

**Jaffar express derails**  
**F.P. Report**  
WAH CANTT: A Quetta-bound passenger train on Thursday derailed near Margalla tunnel in Taxila, causing the suspension of railway traffic between Rawalpindi- Peshawar sections. No casualties were reported in the accident. The 40 down Quetta-bound Jaffar express coming from Peshawar train derailed due to “technical” reasons, and the train traffic would be restored “soon.”

**Earthquake jolts Quetta**  
**F.P. Report**  
QUETTA: Residents of Quetta experienced a jolt on Thursday as an earthquake of 2.8 magnitude struck the area. The PMD in Islamabad reported that the quake originated within Quetta, at a depth of 23 kilometers. The epicenter was pinpointed 75 kilometers northeast of the city. Thankfully, due to the low magnitude, initial reports indicate minimal damage and no casualties.

# The Frontier Post

## Over 200 killed as Air India plane crashes

AHMEDABAD (Reuters): More than 200 people were killed when an Air India plane bound for London with 242 people on board crashed minutes after taking off from the western city of Ahmedabad on Thursday, authorities said, in the world's worst aviation disaster in a decade.

The plane came down in a residential area, crashing on to a medical college hostel outside the airport during lunch hour. It was headed for Gatwick Airport, south of the British capital. City police chief G.S. Malik told Reuters that 204 bodies had been recovered from the crash site. There were no reports of survivors being found, and the Indian Express newspaper said all 242 on board had perished, citing police.

Malik said the bodies recovered could include both passengers and people killed on the ground. Relatives had been asked to give DNA samples to identify the dead, state health secretary Dhananjay Dwivedi said. "The building on which it has crashed is a doctors' hostel... we have cleared almost 70% to 80% of the area and will clear the rest soon," a senior police officer told reporters.

Parts of the plane's body were scattered around the building into which it crashed, photographs and videos from the area showed. The tail of the plane was stuck on top of the building. India's CNN News-18 TV channels said the plane crashed on top of

the dining area of state-run B.J. Medical College hostel, killing many medical students as well. The passengers included 217 adults, 11 children and two infants a source told Reuters. Of them, 169 were Indian nationals, 53 were Britons, seven Portuguese, and one Canadian, Air India said.

Aviation tracking site Flightradar24 said the plane was a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, one of the most modern passenger aircraft in service. It was the first crash for the Dreamliner, which began flying commercially in 2011, according to the Aviation Safety Network database. The plane that crashed on Thursday flew for the first time in 2013 and was delivered to Air India in January 2014, Flightradar24 said.

"At this moment, we are ascertaining the details and will share further updates," Air India said on X. "The injured are being taken to the nearest hospitals." The crash occurred just after the plane took off, television channels reported. One channel showed the plane taking off over a residential area and then disappearing from the screen before a huge jet of fire can be seen rising into the sky from beyond the houses.

Visuals also showed debris on fire, with thick black smoke rising up into the sky near the airport. They also showed people being moved in stretchers and being taken away in ambulances. "My sister-in-law was

going to London. Within an hour, I got news that the plane had crashed," Poonam Patel, a relative of one of the passengers, told news agency ANI at the government hospital in Ahmedabad.

Ramila, the mother of a student at the medical college, told ANI her son had gone to the hostel for his lunch break when the plane crashed. "My son is safe, and I have spoken to him. He jumped from the second floor, so he suffered some injuries," she said. According to air traffic control at Ahmedabad Airport, the aircraft departed at 1.39 p.m. (0809 GMT) from runway 23. It gave a "Mayday" call, signalling an emergency, but thereafter there was no response from the aircraft.

Flightradar24 also said that it received the last signal from the aircraft seconds after it took off. Boeing said it was aware of initial reports and was working to gather more information. Boeing shares fell 6.8% to \$199.13 in pre-market trade. Britain was working with Indian authorities to urgently establish the facts around the crash and to provide support to those involved, the country's foreign office said in a statement posted on its website.

