government employees would help provided relief to the price hike stricken people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Professor Dr Zilakat Malik welcomed allocation of Rs.1,904 million for 10 projects of the Industries and Production Division under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) during the upcoming financial year 2025-26.

He said that Pakistan was confronted to the monster challenge of unemployment and poverty and promotion of industries and agriculture sectors would help create jobs opportunities for youth.

Professor Dr AH Hillali welcomed increase in pay and pension of employees in federal budget and termed it relief oriented.

He welcomed allocation of huge amount for education, health, PSDP, Benazir Income Support Program and other socio-economic sectors.

He said that it was a good omen that wheel of economic growth and development was back on track and maximum relief provided to people all provinces of Pakistan.

Interest-free loan scheme launched for merged districts

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has launched a long-term interest-free microfinance scheme for entrepreneurs to support small businesses and enhance livelihoods in the merged districts.

A press release on Thursday, said the initiative, which spans 13 years (2021-2034), has already made substantial progress, with 66,557 individuals benefitting from the program so far, while 22,152 more are currently receiving financial support under the scheme.

The program provides interest-free loans ranging from Rs25,000 to Rs75,000, with a flexible repayment period of up to 36 months. This structure has been designed to ensure that recipients can repay the loan in easy installments without the burden of interest, making it especially accessible for low-income and underserved populations. The project is being implemented by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Small Industries Development Board (SIDB), with a total allocation of Rs2,007 billion.

Operational execution is being carried out in partnership with Akhuwat Foundation Pakistan, one of the country's most trusted micro-finance institutions. Currently, 36 branches of Akhuwat are functioning in various merged districts, enabling local residents to apply for loans close to home.

The scheme caters to a wide range of economic sectors. Beneficiaries have used the funds to start new businesses, expand existing enterprises, purchase necessary equipment and machinery, and invest in agriculture and livestock development.

This multi-sectoral approach ensures that people from all walks of life, particularly those from rural and economically marginalized backgrounds, can benefit from financial inclusion.

Sikandar Shah, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer of the SIDB, recently conducted an official visit to the Akhuwat branch offices located in Bajaur district, DI Khan and Lakki Marwat.

During his visit, he observed the implementation and progress of the Interest-Free Microfinance Scheme for Entrepreneurship Development in the merged areas. The official acknowledged its impact on the socio-economic uplift of the region.

He commended the program as a cornerstone of inclusive development in the newly merged districts, recognizing its role in empowering local communities by providing accessible financial resources to aspiring entrepreneurs.

The initiative not only promotes economic participation at the grassroots level but also reflects the provincial government's broader vision of fostering self-reliance, employment generation, and sustainable economic growth.

This scheme, through its support to small businesses, agriculture, and livestock sectors, is paving the way for long-term prosperity and financial independence in the region. Local beneficiaries have expressed appreciation for the initiative, noting that the scheme has not only provided them with financial support but also with the confidence and tools needed to build a better future for their families and communities.

Sikandar Shah hoped that with continued implementation and monitoring, the scheme was expected to transform thousands of lives and contribute to the socioeconomic uplift of the merged districts in the coming years.

WSSP concludes special Eid-ul-Adha cleanliness operation in Peshawar

PESHAWAR (APP): The Water and Sanitation Services (WSSP) Peshawar (WSSP) has successfully concluded its special cleanliness operation carried out during the three days of Eid-ul-Adha in the provincial capital.

As part of the campaign, roads across the provincial capital were washed with a mixture of rose water and chlorine to maintain cleanliness and hygiene.

According to WSSP spokesman, more than 3,500 staff members participated in the operation.

During the operation, over 9,500 tons of waste was removed during the three days of Eid and disposed of.

The WSSP utilized 707 small and large vehicles to collect animal remains from across the city.

Chief Executive Officer Yasir Ali Khan also toured various areas of Peshawar to inspect the progress of the operation.

In addition to the sanitation efforts, WSSP ensured the uninterrupted supply of clean drinking water and responded promptly to public complaints.

After completing the waste collection phase, roads and designated collection points were washed and treated with lime. Disinfection sprays and ongoing monitoring were also part of the operation.

CEO Yasir Ali Khan appealed to citizens to cooperate by placing animal waste in plastic bags and leaving them outside their homes or at designated collection points, instead of dumping them in streets or alleys.

The initiative reflects WSSP's commitment to maintaining public hygiene during one of the busiest times of the year, ensuring a cleaner and safer environment for all residents.



PESHAWAR: Gypsy person boiling meat after collecting on Eid ul Adha at Ring road. — APP photo

Charitable Organizations celebrate Eid at PCP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: On the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Adha, beautiful glimpses of the spirit of sacrifice and service to humanity were witnessed at the Paraplegic Center Peshawar (PCP), wherein several charitable organizations and philanthropists contributed. Qatar Charity and Friends of Paraplegics (FoP) continued their tradition of supporting patients with disabilities and their families, while Fix It KP Chapter made the day even more memorable.

Qatar Charity distributed sacrificial meat to 98 persons with disabilities (PwDs), patients, and their families. Dr. Syed Muhammad Ilyas, CEO PCP, expressed his heart-felt happiness, stating that Qatar Charity's gesture of distributing sacrificial meat among people with disabilities in Peshawar won everyone's hearts. He added that the selection of PCP and FoP for this initiative was testimony to their commitment to a genuine welfare mission, and Qatar Charity would undoubtedly continue to collaborate with them to promote true service and selflessness in the future.

As per tradition, Friends of Paraplegics Peshawar continued its services during Eid. This time, a calf was sacrificed, and its meat was distributed among the patients and their caregivers as needed throughout the days of Eid.

Similarly, Fix It's provincial president Adnan Khan not only visited the Paraplegic Center Peshawar but also brought four goats for sacrifice with his team. Accompanied by fifty orphan children from the Fix It Family Home and their caretakers, they shared the joy of Eid with the patients, participated in the meal, and the children played in the center's lawn, enjoying the festivities.

Volunteers from Friends of Paraplegics and the Fix It team joined hands to host a feast for the patients and children with sacrificial meat. Eidi and sweets were also distributed among the children, bringing smiles to their faces.

Dr. Ilyas Syed deeply appreciated Fix It's heart-felt participation. He mentioned that Adnan Khan and his team's celebration of Eid with the patients and orphan children at the PCP was not just a feast or a traditional charitable activity, but a living example of humanity, selflessness and harmony. He added that this day was not only a message of joy for the patients but also an emotionally enriching experience for them, especially because his two sons, Omar and Ali, were also present on this occasion.

On this occasion, the Chairman FoP, Sana Ullah, General Secretary Engr Irfan Ullah, executive members and district coordinators were also present, playing a crucial role in making the Eid celebrations a success.

Influx of tourists to KP’s Tourist spots seen during Eid-al-Azha

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's tourist and scenic spots witnessed an extraordinary influx of visitors, with over 932,000 tourists arriving in just three days (June 7-9, 2025) During Eid al-Adha.

The Swat region, in particular, saw a significant influx of tourists. Famous destinations within Swat, such as Madyan, Bahrain, and surrounding areas, welcomed a total of 288,424 domestic tourists, along with 63 foreign visitors. These figures highlight Swat's popularity as a prime attraction for Pakistani tourists during the Eid holidays.

Across the province, other major tourist spots also experienced high visitor numbers. Galiyat: 177,000 tourists, Naran Kaghan: 168,000 tourists, Malam Jabba: 160,000 tourists, Dir Upper: 85,000 tourists.

These statistics were compiled with the assistance of police and Balochistan Levies checkpoints, Tourism Police, Assistant Commissioners, and field officers from relevant development authorities.

Under the directives of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur and Advisor for Tourism Zahid Chanzab, excellent facilities were provided to tourists. Visitors highly praised the effective arrangements for parking, security, guidance, and medical assistance. Young personnel from the Tourism Police provided exemplary service to tourists, while the Department of Tourism's helpline 1422 remained operational 24 hours a day.

The significant arrival of tourists in merged districts like Khyber and Bajaur also highlighted the emerging tourism development in these areas. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority played a pivotal role in managing tourist arrangements, oversight, and facility provision.

Advisor for Tourism Zahid Chanzab stated that the trust shown by tourists is a source of pride. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and the Culture and Tourism Authority are utilizing all available resources to make the province a safe, modern, and world-class tourist hub.

Sherpao criticizes federal budget

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Provincial Chairman of the Qaumi Watan Party (QWP), Sikandar Hayat Khan Sherpao, has strongly criticized the federal budget, saying it does not reflect the aspirations of the people. In a press release issued from Watan Kor, Peshawar, he stated that the budget fails to provide any relief for the public, business community, or the agriculture sector - the backbone of the national economy. Instead, it imposes heavy taxes that are likely to have further negative consequences.

He expressed concern that inflation is at its peak and, coupled with agricultural decline, nearly half of the country's population may fall below the poverty line. He added that instead of reducing its extravagant expenditures, the government has increased them by 17%, shifting the burden entirely onto the poor.

Sherpao asserted that the budget lacks concrete plans for economic development, agricultural prosperity, and public welfare, making it unrealistic to expect economic stability, reduction in inflation, or revival of the agriculture sector from it. Regarding the development budget, he warned that, similar to last year, any failure to meet tax collection targets will likely result in cuts to development funds first.

He also criticized the expected hike in petrol and diesel prices, stating that the resulting rise in transportation and electricity costs will further burden the public and push more people below the poverty line. According to him, poverty currently affects about 42% of the national population, with 48% in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 70% in Balochistan - figures he described as alarming. He added that the federal government continues to impose heavy taxes on smaller provinces despite depriving them of their fair share of resources.

Sherpao condemned the government's failure to allocate the promised funds for the merged tribal districts in the latest budget, warning that this would further deepen deprivation and disillusionment in those areas. He said that neglect of the agriculture sector has brought it to the brink of collapse, with major crop growth seeing a record decline. Last year, agricultural output was recorded at 6.4%, which has plummeted to just 0.65% this year - a matter of grave concern, given agriculture's central role in the economy.

He also cast doubt on any significant increase in exports and criticized the government for misleading public servants by announcing a 10% salary increase while trapping them in a web of heavy taxation - a tactic he likened to "giving with one hand and taking double with the other."

Highlighting economic mismanagement, Sherpao said it was surprising that the value of the dollar is decreasing globally while rising in Pakistan, exposing the government's flawed policies. He emphasized that a reduction in the dollar's value within Pakistan would help lower national debt and fuel prices.

Expressing skepticism over the new tax revenue target of Rs 14,000 billion, he questioned how the government expects to meet this goal when it failed to achieve last year's Rs 12,700 billion target. He concluded by stating that the overall impact of the budget would further intensify inflation and hurt the lower-income population the most. The budget, he said, includes no significant measures to address the backwardness of smaller provinces or ensure the prosperity of their people, which will only deepen their sense of deprivation.





In brief

Three killed in road mishap F.P. Report

BUNER: A horrific collision took place between motorcycle and a motor car near Pakistan Depot in the commercial market of Swari, resulting in the death of three youths riding the motorcycle. The three deceased youths have been identified as Asim Ali, Sudais Ali and Zeeshan Ali, of whom Asim Ali and Sudais Ali belong to village Nawagai, tehsil of Mandanr Buner and Zeeshan Ali belongs to Kandao Paty Nagramai, tehsil of Mandanr Buner. According to family sources, the three deceased youths were close friends and were going to Swat for a ride on a motorcycle when they met with an accident in Swari Bazaar, Buner. Immediately after the accident, the local population and police participated in rescue activities and shifted the bodies of the three deceased youths to Daggar Hospital. Where the doctors confirmed their death and after completing the necessary procedures, the bodies were handed over to the heirs. Meanwhile, family sources have said that the funeral prayers of Asim Ali and Sudais Ali were offered at 6:30 pm at Kandao Paty Nagaramai, and they were buried in ancestral graveyards in the hue and cry of families, relatives, friends and villagers.

Moawin foundation sacrifice animals Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: Moawin Foundation and IHHNL successfully organized a large-scale Qurbani (sacrifice) Drive 2025 in Shakakot, Malakand Agency, and Rawalpindi. A total of 221 animals were sacrificed during the event, and over 10,000 meat distribution bags were delivered to deserving families across the region. Additionally, 300 meat bags were distributed to communities in Ismaila (Swabi district) and Camp Corona (Nowshera district), specifically at the Moawin Foundation's Vocational Training Institutes. This initiative highlights the Moawin Foundation's unwavering commitment to supporting underprivileged communities and sharing the joys and blessings of Eidul Azha across multiple districts.

WSSCK completes cleanliness drive F.P. Report

KOHAT: Water and Sanitation Services Company Kohat (WSSCK) successfully completed a three-day special Eid cleanliness operation. By implementing its three-day Eid special cleanliness operation, 1430 tons sacrificial animal wastes were disposed of under environmentally friendly manner in six urban and KDA. Staff of the company remained on duty during three day of the Eid. In the operation, more than 96 vehicles, including Suzuki mini dumper, Garbage compactors, tractor trolleys, skip tractors, tractor shovels and excavators were participated. As many as 384 staff, including administrative officers, participated in the special Eid cleaning campaign. Member of the Provincial Assembly and DEDAC Chairman of the Assembly Shafi Jan along with Additional Deputy Commissioner Kohat Hamid Iqbal and WSSCK Board Chairman and Acting Chief Executive Officer Muhammad Saad from Sangerh School No. 3 formally inaugurated the Eid special cleanliness operation.



MINGORA: An official of KP Tourism Police Department, maintaining traffic on road in Swat.

American Independence Day Ceremony held at Press Club Lodhran

Saqib Mushtaq

LODHRAN: A grand ceremony was held at the Press Club Lodhran to celebrate the 249th anniversary of American Independence Day, during which a cake was cut. This event marked the first time in the history of the Lodhran district that such a significant celebration took place.

Despite messages and threats from some mischief-makers and self-proclaimed religious leaders discouraging the cutting of the American Independence Day cake, the cake was cut to raise awareness and further strengthen the relationship between Pakistan and the United States.

The ceremony featured prominent figures from various walks of life, including journalists, civil society representatives, business leaders, and youth groups. The aim of the event was to highlight the importance of US-Pakistan relations on this special occasion and to promote a message of mutual friendship. The event began with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by the national anthems of both Pakistan and the United States.

Notable attendees included Muhammad Tufail Thakur Advocate (Vice President of the



Bahawalpur High Court Bar Association), Mirza Saleem Akhtar (District Chairman of the Olympic Association), Press Club President Malik Shafiq, General Secretary Sheikh Tahiruddin Advocate, political and social leader Rao Tariq Hanif, Editor of Daily Lehar Sahil Malik Mushtaq Arain, former Chairman of the Usher Zakat Committee

Lodhran Shaikh Jahangir Khan, Senior Reporter Chaudhry Imran, Reporter Iqbal Khan Lodhi, Host Saqib Mushtaq, and other members of the Press Club. During his speech, Muhammad Tufail Thakur Advocate emphasized the need to strengthen and consolidate Pakistan-US relations. Malik Shafiq Arain, in his welcome address, highlighted that America is the world's largest democracy and noted that Independence Day is a time to reflect on the fundamental principles of democracy, freedom of expression, and human rights. He stated that Pakistan and the

United States have long-standing diplomatic, educational, economic, and security ties that need to be further promoted.

A special cake was cut to commemorate America's Independence Day, and guests participated enthusiastically in the celebratory atmosphere that followed, which included light music and refreshments.

Journalists attending the event expressed appreciation for the initiatives of the US Embassy in Pakistan. Several speakers also acknowledged the achievements of Pakistanis living in the US, recognizing them as bridges between the two countries.

The event not only symbolized friendship and cooperation between the two nations but also provided an opportunity to express solidarity, which was warmly received by both the media and participants. The ceremony concluded with prayers for the progress and security of both countries.

Several outlawed held during search operation

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Over a dozen suspects were arrested during a search and strike operation jointly launched by the police and security forces in the Top Takhtikhel, Qazi Dheri, Tanchiabad, Tabi Murad and Sherikhel areas of Lakki Marwat district, claimed DPO.

The district police head said that the operation was launched on reports about the presence of terrorists and anti-peace and anti-state elements in the remote rural localities of the district. "During the action, the law enforcers eliminated the hideouts of miscreants and criminals gangs and arrested 13 suspects including two drug traffickers and seized arms and ammunition from them", he maintained.

He said that the cops checked data of suspected individuals with the help of the criminal record verification system and met with local elders to seek their support to make actions against miscreants result-oriented. The DPO said that the police would continue such actions in future to make the district crime-free and establish lasting peace in the area.

Meanwhile, Regional Police Officer Bannu Sajjad Khan directed district police authorities to trace the bandits involved in looting passenger buses and ensure their arrest without delay. He issued these directions while chairing a meeting here at the police lines in the District Headquarters Complex Tajazai.

Lakki Marwat DPO Muhammad Jawad Ishaq briefed him about the secu-

city and law and order situation. SP Investigation Murad Ali Khan, SDPOs and SHO were in attendance. The RPO said that the road and highway safety must be kept the top priority as it was the prime duty of police to provide the transporters and commuters safe travelling on roads. He said that the arrests of bandits' gang would help to enhance public trust in the police force of the district.

Sajjad asked the police officials to increase patrolling on Lakki-Darra Tang and other roads and tighten noose around anti-social elements in the district. He stressed for promoting community policing to win people's support against criminals and miscreants and asked the cops to behave with citizens politely.

BTM protest continue in Larkana

F.P. Report

LARKANA: The Badeh Taluka Movement (BTM) is continuing its 307th day of protest on the second day of Eid against the indifference of the Sindh government to grant taluka status to Badeh city. The citizens have been protesting continuously for six consecutive years.

According to details, the leaders of the Badeh Taluka Movement along with civil society representatives and citizens took out a protest rally from the media house to reached the town hall. The citizens held banners and placards in their hands and raised slogans against the insensitivity of the Sindh

rulers. On this occasion, BTM struggle leaders and civil society representatives Zeb Ali Sario, Comrade Aziz Brohi, Ghulam Mustafa Ansari and others protested and said that the PPP government does not seem serious about granting the status of a taluka to Badeh city, due to which the residents of Badeh city have been struggling for the past six years, but at present they are continuing the protest in a state of intense anger.

DG Archaeology reviews development works: Deputy General Archaeology arrived at the tourist center of Mohenjo Daro in Larkana district to review the development

works of Mohenjo Daro and reviewed the conservation work done on ancient artifacts near the stupa. He also visited the laboratory established for soil and water testing and reviewed the testing of soil and water samples using modern equipment.

On this occasion, Director General Archaeology Abdul Fatah Sheikh, speaking to the media, said that on the instructions of the Sindh government, for the first time in Mohenjo Daro, an internet system has been installed in the campus through satellite, with which we are providing internet facilities to employees and foreign tourists.

Aman Football Mela held in Tank

F.P. Report

TANK: The Sabir Club wins 'Aman Football Mela' organized in Tank with the support of the Sports Department and Pak Army. The final match featured a gripping face-off between Sabir Club and AL Masoom Pathankot Club. The match remained goalless until regulation time. Sabir Club was declared the winner in the spirit of goodwill.

The match drew a large crowd of enthusiastic spectators who cheered on the players. Commanding Officer Cornal Ahmed and District Sports Officer Irfanullah Bhattani was the chief guest of the final match, who praised the players for their outstanding performances.

At the conclusion of the match, trophies and cash prizes were awarded to the standout performers. Speaking on the occasion, District Sports Officer Irfanullah Betani emphasized the significance of such events for promoting long-term peace and regional development.

He noted that athletes serve as ambassadors of peace, fostering unity and brotherhood within society. He also commended the Organizers for its excellent organization and pledged continued efforts to host more sporting events across the district, including football and other games.

Bus stands inspected

F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Assistant Commissioner and Administrator Municipal Committee Kamalia Iqra Nasir, along with Chief Officer Municipal Committee Ali Raza, conducted a surprise inspection of various bus stops in the city and directed the traffic police to register an FIR against buses that are overloaded or have passengers on the roofs of the buses and stop them.

AC Iqra Nasir said that the speed limit should be enforced in the city and heavy traffic should be banned from entering the city before dusk so that the increasing number of accidents can be completely controlled. Meanwhile, Provincial Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafiq conducted a detailed visit to Gojra and Toba Tek Singh to inspect the ongoing grand cleanliness operation during Eidul Azha.

3133 patients treated in BKMC

F.P. Report

SWABI: Bacha Khan Medical Complex treated a total of 3,133 patients including surgical, medical, gynecology and pediatric cases during Eid-ul-Azha holidays. According to spokesperson for BKMC over 5,000 laboratory tests were conducted, 61 births took place, 85 CT scans, 482 X-rays, 306 ECGs and 52 dialysis procedures were performed. Additionally, 20 cases of dog bites and 2 cases of poisoning were reported.

Emergency services remained fully functional 24/7 throughout the holidays. Doctors, nurses, paramedics, pharmacy staff and administration performed their duties with full dedication.

Over 800 treated at Lower Dir drug rehab center

Haleem Asad

LOWER DIR: Tucked away in the scenic town of Balambat, a small government-run rehabilitation centre has become a lifeline for hundreds battling drug addiction in the region. Established by the Social Welfare Special Education and Women Empowerment department

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2003 for drug addicts, the center got functional in 2021 in a rented building in Balambat Dir Lower. According to officials, the facility has provided free treatment to more than 800 patients an alarming indicator of the district's growing drug abuse problem.

The centre offers a structured three-month inpatient programme that includes medical detoxification, psychological therapy, and vocational training aimed at reintegrating patients into society.

Locals say that narcotics like crystal meth (ice), heroin, and hashish are easily available in Timergara and nearby areas. The ready access to drugs paired with a lack of consistent law



enforcement is fueling a rapid increase in addiction, particularly among the youth.

Talking to local journalists at his office, the center's rehabilitation officer Nisar Ahmad said that currently, the rehabilitation centre housed 30 patients not only from Lower Dir but also from neighbouring Upper Dir, Chitral, and Bajaur districts. "Each patient's recovery journey costs the government around Rs200,000," he said, adding the center offered support through a professional team that included a psychologist, psychiatrist, medical officer, and even a religious scholar.

To strengthen the chances of long-term

recovery, the facility also operates a vocational training wing where patients learn trades like tailoring, electrical work, cooking, and barbering. The goal is to equip them with practical skills that can help rebuild their lives once they leave treatment.

Despite the center's efforts, officials and residents alike warn that without stronger government action to crack down on drug supply chains and more investment in treatment facilities, the crisis could spiral further out of control. "The need is urgent, and the resources are limited," said one community elder. "We cannot afford to lose another generation to addiction", the elder added.

Department of Urdu inaugurated at KUST

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: The Department of Urdu Language and Literature has been officially launched at Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST). This new department fulfills a long-standing wish of students and literary circles in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, now brought into reality.

Under the direction of Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Syed Zafar Ilyas, Dr. Muhammad Ayaz, Chairman of the Department of Pakistan Studies and Political Science, diligently worked to bring this project to fruition and invited educa-

tional and literary experts from across the country.

Among the experts who participated in the ceremony were Professor Abdul Aziz Sahir (Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad), Professor Muhammad Shafiq (Nawal University Islamabad), Professor Naheed Qamar (Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology), Ms. Zainab (Assistant Professor, Government Girls Post Graduate College Kohat), Dr. Hussain Mahmood, and Sajjad Ahmad (Lecturers, Government Post Graduate College Kohat). Registrar KUST, Mr. Rauf Khan, also

attended the inaugural ceremony.

The guests, along with Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Syed Zafar Ilyas and Dr. Muhammad Ayaz, planted saplings at the university, offering prayers for the university's progress and prosperity. They described this initiative as a significant step forward in promoting Urdu language and literature and lauded the efforts of the Vice Chancellor and Dr. Ayaz. They expressed that higher education opportunities in Urdu will prove to be an invaluable asset for students from all over Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly those from Kohat and the southern districts.

Former Deputy Speaker meets JUI-F chief

F.P. Report

BANNU: Former Deputy Speaker National Assembly and senior leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F), Zahid Akram Khan Durrani, paid a visit to Abdul Khel along with a delegation where he met with the party chief, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, and extended heartfelt Eidul Azha greetings.

Among the notable attendees were Chief of Kachozai Malik Kashif Khan, former Tehsil Nazim Engineer Malik Ihsan, Rahat Khan, and other respected elders and party office bearers.

During the meeting, held in a cordial and welcoming atmosphere, discussions were held on mutual interests, the prevailing regional

situation, and key organizational matters. Zahid Akram Durrani also held a separate meeting with Maulana Asjad Mehmood, in which the two leaders reviewed the party's ongoing public outreach campaigns, current political activities, and future strategies.

The meetings emphasized party unity, resolution of public issues, and the strengthening of the organizational structure. Durrani assured the leadership that the district and tehsil-level party leadership is in constant communication with workers and is fully prepared for the upcoming elections.

WSSCB removes Over 600 ton waste during Eid: The Water and Sanitation Services Company

(WSSC) Bannu continued its extensive cleanliness operation during the Eid-ul-Fitr holidays, successfully removing over 600 kilotons of waste and debris from 80 key points across the city and surrounding areas. All designated locations were thoroughly cleaned and washed to ensure a hygienic environment for the residents.

Chief Executive Officer of WSSC Bannu, PMS Muhammad Imran, briefed media representatives at the Fatima Khel site, stating that the cleanup operation was launched on the first day of Eid under the leadership of Commissioner Bannu Division Muhammad Ali Khan and the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Faheem Khan.

Two killed, 48 injured in South Waziristan mishaps

F.P. Report

WANA: What should have been a joyous occasion turned grim in Lower South Waziristan, as the Eid al-Azha celebrations were overshadowed by a series of tragic incidents that claimed two lives and left more than 50 people injured.

According to local police and officials at Wana Headquarters Hospital, at least 48 people were injured in the past 24 hours due to reckless motorcycle stunts—primarily one-wheeling—and overspeeding. Most of the victims are young men, several of whom required transfer to advanced medical facilities after receiving initial treatment.

In a separate incident in the Manra area of Tehsil Birmal, two children sustained critical injuries in crossfire between rival groups. According to local police and officials at Wana Headquarters

they were rushed to a nearby hospital, where their condition remains serious.

Adding to the tension, unidentified gunmen opened fire in the Karikot area of Tehsil Wana on the eve of Eid, killing two individuals on the spot. Police responded promptly, secured the crime scene, and have initiated an investigation into the fatal shooting.

The wave of violence and accidents has cast a shadow over Eid in the region, spreading fear among residents. Local (What should have been a joyous occasion turned grim in Lower South Waziristan, as the Eid Adha celebrations were overshadowed by a series of tragic incidents that claimed two lives and left more than 50 people injured.

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Adding to the tension, unidentified gunmen opened fire in the Karikot area of Tehsil Wana on the eve of Eid, killing two individuals on the spot. Police responded promptly, secured the crime scene, and have initiated an investigation into the fatal shooting.



Trump admn deploys Marines to Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES/WASHINGTON (Reuters): The Trump administration ordered US Marines into Los Angeles and intensified raids on suspected undocumented immigrants, fueling more outrage from street protesters and Democratic leaders who raised concerns over a national crisis.

Some 700 Marines based in Southern California were expected to reach Los Angeles, officials said, as part of a federal strategy to quell street demonstrations opposing the immigration raids, which are a part of a signature effort of President Donald Trump's second term.

Although their mission to protect federal personnel and property is temporary - filling the gaps until a full contingent of 4,000 National Guard troops can reach Los Angeles - the deployment is an extraordinary use of military force in support of a police operation, and it comes over the objection of state and local leaders who did not request help. Meanwhile, US Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem pledged to carry out even more operations to round up suspected immigration violators, extending a crackdown that provoked the protests. Trump officials have branded the protests as lawless and blamed state and local Democrats for permitting upheaval and protecting undocumented immigrants with sanctuary cities.

The military and federal enforcement operations have further polarized America's two major political parties as Trump, a Republican, threatened to arrest California's Democratic governor, Gavin Newsom, for resisting the federal crackdown. California sued the Trump administration to block deployment of the National Guard and the Marines, arguing that it violates federal law and state sovereignty.

The top Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator Jack Reed, said he was "gravely troubled" by Trump's deployment of active-duty Marines. "The president is forcibly overriding the authority of the governor and mayor and using the military as a political weapon. This unprecedented move threatens to turn a tense situation into a national crisis," Reed said.

"Since our nation's founding, the American people have been perfectly clear: we do not want the military conducting law enforcement on US soil," he said. The announcement that Marines would be deployed was made on the fourth straight day of protests. Police began to disperse hundreds of demonstrators who gathered outside a federal detention cen-



ter in downtown Los Angeles where immigrants have been held. Police said arrests were being made.

National Guard forces had formed a human barricade to keep people out of the building. Then a phalanx of police moved up the street, pushing people from the scene and firing "less lethal" munitions such as gas canisters. Police had used similar tactics. US Marines are known as the first American forces to establish a beachhead in US military interventions, and as the last forces to leave any occupation.

Though military forces have been deployed domestically for major disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and the attacks of September 11, 2001, it is extremely rare for troops to be used domestically during civil disturbances. Even without invoking the Insurrection Act, Trump can deploy Marines under certain conditions of law or under his authority as commander in chief.

The last time the military was used for direct police action under the Insurrection Act was in 1992, when the California governor at the time asked President George H.W. Bush to help respond to Los Angeles riots over the acquittal of police officers who beat Black motorist Rodney King. Newsom contends it is his charge as governor to call in the National Guard, labeling Trump's action as "an unmistakable step toward authoritarianism."

Trump in turn said he supported a suggestion by his border czar Tom Homan that Newsom should be arrested over possible obstruction of his administration's immigration enforcement measures. "I would do it if I were Tom. I think it's great," Trump told reporters. The protests so far have resulted in a few dozen arrests and some property damage.

"What is happening affects every American, everyone who wants to

live free, regardless of how long their family has lived here," said Marzita Cerrato, 42, a first-generation immigrant whose parents are from Mexico and Honduras. Protests also sprang up in at least nine other US cities, including New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco, according to local news outlets.

In Austin, Texas, police fired non-lethal munitions and detained several people as they clashed with a crowd of several hundred protesters. Before the Los Angeles dispersal, several hundred protesters outside a detention center chanted "free them all," flew Mexican and Central American flags, and directed sometimes-vulgar insults toward federal officers.

At dusk, officers had running confrontations with protesters who had scattered into the Little Tokyo section of the city. As people watched from apartment patios above street level, and as tourists huddled inside hotels, a large contingent of LAPD and officers and sheriffs deputies fired several flash bangs that boomed through side streets along with tear gas. Homeland Security said its Immigration and Customs Enforcement division had arrested 2,000 immigration offenders per day in recent days, far above the 311 daily average in fiscal year 2024 under former President Joe Biden.

"We conducted more operations today than we did the day before and tomorrow we are going to double those efforts again," Noem told Fox News' "Hannity." "The more that they protest and commit acts of violence against law enforcement officers, the harder ICE is going to come after them." Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass opposed the clampdown, telling MSNBC, "This is a city of immigrants." Noem countered that, "They are not a city of immigrants. They're a city of criminals."

Japan sights two Chinese aircraft carriers in Pacific for first time

TOKYO/BEIJING (Reuters): Two Chinese aircraft carriers were spotted conducting simultaneous operations in the Pacific for the first time, in a move that Japan's defence minister said signified Beijing's intention to further widen its capabilities beyond its borders.

The operations were a "routine training" exercise that did not target specific countries or regions, Wang Xueming, a spokesperson for the Chinese Navy, said in a statement, however. Since May, China has been flexing its muscles by sending an unusually large number of naval and coast guard vessels through a swathe of East Asian waters, according to security documents and officials, in moves that have unnerved regional capitals.

Japan's defence ministry has confirmed the two carriers, Liaoning and Shandong, were operating in separate areas in the Pacific, both near remote southern islands belonging to Japan. "Japan's prompt disclosure of information concerning the carriers underscores its commitment to deter any forceful, unilateral shifts in the regional status quo," Defence Minister Gen Nakatani told a press conference.

He added that Tokyo has engaged with Beijing to ensure its operations did not pose a threat to Japan's national security, but stopped short of criticising the neighbour. Japan is pursuing the build-up of its Pacific air defences and will closely monitor the movements of Chinese naval vessels, Nakatani said.

Earlier, Japan said the Liaoning sailed within its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) near Minamitorishima, a remote island east of Iwo Jima. Beijing's activities were consistent with international law and practice, its foreign ministry said. "China has always pursued a defensive national defence policy and hopes that the Japanese side will look at the matter objectively and rationally," ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a regular news briefing.

France says it obtains Palestinian reform pledge

PARIS (Reuters): France said it had obtained new commitments from the Palestinian Authority to reform, ahead of a conference next week at which Paris could become the most prominent Western power to back recognition of an independent Palestinian state.

President Emmanuel Macron has received a letter from Mahmoud Abbas in which the Palestinian president condemns the October 7, 2023 Hamas attack against Israel, calls on all hostages to be released and pledges further reforms, the Elysee said. Abbas, 89, has headed the internationally recognised Palestinian Authority since the death of veteran leader Yasser Arafat in 2004.

The PA exercises limited self rule in parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank but lost control of Gaza to its rivals Hamas since 2007. It has previously condemned Hamas for the attack that provoked the Gaza war and has called for the militant group to be disarmed in a future settlement. The letter to Macron, who is working on organising an international conference with Saudi Arabia to discuss recognition of Palestine, contains "unprecedented" pledges, Macron's office said, without elaborating.

"Hamas will no longer rule Gaza and must hand over its weapons and military capabilities to the Palestinian Security Forces, which will oversee their removal outside the Occupied Palestinian territory, with Arab and international support," the French leader's office quoted Abbas as having written in the letter. Israel has said it will not accept any role for the PA in Gaza after the war and has denounced countries that consider recognising Palestinian independence, which it says would reward Hamas for its attacks.

Six killed in small plane crash off San Diego coast

SAB DIEGO (AP): A small plane crashed off the San Diego coast shortly after takeoff, killing all six people on board, the Federal Aviation Administration said. The twin-engine Cessna 414 crashed, the FAA said. The plane was returning to Phoenix one day after flying out from Arizona, according to the flight tracking website Flightaware.com.

The Coast Guard said searchers found a debris field about 3 miles (about 5 kilometers) off the coast of Point Loma, a San Diego neighborhood that juts into the Pacific, US Coast Guard officials. The water in the search area is about 200 feet (61 meters) deep. Although the FAA said all six people on board the plane were killed, authorities haven't identified them.

The FAA said the plane is owned by vitamin and nutritional supplement maker Optimal Health Systems. But the company based in Pima, Arizona,

said in a statement that it sold the plane to a group of private individuals in 2023, meaning the FAA database could be out of date. However, the company's founder, Doug Grant, said in the statement that, "We personally know several of the passengers onboard and our sincerest condolences are offered to those affected by the tragedy, all of whom are incredible members of our small community."

The FAA referred questions about the plane's ownership to the National Transportation Safety Board, which didn't immediately provide any further details about the crash. The pilot told air traffic controllers that he was struggling to maintain his heading and climb as the plane twice turned towards shore before going back out to sea, according to audio posted by www.LiveATC.net and radar data posted by FlightAware. The controller urged the pilot to climb to

4,000 feet after he reported the plane was only about 1,000 feet in the air.

The controller directed the pilot to land at a nearby US naval airport on Coronado Island, but the pilot said he was unable to see the airport. A short time later, the pilot repeatedly signaled the "Mayday" distress call before controllers lost radar contact. A man who was out surfing when the plane crashed told NBC 7 in San Diego that he saw the plane come down at an angle, then climb back into the clouds before diving again and crashing into the water.

"The next time he came out of the clouds, he went straight into the water. But after I saw this splash, about six seconds later, it was dead silent. I knew that they went in the water, nose first, at a high speed," Tyson Wislofsky said. The crash comes weeks after a small Cessna crashed into a San Diego neighborhood in foggy weather and killed six people.

‘Russia has plans to test NATO’s resolve’

BERLIN (Reuters): Russia is determined to test the resolve of the NATO alliance, including by extending its confrontation with the West beyond the borders of Ukraine, the Germany's foreign intelligence chief told the Table Media news organization.

Bruno Kahl, head of the Federal Intelligence Service, said his agency had clear intelligence indications that Russian officials believed the collective defence obligations enshrined in the NATO treaty no longer had practical force. "We are quite certain, and we have intelligence showing it, that Ukraine is only a step on the journey westward," Kahl told Table Media in a podcast interview.

"That doesn't mean we expect tank armies to roll westwards," he added. "But we see that NATO's collective defence promise is to

be tested." Germany, already the second-largest provider of armaments and financial support for Ukraine in its war with Russia, has pledged to step up its support further under the new government of Chancellor Friedrich Merz, promising to help Ukraine develop new missiles that could strike deep into Russian territory.

Without detailing the nature of his intelligence sources, Kahl said Russian officials were envisaging confrontations that fell short of a full military engagement that would test whether the US would really live up to its mutual aid obligations under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. "They don't need to dispatch armies of tanks for that," he said. "It's enough to send little green men to Estonia to protect supposedly oppressed Russian

minorities."

Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea involved occupation of buildings and offices by Russian soldiers in unmarked uniforms and civilian clothes, who came to be known as the "little green men" when Moscow initially denied their identity. Kahl did not specify which officials in Moscow were thinking along these lines.

Merz, who visited Donald Trump in Washington last week, pushed back against the US president's assertion that Ukraine and Russia were like two infants fighting, telling Trump that where Ukraine targeted Moscow's military, Russia bombed Ukraine's cities. Kahl said his contacts with US counterparts had left him convinced they took the Russian threat seriously. "They take it as seriously as us, thank God," he said.

US reports the arrest of another Chinese scientist

DETROIT (AP): A Chinese scientist was arrested while arriving in the US at the Detroit airport, the second case in days involving the alleged smuggling of biological material, authorities said.

The scientist is accused of shipping biological material months ago to staff at a laboratory at the University of Michigan. The FBI, in a court filing, described it as material related to certain worms and requires a government permit. "The guidelines for importing biological materials into the US for research purposes are stringent, but clear, and actions like this undermine the legitimate work of other visiting scholars," said John Nowak, who

leads field operations at US Customs and Border Protection.

The scientist was interviewed and arrested after arriving on a flight from China, where she is pursuing an advanced degree at Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan. She planned to spend a year completing a project at the University of Michigan. Her shipments, including an envelope stuffed inside a book, were intercepted last year and earlier this year and opened by authorities, the FBI said.

The court filing doesn't indicate whether the FBI believes the biological material was risky, though US Attorney Jerome Gorgon Jr. said smuggling

"threatens our security." The scientist remains in custody awaiting a bond hearing. "It doesn't strike me as something that is dangerous in any way. But there are rules to ship biological material," said Michael Shapira, a biologist at the University of California, Berkeley, who read the court filing and spoke to The Associated Press.

The government last week charged two Chinese scientists who are accused of conspiring to smuggle a toxic fungus into the US. One was turned around at the Detroit airport and sent back to China last year, while the other, a researcher at the University of Michigan, was arrested. She remains in custody.

Filipino forces, villagers struggle to live in China’s shadow in waters

WEST YORK ISLAND, South China Sea (AP): Overwhelmed after setting foot for the first time on a far-flung but picturesque island in the disputed South China Sea, a Filipino army official knelt to kiss the shore. She held a small Philippine flag that fluttered in the breeze.