"The tragedy in Ahmedabad has stunned and saddened us," Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi posted on X. "It is heartbreaking beyond words." India's President Droupadi



Murmu said she was "deeply distressed to learn about the tragic plane crash". "It is a heart-rending disaster. My thoughts and prayers are with the affected people. The nation stands with them in this hour of indescribable grief," she said on X.

The Indian aviation minister's office said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had directed it to ensure all support was extended to the rescue efforts immediately. Ahmedabad is the main city in Modi's home state of Gujarat. Ahmedabad Airport said it had suspended all flight operations with immediate effect. The airport is

operated by India's Adani Group conglomerate.

"We are shocked and deeply saddened by the tragedy of Air India Flight 171," Gautam Adani, founder and chairman of the group, posted on X. "Our hearts go out to the families who have suffered an unimaginable loss. We are working closely with all authorities and extending full support to the families on the ground," he said.

The scenes emerging of a London-bound plane carrying many British nationals crashing in the Indian city of Ahmedabad are devastating. The

last fatal plane crash in India was in 2020 and involved Air India Express, the airline's low-cost arm. The airline's Boeing-737 overshot a "table-top" runway at Kozhikode International Airport in southern India. The plane skidded off the runway, plunging into a valley and crashing nose-first into the ground. Twenty-one people were killed in that crash.

The formerly state-owned Air India was taken over by Indian conglomerate Tata Group in 2022, and merged with Vistara - a joint venture between the group and Singapore Airlines - in 2024. Tata said an emergency centre had been activated and a support team set up for families seeking information. The fatal crash tarnishes the Dreamliner jet's safety record and could muddy Boeing's efforts to rebuild trust related to safety and ramp up production under new Chief Executive Officer Kelly Orthberg.

Shares of Spirit AeroSystems, a key supplier, and GE Aerospace, which makes engines for the jet, also fell about 4pc each. Boeing's shares were down about 8pc at \$196.75 in premarket trading. "It's a knee-jerk reaction [to the incident] and there's revived fears of the problems that plagued Boeing aircraft and Boeing itself in recent years," said Chris Beauchamp, analyst at IG Group.

## PM, UAE President discuss bilateral, regional issues

ABU DHABI (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Thursday here met with President of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan during his official visit and discussed matters of bilateral and regional interest.

The meeting underscored the deep-rooted, brotherly relations between Pakistan and the UAE, built on mutual trust, shared values, and a history of close cooperation. The two leaders discussed a wide range of bilateral, regional, and global issues of mutual interest, and reaffirmed their commitment to further enhancing collaboration in key areas.

The Prime Minister conveyed his sincere gratitude to the leadership of the UAE for its constructive role in helping to defuse tensions between Pakistan and India. He appreciated the UAE's positive role in promoting peace, dialogue and stability in the region. Both sides expressed satisfaction over the positive trajectory of bilateral ties and ongoing engagements at all levels. The leaders agreed to maintain close coordination and continue working together to advance shared goals of regional peace and prosperity.

The Prime Minister reiterated his earlier invitation to the President of UAE to visit Pakistan. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Federal Minister for Interior Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, SAPM Syed Tariq Fatemi were also present in the meeting.

Later in a post on X, the prime minister said, "Delighted to meet my dear brother, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, during my official visit to the UAE. I thanked him for the UAE's vital role in easing recent tensions between Pakistan and India. "We reaffirmed our shared commitment to peace, stability, and prosperity in the region. Our deep-rooted ties built on trust and brotherhood, continue to grow



stronger, especially in trade and investment. I look forward to welcoming His Highness to Pakistan soon," he added.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said the country's resolute commitment amid accelerating journey toward a knowledge economy to digital transformation, global tech engagement and youth empowerment remains unwavering.

The prime minister was addressing the Pakistan's participation at London Tech Week 2025, held with all global stakeholders on board. The prime minister congratulated all stakeholders on Pakistan's impactful presence at London Tech Week 2025.

"This positions Pakistan as a forward-looking country that is harnessing technology, innovation and youth potential to engage with the world. Our presence at such an important platform reflects our growing digital footprint and global ambition," he said. PM Shehbaz commended the Ministry of IT, PSEB, TDAP, and its tech entrepreneurs for presenting Pakistan with vision and purpose. He commented, "Pakistan's tech future is bright! In Sha Allah".