"This is just so beautiful," Philippines military spokesperson Col. Francel Margareth Padilla said of West York Island, one of nine islands, reefs and atolls occupied by Filipino forces in the long-contested waters. "This solidifies our resolve to fight for this place whatever happens."

The 18.6-hectare (46-acre) droplet-shaped island, called Likas by Filipinos, could easily become an eco-tourism draw in tropical Asia with its powdery white-sand beaches, turquoise waters and giant sea turtle sanctuaries. Padilla expressed hope it could someday be opened to Filipino travelers and tourists from across the world. But that longstanding aspiration by Philippine officials has been stymied by a tangle of territorial conflicts involving a militarily superior China.

Beijing claims virtually

the entire South China Sea, a vital global trade route with rich undersea deposits of gas and oil. It has increasingly flexed its military might, including its navy — the largest in the world — to strengthen its grip on a strategic waterway it says it has owned since ancient times. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan contest China's expansive claims with their own, and the territorial stand-offs have increasingly flared into cat-and-mouse confrontations at sea in recent years.

The long-simmering disputes are also a delicate fault line in the regional rivalry between Beijing and Washington. Both former President Joe Biden and his successor, Donald Trump, have condemned China's growing aggression in the contested waters, including its coast guard's use of powerful water cannons, blinding military-grade lasers and dangerous sea maneuvers against the coast guard and navy of the Philippines, Washington's oldest treaty ally in Asia.

Under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who took office in mid-2022, the Philippines has intensified

a campaign to expose China's increasingly assertive actions by capturing them in video and photographs. The images have then been made public in the hope that international pressure would prompt Beijing to back down to avoid damage to its reputation. The Philippine military invited a small group of journalists, including two from The Associated Press, in a dayslong naval patrol of the South China Sea territories claimed by Manila and on visits to navy and marine forces deployed to guard them.

During the patrol, which ended over the weekend, the BRP Andres Bonifacio navy ship carrying the journalists warned a number of Chinese coast guard ships and suspected Chinese militia vessels by two-way radio to move away from Philippines-claimed waters. The Chinese ships responded by asserting their sovereignty in the offshore region without undertaking any provocative actions.

On West York Island, two Filipino marines in camouflage uniforms stood guard with M4 assault rifles under a Philippine flag. One used binoculars to scan the surrounding waters for

Chinese or Vietnamese ships passing by from a distance.

One of the farthest islands in the disputed waters from the nearest Philippine province of Palawan, West York is a difficult and risky post, where Filipino forces see nothing beyond the small island but sea. Military personnel can occasionally call their loved ones during their two-month deployment, but the internet connection is spotty, especially during the typhoon season that starts in June, according to military personnel on the island. They grow eggplants, okra and chili peppers and raise goats and chickens to augment food provisions delivered by navy ships from Palawan. There is a makeshift basketball court to help while away off-duty time and ease the feeling of isolation.

"It's being away from your family," Padilla said. "At the end of the day, you go home to an empty room." Marine Col. Joel Bonavente, who was among the visiting military officials, told AP that military personnel posted in the remote outpost get additional pay to compensate for the "hazard and loneliness."

Mexican president condemns violence in Los Angeles protests

MEXICO CITY (Reuters): Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum condemned violent acts committed during the massive protests that have broken out in Los Angeles against immigration raids.

Sheinbaum, speaking at her morning press conference, also called on US authorities to respect the rule of law in migration processes. "It must be clear: We condemn violence wherever it comes from," Sheinbaum said. Protests spread in Los Angeles during the weekend over President Donald Trump's immigration enforcement as groups of protesters,

many carrying Mexican flags and signs denouncing US immigration authorities, gathered in spots around the city.

"We call on the Mexican community to act peacefully and not fall for provocations," Sheinbaum said. She did not specifically call for an end to the protests. The protests have included burning cars and some protesters throwing bottles and concrete projectiles, according to police. California Governor Gavin Newsom has said Trump inflamed the situation by deploying the National Guard.

Trump has referred to

the protesters as insurrectionists and the unrest in Los Angeles has become a flashpoint in his signature effort to clamp down on illegal immigration. In Mexico City, a small group of protesters gathered outside the US embassy in solidarity with the Mexican community in Los Angeles.

"Seeing the images from LA makes you feel impotent, but also proud to be Mexican," said 51-year-old historian Argelia Gonzalez. "We are hand-in-hand with them." Trump has pledged to deport record numbers of people who are in the US illegally and to lock down the US-Mexico border, set-

ting the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency a daily goal of arresting at least 3,000 migrants.

At least 42 Mexicans are being held in four detention centers after recent immigration raids in Los Angeles, and four were deported, Mexico Foreign Minister Juan Ramon de la Fuente said, speaking alongside Sheinbaum. "We will continue our visits to monitor the Mexicans in detention centers in Los Angeles," De la Fuente said. He added the vast majority of Mexicans detained were working when they were arrested.

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No winner to declare in Trump-Musk feud

THE bitter feud that broke out this past week between Elon Musk and President Donald Trump is more than bravado gone bad. It highlighted the ugly, juvenile tendencies of both as they aired a personal grudge on a global scale.

As bizarre and, admittedly, entertaining in a sort of WWE way, it proved, there were no winners to declare. Not Musk, not Trump, not their supporters, investors nor perhaps even bystanders.

Ego can bring down the powerful — as Shakespeare observed long ago with Macbeth, King Lear and Othello. Achieving common goals and maintaining stability requires unity and collaboration. But that was quickly lost as they traded punches on social media.

For Musk, it only further erodes his current and future customer base for everything from Tesla cars to The Boring Company tunnel contracts to SpaceX rockets and satellites. It also suggests that maybe he isn't cut out for leadership no matter how many billions of dollars he still has. Lost trust is difficult to recapture.

For Trump, the world sees again that if you upset him enough, you can get under his skin. Get close to him, play to his ego and you can win him over without any authenticity. Neither quality is ideal for a global leader at a time when America needs to reassert itself.

Oh, it was quite the bromance for a time. Remember when in the aftermath of the assassination attempt on then-presidential candidate Trump, Musk tweeted unequivocally, "I fully endorse Trump." What followed was a prolonged political alliance that saw Musk sporting MAGA hats of nearly every variety, standing beside Trump at rallies across the country, addressing tens of thousands of Republicans at each stop, helping to raise millions for Trump and the GOP, and frequently, if awkwardly, appearing in the background of Oval Office meetings.

Now, we suspect, Musk (and his son) won't be invited back to the Oval Office for some time.

Some of the more prescient among us saw this coming. Cracks were already apparent as Trump's "big, beautiful bill" was vetted. Claims that it would both jumpstart the economy and reduce the deficit proved too difficult a pill for Musk to swallow.

"Shame on those who voted for (the bill)," Musk now famously observed. Trump and many of his supporters alleged Musk only took issue with the bill because of the loss of electric vehicle subsidies. Musk, who spent hundreds of millions of dollars to get Trump reelected, then reminded the president of his game-changing political contributions. Oh, and he used the word "ingratitude."

Trump then threatened to cut all of Musk's government contracts, to which Musk quickly replied that SpaceX would begin decommissioning its Dragon Spacecraft (a spacecraft that the government heavily relies on for deliveries and trips to the International Space Station). Musk also dropped his "big bomb," accusing Trump of being in the government's unreleased Epstein files meaning he was associated with the late Jeffrey Epstein, the disgraced financier convicted of sex offenses.

In a Shakespeare play, this would now be the third act and one or more of the antagonists would express some remorse. They might even recognize their faults.

Whatever offers of rapprochement we hear from the world's richest man and the world's most powerful man, we see little chance of such self-awareness. Musk crossed the Rubicon given how Trump values loyalty above all else.

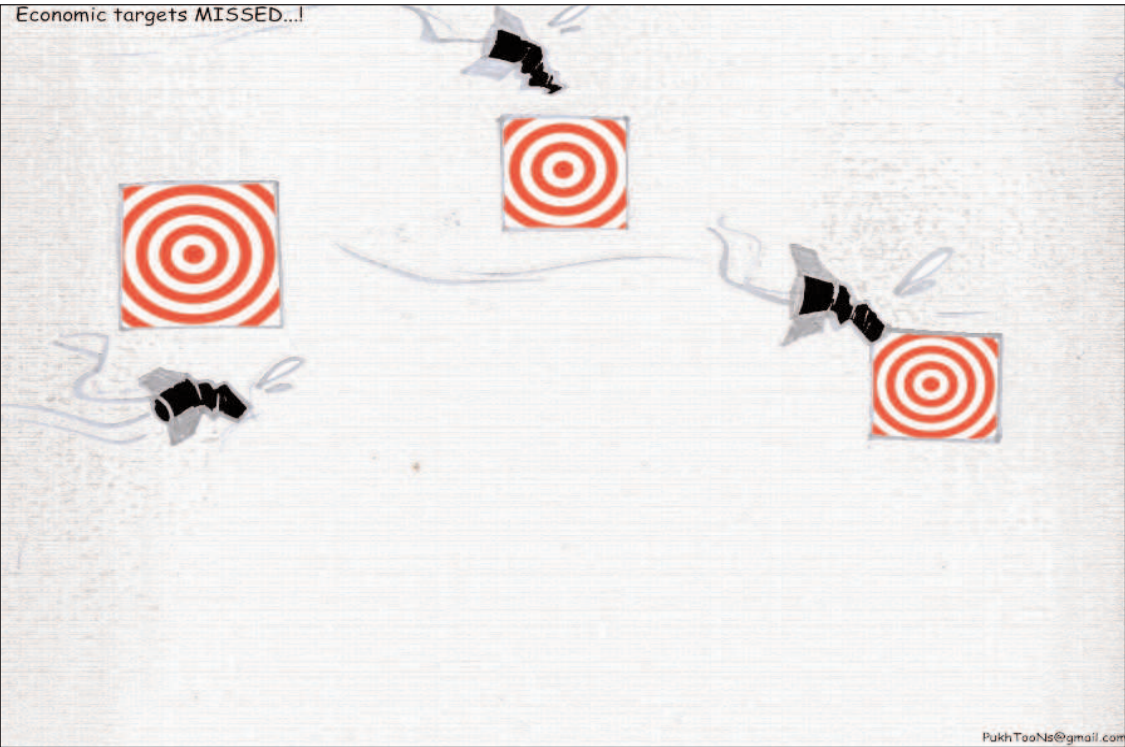
Perhaps a marriage of convenience is still possible but trust? Never again.

The takeaway for the rest of us? How embarrassing and truly awful that the president of the United States would engage in this juvenile, public dispute with his most valued supporter simply because they have differing views on deficit spending. And perhaps there's also a lesson in not airing your dirty laundry in front of tens of millions on a social media account.

In a better functioning democracy, disputes among political allies are resolved through negotiation and compromise, not through public accusations and threats. We are better than that.

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



FIFA has ignored Israel's atrocities for too long

Dr. Ramzy Baroud

FOOTBALL fans worldwide are unequivocally challenging FIFA's continued support for Israel, organizing with unprecedented unity for Palestine. Unlike previous actions, this mobilization is now notably well-coordinated, widespread and consistent.

Long gone are the days when much of the sport's solidarity emerged from the fanbase of Glasgow Celtic, Chile's Deportivo Palestino or Arab teams. Gaza is now the undisputed focal point of sports solidarity worldwide. The consequences of this are arguably the most significant in terms of achieving global awareness of the Israeli genocide in Gaza in particular, but also of the Israeli military occupation and apartheid in the whole of occupied Palestine.

For years, the mainstream media did its utmost to ignore the pro-Palestine flags, banners and chants. When solidarity exceeded tolerable levels, whether in Scotland or Chile, football's authorities cracked down with fines and various other punitive measures. Nowadays, however, such tactics are utterly failing. At times, Celtic Park seems to be one massive pro-Palestine rally, while numerous other clubs are joining in or expanding their efforts.

In and around Paris Saint-Germain's UEFA Champions League final match against Inter Milan on May 31, it seemed as if the entire PSG supporters' activities focused on Palestine. Chants of "Nous sommes tous les enfants de Gaza" (We are all the children of Gaza) echoed everywhere,

inside and outside the stadium. As soon as Achraf Hakimi scored the opening goal, a massive banner was unfurled that read: "Stop the genocide in Gaza."

Such unprecedented acts of solidarity are comparable to the sporting boycotts of apartheid South Africa, which began in the mid-1960s. These boycotts were instrumental in liberating the discourse and transforming the conversation about apartheid from academic halls into the streets.

While the above is true, the two cases are not always comparable. Regarding apartheid, thanks to the efforts of Global South governments, boycotts largely began at an institutional level and gradually garnered massive popular support. In the Palestinian case, however, there has been a complete moral breakdown on the part of institutions like FIFA, while football fans are the ones championing solidarity.

FIFA is yet to take any action against Israel despite the blatant racism within its sporting institutions and the direct harm it is doing to Palestinian sports. The go-to excuse is the slogan: "sports and politics don't mix." But if that is the case, why did FIFA seamlessly mix the two following the Russian invasion of Ukraine?

Almost immediately after the start of the war, Western countries, purporting to speak on behalf of the international community, began slapping hundreds, and eventually thousands, of sanctions

on Russia, which found itself isolated in every arena, including sports. FIFA quickly joined in, banning the Russian national team from its competitions.

In the Palestinian case, the hypocrisy is limitless, even though it began long before the Israeli genocide in Gaza. Every Palestinian effort, often backed by Arab, Muslim and Global South associations, to hold Israel accountable for its apartheid and military occupation has been met with failure. Every time, the response is the same.

An October 2017 statement by FIFA is a case in point. It was a response to a final report by the FIFA Monitoring Committee Israel-Palestine, which followed repeated requests by international groups to look into the matter of the Israeli occupation and the need for FIFA to hold Israel accountable.

The response was decisive: "The current situation ... has nothing to do with football." It is of "exceptional complexity and sensitivity" and cannot be "changed unilaterally by nongovernment organizations such as FIFA." The "final status of the West Bank territories" is the concern of competent international public law authorities. It concluded that "FIFA ... must remain neutral with regard to political matters," adding that the association will "refrain from imposing any sanctions" on Israel and that "the matter is declared closed."

Since then, so much has changed. For example, in July 2018, Israel

declared itself a country for Jews only via the so-called nation-state law. In July 2020, the coalition government agreed a deal that allowed for the annexation of occupied areas within the West Bank. And since Oct. 7, 2023, it has been engaged in a genocide in Gaza.

The accusatory language this time is not that of the Palestinians and their allies. It is the language of international institutions, which are actively investigating Israel's horrific violations in Gaza.

Though FIFA may still claim that the matter is too "complex" and "sensitive," how can it ignore the fact that more than 700 Palestinian athletes were killed and some 270 sports facilities destroyed in the first 14 months of the war?

Here, something must be said about the tenacity of the Palestinians, a quality that does not hinge on FIFA's action or inaction. The Palestine national football team continues to go from strength to strength and, even more impressively, Palestinian children in Gaza somehow manage to create spaces, even among the ruins of their cities, to kick a ball, thus stealing a moment of joy from the horrors of genocide. Though FIFA continues to fail Palestine, sports fans refuse to be part of this moral travesty. Ultimately, it will be the tenacity of the Palestinians and the growing solidarity with their just cause that will force FIFA to take action, not only for the sake of Palestine or even the future of the sport, but for the organization's own relevance.

Dialogue a modest act of building bridges in a very divided world

A year after the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations, observed on June 10, was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, this visionary initiative, which was proposed by China and cosponsored by over 80 countries, reflects a global consensus that human progress is built upon the collective intellectual and cultural achievements of all civilizations, transcending borders and historical divides.

The concept of "civilization" is not easy to define. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization regards it as a universal, pluralistic and nonhierarchical reality. As international discord, ideological fragmentation and geopolitical rivalry threaten to undermine global stability, the establishment of this day of observance serves as a timely reminder that respect, understanding and mutual exchange are not mere diplomatic platitudes but indispensable pillars for lasting peace and shared prosperity. The resolution's core principle — that all civilizational

achievements form "the collective heritage of humankind" — reinforces a fundamental truth: no culture exists in isolation and every society's advancement is enriched through cross-cultural dialogue and collaboration.

This action is also an acknowledgment of China's Global Civilization Initiative, which champions equal dialogue, inclusive engagement, and the celebration of diversity. By promoting a model of global governance that is both multipolar and culturally respectful, China has sought to demonstrate that unity need not mean uniformity. China has organized related activities across the globe to further signal the shift from institutional endorsement to grassroots resonance.

From organizing ancient instrument concerts in Romania and Denmark, flash mobs at Canadian anime festivals, to an event in Kenya, China's efforts to commemorate the day in different countries illustrate the power of cultural diplomacy to bridge divides in unexpected ways. These events are

living testaments to humanity's shared spirit: our capacity to listen, learn and grow together. Whether through music, art or academic exchange, each act of cultural engagement reinforces the bonds that connect us.

Notably, the resolution grounds itself in universally accepted principles, calling for intercultural exchanges rooted in equality and mutual respect while carefully avoiding any suggestion of cultural hierarchy. While some nations have raised concerns about the term "civilization" lacking a precise legal definition, none contest the intrinsic value of fostering dialogue across differences. This underscores a rare point of convergence in an otherwise fractured global landscape.

In championing the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations, China offers not a rigid doctrine but an open invitation, a process of sustained engagement rather than a prescriptive solution. In a world increasingly defined by geopolitical divisions and ideological polarization, this initiative represents a modest

yet meaningful act of bridge-building. It reflects a commitment to the quieter, subtler forms of diplomacy through education, youth exchanges, museum collaborations, and, above all, the willingness to listen with humility and curiosity.

June 10 is more than a symbolic date; it embodies a collective pledge by nations, international institutions and individuals across cultures to pursue unity not through coercion but through the patient, generous work of fostering mutual understanding. If this day helps humanity move beyond the fear of the unknown, ease the anxieties of difference, and strengthen solidarity in the face of shared challenges, then it will have fulfilled its promise.

In doing so, China's proposal will have made an enduring contribution to a future where diversity is celebrated as a source of strength, and dialogue paves the way for a more harmonious world. Just as UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres claimed: "Dialogue is the path to peace. Where dialogue is missing, ignorance fills the void."

Democrats wooing Musk after the Trump breakup is US plutocracy at its best

Belén Fernández

IT'S official: United States President Donald Trump and the world's richest person, Elon Musk, have broken up.

At the end of last month, Musk departed from his post as the head of Trump's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), where he oversaw the mass firing of federal employees and dismantling of various government agencies — all the while benefitting from his own companies' lucrative contracts with the government.

Anyway, US "democracy" has never met a conflict of interest it didn't like.

Musk's service at the White House initially appeared to end on an amicable note as Trump praised him for the "colossal change" he had achieved "in the old ways of doing business in Washington". The former head of DOGE in turn thanked the president for the opportunity.

But soon after his departure, Musk publicly criticised the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act", a tax and spending bill that Trump is currently obsessed with passing, slamming it as a "disgusting abomination".

There ensued predictably dramatic social media exchanges between the two right-wing billionaires with Trump pronouncing Musk "so depressed and so heartbroken" after leaving the White House and offering the additional coherent analysis:

"It's sort of Trump derangement syndrome. We have it with others, too. They leave, and they wake up in the morning, and the glamour's gone. The whole world is different, and they become hostile."

Musk has repeatedly

Musk has repeatedly taken credit for Trump's 2024 election victory on account of the gobs of money he donated to the president's campaign and those of other Republican candidates. Now that the relationship is over, Trump has wasted no time in warning Musk that he'll face "very serious consequences" if he chooses to fund Democratic campaigns in the future. But some Democratic ears, at least, have perked up at the possibility of getting the planet's richest person back on their side — which he abandoned in favour of Trump after having extended support to Democratic former Presidents Barack Obama and Joe Biden. The political switcheroo was hardly extreme. At the end of the day, ideology matters little when you're just in the business of buying power. California Congressman Ro Khanna, for example, recently opined that Democrats should "be in a dialogue" with Musk in light of their shared opposition to Trump's big beautiful bill. As per Khanna's view, "we should ultimately be trying to convince [Musk] that the Democratic Party has more of the values that he agrees with." He went on to list a few of these alleged values: "A commitment to science funding, a commitment to clean technology, a commitment to seeing international students like him." Never mind that Musk's main "value" is a commitment to controlling as much of the earth — not to mention the whole solar system — as he possibly can for the benefit of himself and himself alone. Beyond his mass firing activities while head of DOGE, a brief review of Musk's entrepreneurial track record reveals a total lack of the "values" that Democrats purport to espouse.

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Over recent years, reports have abounded of sexual harassment and acute racism at Musk's Tesla car factories. In October 2021, a federal jury in San Francisco ordered Tesla to pay \$137m to a Black former employee who claimed he was told to "go back to Africa" among other abuses suffered at his workplace.

Along with violating federal labour laws, Musk as chief executive of Tesla threatened workers over the prospect of unionisation. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, he violated local regulations to keep his factories up and running, underscoring a general contempt for human life that, again, should not be a "value" that anyone aspires to.

To be sure, not all Democrats are on board with the proposal to woo Musk back into the Democratic camp — but he may be getting a growing cheering squad. In addition to Khanna's advocacy on his behalf, New York Democratic Congressman Ritchie Torres seems prepared to give Musk his vote as well: "I'm a believer in redemption, and he is telling the truth about the [big beautiful] legislation."

Anthony Scaramucci, Trump's former White House director of communications, has, meanwhile, suggested that Democrats could "bring Elon Musk back into the fold as a prodigal son" by forgoing more left-wing policies — as if there's anything truly left-wing about the Democratic Party in the first place.

Newsweek's write-up of Scaramucci's comments observed that "It would be a coup for Democrats if they could court the influence of the world's richest man once more." It would not, obviously, be a coup for democracy, which is supposed to be rule by the people and not by money.

And yet a longstanding bipartisan commitment to plutocracy means the US has never been in danger of true democracy. Instead, billions upon billions of dollars are spent to sustain an electoral charade and ensure that capital remains concentrated in the hands of the few — while Americans continue to literally die of poverty.

Now it remains to be seen whether the Trump-Musk breakup will drive Democrats into Musk's arms. But either way, the country's plutocratic values remain rock solid — and that is nothing less than a "disgusting abomination".

Trump is acting like an authoritarian; California’s crisis now rests on what he does next

DONALD Trump is talking and acting like an authoritarian as he escalates a constitutional clash with California over his migration crackdown.

Much now depends on whether he's simply talking tough or if he's ready to take an already-tense nation across a fateful line in his zeal for strong-man rule.

In a mind-boggling moment, on Monday, the president of the United States — the country seen as the world's top steward of democracy for 80 years — endorsed the arrest of the Democratic governor of the nation's most populous state.

"I think it would be a great thing," Trump, the only convicted felon ever to serve as president, told reporters as he strode across the South Lawn of the White House.

Later, Trump deployed hundreds of active-duty Marines to Los Angeles and authorized the arrival of 2,000 more National Guard reservists after a weekend of unrest that saw clashes with police and burning cars in contained areas of the city. The protests were triggered by Immigration and Customs Enforcement sweeps seeking undocumented migrants in a city and state that are epicenters of Democratic power.

California and Los Angeles officials reject Trump's claims that they have lost control. On Monday evening, law enforcement officers pushed back demonstrators throwing projectiles with flash bangs.

Trump's decision to deploy troops despite the opposition of California Gov. Gavin Newsom represented the latest example of his willingness to flex extraordinary executive power — often on questionable grounds — and marked a break with a first term when he was often talked out of his extreme impulses by establishment officials.

For all Trump's multiple previous challenges to the rule of law and democracy, a grave new chapter may be opening.

"The president is forcibly overriding the authority of the governor and mayor and using the military as a political weapon. This unprecedented move threatens to turn a tense situation into a national crisis," Rhode Island Sen. Jack Reed, the top Democrat on the Armed Services Committee, said on Monday evening. "Since our nation's founding, the American people have been perfectly clear: we do not want the military

conducting law enforcement on US soil," Reed said in a statement.

California Democratic Rep. Nanette Barragán, whose district encompasses Paramount, just south of Los Angeles, condemned Trump's mobilizations of troops that she said were not justified by the situation. "This is where I think this is a sign of a dictator," she told CNN's Jake Tapper. "And the threat he is making against the governor to arrest him — I mean come on — that is pretty outrageous."

Top Trump administration officials are throwing around words like "insurrection." Not surprisingly, many observers have taken such rhetoric as a sign the White House is prepared to invoke the Insurrection Act — a law that would allow the president to activate troops to put down a rebellion in a state. There is no such revolt in California. Trump's claims on Monday that his swift action stopped Los Angeles being obliterated are also not true.

The president's border czar Tom Homan, meanwhile, told CNN's Kaitlan Collins that claims by Democratic officials that protests intensified

Protesters gathered in large numbers in Los Angeles on Monday night, raising the prospect of another cycle of tension and uncertainty. The trajectory of the crisis could now turn on whether Trump follows through on his dictator's theatrics by crossing lines not approached by modern presidents — notably on the use of troops in a law enforcement capacity. It may also rely on the restraint of protesters, who would play into Trump's hands by taking part in more unrest that creates alarming television pictures that can fuel Trump's dystopian rhetoric. Creating or escalating a law-and-order crisis or threat to public security and then using it to justify the use of the military on domestic soil would mirror the methodology of tyrannical leaders throughout history. And hopes of restraint are hardly supported by Trump's second term so far. The president has, for instance, invoked highly contentious national emergencies on immigration and trade to unlock rarely used executive powers with no pushback from the Republican Congress. He's used presidential authority against what he regards as centers of liberal authority and influence: at Ivy League universities, in the federal government and in the media. And even in his breakup with erstwhile DOGE chief Elon Musk last week, Trump threatened yet another abuse of power by cancelling federal subsidies for the SpaceX boss's firms.

because Trump sent National Guard troops were "ridiculous." Joining "The Source" from Los Angeles, Homan said, "It all depends on the activities of these protesters— I mean, they make the decisions."

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While the announcement of a deployment of Marines to the city was superficially alarming, their orders prohibit them from conducting law enforcement activities like making arrests without Trump invoking the Insurrection Act. The Marines are expected to be used to bolster National Guard members on the ground while up to 2,000 reservists are mobilized.

CNN's Evan Perez, meanwhile, reported on Monday evening that while officials like top White House aide Stephen Miller have been talking about an "insurrection," administration lawyers have been working to craft a much less confrontational way of

The administration is spoiling for a fight as it lays down a marker in California for other Democratic states where leaders are loath to cooperate with Trump's deportation purge.

But as ever with Trump, there's a question as to whether he's serious with his threats or is staking out an extreme position to please his voters or even to create some perceived leverage for himself. Homan, for instance, told CNN's Collins that

Newsom had "absolutely not" done anything at this point to justify his arrest.

And North Dakota Republican Sen. Kevin Cramer adopted the classic GOP line that not everything that the president says should be taken literally when asked about administration threats to detain Newsom. "You guys could ask every day if I am comfortable with what he said. He hasn't arrested him. I can't imagine that he is going to arrest Gavin Newsom," Cramer told CNN's Manu Raju.

Cramer also voiced the view of many Republicans that, far from behaving like an authoritarian, Trump is rightfully addressing failures by Democratic leaders on immigration policy and public order. "There's no question about it: Places like California have thumbed their noses at the American people and decided they want to be sanctuary for criminals," Cramer said.

So far, National Guard reservists mobilized by the president over the head of a state governor for the first time since the Civil Rights era in the 1960s have mostly been used to defend federal buildings in Los Angeles.

Newsom, for example, wrote on social media on Monday that the president was deploying another 2,000 National Guard troops to Los Angeles, even though only 300 from his initial 2,000-strong contingent had so far arrived in the city. "This isn't about public safety. It's about stroking a dangerous President's ego," the governor said. "This is Reckless. Pointless. And Disrespectful to our troops."

The state has sued the administration over that initial call-up of reservists. State Attorney General Rob Bonta called Trump's federalization of the state's National Guard troops "unnecessary, counterproductive, and most importantly, unlawful."

The suit created yet another legal morass around one of Trump's most aggressive power grabs. California has now lodged 24 lawsuits against the administration in 19 weeks.

With every day that passes in the California public order crisis, the political incentives seem to be driving toward more confrontation rather than a peaceful resolution. But ultimately it's up to Trump how this ends.

protecting the federal government's ability to carry out immigration enforcement, hoping to avoid further inflaming the situation, according to multiple people briefed on the discussions.

This may all signify that the president is not yet ready to push the nation toward an unprecedented authoritarian cliff — even if his personal history, not least over January 6, 2021, suggests that in the heat of the moment he often takes the most reckless course.

And Trump may be playing with fire in a city and state where anger over his wild four-month-old presidency is boiling. By inserting troops into such a volatile and tense environment, he's opening the possibility that flashpoints could ignite and even that tragic circumstances could unfold.

But then again, maybe that's the point, if the president is seeking a predicate to deploy active-duty troops on the streets of American cities.

Another troubling omen is that Newsom — who, like Trump, relishes public fights — has no incentive to cave to the man he would like to replace as president in 2029.

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THE government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is setting the stage for the upcoming UN International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. The three-day session, to be held in New York from June 17-20, will be chaired by the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

It is believed that at this conference, France and a number of other countries will formally recognise the State of Palestine. In an angry response, Mr Netanyahu announced that should France and others make this announcement, Israel will retaliate with the formal annexation of the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

In a sense, the threats are meaningless, not because Israel couldn't take measures to sabotage a Palestinian state, but because this is precisely what it has been doing for several decades — and it has accelerated its efforts in the past few years.

The daily news from Gaza is numbing. Earlier, in March this year, after 18 months of an immense toll in lives and property, Israel agreed to a ceasefire, only to break it and intensify its plans to wipe out and annex large swathes of this territory.

Daily, there are reports of Israeli bombings, shelling, or shootings that kill scores of Palestinians at shelters or food distribution sites. In too many instances, Israeli officials first deny that it happened, then deny that they had anything to do with the killings — "it might have been Hamas" or, "if we did, it was because our soldiers were forced to shoot in the air" to control unruly crowds.

When all else fails, the government obfuscates by announcing that a military review panel is looking into the matter (coupled with the charge that anyone prejudging the matter before the Israeli military publicly issues its findings — which they never do — must be harbouring an anti-Israel bias). The result is that there is no accountability, and the killings continue.

The Netanyahu government's plan for Gaza is taking shape. The logic behind the Israeli-US "humanitarian mission" in Gaza is now established and that is to facilitate their masterplan for the area to wipe out the population.

First, the Israeli government is conducting "mopping up" operations in the

James Zogby

north, evicting as many Palestinians as possible from 80 per cent of Gaza and forcing them to congregate in congested areas along the southern border.

Then, after denying Palestinians food aid for three months, they have set up these Israeli-run food distribution sites in the south with the clear message that "if you're hungry and want food, this is the only place you'll get it".

As throngs of desperate Palestinians mass at the sites, Israeli forces use live ammunition as crowd control, killing dozens at each location. The entire enterprise is inhuman and yet it continues.

The situation in the West Bank has gone from bad to worse. After months of raids that have taken the

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lives of 1,000 Palestinians and destroyed the homes of 40,000, the Israeli government has authorised the establishment of 22 new settlements, the confiscation of more Palestinian land, and the construction of more Jewish-only roads. All of this will serve to further the cantonisation of the West Bank, isolating Palestinian population centres from one another.

The design Israel's government is following was laid out in 1978 by Matityahu Drobles of the World Zionist Organisation.

The Drobles Plan envisioned total conquest of the West Bank through the establishment of Israeli settlement blocs connected by highways and secured infrastructure that would divide the area, making the establishment of a contiguous Palestinian state impossible.

This was Drobles' declared intent. Back in the 1970s, Israel's Labour governments rejected this idea, preferring to build settlements along the 1967 lines. When the Likud party came to power, they embraced Drobles in 1979 and began to implement it, but without ever formally acknowledging it. Now they have.

Palestinians in East Jerusalem fare no better.

They still face threats of confiscation of homes and properties, the weaponisation of archaeology through which the Israeli government has seized sites they believe hold special importance to their history, while ignoring that same site's pre-history or current importance to Palestinian Muslims or Christians.

And while Christians and Muslims are violently assaulted or harassed as they seek to pray on their faiths' holy days, Jewish worshippers are protected by the Israeli military as they violate what had been the previously accepted "status quo" at the Haram Al Sharif.

While in the past, these violations were carried out by a handful of Jewish religious extremists, now there are thousands, including officials, who annually

invade the Haram. And as if to signal their clear intentions, Israeli officials have changed street signs which once pointed the way to the "Haram" to now read the "Temple".

And so the upcoming UN sessions have the makings of a supreme test of wills. It pits the Israeli government, backed by the US, against the rest of the world. What Israel's government is doing and what it still can do is known. The question is whether other nations will find the resolve to directly confront Israel's plans and take action to isolate and seek accountability from it for its actions.

It will require more than recognition of Palestinian rights, verbal protests, or resolutions of disapproval of Israeli policies. Europe can't just protest against settlements and genocide in Gaza, while continuing to be the largest buyers of Israeli-made weapons. If they don't apply sanctions (like Spain) or boycott settlement products (like Ireland), nothing will change.

In a real sense, at stake during next week's UN sessions is more than just recognition of a Palestinian state, it is the survival of the rule of law and human rights covenants and the integrity of the UN.

What is happening in Los Angeles is not law enforcement, it's occupation

THE scenes unfolding in Los Angeles should alarm every American who values constitutional governance. Federal troops have been deployed to a major American city not in response to an insurrection or natural disaster, but to suppress protests against immigration enforcement operations. The whole of downtown Los Angeles has been declared an "unlawful assembly area".

This represents a dangerous escalation that threatens the very foundations of the US democratic system.

What began as routine raids by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on June 6 quickly spiralled into something far more ominous. Federal agents swept through Los Angeles, detaining 121 individuals from restaurants, stores and apartment buildings. The raids were conducted in broad daylight, with a calculated boldness that seemed designed to provoke.

The community's response was swift. By the afternoon, protesters had gathered downtown, not as rioters but as a grieving community, holding signs and chanting "Set them free!".

This was grief made public, anger given

voice. But in today's America, even peaceful displays of grief and anger are not allowed when they go against the narrative set by those in power.

The police responded with force. Tear gas canisters flew. Flash-bang grenades exploded. A peaceful demonstration transformed into a battlefield — not because protesters chose violence, but because the government did.

US President Donald Trump decided to escalate further. He signed a memorandum deploying 2,000 National Guard troops to Los Angeles, with Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth threatening to mobilise active-duty Marines if protests continued.

The legality of these actions is questionable at best. Under the Insurrection Act, federal troops can only be deployed after a public proclamation calls for citizens to disperse. Such a proclamation has not been made, and Trump has not invoked the act. Governor Gavin Newsom, who has the power to decide on matters of security in the state of California, was not consulted; he was simply informed.

There is no widespread rebellion threatening the authority of the United States. There are

no enemy combatants in Los Angeles, just angry, grieving people demanding dignity for their communities. What we're witnessing is not the lawful execution of federal authority but improvisation masquerading as application of law, the slow erosion of constitutional order, replaced by declaration, spectacle, and muscle.

If challenged in court, this deployment would likely be deemed illegal. But that may not matter — and that is the most chilling aspect of this crisis. We are fast moving towards a place where illegality no longer matters, where muscle has arrived with or without paperwork, and law is merely a facade.

This moment cannot be understood in isolation. As scholar Aime Cesaire observed in his analysis of colonialism, violence in the periphery inevitably returns to the metropole. The tools of oppression developed abroad always find their way home.

In the US, this has been a decades-long process. In 1996, a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act allowed the Pentagon to transfer surplus military-grade weaponry to local police departments. In the following three decades, the same weapons that were used

for imperialist violence abroad were transferred to police departments to deploy in poor and marginalised communities.

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the "war on terror", tactics to target and subjugate foreign populations were transferred at home to use against vulnerable communities. Congress passed sweeping laws like the USA PATRIOT Act and amendments to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, enabling mass surveillance and intelligence gathering on US soil.

The 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists allowed for indefinite military detention of US citizens, while a Supreme Court ruling in Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project expanded the

Ahmad Ibsais

"material support" doctrine to criminalise even peaceful engagement with blacklisted groups.

Programmes like Countering Violent

Extremism (CVE) turned schools and mosques into surveillance hubs, targeting Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities.

While outside the US government was pursuing a campaign of renditions, torture and illegal detention at Guantanamo Bay, at home, it was deploying lawfare against "suspect" communities.

The 2008 Holy Land Foundation trial introduced "secret evidence" in a US criminal court for the first time, with an anonymous Israeli intelligence officer claiming he could "smell Hamas" on defendants. Georgia's

prosecution of Cop City protesters under "terrorism" charges directly borrowed from this playbook, as did Tennessee's Bill HB 2348, which extends policing powers to suppress peaceful protests.

After October 2023, the US government violated its own laws in order to participate directly in the genocide in Gaza, providing Israel with weapons and intelligence. The mass repression and erasure that Palestinians had suffered at the hands of their US-backed colonisers were transferred on American soil.

The government launched an unprecedented attack on free speech and academic freedom, cracking down on students protesting the genocide and encouraging retribution against pro-Palestinian voices. We've seen tenure revoked, protesters surveilled, and dissent criminalised. Palestinians and their allies have endured a fourfold increase in harassment, doxing, and employment loss; they have also faced violent attacks and murder.

All this started not under Trump, but under his "Democratic" predecessor, former US President Joe Biden, who also increased the budget of police departments by \$13bn and expanded

ICE's powers.

The pattern is clear: repressive measures developed to target foreign populations have become tools to suppress all dissent at home.

What is happening in Los Angeles and other cities isn't about law enforcement; it's about power projection, about demonstrating that defiance will be met with overwhelming force and quashed.

The legal framework matters less than the spectacle. When federal agents fire flash-bang grenades at protesters outside Home Depot stores, when ICE directors accuse mayors of siding with "chaos and lawlessness", when FBI officials tweet about hunting down rock throwers, we're watching the construction of a narrative that justifies state violence.

This is how soft courts unfold: not with tanks rolling down Pennsylvania Avenue, but through executive memos, press briefings, and military logistics disguised as public safety. The Insurrection Act becomes a dead letter not through repeal but through irrelevance.

If this precedent stands, federal troops will become the standard response to resistance. Cities that don't vote for the president will face



PSX witnessed bullish trend, gains 383 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 383.44 points, showing positive change of 0.32 percent, closing at 122,024.44 points as compared to 121,641.00 points on the last trading day.

A total of 592,952,761 shares were traded during the day as compared to 854,617,208 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 21.827 billion against Rs 25.793 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 473 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 230 of them recorded gains and 200 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 43 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Cnergyco PK with 61,375,370 shares

at Rs 8.03 per share, K-Electric Limited with 59,081,829 shares at Rs 5.62 per share and Dewan Cement with 45,553,863 shares at Rs 15.52 per share.

Sapphire Fibres Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 96.67 per share closing at Rs1,152.79 whereas runner-up was Sapphire Textile Mills Limited with Rs43.08 rise in its share price to close at Rs 1,143.08.