Moreover, on the occasion of World Day Against Child Labour, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reiterated Pakistan's solidarity with global efforts to eliminate child labour, emphasizing the nation's commitment to creating a safer and more prosperous future for children.

The Prime Minister in his message highlighted that the observance of this day is a poignant reminder of the ongoing journey toward the eradication of child labour worldwide. "Pakistan stands united with the international community in this struggle," he stated, underscoring the importance of international cooperation in tackling this critical issue.

Sharif expressed a strong personal and governmental pledge to combat all forms of child labour within the nation. He called for renewed efforts to ensure that children grow up in environments that nurture their potential rather than exploiting their vulnerabilities.

As countries around the globe mark this significant day, Pakistan's leadership is pushing for transformative policies and robust interventions aimed at protecting the rights and welfare of the youngest members of society. The commitment resonates with global objectives to enhance child safety and economic prosperity, reflecting a universal endeavor to secure a better tomorrow for all children.

**PM condoles over deaths in Air India crash:** Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said he was saddened by the tragic crash of Air India flight near Ahmedabad. In a post on X, he said, "We extend our condolences to the families of the victims grieving this immense loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those affected by this heartbreaking tragedy."

## UN N-watchdog board censures Iran

VIENNA (AP): The UN nuclear watchdog's board of governors on Thursday formally found that Iran isn't complying with its nuclear obligations for the first time in 20 years, a move that could lead to further tensions and set in motion an effort to restore United Nations sanctions on Tehran later this year.

Iran reacted immediately, saying it will establish a new enrichment facility "in a secure location" and that "other measures are also being planned." "The Islamic Republic of Iran has no choice but to respond to this political resolution," the Iranian Foreign Ministry and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran said in a joint statement.

US President Donald Trump previously warned that Israel or America could carry out airstrikes targeting Iranian nuclear facilities if negotiations failed — and some American personnel and their families have begun leaving the region over the tensions, which come ahead of a new round of Iran-US talks Sunday in Oman. In Israel, the US Embassy ordered American government employees and their families to remain in the Tel Aviv area over security concerns. Nineteen countries on the International Atomic Energy Agency's board, which represents the agency's member nations, voted for the resolution, according to diplomats who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe the outcome of the closed-doors vote.

In the draft resolution seen by The Associated Press, the board of governors renews a call on Iran to provide answers "without delay" in a long-running investigation into uranium traces found at several locations that Tehran has failed to declare as nuclear sites. Western officials suspect that the uranium traces could provide further evidence that Iran had a secret nuclear weapons program until 2003.

The resolution was put forward by France, the United Kingdom, Germany and the United States. Speaking to Iranian state television after the vote, the spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran said that his agency immediately informed the IAEA of "specific and effective" actions Tehran would take. "One is the launch of a third secure site" for enrichment, spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi said. He did not elaborate on the location, but the organization's chief Mohammad Eslami later described the site as "already built, prepared, and located in a secure and invulnerable place."

Iran has two underground sites at Fordo and Natanz and has been building tunnels in the mountains near Natanz since suspected Israeli sabotage attacks targeted that facility. The other step would be replacing old centrifuges for advanced ones at Fordo. "The implication of this is that our production of enriched materials will significantly

cantly increase," Kamalvandi said.

According to the draft resolution, "Iran's many failures to uphold its obligations since 2019 to provide the Agency with full and timely cooperation regarding undeclared nuclear material and activities at multiple undeclared locations in Iran ... constitutes non-compliance with its obligations under its Safeguards Agreement." Under those obligations, which are part of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Iran is legally bound to declare all nuclear material and activities and allow IAEA inspectors to verify that none of it is being diverted from peaceful uses.

The draft resolution also finds that the IAEA's "inability ... to provide assurance that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively peaceful gives rise to questions that are within the competence of the United Nations Security Council, as the organ bearing the main responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security." The draft resolution made a direct reference to the US-Iran talks, stressing its "support for a diplomatic solution to the problems posed by the Iranian nuclear program, including the talks between the United States and Iran, leading to an agreement that addresses all international concerns related to Iran's nuclear activities, encouraging all parties to constructively engage in diplomacy."

## Judicial system paralyzed by 26th Amend, says Saif

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, has stated that the disappearance of judges is clear proof that all cases filed against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan are false and baseless. He said that if there were any substance to these cases, judicial proceedings would have been carried out at all costs. Hearings would not have been postponed, and neither judges nor lawyers would have gone missing.

He remarked that the repeated disappearance of judges and lawyers was a calculated move to prolong these fabricated cases. Barrister Dr. Saif further stated that the 26th Constitutional Amendment has paralyzed the country's judicial system. "When courts fail to deliver justice, it becomes the constitutional and democratic right of the people to protest peacefully," he added.

He said that the illegitimate government has used its final tactic the use of force to suppress public voices. However, the people are no longer afraid and are fully prepared to once again take to the streets. The government has left the people with no option but to protest. The public stands firmly with their beloved leader, Imran Khan, and is always ready to take to the streets for him.

Barrister Dr. Saif asserted that this time, the protest movement would be beyond the control of the so-called government. The people will come out in full force and give a resolute response to every fascist action of the regime. He further added that the repeated adjournments in the hearings of Imran Khan's cases were tantamount to the burial of justice. Since the passage of the 26th Constitutional Amendment, the courts are no longer in a position to deliver justice. If the most popular leader in the country, Imran Khan, cannot receive justice, how can the common man expect it?

He continued by saying that the illegitimate government has broken all records of fascism against Imran Khan, yet they have failed to remove him from the hearts of the people. In fact, these oppressive tactics have only increased his popularity. Barrister Dr. Saif concluded by saying that the people now have no option left but to protest for the release of their beloved leader. Taking to the streets has become inevitable.

## Trump once again offers to be arbitrator in Kashmir issue

WASHINGTON: United States President Donald Trump on Thursday once again offered to arbitrate the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India, echoing comments made by the US State Department a day prior.

Trump had offered to work on the Kashmir issue after he brokered a ceasefire between the two nuclear powers following their most intense military confrontation in decades. In a message lauding the countries' leaders for achieving peace, he remarked, "I will work with both of you to see if, after a 'thousand years', a solution can be arrived at concerning Kashmir."

Responding to a question on the steps the US plans to take in the wake of Trump's offer, State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce noted, "[Trump] has been the only one to bring certain people to the table to have conversations that nobody thought was possible," remaining hopeful that the Kashmir issue can also get resolved.

Fielding questions after a bill-signing ceremony on Thursday, the US president said that he "stopped a war" between Pakistan and India. "Eventually they were gonna go nuclear ... and I stopped it. I called each leader ... and I spoke to them and talked about trade," Trump said. "I said, 'You're not trading with us if you go to war ... if you're going to start throwing nuclear weapons around."

"They were both unbelievable. They

understood it exactly, they stopped. I stopped that war with phone calls and trade," Trump added. He further said that India is negotiating a trade deal in Washington, and a Pakistani delegation would arrive "I think next week".

In response to another question, Trump said, "We're going to get them together. I told them, India and Pakistan ... they have a longtime rivalry over Kashmir. I told them 'I can solve anything.' 'I will be your arbitrator. I will be your arbitrator. I can solve anything.'" Pakistan and India have been at odds since the Pahalgam attack in occupied Kashmir, which saw the killing of 26 tourists. New Delhi, without any evidence, blamed Islamabad for the attack, while the latter strongly denied the claims and offered a neutral probe. The two nations then fought a four-day conflict before the US brokered a ceasefire on May 10.

Earlier this month, Pakistan launched a broad-based engagement campaign in the United States to present its perspective on the recent conflict with India, and counter New Delhi's growing lobbying presence there. As part of its global outreach, the team visited London and will also visit Brussels. The delegation comprises former foreign ministers Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, Hina Rabbani Khar and Khurram Dastgir; Senators Sherry Rehman, Musadik Malik, Faisal Subzwari and Bushra Anjum Butt; along with senior envoys Jalil Abbas Jilani and Teh-mina Janjua. — Agencies

## Hamas claims it killed 12 Israeli-backed fighters

CAIRO (AP): A unit of Gaza's Hamas-run police force said it killed 12 members of an Israeli-backed militia after detaining them early Thursday. Hours earlier, an Israel-supported aid group said Hamas attacked a bus carrying its Palestinian workers, killing at least five of them.