PIA Holding Company LimitedB witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 2,879.00 per share price, closing at Rs 25,910.98, whereas the runner-up Khyber Textile Mills Limited with Rs 273.52 decline in its per share price to Rs 2,461.65.

Rupee sheds 03 paise against US Dollar

The Rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 03 paise against the US Dollar in the

interbank trading and closed at Rs 282.20 against the previous day's closing of Rs 282.17.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.6 and Rs 284.4, respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 38 paise to close at Rs 321.64 against the last day's closing of Rs 322.02, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.95, whereas a decrease of Rs 2.32 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 380.39 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 382.71.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 01 paise each to close at

Rs 76.83 and Rs 75.24, respectively.

Gold prices dip by Rs.6,100 to Rs.352,300 per tola

The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs.6,100 and was traded at Rs.352,300 on Tuesday compared to its sale at Rs. 358,400 on last trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs.5,230 to Rs.302,040 from Rs. 307,270 and for 10 grams of 22 Karat it went down by Rs4,794 to Rs.276,880 from Rs. 281,674.

The rates of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.3,745 and Rs.3,210 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market went down by \$61 to \$3,339 from \$3,400, the Association reported.



ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Atif Ikram alongwith traders from all over country listening Budget-2025 speech at FPCCI headquarters.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was report at the port where four ships, Seaspan Santos, Clipper Tyne, Ncc Sama and Lebrethah carrying Container, Wood Pulp, Gasoline and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, FOTCO oil Terminal and Engro Elengy Terminal respectively on June 9.

Meanwhile, two more ships, Valence and Nordic Masa with Container and Chemicals also arrived at 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 three ships, Seaspan Santos, Sedra and Clipper Tyne are expected to sail on Tuesday afternoon.

Cargo volume of 154,585 tonnes, comprising 118,885 tonnes imports cargo and 35,700 export cargo carried in 3,900 Containers (1,800 TEUs Imports & 2,100 TEUs Exports) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are six ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them three ships, Valence, Royal Galaxy and Nordic Masa & another ship 'Global Oriole' scheduled to load/offload Container, Rice, Chemicals and Steel Coil are expected to take berths at QICT, MW-1, EVTL and MW-2 respectively, while two more container ships, Hansa Africa and Xin Lian Chang are due to arrive at outer anchorage today (Wednesday).

Livestock emerges as agri powerhouse

MULTAN (APP): The livestock sector has once again proven to be the backbone of Pakistan's agriculture and economy, contributing a substantial 63.60% to the agriculture sector and 14.97% to the national GDP, according to the Economic Survey 2024-25.

Amidst stagnation in major crops due to climatic and economic challenges, livestock remained a beacon of resilience and growth, registering an impressive growth rate of 4.72%.

Experts term it a vital pillar supporting rural livelihoods, food security, and national economic stability.

"Livestock is a lifeline for millions in rural areas of the country," said Dr Jamshed Akhtar, deputy director of Livestock Department. "Its consistent performance, even during uncertain times, proves the sector's potential to lead agricultural transformation in the country."

He added that cattle, buffaloes, goats, and sheep not only provide milk, meat, and hides but also generate income for small-holder farmers, especially women, who play a key role in managing household-level livestock.

The sector's growth has helped stabilize the agricultural GDP and created buffers against food inflation by ensuring steady supplies of dairy and meat products.

Dr Jamshaid Akhtar stressed the need for increased support to modernize livestock practices and linking farmers to markets.

The Economic Survey also underlined livestock's role in value-added industries, such as dairy processing, leather, and some others, calling it a key driver for rural development.

Mariani sees 2025 budget as key to sustainable growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of the Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry Muhammad Ayub Mariani Tuesday expressed optimism about the 2025 budget, citing Islamic countries' commitments and measures such as five-year vehicle tax relief and FBR and duty tax adjustments as key factors that will promote sustainable economic growth.

Muhammad Ayub Mariani emphasized that the budget is a crucial step towards achieving sustainable economic growth, citing positive indicators that suggest a promising future for the country's development and prosperity.

According to him, the

Finance Minister's press conference yesterday gave positive indications, filling the people of Balochistan with hope that the budget will yield beneficial results for the common man.

Mariani emphasized the importance of such initiatives in stabilizing and sustaining economic growth.

He mentioned that now local industries will come for competition, increasing export opportunities, economic zones, and the Karachi to Quetta road will further boost trade and commerce in the region.

"The joint endeavors of the people, government and military, he said, adding,

these have been instrumental in establishing stability and maintaining peace in the area."

The government, he noted, is prioritizing industry promotion and offering incentives to support businesses and stimulate economic development.

Overall, the budget relief measures are a positive step towards promoting economic growth, reducing poverty and improving the standard of living for citizens, he mentioned.

By providing relief to the common man and promoting business growth, the government is working towards creating a more prosperous and stable economy, he concluded.

City School sign MoU with Joy of Science Museum

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The City School has partnered with the Joy of Science Museum to enrich students' academic journey through immersive, hands-on science experiences. An MoU was signed by Rabia Suhail, Head of Counselling, Placement & Alumni Services (CAPS).

The partnership aims to bring science to life by bridging classroom con-

cepts with real-world applications.

"At The City School, we believe experiential learning is key to nurturing curiosity. Science captivates young minds, and through hands-on experiments and interactive exhibits, we aim to ignite a lifelong passion for discovery," shared Ms. Suhail.

Through this collaboration, students will explore scientific phenomena via interactive exhibits and cur-

riculum-aligned activities at the Joy of Science Museum.

The museum features engaging zones like Magic of Science, Mother Nature, Cosmology, and Technology, introducing concepts that help learning and innovation.

In addition, The City School will offer exclusive discounts to its students for these visits, making science exploration more accessible and inspiring.

Budget 2025-26 balanced, growth-oriented: Iftikhar

LAHORE (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik on Tuesday termed the federal budget for the fiscal year 2025-26 as balanced, growth-driven, and export-oriented, praising its attractive incentives aimed at reviving and accelerating economic activity across the country.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, he welcomed the reforms as historic and transformative, aimed at promoting ease of doing business. He noted that the measures introduced would pave the way for economic stability, strengthen key sectors, and bring much-

needed relief to underprivileged segments of society. "The federal budget sets a proper direction for national economic growth and will significantly improve key indicators, including GDP," he said. "Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's wise and timely decisions will provide relief to the business community, while incentive packages will serve as a cushion to support economic expansion and boost exports," he added.

He acknowledged that Pakistan's economy was navigating a difficult phase, further complicated by the impacts of global climate change. However, he

appreciated the government's bold policy choices, particularly in the agriculture sector. He highlighted the allocation of record funds for research and development, and the promotion of modern agricultural techniques, including the mandatory use of high-tech hybrid seeds, as major steps towards transforming agriculture along scientific lines and improving per-acre yields.

He expressed optimism that any concerns or irritants in the budget would be addressed in consultation with the business community, which he described as a cornerstone of the country's financial strength.

Maersk, Panattoni, JD Property sign deals

RIYADH (Arab News): Global supply chain players, including Maersk, Panattoni, and JD Property, signed agreements with Saudi entities at Transport Logistic 2025, underscoring the Kingdom's emergence as a key player in the sector.

The deals — involving partnerships with firms such as GFS Express, Hefei Logistics Group, Scan Global, and Koppert — were unveiled as part of Saudi Arabia's expansive presence at the trade fair, held in Munich, Germany.

Led by the National Industrial Development and Logistics Program and Invest Saudi, the Kingdom's pavilion brought together 22 key government and private sector stakeholders.

Saudi Arabia has emerged as a central hub in the global logistics sector,

with its market valued at \$136.3 billion in 2024. It is also projected to grow at an annual rate of 6.5 percent, reaching \$198.9 billion by 2030, according to Eurogroup Consulting.

"From hosting tech giants like Apple and iHerb in smart hubs to launching our national car Ceer, Saudi Arabia is becoming an industrial and automotive powerhouse," said Suliman Al-Mazroua, CEO of NIDLP, according to a post on the organization's official X account.

He added: "This isn't just our story, it's an invitation to dreamers and innovators. The future is happening now."

Speaking at the three-day event that started on June 3, Al-Mazroua highlighted Saudi Arabia's economic diversification success.

"For the first time in our history, non-oil activities contribute 55 percent of Saudi Arabia's gross domestic product. This isn't a future target, it's today's reality," he said.

Key deals signed
The first day of the exhibition witnessed the signing of several strategic agreements aimed at strengthening Saudi Arabia's logistics capabilities and fostering international cooperation.

Among the key deals, GFS Express and Hefei Logistics Group inked a memorandum of understanding to enhance logistics collaboration and develop innovative supply chain solutions.

SAL partnered with GCL to create specialized logistics solutions for the entertainment, sports, and arts sectors.

Budget 2025-26 to catalyze industrial growth: Haroon Akhtar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Industries & Production Haroon Akhtar Khan asserted on Tuesday that the government's unwavering commitment will revolutionize the manufacturing sector through its Budget 2025, unveiling a game-changing industrial policy poised to propel the sector to new heights.

In an exclusive interview with a private news channel as part of our Budget 2025 coverage, Haroon Akhtar Khan revealed that a new industrial policy is on the horizon, designed to further catalyze the growth of the manufacturing sector.

While discussing the government's budget prior-

ities, SAPM Haroon Akhtar Khan emphasized that Budget 2025 is poised to unlock the sector's full potential, providing critical support to small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Highlighting the need for industrial transformation, Haroon Akhtar Khan emphasized that enhancing confidence levels among stakeholders and increasing incentives are crucial to bringing about a revolution in the industry sector.

By fostering a supportive environment and providing targeted incentives, the government aims to stimulate growth, boost investor confidence and drive innovation, ultimately propelling the sector towards unprecedented

heights, he added.

He further emphasized that the Prime Minister is personally overseeing FBR revenues to ensure their effective collection.

Haroon also assured that government will closely monitor the role of FBR and NAB to prevent undue interference, with the aim of reviving confidence among businessmen and industrialists.

By striking a balance between regulatory oversight and business-friendly policies, the government seeks to create a conducive environment for economic growth and investment, he added.

Akhtar Khan also stressed the importance of sustained focus on manu-

facturing and exports to drive economic growth.

He emphasized that consistent efforts are necessary to keep the wheel of progress moving, ensuring that the country's industrial sector remains competitive and thriving in the global market.

He further announced that the government is set to end additional customs duties, a move aimed at leveling the playing field for export-oriented industries.

By removing this extra burden, the government seeks to enhance the competitiveness of local exporters in the global market, fostering a more favourable trade environment, he concluded.

FPCCI convener lauds CM Punjab's decision

LAHORE (APP): The Convener of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Regional Committee on Food Shahid Imran hailed the decision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to broaden the tax net instead of introducing new taxes in the upcoming provincial budget.

Talking to a delegation of traders led by Saif Ur Rehman, Coordinator to the Federal Tax Ombudsman,

here on Tuesday, Shahid Imran said the move would promote economic stability, reduce the burden on existing taxpayers, and foster business growth across the province.

He emphasized that expanding the tax base was a sustainable and prudent strategy for increasing revenue without placing additional strain on already compliant businesses.

He lauded the provincial government's foresight in addressing fiscal chal-

lenges while promoting documentation and transparency in the economy.

He urged the government to ensure effective implementation of this policy through investment in digital infrastructure and widespread tax awareness campaigns.

He expressed confidence that such progressive initiatives would help establish a more equitable tax system and contribute significantly to Punjab's long-term economic development.

Budget to boost handcrafted furniture exports: PFC CEO

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq on Tuesday welcomed the Federal Budget 2025-26, stating that the announced measures aim to capitalize on Pakistan's unique craftsmanship and are aligned with the government's target of achieving \$5 billion in furniture exports by 2030.

Commenting on the budget, he said the federal government is deploying

targeted initiatives to promote the export of world-class, hand-engraved furniture. The incentive package, he added, will open new avenues for foreign investment and foster collaboration with global partners.

He also noted that skill development centers will be upgraded with the active participation of the PFC to align workforce capabilities with international standards. In addition, the budget places special

emphasis on research and development to support the creation of new furniture brands that can compete in global markets.

Mian Kashif further announced that, following the positive steps taken in the budget, the PFC will organize single-country furniture expos in major international markets, particularly in the Gulf region, in collaboration with the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP).

Stocks mostly fall as China-US resume trade talks

LONDON (AFP/APP): Major stock markets mostly dropped in Asia and Europe on Tuesday as investors waited for the outcome of US-China talks aimed at cementing a fragile trade war truce between the world's two biggest economies.

London's benchmark FTSE 100 index bucked the trend as it was on course to close at a record high after weak UK unemployment data raised chances the Bank of England will cut interest rates into next year.

"US-China trade talks are the main focus for investors," noted Neil Wilson, UK investor strategist at Saxo Markets.

"A good outcome could send Wall Street to a fresh record high" when trading

resumes Tuesday, he added.

The world's two biggest economies are holding a second day of trade talks in London, seeking to shore up a shaky tariff truce in a bitter row deepened by export curbs.

One of US President Donald Trump's top advisers said he expected "a big, strong handshake" at the end of the discussions.

Trump told reporters at the White House: "We are doing well with China. China's not easy. I'm only getting good reports."

The agenda is expected to be dominated by exports of rare earth minerals used in a wide range of things including smartphones, electric vehicle batteries and green technology.

"Investors remain on tenterhooks as talks between the US and China spill over to today, with a nuanced situation yet to be resolved," said Richard Hunter, head of markets at Interactive Investor.

"For the time being, the pause in tariff hostilities is a positive starting point as the US seeks the restoration of rare earth mineral exports from China which would inevitably result in a mutual relaxation."

Investors are awaiting also key US inflation data this week, which could impact the Federal Reserve's monetary policy.

Analysts warn Trump's tariffs will refuel inflation, strengthening the argument to keep interest rates on

hold instead of lowering them. The Fed faces pressure from the president to cut rates, with bank officials due to make a decision at their policy meeting next week. While the Bank of England is expected to pause on rates at its next meeting this month, analysts now see it cutting on at least two occasions this year and again in early 2026 after Tuesday's jobs data, which also showed slowing wages growth.

News of dampened inflationary pressure weighed heavily on the pound, boosting the London stock market, which has benefited this year from the UK government striking post-Brexit trade agreements with the US and India.



In brief

Lyon's Cherki move to Man City

LONDON (Agencies): Manchester City have completed the signing of attacking midfielder Rayan Cherki from Lyon before the first of this summer's transfer deadlines. City will pay an initial fee of £30.45m, and Cherki has signed a five-year deal until 2030. The 21-year-old will be able to play for City at the Club World Cup, which begins in the United States on 14 June. Cherki has already made almost 200 appearances for Lyon and has scored once in his two caps for France. "This is a dream for me," said Cherki. "Honestly, to be joining a club like Manchester City and have the opportunity to make the next step in my career here is something very, very special." He is City's second signing in two days, with coach Pep Guardiola having brought in Algeria left-back Rayan Ait-Nouri from Wolves for £31m on Monday. Cherki made his senior debut for Lyon aged 16 in October 2019 and leaves the club having scored 29 goals in 185 games. "I have worked so hard for this all my life," Cherki added. "I love this sport, and I can't wait to develop further here in Manchester with Pep and his backroom staff. "The responsibility to help the team continue winning is something I want to embrace. I would only leave Lyon for a project I really believe in and everything at City suggests I can develop my game and help the team be successful in the future."

McIlroy improves his driver woes

OKAMONT (AFP): World number two Rory McIlroy says his swing and driver struggles over the past month have improved as he prepares to challenge intimidating Oakmont in this week's 125th US Open. McIlroy won the Masters in April to complete a career Grand Slam, a trek the 36-year-old from Northern Ireland began with his first major triumph at the 2011 US Open at Congressional. The five-time major winner had his driver test non-conforming to golf rules before the PGA Championship and has struggled since to find a comfortable replacement, missing the cut in last week's Canadian Open. "I feel a little better with the driver over the weekend at home and even today playing a practice round, so hopefully I can hit a few more fairways than I have been hitting and give myself some opportunities," McIlroy said Tuesday. McIlroy had been testing several different drivers to find one that matched the feel of the familiar one he had worn down until it was done, and he was fighting swing issues. "Hitting a lot of drivers. Every driver sort of has its own character and you're trying to manage the misses. It's definitely a little bit of both," he said. "I think I learned a lot on Thursday and Friday last week and did a good bit of practice at home and feel like I'm in a better place with everything going into this week." Asked what he learned, McIlroy replied, "I learned that I wasn't using the right driver." McIlroy didn't have a top driver at the PGA Championship but noted that top-ranked Scottie Scheffler, the PGA winner, said after the win his driver had also failed a pre-event test. "It wasn't a big deal for Scottie," McIlroy said. "So it shouldn't have been a big deal for me." The big deal before him this week is one of golf's toughest tests at Oakmont, with dense rough, fast sloping greens and abundant bunkers.

Aqib Javed out to transform NCA into top institution

LAHORE (APP): PCB's Director High-Performance Aqib Javed said that he wanted to transform the National Cricket Academy, Gaddafi stadium into a role model modern training facility to be emulated by others.

In a PCB podcast hosted by former fast bowler Wahab Riaz, Aqib Javed expressed his keen desire to lace the NCA with the modern innovations in cricket coaching and training and raise it to the level where the world recognizes it as the best system.

Aqib Javed said the NCA would bridge the gap between current players and their replacements,adding that he will groom three cricketers for one player.He said bio-mechanics lab was being relocated to the NCA from a local university to make it more effective."NCA plays a vital role in the development and promotion of cricket in a country and I left Pakistan once the NCA was closed down and accepted a job at the United Arab Emirates (UAE) cricket," the former fast bowler said,adding he helped UAE cricket to qualify for ICC U 19 World Cup,ICC Men's T20I World Cup and the ICC ODI Men's World Cup.

On his coaching philosophy,he said he had joined Pakistan Super League (PSL) franchise due to its distinctive Player Development Program, adding that he was not interested to take up a

coaching job for the PSL stint."The most redeeming things as a coach was the moment when you improve a player's life for the better and it increases the passion for cricket in that area," Aqib responded,adding it was hard decision to leave Lahore Qalandars but it he did it for the good of Pakistan cricket.

Aqib Javed said a definitive role should be outlined for the NCA, adding that Pakistan cricket needs players with equal in three formats,adding that there were many players in Pakistan cricket who do not know basics of fielding. Aqib Javed, on his coaching plans,said 30 cricketers will be selected from the district and region level, adding that a comprehensive syllabus will be outlined for the NCA and the regional academies.

Pakistan cricket was not an exception as hiring of foreign coaches was a common practice around the world and it was not a reality that Pakistan cricket does not have good indigenous coaches.

He said the PCB was intending to focus on the education of coaches, umpires, trainers and physios with a view to raise confidence and their pool, adding that the local coaches will have to pursue specialization in one department after qualifying level III coaching course.

On the allocation of academies for different age groups and women cricketers, Aqib revealed, "The

Karachi High Performance Centre will now cater to women cricketers, providing facilities to support their diet, training and skill development. The Multan HPC will be dedicated to U19 players, with a group of 30 selected for specialised training. The Faisalabad centre will be used for U17 players, while Sialkot's HPC will focus on grooming 30 U15 players." On the upgradation of facilities at the High-Performance Centre, Aqib said, "A biomechanics laboratory will be set up at the National Cricket Academy in Lahore.This will not only help assess bowling actions but also support injury prevention from the U15 level to first-class cricket players. We have also acquired new coaching tools to help batters, bowlers and fielders enhance their skills."

Also,we are acquiring Baseball technology to improve the art of spin bowling and launching an information portal at the NCA to highlight its activities, which will be re-integrated with regional cricket." Talking about the short and long term plans he has set for himself as Director High Performance, he said, "Over the next six months, I have set myself a target to bring about visible improvement. We are coordinating with head coach Mike Hesson to identify areas where players need focused development. The long-term plan focuses on nurturing U15, U17, and U19 players."