The militia, led by Yasser Abu Shabab, said its fighters had attacked Hamas and killed five militants but made no mention of its own casualties. It also accused Hamas of detaining and killing aid workers. It was not immediately possible to verify the competing claims or confirm the identities of those killed. The Israeli military circulated the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's statement on its social media accounts but declined to provide its own account of what happened.

The aid group's operations in Gaza have already been marred by controversy and violence since they began last month, with scores of people killed in near-daily shootings as crowds headed toward the food distribution sites inside Israeli military zones. Witnesses have blamed the Israeli military, which has acknowledged firing only warning shots near people it said approached its forces in a suspicious manner. Earlier this week, witnesses also said Abu Shabab militants had opened fire on people en route to a Gaza aid hub, killing and wounding many.

The United Nations and major aid groups have rejected the Israeli and US-backed initiative, accusing them of militarizing humanitarian aid at a time when experts say Gaza is at risk of famine because of Israel's blockade and renewed military campaign. Last week, Israel acknowledged it is supporting armed groups of Palestinians in what it says is a move to counter Hamas. Abu Shabab's militia, which calls itself the Popular Forces, says it is guarding the food distribution points set up by the Israeli- and US-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation in southern Gaza. Aid workers say it has a long history of looting UN trucks. GHF has denied working with the Abu Shabab group.

In a statement released early Thursday, the foundation said Hamas had attacked a bus carrying more than two dozen "local Palestinians working side-by-side with the US GHF team to deliver critical aid" near the southern city of Khan Younis. "We condemn this heinous and deliberate attack in the strongest possible terms," it said. "These were aid workers. Humanitarians. Fathers, brothers, sons, and friends, who were risking their lives everyday to help others."

It did not identify the men or say whether they were armed at the time. Rev. Johnnie Moore, a Christian evangelical adviser to US President Donald Trump who was recently appointed head of GHF, called the killings "absolute evil" and lashed out at the UN and Western countries over what he said was their failure to condemn them. "The principle of impartiality does not mean neutrality. There is good and evil in this world. What we are doing is good and what Hamas did to these Gazans is absolute evil," he wrote on X.

Israel and the United States say the new system is needed to prevent Hamas from siphoning off aid from the long-standing UN-run system, which is capable of delivering food, fuel and other humanitarian aid to all parts of Gaza. UN officials deny there has been any systematic diversion of aid by Hamas, but say they have struggled to deliver it because of Israeli restrictions and the breakdown of law and order in Gaza. UN officials say the new system is unable to meet mounting needs, and that it allows Israel to use aid as a weapon by controlling who has access to it and by essentially forcing people to relocate to the aid sites, most of which are in the southern-most city of Rafah, now a mostly uninhabited military zone. Some fear this could be part of an Israeli plan to coerce Palestinians into leaving Gaza.

Hamas also rejected the new system and threatened to kill any Palestinians who cooperate with the Israeli military. The killings early Wednesday were carried out by the Hamas-run police's Sahm unit, which Hamas says it established to combat looting. The unit released video footage showing several dead men lying in the street, saying they were Abu Shabab fighters who had been detained and killed for collaborating with Israel. It was not possible to verify the images or the claims around them.





KARACHI: A large number of lady health workers holding a protest in favour of their demands outside Sindh Assembly.

## PM&DC announces new syllabus for MDCAT 2025

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) has officially uploaded the new syllabus for the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) 2025 on its official website. This new syllabus will serve as the core framework for the upcoming MDCAT examination. The MDCAT is likely to be held on the last Sunday of September or 1st Sunday of October 2025. However, the final date will be announced in a couple of days in consultation with the admitting universities and with the approval of the council.