Afridi, Shadab in first list of BBL draft

SYDNEY: The Pakistan quartet of Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shadab Khan, Harris Rauf and Mohammad Rizwan are part of the first overseas draft list of BBL 15 released on Tuesday. The draft will be held on June 19 with Brisbane Heat holding the No. 1 pick and having the first chance to pick a player.

Sam Curran and Alex Hales from England, Lockie Ferguson and Tim Southee from New Zealand, Sri Lanka's Kusal Perera and West Indies' Shamar Joseph are the other six players in the first draft list of 10 players.

In the WBBL, the Indian pair of Shikha Pandey and Jemimah Rodrigues are in the first nomination list, alongside Deandra Dottin of West Indies and Fatima Sana of Pakistan. England's Lauren Bell, Sophie Ecclestone, Heather Knight and Danni Wyatt-Hodge are part of the

list too, as are the South African pair of Shabnim Ismail and Chloe Tryon. The draft for the upcoming BBL and WBBL seasons have been brought forward to June to provide clubs more certainty about player selection. According to a CA statement, over 600 overseas players have registered interest for the BBL and WBBL.

The teams have already started building their squads. Jamie Overton and Laura Wolvaardt (Adelaide Strikers), Colin Munro and Nadine de Klerk (Brisbane Heat), Chris Jordan (Hobart Hurricanes), Tim Seifert and Hayley Matthews (Melbourne Renegades), Tom Curran and Marizanne Kapp (Melbourne Stars), Finn Allen and Sophie Devine (Perth Scorchers), Amelia Kerr (Sydney Sixers),

Sam Billings and Chamari Athapaththu (Sydney Thunder) are the overseas players to have been pre-signed already. Hurricanes have not named a pre-signed player for the WBBL yet and the same is the case for Sixers in the BBL.

This season, Heat and Sixers will have first picks for the BBL and WBBL drafts respectively. Both drafts consist of four rounds, with all teams receiving one pick in each round. Teams can select a player who has made themselves available to be drafted in one of four overseas player salary bands: Platinum (round 1 or 2), Gold (round 2 or 3), Silver (round 3 or 4) or Bronze (round 4 only). Teams must use at least three picks including pre-signed players and can pass once. —Cricinfo

Guardiola 'so scared' by Israel-Gaza war

LONDON (Agencies): Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola said he is 'so scared' by the 'painful' war in Gaza as he delivered an emotional speech.

It is 20 months since Israel launched a military campaign in Gaza in response to the unprecedented Hamas-led cross-border attack on Israel on 7 October 2023, in which about 1,200 people were killed and 251 others were taken hostage.

At least 54,880 people have been killed in Gaza since, according to the territory's Hamas-run health ministry. Guardiola, 54, was speaking as he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Manchester on Monday.

"It's so painful what we see in Gaza. It hurts my whole body," said Guardiola in clips of his speech shared on social media. "Let me be clear, it's not about ideology. It's not about whether I'm right, or you're wrong. It's just about the love of life, about the care of your neighbour.

"Maybe we think that we see the boys and girls of four years old being killed by the bomb or being killed at the hospital because it's not a hospital anymore. It's not our business. "We can think about that. It's not our business. But be careful. The next one will be ours. The next four- or five-year-

old kids will be ours. Sorry, but I see my kids, Maria, Marius and Valentina. When I see every morning since the nightmare started the infants in Gaza, and I'm so scared."

Guardiola has never been afraid of airing his political views, having frequently spoken of his support for pro-Catalan independence. In 2018, he was fined £20,000 by the Football Association for "wearing a political message" pitchside - a yellow ribbon to support imprisoned politicians in his native Catalonia, having previously being warned he was in breach of regulations.

The year before, he joined thousands of protesters in Barcelona calling for independence in the region.

Guardiola was awarded the honorary degree for his success with City - having won 18 trophies in his nine years at the club - as well as the work of his family foundation, the Guardiola Sala Foundation, which "strives to support the most disadvantaged" in society.

"Maybe this image feels far away from where we are living now, and you might ask what we can do," said Guardiola, who added he was also "deeply troubled" by the wars in Sudan and Ukraine. "There is a story I'm reminded of. A forest is on fire. All the

animals live terrified, helpless. But a small bird flies back and forth to the sea, carrying drops of water in its little beak.

"A snake laughs, and asks: 'Why bro? You will never put the fire out.' The bird replies: 'Yes, I know.' 'Then why do you do it again and again?', the snake asks once again. 'I'm just doing my part,' the bird replies for the last time.

"The bird knows it won't stop the fire, but it refused to do nothing. "In a world that often tells us we are too small to make a difference, that story reminds me the power of one is not about the scale, it's about choice, about showing up, about refusing to be silent or still when it matters most."

Others within football have previously spoken out about the Israel-Gaza war.

In October 2023, Liverpool and Egypt forward Mohamed Salah called on "world leaders to come together to prevent further slaughter of innocent souls". In the same month, Dutch winger Anwar El Ghazi had his contract at Mainz terminated for a perceived pro-Palestine post he made on social media.

Last year, El Ghazi - now at Cardiff City - pledged 500,000 euros of his pay-off from Mainz to "fund projects for the children in Gaza".

Japan beat Indonesia 6-0 in final AFC World Cup Group C qualifier



OSAKA (Agencies): Daichi Kamada scored twice as Japan rounded off their successful World Cup qualifying campaign with a 6-0 thrashing of Patrick Kluivert's Indonesia in Osaka.

Kamada, an FA Cup winner with Crystal Palace in England this season, struck twice in Tuesday's first half as already-qualified Japan finished their campaign as Group C winners, scoring 30 goals in their 10 matches.

Takefusa Kubo, Ryoya Morishita, Shuto Machino and substitute Mao Hosoya were also on target against Indonesia, who finished fourth in the group.

Kluivert's side, who were backed by a large number of supporters who

had travelled to Japan, advanced to a further round with five other teams to decide two more Asian qualifiers for next year's tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The result matched Japan's previous winning margin against Indonesia, which also came in a 6-0 win in 1976. Japan coach Hajime Moriyrasu has set the ambitious target of winning the World Cup in North America.

His side will play friendlies against teams from outside Asia over the next 12 months, and Kamada is looking to learn from the experience. "Playing against Asian teams and against the kind of European teams who will be at the World

Cup is totally different," said the 28-year-old.

"As we play these games, we will start to see a lot of areas where we need to improve. We need to come together as a team and overcome these problems when they crop up."

Japan have already lined up away friendlies against Mexico and the US in September and will face four as yet unnamed opponents at home before the end of the year.

Moriyrasu said his players need to keep improving "in all departments" and praised their attitude against Indonesia.

"The challenge for the players is to break past their limits and grow," he said.

"They did that in train-

ing and in the game, where they were never satisfied and always looking for the next goal and the next chance, which is great to see." Japan lost their unbeaten qualifying record in a 1-0 defeat away to Australia last week, with coach Hajime Moriyrasu fielding an experimental lineup with qualification already in the bag.

He started with two more debutants against Indonesia, handing first caps to defender Junnosuke Suzuki and winger Shunsuke Mito. Kamada opened the scoring in the 15th minute, heading home from a Mito cross. The Palace forward turned provider for his team's second, combining with Kubo before the Real Sociedad man fired past Indonesia goalkeeper Emil Audero.

Indonesia lost defender Kevin Diks to injury midway through the first half, and his replacement, Yakob Sayuri, lasted only 15 minutes before he also had to go off after a clash of heads. Kamada scored Japan's third on the stroke of half-time, waltzing through the Indonesia defence before tucking the ball over Audero. Morishita volleyed home at the back post in the 55th minute for his first international goal.

Machino and Hosoya also got on the scoresheet as Japan continued to squeeze Indonesia until the final whistle.

Naqvi hails ICC Hall of Famer Sana Mir

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi has hailed former Pakistan Women team captain Sana Mir on becoming the first Pakistani woman cricketer to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. "Well done, Sana Mir- a daughter of Pakistan who has brought pride to the nation," Naqvi said in his congratulatory message on Tuesday. Mohsin Naqvi said that Sana Mir has raised the national flag high and brought glory to Pakistan.

He described her a national asset and a role model for women cricketers. "Sana Mir's induction into the Hall of Fame marks a historic milestone in the history of Pakistan women's cricket. She dreamt big, worked hard, and made history. Her achievement is a source of immense pride for the entire nation," he added. Sana Mir's accomplishment inspires every daughter of this country. Through dedication, perseverance, and relentless hard work, she has achieved this honor and brought international recognition to Pakistan. This success is not only hers but also a triumph for Pakistan women's cricket and the entire country.

Romeo wins Dauphine third stage to take yellow



CHARANTONNAY (AFP): Spain's Ivan Romeo won the third stage of the Criterium du Dauphine on Tuesday when he streaked clear at the end of a 207km run from Brioude to Charantonnay to cross the line first and claim the overall lead.

Romeo surprised his breakaway companions, including Dutch world champion Mathieu van der Poel, to drop them in the final kilometres and lead the dash into the town of Charantonnay.

"I've been thinking about this stage for a month now. I can hardly believe it. It was one of the hardest days of my life, I wasn't feeling well," said time-trial specialist Romeo.

"But I followed my instincts in the final. It's the best day of the year for me. Hard work pays off."

It was the second win of the 21-year-old Movistar rider's career, and earned him the yellow leader's jersey on the eve of the first time-trial in this edition of the Dauphine.

Romeo completed the hilly run across the south-east of France in 4hr 34min 10sec.

Colombian Astana rider Harold Tejada came in second at 14sec, with Frenchman Louis Barre of Intermarche completing the podium.

The peloton, containing many of the race favourites, rolled in just over a minute later at the end of a day

without any major incidents.

One of those contenders for the general classification is Red Bull leader Florian Lipowitz -- in the absence of last year's winner Primoz Roglic -- who did well to slip into the breakaway and come in just outside the podium.

The German sits fourth overall, with a 42sec advantage over ninth-placed Slovenian Tadej Pogacar.

The breakaway formed quickly after the start, and was composed of 13 riders. The first big break came on the Cote du Chateau Jaune, with its average gradient of over 9 percent, situated 19km from the finish.

After this final climb, only 10 riders remained amongst the contenders for the stage, and victory seemed to be in the grasp of Van der Poel -- the fastest of the bunch.

But Romeo had other ideas, attacking for the first time with 9km remaining before going again and quickly opening up a sizeable gap on the chasing pack. Wednesday's fourth stage will be a 17.4km time-trial

between Charnes-sur-Rhone and Saint-Pery.

Pooran makes shock retirement from international cricket at 29

JAMAICA: Nicholas Pooran, the former West Indies white-ball captain, has retired from international cricket at the age of 29. He finishes with 1983 runs in 61 ODIs and 2275 runs in 106 T20Is.

Pooran had recently opted out of selection for West Indies' T20I series against England and hadn't featured in ODIs since West Indies' exit in the 2023 ODI World Cup Qualifiers. However, his retirement comes as a shock since it was only in November last year - on the occasion of his 100th T20I cap - that Pooran had said he could play 100 more T20Is.

In a statement on his social media, Pooran wrote on Monday: "After much thought and reflection, I've decided to announce my retirement from international cricket. This game we love has given and will continue to give so much - joy, purpose, unforgettable memories, and a chance to represent the people of the West Indies. Wearing that maroon, standing for the anthem, and giving everything I had each time I stepped on the field... it's



hard to put into words what that truly means to me. To have led the team as captain is a privilege I will always hold close to my heart.

"To the fans - thank you for your unwavering love. You lifted me in the tough moments and celebrated the good ones with unmatched passion. To my family, friends and teammates - thank you for walking the journey with me. Your belief and support carried me through it all. Though this international chapter of my career closes, my love for West Indies Cricket will never fade. I wish the team and the region nothing but

success and strength for the road ahead."

Pooran made his West Indies debut in 2016 against Pakistan in the UAE and three years later earned his first ODI cap, against England. In 2022, he was appointed West Indies' white-ball captain but stepped down after a disastrous T20 World Cup in Australia that year. He last played for West Indies in December 2024, in a home T20I series against Bangladesh in Kingstown.

But he had arguably his best year in 2024, hitting the most sixes in a calendar year (170) before finishing

IPL 2025 with 524 runs at a strike rate of 196.25 with five half-centuries. He was also expected to be a key part of West Indies' plans for the 2026 T20 World Cup early next year.

A regular in the franchise circuit, Pooran is expected to feature in the MLC and The Hundred this summer. Apart from the CPL and the IPL, he is also a regular in the ILT20 in the UAE. In T20Is, a format where he finishes as West Indies' most capped T20I player and highest run-scorer, he scored 2275 runs at an average of 26.14 and strike rate of 136.39. In ODIs, he scored 1983 runs at an average of 39.66 and strike rate of 99.15.

"Cricket West Indies extends sincere gratitude and appreciation to Nicholas Pooran for his outstanding contributions to West Indies cricket," a statement from CWI said on Monday. "We salute his achievements and thank him for the moments he has given fans across the region and beyond. We wish him all the very best in the next phase of his journey." —Cricinfo



In brief

IRSA releases 238,193 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 238,193 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 201,816 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1445.56 feet which was 43.56 feet higher than dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 111,400 cusecs and 151,300 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1163.75 feet, which was 113.75 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 33,523 cusecs and 30,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 184,496, 140,670, 104,269 and 49,200 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 25,500 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 4524 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

DIGs visits checkpoints

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Muhammad Jawad Tariq and DIG Law and Order Muhammad Atiq Tahir conducted surprise inspection visits to various duty points across the federal capital. An official told APP that the senior officers were accompanied by SSP Investigation and SSP Operations during the visits. The DIGs reviewed the security arrangements and met with on-duty officers, issuing directives to perform their duties with vigilance and dedication. They said all officers must remain alert and fulfill their responsibilities with honesty and integrity, ensuring the safety of citizens and protection of public property. DIG Tariq said officers were also instructed to treat citizens respectfully during checking operations to strengthen public trust and cooperation. DIG Tariq said a firm crack-down has been ordered against suspicious individuals and criminal elements across the city to maintain law and order and ensure the safety of residents. DIG Tariq said the primary objective of the police force is to control crime and instill a strong sense of security among citizens.

17 outlaws arrested

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have arrested 17 outlaws including four absconders and recovered a large quantity of drugs, liquor, and weapons from their possession on Tuesday. An official told APP that teams from Shalimar, Sumbal, Tarnol, Sabzi Mandi, Kirpa, Humak, Bhara Kahu, Shahzad Town, and Bani Gala police stations arrested 13 suspects involved in various criminal activities and recovered 3,900 grams of heroin, 401 bottles of liquor, three pistols, two guns, and ammunition from their possession. He said that cases have been registered against the arrested individuals and further investigation is underway. He said that in a special campaign to apprehend proclaimed offenders and absconders, police teams also arrested four accused who were on the run from law enforcement. He said that following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the capital police had accelerated the crackdown against criminal elements to ensure peace and order in the city. He said that the Islamabad Police is committed to protecting the lives and property of citizens and no element would be allowed to disrupt public peace.

Govt allocates commendable health budget: Mustafa Kamal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Health, Syed Mustafa Kamal Tuesday stated that considering the current economic challenges, the government has made every effort to allocate a commendable budget for the health sector.

In an exclusive conversation with a private news channel, the minister acknowledged the limitations faced by the government in allocating funds for the health sector, but emphasized that every effort had been made to prioritize healthcare despite economic constraints.

He also expressed the

government's commitment to completing ongoing development projects in the health sector.

"We will try our best to complete all ongoing development projects on health," he said, emphasizing the importance of seeing these initiatives through to fruition.

He assured that the government would prioritize the timely completion of these projects, which would ultimately benefit the healthcare system and the public.

The minister also emphasized that the government had made every effort to allocate sufficient

funds for the health sector, considering the current economic constraints.

Mustafa Kamal further explained, "We understand the importance of a robust health sector, and we have done our best to prioritize it within the limitations we face. The budget allocation may not be perfect, but it is a step in the right direction, he added.

When pressed about potential improvements for the next budget, Mustafa Kamal assured, "We are working tirelessly to identify areas where we can optimize our resources and make a more significant impact.

Pakistan intensifies repatriation of illegal foreigners

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Interior on Tuesday announced a significant acceleration in its efforts to repatriate individuals residing illegally within the country.

According to the Ministry, the latest phase of the Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Program (IFRP), which includes the repatriation of Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders, began on April 1, 2025. Since that date, a total of 216,103 illegal foreigners have been sent back to their respective countries.

The Ministry stated that

this recent surge is part of a broader campaign that started earlier. Since October 2023, a total of 1,102,441 illegal foreigners have been repatriated under the program. Officials

emphasized that the campaign is ongoing.

The Ministry reiterated its advice to all illegal foreigners, including Afghan nationals, to leave Pakistan voluntarily, to leave Pakistan voluntarily. It assured that those returning are being treated with dignity, with special consideration given to women, children, and the elderly. The government also stated that food and

healthcare arrangements are being provided for departing individuals.

Alongside the call for voluntary departure, the Ministry issued a stern warning. It stated that anyone obstructing the repatriation process, or found employing illegal foreigners, providing them accommodation (including hotel stays), or conducting business with them, will face strict legal action.

The Ministry's statement underscores Pakistan's continued focus on implementing its policy regarding illegal foreign residents.

Heatwave: Departments in Rawalpindi put on high alert

RAWALPINDI (APP): The relevant departments in the Rawalpindi Division have been put on high alert on the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz to cope with any emergency situation in the wake of ongoing heatwave in the province.

According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department, temperature during the heatwave, which will continue till June 13, is expected to remain high by 7 degrees from the normal.

Commissioner Rawalpindi Engineer Amir Khattak, in his directive in this regard, called for ensuring the availability of cold

drinking water at all public places, markets and bus terminals. He also directed for availability of necessary medicines for heat stroke at the counters set up in hospitals in this regard.

The commissioner urged the public to adopt precautions for avoiding heat stroke. Children, elderly and patients should be taken care especially as they might suffer from heatwave, he added.

He also requested the people to remain indoors and not venture outside without any important work. In case of any emergency, they should contact NDMA's Helpline 1129, he

added.

Meanwhile, the City Traffic Police Rawalpindi also urged the people to use a cloth or cap, besides taking a bottle of water with them before embarking on a journey. Motorcyclists must use helmets, while radiators and cooling systems of vehicles should also be checked to avoid any untoward situation due to excessive heat, it added.

The CTP advised the children and elderly to avoid travel in the day. Rescue 1122 or the traffic warden on duty should be informed if anyone fainted and got affected on a road due to the heat, it added.

Eid like cleanliness standard should be maintained: Commissioner

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commissioner Rawalpindi Engineer Amir Khattak while expressing satisfaction on effective cleanliness arrangements for Eidul Azha on Tuesday directed to maintain such high standards of sanitation throughout the year.

He was chairing a meeting of Divisional Coordination Committee, which was attended by the Additional Commissioner Coordination, and officers of the Rawalpindi Waste Management Company and other departments.

It was noted that excel-

lent sanitation and cleanliness arrangements were witnessed during all three days of Eid, and decided to hold a follow-up meeting in this regard soon.

Commissioner Khattak observed that sanitation and cleanliness should be a permanent priority of the administration as it was not a temporary requirement. He directed that the sanitation campaign should be further intensified at the village level, and tehsil level control rooms should be linked to the Deputy Commissioner Office.

He further directed that all ongoing development schemes should be reviewed immediately, while the new ones should be finalized and submitted by tomorrow (Wednesday).

The uplift projects, he said, should be implemented as soon as possible. The commissioner said coordinated measures at all levels were the need of the hour for the convenience and betterment of citizens. Everyone had to play a role in that regard for creating a clean, developed and integrated system, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Citizens watching the 2025-26 federal budget live on television screen at a roadside in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo

Strict action launched to stop dangerous traveling

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Traffic Police Rawalpindi Tuesday launched a campaign against people traveling on the roofs of buses. Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi, Beenish Fatima has ordered strict checking across the city.

Teams are now closely monitoring bus stands, highways and major roads to stop buses carrying passengers on the roof. Traffic Police have now adopted a zero tolerance policy as in the past, many lives have been lost due to accidents caused by this practice.

Police officers have been directed to take action against buses violating the rules.

They will impound the vehicles and register FIRs against the drivers and owners under the Pakistan Penal Code.

The education Wing of the Traffic Police is also holding awareness sessions for drivers and conductors at various places. Public transport unions have been warned to make sure their drivers do not allow passengers on the roof.

Any violation will lead to strict action.

The City Traffic Police also appeals to citizens to avoid traveling on bus roofs, as it puts your life and others in danger. CTP also appealed to report immediately to the Traffic Police complaint cell at 051-9274843 against such violations.

ANF recovers over 25 kg of drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting six operations across the country, recovered as many as 25.361 kilograms of drugs worth more than Rs 2.51 million and arrested five suspects, including a British National and a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Tuesday.

He informed that 461 grams of heroin were recovered from a British national travelling to Birmingham at Peshawar Airport.

As many as 4.8 kgs of hashish were recovered from a parcel hidden inside an air conditioner, destined for Orangi Town, Karachi, at the courier office in Peshawar.

Similarly, 4.5 kgs of hashish were recovered from a vehicle at RCD Road, Hub. As much as 10.800 kgs of hashish were recovered from two suspects, including a woman travelling in a public transport near Islamabad Motorway Toll plaza.

As many as 3.6 kgs of hashish were recovered from a vehicle near Havelian Interchange, Hazara and the two suspects were arrested.

In another operation, 1.2 kg of hashish was recovered from two suspects near the Islamabad Motorway Toll Plaza. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and further investigations are underway.

Pakistan-Russia ties strengthening, says KP Governor

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Tuesday attended a prestigious ceremony to mark the National Day of the Russian Federation.

The event was hosted by the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Pakistan, Albert P. Khorev, who warmly welcomed the Governor Kundi along with other

distinguished guests.

On this occasion, Governor Kundi joined President Asif Ali Zardari, who was the chief guest at the event, and Ambassador Khorev in cutting a ceremonial cake to commemorate Russia's National Day.

During the ceremony, the Governor presented a bouquet to the Russian ambassador and extended heartfelt congratulations

to the government and people of Russia on behalf of himself and the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Speaking at the event, Governor Kundi acknowledged Russia as a significant global power, emphasizing that Pakistan and Russia share broad mutual political and military interests. He said that bilateral relations between the two nations are growing stronger with the passage of time.

Budget to bring fruitful results: MNA Sidhu

ISLAMABAD (APP): A member of the National Assembly Chaudhry Naseer Ahmad Abbas Sidhu expressed confidence on Tuesday that this year's budget is significantly better than last year's, providing maximum relief and promising fruitful results in the coming years.

In an exclusive interview with PTV in Parliament, the MNA said that things are moving in the right direction after the

budget, and many aspects will improve further.

He further praised the budget, highlighting its focus on macroeconomic stability and relief measures. He expressed optimism that these initiatives would yield positive outcomes, benefiting the nation in the long run.

Sidhu commended the government's efforts to address economic challenges and provide relief to the people, emphasizing that the budget's

impact would be felt in the coming years.

Responding a query, Chaudhry Naseer noted that the positive impact of the budget would unfold gradually, emphasizing that step-by-step improvement is on the horizon.

He acknowledged that patience and time would be required to fully realize the benefits, but expressed confidence in the budget's potential to drive progress and deliver relief to the people.

BISP disburses Rs. 592 billion to 9.9 million families

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal government, through its flagship social protection initiative of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), disbursed Rs. 592 billion in unconditional cash assistance to 9.9 million low-income families during the fiscal year 2024-25.

This was shared during the budget speech for 2025-26 delivered by Finance Minister, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday. The financial support was aimed at helping economically disadvantaged households cope with rising inflation and income instabil-

ity. The programme played a critical role in easing economic burdens through targeted cash transfers.

Under the Benazir Nishonuma Programme, 1.5 million pregnant and lactating mothers were provided with essential nutrition, and 1.6 million children were supported with financial assistance and dietary supplements. Children under the age of two received additional focused care to address malnutrition and stunted growth.

The government also awarded education stipends to 11.6 million children of

BISP beneficiaries to encourage school enrollment and reduce dropout rates among disadvantaged families.

To promote economic self-reliance, 250,000 individuals received financial literacy training, empowering them with the tools to manage their finances and participate in economic activity more effectively.

These interventions reflect the government's ongoing commitment to supporting the most marginalized segments of society through a comprehensive and inclusive social protection system.

IGP hears public complaints in open court

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, presided over an open court session at the Central Police Office Islamabad today.

The meeting was marked by direct interactions between the IGP and citizens, as well as police officers, addressing pressing issues and providing immediate solutions.

During this interactive session, IGP Rizvi emphasized the importance of resolving citizens' issues fairly and efficiently. He assured the attendees that negligence and carelessness in police duties would not

be tolerated. He encouraged citizens facing police-related challenges to participate in the open court, reinforcing that his office is always accessible to the public.

The IGP instructed senior police officers to prioritize grievances within a set timeframe and ensure comprehensive reporting back to the Central Police Office. He underscored the necessity for all Sub-Divisional Police Officers (SDPOs) and Station House Officers (SHOs) to adhere to office hours strictly and focus on resolving public issues.

IGP Rizvi highlighted the proactive measures

being undertaken by the Islamabad Police to facilitate citizens. He pointed out that the regular convening of open courts significantly aids in addressing problems on a priority basis.

In addition, zonal officers and SHOs were instructed to engage with the public during designated hours and ensure prompt and fair resolution of their concerns, reflecting the police department's commitment to public service.

This initiative by the IGP aims to foster greater trust between the police and the community, ensuring that citizens' voices are heard and addressed effectively.

Bus collides with tree, 3 dead

ISLAMABAD (APP): A tragic accident occurred in Pindi Bhattian on Tuesday morning when a bus collided with a tree, resulting in the deaths of three passengers on the spot who were sitting on the roof of a bus. According to rescue sources, the bus heading from Gujrat to Muzaffargarh was involved in the fatal accident. The victims, including the deceased and injured were from Sindh province, private news channel reported. Following the accident report, a Rescue 1122 team swiftly arrived at the scene and began administering first aid to the injured, as the local hospital in Pindi Bhattian lacked sufficient staff and medical supplies.



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters enjoy jumping and bathing in Rawal Lake spillway water to get some relief from hot weather in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo

Najibullah passes away

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Afghanistan Powerlifting Federation (APF) Chief Najibullah Ayoubi has died of a heart attack in Kabul. Najibullah Ayoubi son, Sahil Ayoubi, confirmed to the media that his father passed away at a hospital in Kabul following a heart attack on Monday night. Najibullah Ayoubi was 47 years old and had served as Afghanistan Powerlifting Federation (APF) chief for several years.

The Frontier Post

Zil Hajj 14, 1446 — Wednesday, June 11, 2025

1 killed in Jawzjan accident

SHIBERGHAN (Pajhwok): One person was killed and another wounded in a traffic accident involving two cars and a motorcycle in northern Jawzjan province, police said. The accident took place on the Shiberghan-Mazar-i-Sharif highway in Kukaldash village in Faizabad district, Jawzjan police spokesman Qari Abdul Sattar Halimi told Pajhwok Afghan News. He said the accident occurred due to a collision between two speeding cars and a motorcycle.

Measles vaccination drive to be started

KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Public Health announced that a nationwide measles vaccination campaign will be held in the country this month. Sharafat Zaman Amarkhil, the spokesperson for the ministry, stated that since the beginning of this year, nearly 4,000 suspected cases of this disease have been recorded across the country. He told TOLONews: "From the beginning of 2025 until now, nearly 4,000 measles cases have been registered with us; however, these cases are suspected, and confirmed cases are fewer. The Ministry of Public Health, in order to prevent

measles like other contagious diseases, is offering measles vaccine services at nearly 3,000 centers." Previously, the World Health Organization reported that in the 20th week of this year (2025), 21 people died due to measles in the country. Marsal, the mother of one of the sick children, told TOLONews: "My child is five months old. He had a high fever, and we brought him to the hospital. The doctors said he has symptoms of measles. My child is currently in the ICU but has not been vaccinated yet."

Doctors at Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital report a

rise in the disease in recent years, with 10 to 12 children being admitted daily due to measles. Mohammad Arif Hassanzai, a doctor at Indira Gandhi hospital in Kabul, told TOLONews: "Every day, 8 to 12 new patients come in, meaning that some of our patients recover, and new ones take their place. The increase in measles cases has been ongoing for several months." Earlier, data provided by the World Health Organization indicated that in the 20th week of this year, a total of 4,043 suspected measles cases and 21 deaths were recorded in Afghanistan.

Minister travels to Russia

KABUL (Amu TV): A senior Taliban education official has traveled to Russia to attend the Third Global Education Ministers' Summit, where he is expected to deliver remarks on the state of Afghanistan's education system, Taliban officials said Tuesday. Sakhawullah Saeed, deputy minister at the Taliban-controlled Ministry of Education, is leading a delegation to the city of Kazan. The ministry said in a statement that Saeed would present "a detailed speech on the state of Afghanistan's education system, its opportunities and challenges," and call on the international community to support its improvement.

The trip comes as the Taliban face mounting criticism at home and abroad over their record on education, particularly their ban on schooling for girls beyond the sixth grade. Civil society activists and former officials have said the Taliban's policies have devastated the education sector, leaving millions of students—most of them girls—without access to formal learning.

Since regaining control of Afghanistan in 2021, the Taliban have shuttered schools for girls in most provinces and drastically curtailed education opportunities for women. According to the United Nations, more than 2.2 million girls are currently out of school in Afghanistan.

"The education system has collapsed under Taliban rule," said Abdul Ahad Farzam, a civil society activist, in a video statement. "None of the global standards for quality education are being met, especially the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of gender."

UNESCO reported that as of the current solar year, at least 400,000 girls above sixth grade have been newly pushed out of classrooms.

Students and former officials alike have questioned the Taliban's participation in international education forums, calling it hypocritical and symbolic at best.

"They speak of development, but they have denied millions of us our most basic right," said a high school student in Herat, speaking on condition of anonymity for safety reasons.

Daesh hideout destroyed, 2 affiliates killed in Kabul

KABUL (Pajhwok): A hideout of the Islamic State (IS), also known as Daesh, has been destroyed in 15th police district of Kabul, an official announced on Tuesday.

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) chief spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said two members of Daesh were also killed in the operation.

The sounds of light and heavy weapons were heard in Qasba area of 15th police district of capital on Monday evening. However, later the Ministry of Interior said that operations were underway in the area, without providing further details.

Zabihullah Mujahid, spokesman for the Islamic Emirate, told Pajhwok Afghan News today: "An operation was carried out last evening on a hideout of



IS Khawarij in the area of the 15th district of Kabul city. As a result of the operation, when the enemy

resisted, two of its members were killed." Without going to details, he said the weapons and

ammunition stored at the centre were seized, the hideout was destroyed and "their plots and plans" thwarted.

30,000 pilgrims from Afghanistan successfully complete Hajj

KABUL (Ariana News): Around 30,000 Afghan pilgrims have successfully completed the Hajj pilgrimage this year, with authorities reporting smooth operations and no significant incidents.

The Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs of Afghanistan confirmed that the annual pilgrimage was conducted peacefully and efficiently for Afghan participants.

According to an official

statement, all religious rites were performed in an orderly manner, supported by well-coordinated logistical and safety measures.

From departure and accommodation to the completion of the Hajj rituals and the return process, the ministry said every phase was carefully managed. The cooperation between Afghan service teams and Saudi authorities was praised for ensuring the pilgrims' comfort and security

throughout the journey.

"No major problems or incidents were reported during this year's pilgrimage," the ministry stated, noting that Afghan pilgrims were able to fulfill their religious obligations safely in the holy city of Mecca.

The ministry also announced plans to release a detailed report once all pilgrims have returned, outlining the planning and execution of this year's pilgrimage.

Hajj, one of the five pil-

lars of Islam, draws millions of Muslims to Mecca each year. Afghanistan's participation is coordinated under a national quota managed by the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs.

This year's successful completion of the pilgrimage highlights effective collaboration between Afghan and Saudi officials, ensuring Afghan citizens could observe this important religious duty with dignity, safety, and peace of mind.

Over 51,000 free SIM cards distributed to Afghan returnees

KABUL (TOLONews): Since the start of the second phase of the forced expulsion of Afghan migrants from Pakistan, more than 51,000 telecommunications SIM cards have been distributed free of charge.

According to officials from the interim government, each family receives three SIM cards, which include free call minutes and internet packages.

Zabihullah Zaki, head of telecommunications and information technology in Nangarhar, stated: "So far, 51,370 SIM cards have

been distributed. Each registered form is entitled to three SIM cards, either from a single network or from three different networks."

Imran Momand, a representative of a private telecommunications company, said: "These SIM cards include one gigabyte of internet and 200 free call minutes. Additionally, we provide 50% extra internet on all data packages."

Wahidullah, a representative from another private telecom company, stated: "These SIM cards come with one gigabyte of inter-

net and 1,500 call minutes, valid for one month."

Returnees mentioned that receiving these SIM cards at the temporary Omari Camp has somewhat alleviated their problems.

Imran, a deportee from Pakistan, said: "We were expelled from Pakistan under very harsh conditions, and we were treated poorly. Now we have arrived at the Omari Camp in Torkham, where we have been given SIM cards to contact our relatives."

Samiullah, another deportee from Pakistan,

said: "We were returned in very poor conditions. Now, having arrived at the Omari Camp, we have received SIM cards that allow us to contact our families and inform them that we have been sent back to Torkham."

The expulsion of Afghan migrants holding ACC (Afghan Citizen Card) documents from Pakistan has begun, while the Pakistani government has given migrants holding PoR (Proof of Registration) cards until June 30 of this year to return voluntarily.

Nuruddin Azizi leads delegation to Tashkent



KABUL (TOLONews): A high-ranking delegation of the Islamic Emirate, led by acting minister of industry and commerce, Nuruddin Azizi, departed for Uzbekistan.

With the aim of expanding economic and trade relations with Central Asian countries, the delegation, headed by Azizi, is visiting Uzbekistan.

The purpose of the trip is to participate in the 4th International Investment Conference in Tashkent and to follow up on previous commitments between Kabul and Tashkent.

Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad, spokesperson for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, said: "It is planned that an exhibition of Uzbekistan's domestic products will be held on the sidelines of the conference, and the high-ranking delegation of the Islamic

Emirate will meet with officials from Uzbekistan and several other countries."

It is expected that alongside the conference, the Afghan delegation will also meet with top Uzbek officials to discuss the expansion of economic, trade, and transit relations.

Several economic analysts view this visit as an important step toward strengthening trade between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan.

Economic affairs analyst Mohammad Nabi Afghan commented: "If the Islamic Emirate delegation acts in accordance with national interests, it could benefit Afghanistan significantly,

as many of our projects are based in Uzbekistan."

Another analyst, Qutbuddin Yaqubi, said: "The visit of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce's delegation, led by Minister Nuruddin Azizi, to Uzbekistan is positive. In the current situation, it is essential to strengthen relations with neighboring and regional countries, which will bring mutual benefits."

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce stated that this conference is one of the region's major international investment gatherings, attended by senior officials, including presidents and prime ministers from nearly 100 countries.

Zahra: Pioneer in renewable energy, power station production

KABUL (Pajhwok): Amid Afghanistan's electricity shortages, a young girl in Kabul is working with limited resources but a big dream to find a sustainable solution to the matter by producing small-scale power stations.

Zahra Ali, 23, believes that hardships, initially painful, can act as a catalyst for resilience. Her inspiration was born out of darkness, both literal and metaphorical, which motivated her to bring light not just to her own life but to the lives of others.

Born in Kabul, Zahra completed her secondary education at Sayedul Nasiri High School in 2019.

She says the motivation to start working arose from the many challenges she faced in life, which taught her that adversity shapes stronger individuals.

"I never wanted to be

someone who gives up in the face of difficulty," she said.

"My motivation began when my problems began. I wanted to stand up and work because I'm passionate about success and recognition. That desire gave me the courage to take the first step. Work gives me a sense of progress and purpose — I believe I can achieve my dreams. I've always loved the technical field and wanted to be part of it."

At first, Zahra was uncertain about how people would respond to her product. However, after building her first power station and receiving positive feedback within the first week, her confidence grew.

Orders soon started coming in from provinces across the country.

She launched her business with minimal capital.

The first power station was built using Tesla lithium batteries imported through ground cargo from abroad, while other materials were sourced locally.

"In the beginning, I was worried whether people would accept my product. But after the first unit received excellent feedback, my confidence grew. Today, we produce 10 to 12 power stations daily, each assembled in just two hours and dispatched to different provinces," she said.

Zahra recalls that when she began, she stood alone—even her family was initially hesitant due to the uncertain circumstances.

"But my vision and goals were always in front of me. I never wanted to quit. I took every challenge upon myself and carried the weight of my struggles," she added.

Her power stations con-

tain solar panels, generator or machine-rechargeable, lightweight, portable and have a lifespan of over 10 years.

"While imported acid-based power stations cost up to 26,000 afghanis, we produce the same capacity units for just 10,000 afghanis — with three years of after-sales service included," she said.

Zahra has no plans to stop here. She aims to design robots that can be used in agriculture, factories and for manual tasks, enabling people to earn an income even from home.

She is also involved in importing and refurbishing electric bicycles.

"We import used bicycles, repair and upgrade them, then return them to market. While the batteries are imported, all other components are sourced locally in Kabul."

Zahra works under the supervision of her mentor, Hasibullah Naibkhil, who has professional experience with lithium battery technologies abroad.

He says Zahra has now been working in the field for three years and builds power stations independently from start to finish.

"I trained abroad in lithium battery systems and voltage technologies. Now we are back in Afghanistan, working as a team — led by myself and Zahra, alongside several colleagues," Naibkhil said.

He noted that while some components are still imported, the team is striving to make the entire production process locally and become fully self-reliant.

"At present, we can build power stations with up to 5-kilowatt capacity. Our goal is to eventually produce 1-megawatt sys-



tems to harness Afghanistan's abundant solar and wind energy."

Naibkhil emphasised that Afghanistan enjoys sunshine five days out of every seven — a significant natural advantage.

"Let's join hands and turn Afghanistan's sunshine into a source of prosperity, making the country energy self-sufficient," he urged.

He added that Zahra's power stations are user-friendly, require no technical training to install, and are capable of powering a wide range of household devices.

"They're not just for lighting — they can run washing machines, laptops, and incubators, offering both AC and DC electricity," he concluded.

Sacrifice for education: Illiterate man donates land to school

FAIZABAD (Pajhwok): In a remote corner of Tashkan district in northeastern Badakhshan province, a man who never had the opportunity to receive an education himself, has donated 1.5 acres of land to the Ministry of Education (MoE) for construction of a school — so the children of his village will not remain illiterate and can study in a safe and secure environment.

Mirwais, a 34-year-old resident of Siyagandah village — home to 85 families — said the lack of a school building was one of the major challenges facing the local population.

He explained that children from this and neighbouring villages attended

classes either under the scorching sun or in freezing and rainy weather — often in the open or in makeshift tents.

Speaking to Pajhwok Afghan News, he said: "I myself remained illiterate, but I donated more than 1.5 acres of my land so our children can study in a proper environment, protected from the harsh sun and with the opportunity to progress and prosper."

He added that many of the village's children attended a primary school in open spaces — sometimes under tents when available, and at other times without any shelter.

Mirwais said he made this sacrifice after the

Education Department, in response to their petitions requesting a school building, asked the villagers to first provide land for the project.

He called on the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) and education officials to take necessary steps to construct a school in their village so the children could benefit from a secure and supportive learning environment.

His generous donation has been warmly welcomed and widely praised by students and their families.

Children appeal for a school building

Among them is Mojtaba, a nine-year-old pupil in 3rd grade at Siyah-Jangal

Primary School in Tashkan. The top student in his class, Mojtaba dreams of becoming a doctor one day.

He said the absence of a proper school building forced all students, including him, to study under the blazing sun or, at times, in the rain.

Mojtaba urged the Ministry of Education for immediate action, saying: "In summer, we faint from the heat. When it rains, our books get soaked, and we fall ill."

A parent's voice
Faiz Mohammad, the father of one of the pupils, said: "Children from three neighbouring villages gather in one place to study, but there's no building, no tent,

no boundary wall — yet they still come and study. They endure extreme heat and cold, and often fall ill."

He expressed his deep appreciation for Mirwais, calling him a kind-hearted and noble individual.

He also urged the provincial Education Department to commence construction of the school building so its students' difficulties could be resolved and a proper learning environment provided.

Education department response

Abdul Ghani Abidi, an official from the provincial Education Department, said their engineers had already surveyed, mapped, and registered the donated land,

and construction of the school in Siyah-Jangal village would begin soon.

He noted that the land donation reflected the people of Tashkan's strong sense of responsibility and commitment to the future of their children.

He assured that, in coordination with relevant organisations, the construction of the school would commence shortly so that local children would no longer be deprived of an education.

District Education Director Maulvi Zakir Munib said 280 students were currently enrolled at Siyah-Jangal Primary School, studying under open skies and exposed to

harsh weather conditions. Of these, 120 are girls and 160 boys. The school currently offers classes up to Grade 6.

He added that there are 24 schools in the district — including one madrasa, 11 high schools, seven primary schools, and five middle schools. However, 22 of these schools still lack buildings.

Expert opinion
Saleem Dahmneesh, an education training specialist based in Faizabad, said:

"Donating land, constructing school buildings, and offering unused compounds for educational purposes fosters a positive attitude towards education in society and encourages stu-

dents to engage more enthusiastically in their studies."

He stressed the importance of safe and proper learning environments and said such initiatives could significantly raise community awareness and education levels.

He added that the financial and moral support of charitable individuals creates motivation among students and strengthens their commitment to learning.

Dahmneesh called on institutions and philanthropists to not only assist those in need but also to actively contribute to the construction of educational facilities and the distribution of learning materials.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari cutting cake to mark 35th National Day celebrations of Russian Federation.

Pakistan considers Russian as a major global power: Zardari

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of the 35th National Day of the Russian Federation, President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari extended warm greetings to President Vladimir Putin, the Russian Ambassador in Islamabad, and the people of Russia.

In his speech, President Zardari said Pakistan joins in celebrating the joy of Russia's National Day, reflecting the friendly and growing ties between the two nations. He noted that Pakistan-Russia relations have steadily improved over the past years, based on mutual respect, cooperation, and shared interests across various sectors.

"High-level engagements between

the two countries have increased in recent times, laying a strong foundation of understanding and trust," the President stated, adding that these developments signify the deepening of bilateral relations. President Zardari further emphasized that Pakistan and Russia continue to maintain close cooperation on regional and global platforms, underscoring Pakistan's recognition of Russia as a major global power.

He acknowledged Russia's key role in ensuring regional peace and stability in the Eurasian region, highlighting its importance as a strategic partner. Referring to a recent meeting between Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi and

Russian Foreign Minister in Moscow, the President described it as "highly encouraging." He said both sides stressed the importance of regional peace and stability during their discussions.

President Zardari expressed confidence that the bonds of friendship between Pakistan and Russia would grow stronger, pointing out the immense potential for expanding cooperation in trade, investment, technology, and people-to-people contacts. "Let us renew our commitment to fostering greater understanding and collaboration between Pakistan and Russia," he urged. "Long live Pakistan-Russia friendship," President Zardari concluded.

Absenteeism persists at Peshawar Sectt

Syed Adnan

PESHAWAR: Despite the official end of public holidays, most officers and staff at the Peshawar Secretariat remained absent from their offices on Tuesday. The slow resumption of routine administrative operations has raised concerns over potential delays in resolving public affairs.

According to sources, the biometric attendance system in key departments including Local Government, Communication & Works (C&W), Education, Health, Agriculture, Auqaf, Culture, Tourism, Energy & Power, and Food-remains completely non-functional. As a result, there is no record of which employees are present or absent, and attendance monitoring is not being carried out.

Due to the absence of officers and staff, citizens visiting these offices faced severe difficulties. Many were forced to return disappointed after finding empty chairs and locked rooms. There is growing public demand for the government to take notice of the situation and restore the biometric system to ensure transparency and efficiency in government affairs.

Sources claim that in some departments, the biometric system has been deliberately kept offline to avoid strict attendance checks. This attitude is not only affecting the performance of government offices but also raising serious questions about employee discipline and accountability.

Aseefa flays murder of Sana Yousuf

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: First Lady and Member of the National Assembly, Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, today strongly condemned the murder of 16-year-old Sana Yousuf in Islamabad, who was killed on the eve of her 17th birthday.

Calling it a stark reminder of the violence which women and girls face simply for asserting their rights, she extended her condolences to Sana's family, the community in Chitral, and all those grieving this senseless loss. "Sana was just a girl—with ambition, with dreams, with a life ahead of her," said Aseefa. "She had every right to live freely and safely. What happened to her wasn't just an act of violence — it was a punishment for saying no. And that should horrify every one of us."

She highlighted that violence stemming from male entitlement is neither new nor rare—and must no longer be tolerated under the guise of culture or tradition. "This mindset that a woman's rejection is an insult, that her choices need to be controlled—it's old, it's cruel, and it's killing our daughters. My mother, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, broke those walls with her own strength. She didn't just lead—she opened doors for millions of women to follow. And we owe it to her legacy, and to young women like Sana, to keep those doors open." Addressing the wave of online abuse directed at Sana after her death, Aseefa rejected the idea that social media use or self-expression could ever be used to justify violence.

"There is nothing—no app, no photo, no video—that excuses murder.

Iran says new round of US talks planned for Sunday

TEHRAN (AFP): Iran said a new round of nuclear talks with the United States is planned for Sunday, after Washington submitted a proposal for a deal amid a stand-off over uranium enrichment. The long-time foes have held five rounds of talks since April, the highest-level contact since President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from a 2015 nuclear accord during his first term.

"The next round of Iran-US indirect talks is being planned for next Sunday in Muscat," Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baqaei said in a statement on Tuesday. Trump had earlier said the meeting with Iran was expected on Thursday but Baqaei noted that Iran's Foreign Minister and Chief Negotiator Abbas Araghchi would be attending the Norway's Oslo Forum, a gathering of conflict mediators.

The sixth round of talks would come around two weeks after Iran had received a US proposal for nuclear deal which Araghchi described as containing "ambiguities". Iran said the US proposal failed to include "elements" reflective of the previous negotiations including lifting of sanctions — a key demand for Tehran, which has been reeling under their weight for years.

Tehran said it would present a "reasonable, logical and balanced" counter-proposal to the United States through mediator Oman. On Monday, Trump said that the upcoming US-Iran talks could clarify if a nuclear deal is possible to avoid military action. Iran and the United States have been locked in a diplomatic standoff over Iran's uranium enrichment, with Tehran defending it as a "non-negotiable" right and Washington calling it as a "red line".

Iran currently enriched uranium to 60%, far above the 3.67% limit set in the 2015 deal and close though still short of the 90% needed for a nuclear warhead. Western countries, including the United

States, have long accused Iran of seeking to acquire atomic weapons, while Tehran insisted its nuclear programme was for peaceful purposes. On Tuesday, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi dismissed claims that there was a "deadlock" in the talks with the US.

"Any negotiations with an international dimension come with their own sensitivities and require a great deal of patience for them to reach a result," he told the official IRNA news agency. "What matters to us is that we can safeguard the national interests of the country through these talks, and that is how we proceed," he added. He said that the sixth round will be the first in which the parties express their views on the exchanged written materials, noting that Tehran will again reiterate its position on enrichment capacity, as it has done publicly in the past.

On Monday, the United Nations nuclear watchdog began a Board of Governors meeting in Vienna that would last until Friday to discuss Iran's nuclear activities among other topics. The meeting came after the International Atomic Energy Agency released a report criticising "less than satisfactory" cooperation from Tehran, particularly in explaining past cases of nuclear material found at undeclared sites.

Iran has criticised the IAEA report as unbalanced, saying it relied on "forged documents" provided by its arch foe Israel. On Tuesday, Araghchi reiterated criticism of a plan by European powers and the United States to adopt a resolution at the IAEA meeting, accusing Tehran of non-compliance with its nuclear obligations. "Any ill-considered and destructive decision in the Board of Governors against Iran will be met with an appropriate response," he said during a phone call with Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya. Iran has said it would reduce cooperation with the IAEA if the resolution passed.

Shooter kills nine people at Austrian school

GRAZ (AFP): An attack on a school in southeastern Austria by a former student has left nine people dead, authorities said Tuesday, in a rare case of deadly gun violence in the Alpine country.

Heavily armed police, a helicopter and paramedics descended upon the school in Graz, where 10 people, including the alleged lone shooter, were killed, regional police said. Six of the victims were female and three were male, authorities later confirmed, without specifying their ages. Twelve people suffered severe injuries. Police said the situation was "secure" and support was being provided to witnesses and those affected.

The suspect acted alone and took his own life in the school toilet, police said, adding his motive remained unknown. Later on Tuesday, Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker declared three days of national mourning to remember the victims, saying the country had witnessed "an act of unimaginable violence".

According to the police, the alleged perpetrator is a 21-year-old Austrian from the wider Graz region. The perpetrator used two

weapons he had owned legally to carry out the attack. The suspected shooter was a former student at the school, but had not finished his studies, Interior Minister Gerhard Karner told reporters.

"It's a disaster, simply terrible. After all, it's about children," Hasan Darsel, a restaurant owner in the area, told the newspaper Kronen Zeitung. After arriving in Graz, Stocker described the shooting as "a national tragedy", adding that it was "a dark day" for Austria. Condolences poured in from across Europe. The European Union's top diplomat, Kaja Kallas, said she was "deeply shocked" when she heard about the shooting.

"Every child should feel safe at school and be able to learn free from fear and violence," Kallas posted on X. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said "our thoughts are with our Austrian friends and neighbours and we mourn with them" after the school shooting he called "horrific". Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban offered his "deepest condolences to Chancellor Christian

Stocker and the people of Austria" via social media.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said "the news from Graz touches my heart" while Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni expressed her sympathies to the families of the victims following the "tragic news". Attacks in public are rare in Austria, which is home to almost 9.2 million people and ranks among the 10 safest countries in the world, according to the Global Peace Index.

School shootings are also much more uncommon in Europe than in the United States but in recent years Europe has been shaken by attacks at schools and universities that were not connected to terrorism. In France on Tuesday, a teaching assistant was killed at a school in Nogent in the east following a knife attack.

In January 2025, an 18-year-old man fatally stabbed a high school student and a teacher at a school in north-eastern Slovakia. In December 2024, a 19-year-old man stabbed a seven-year-old student to death and injured several others at a primary school in Zagreb, Croatia.



MAKKAH: Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi called on Secretary General of Muslim World League and Chairman of Organization of Muslim Scholars, Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Alissa.

Hopes rise on second day of US-China trade talks

LONDON (AFP): The United States and China huddled for a second day of talks in London on Tuesday, with Washington sending positive signals that the two superpowers might resolve a bitter trade war dragging on the global economy.

The talks were "going well," US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick told Bloomberg Television, adding he expected on Tuesday's discussions to last "all day". Global stock markets were muted on Tuesday as investors awaited the outcome of the talks aimed at cementing a fragile truce in the trade war.

With talks dragging on, "the lack of positive headlines weighed on stocks and the dollar," said Kathleen Brooks, research director at XTB trading platform. But one of US President Donald Trump's top advisers had said on Monday that he expected "a big, strong handshake" after the talks in the UK's historic Lancaster House. Trump told reporters at the White House on Monday: "We are doing well with China. China's not easy."

He added: "I'm only getting good reports." The gathering of key officials from the world's two biggest economies began Monday in London, after an earlier round of talks in Geneva last month. China's exports of rare earth minerals used in a wide range of things including smartphones, electric vehicle batteries and green technology are expected to dominate the agenda.

"In Geneva, we had agreed to lower tariffs on them, and they had agreed to release the magnets and rare earths that we need throughout the economy,"

UK will sanction Israel ministers

LONDON (Reuters): Britain and other international allies will formally sanction two far-right Israeli ministers, Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, following their conduct over the war in Gaza, the Times reported on Tuesday. London will join Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other nations in freezing the assets and imposing travel bans on Israel's national security minister Ben-Gvir — a West Bank settler — and finance minister Smotrich. Britain's foreign office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the report.

Britain, like other European countries, has been ramping up the pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government to end the blockade on aid into Gaza, where international experts have warned that famine is imminent. London last month suspended free trade talks with Israel for pursuing "egregious policies" in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, summoned its ambassador, and announced further sanctions against West Bank settlers.

Trump's top economic adviser, Kevin Hassett, told CNBC on Monday. But even though Beijing was releasing some supplies, "it was going a lot slower than some companies believed was optimal", he added. Still, he said he expected "a big, strong handshake" at the end of the talks. "Our expectation is that after the handshake, any export controls from the US will be eased, and the rare earths will be released in volume," Hassett added. He also said the Trump administration might be willing to ease some recent curbs on tech exports.

Tensions between Washington and Beijing have heightened since Trump took office in January, with both countries engaging in a tariffs war hiking duties on each other's exports. The Geneva pact to cool tensions temporarily brought new US tariffs on Chinese goods down from a staggering 145% to 30%, and Chinese

countermeasures from 125% to 10%.

But Trump recently said China had "totally violated" the deal. And analysts remained cautious. "We doubt that the US will back off completely. That's likely to restrain any relief rally," said Thomas Mathews, head analyst of Asia Pacific markets for Capital Economics. Ipek Ozkardeskaya, senior analyst at the Swissquote Bank, said although there had been "no breakthrough" it seemed "the first day of the second round of negotiations reportedly went relatively well".

"Rumours are circulating that the US may be willing to make concessions on tech exports in exchange for China easing restrictions on rare earth metal exports," she said. On what he dubbed "Liberation Day" in April, Trump slapped sweeping levies of 10% on friend and foe alike, and threatened steeper rates on dozens of economies.

Govt unveils Rs17.573tr federal budget

(Continued from Page 1)

Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb also announced major tax relief measures for salaried persons, construction sector, and purchase of immovable property besides introducing tax credit to provide loans to construct low-cost houses.

In his speech while presenting the federal budget 2025-26 in the National Assembly, the finance minister said that under the direction of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the tax burden on the salaried class is being reduced in the upcoming fiscal year. In this regard, he said a significant reduction in income tax rates is proposed for salaried people in all income slabs.

This relief will not only simplify the tax structure but will also ensure a balance between inflation and take-home salary by reducing the tax burden on the middle-income earners. The tax rate for those earning between Rs. 600,000 and Rs. 1.2 million has been reduced from 5% to just 1%. Furthermore, it is also proposed to reduce the tax amount for salaried people earning between Rs. 1.2 million and Rs. 2.2 million from Rs.

30,000 to Rs. 6,000 and the minimum tax rate is also proposed to be reduced to 11% from 15%.

Similarly, a reduction in tax rate is being proposed for those earning higher salaries. The tax rate for those earning between Rs. 2.2 million and Rs. 3.2 million is proposed to be reduced from 25% to 23%. This move reflects the government's commitment to making taxes fairer and reducing the burden on salaried individuals, the finance minister said. In order to stop brain drain from the country, he said that the government has proposed to remove one percent surcharge on the people having income of more than 10 million. He said the super tax rate on the corporations earning annual income between Rs 200 million to 500 million is being reduced by 0.5%.

In the construction sector, the government has also proposed to reduce the rate of Withholding Tax on the purchase of property from 4% to 2.5%, from 3.5% to 2%, and from 3% to 1.5%. Likewise, the finance minister also announced to eliminate the federal

excise duty of up to 7% imposed last year on the transfer of commercial properties, plots, and houses.

Furthermore, he said tax credit is being introduced for houses up to 10 marla and flats of up to 2000 sqft to provide loans for the construction of low-cost houses and to encourage mortgage. The government has also proposed to reduce the stamp paper duty on the purchase of property in Islamabad from 4% to 1%. He hoped that the provinces will also support the federal government's move by slashing heavy taxes imposed on the immovable property.

He said the tax rate on the interest income has been proposed to increase from current 15% to 20%. However, he made it clear that this increase will not apply on the national savings and small scale savings. The finance minister highlighted that new tax was being introduced for e-commerce platforms, courier services and other digital services.

He said the government has proposed 5% tax on the income of pensioners of

up to 70 years, whose annual pension exceeds Rs 10 million. He made it clear that the government has no intention to impose tax on the low and middle income pensioners. In order to promote cashless economy, the government has proposed to increase the advance tax rate on withdrawing cash for the non-filers from current 0.6% to 1%.

"We are making necessary reforms to remove loopholes, improve equity and make tax laws easier to comply with," the finance minister said adding that rental income from commercial properties will now be recognized at a standard rate of 4% of the fair market value. This will limit the discretionary powers of the tax authorities. The finance minister said the government was going to propose steps to improve enforcement, reduce tax theft and promote transparency in the tax system.

He said that in order to encourage local manufacturing of solar panels, the government has proposed to impose 18% sales tax on the import of solar panels. Similarly, the finance minister said the government has decided to

remove the tax exemption for the newly merged districts of KP and Balochistan. He said the exemption will be removed step wise during next five years. He informed that the government has decided not to impose any further tax on fertilizers and pesticides.

The finance minister said in order to discourage fossil fuel in the country, the government has proposed to impose Rs 2.5 carbon levy on one liter of petrol, high speed diesel and furnace oil which will be increased to Rs 5 per liter from the fiscal year 2026-27. Furthermore, petroleum levy on furnace oil will be imposed as per the government announcement. He said the government has also decided to refinance the current expensive government debts of power sector through cheap and Sharia compliance bank financing to avoid extra expenditures.

He said the government has also proposed to impose additional levy on the import and purchase of cars with petrol and diesel engines. He said the FBR's tax-to-GDP ratio which was only 8.8 percent as on June 30, 2024,

has been increased to 10.3% in first nine months of current fiscal year and is expected to further increase to 10.4 percent by the end of June 2025. Federal non-tax revenues have also increased to 1.2 percent of GDP compared to 0.8 percent last year. "Overall, federal revenues are now 11.6 percent of GDP and if we include the provinces' 0.7 percent tax-to-GDP ratio, the national tax-to-GDP ratio will be 12.3 percent by the end of the current fiscal year," he added. As regards relief measures for the salaried persons, the finance minister announced that the government has proposed 10% increase in the employees (BPS 1-22) of the federal government.

Likewise, he said 7% increase in the pensions of the retired employees has also been proposed. For handicapped employees, the special conveyance allowance is being increased from Rs 4000 to Rs 6000. In order to reduce disparities among the employees of various departments, provision of 30% disparity reduction allowance has also been proposed for the eligible employees. Likewise, special relief allowance has also been proposed for the officers/soldiers and JCOs of the armed forces.