As the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council is the national statutory body responsible for regulating the standards of medical and dental education throughout the country, PMDC oversees curriculum development, licensing, and accreditation of medical institutions.

The new syllabus encompasses five key subjects i.e., Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English, and Logical Reasoning, with a focus on conceptual understanding and critical thinking. The PM&DC encourages all aspiring medical and dental students to begin their preparation following the newly issued curriculum syllabus.

The structure, weightage, and difficulty levels for the MDCAT 2025 exam have also been officially defined. The exam will consist of a total of 180 multiple-choice questions (MCQs), to be completed within a three-hour duration. The difficulty distribution of the questions will be as follows: 15% easy, 70% moderate, and 15% difficult. The format of the exam will be entirely MCQ-based, and no negative marking will be applied. To qualify for admission, candidates must achieve a minimum of 55% marks for admission in medical colleges and 50% marks for admission in dental colleges. These standards have been lined up to ensure a fair and comprehensive evaluation of each candidate's knowledge and readiness for medical or dental education.

PM&DC President Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj in his statement, apprised that the new syllabus for MDCAT 2025 is a step toward promoting transparency, fairness, and standardization in medical and dental admissions. He added that, few gaps were pointed out in the previous syllabus, which have been rectified and the PM&DC has successfully addressed the issue and introduced the revised syllabus within just six months. He added that this updated cur-

riculum has been compiled to balance foundational knowledge with analytical and reasoning skills, serving the evolving academic needs of our next generation of healthcare professionals

Dr. Taj reaffirmed that the updated syllabus lays the foundation for a merit-based, unified national assessment. He added that PM&DC is also developing a question bank with expert input.

He acknowledged past challenges and emphasized that the Council has worked diligently to resolve these issues and ensure a fair testing system. The new syllabus was developed through extensive consultations with education experts, universities, and provincial authorities, aligning it with national academic standards and international best practices. It places strong emphasis on conceptual understanding and analytical skills across core science disciplines. The MDCAT (Medical and Dental College Admission Test) Committee, along with its dedicated working groups, has successfully finalized a unified national curriculum for the MDCAT through a transparent, inclusive, and collaborative process.

A total of nine meetings were held by the Committee and its working groups to develop and refine the curriculum. The first draft was issued in March, after which comprehensive feedback was sought from all stakeholders, including Provincial Education and Health Departments, the regions of AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan, the Inter Board Committee of Chairmen (IBCC), Federal and Regional Boards, Admitting Universities across the country and the public at large. President PM&DC thanked all stake holders for their valuable feedback on the new document. All suggestions and inputs were thoroughly reviewed and carefully incorporated into the curriculum syllabus. After the approval from the National Medical and Dental Academic Board and the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) the final draft has been uploaded on the PM&DC website. This collaborative effort ensured that all necessary measures have been taken to implement a standardized national curriculum for MDCAT to maintain consistency, transparency, and fairness in medical and dental college admissions nationwide. He emphasised that the candidates are advised to regularly visit the PMDC website for any further updates regarding the exam schedule, registration, and other important announcements.

## Technical & Vocational Centre solarized

F.P. Report

JEHANGIRA: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Industries, Abdul Karim Tordher, on Thursday, inaugurated a 5KV solar energy system at the Government Technical and Vocational Center, Jehangira.

The project was executed through a collaborative initiative involving UNISA, Master Foods Shedu and the institute's management committee (IMC) of the center. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Mr. Tordher lauded the contribution of local industries UNISA and Master Foods for their generous support in installing a solar energy system at the technical institute. He praised their commitment to community development and sustainable energy.

He further stated that efforts would be made to coordinate with relevant government departments to extend solarization at the center. "Our goal is to ensure a well-equipped and enabling learning environment for our youth, empowering them with practical skills to contribute to the prosperity and economic stability of both themselves and the province," he said.

Commenting on the upcoming provincial budget, Mr. Tordher remarked that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa budget will be people-centric and is expected to include significant relief measures for the industrial sector to foster growth and investment.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Engineer Khizar Hayat, Principal of the Technical and Vocational College; the General Manager of Master Foods; Chairman of the Institute Management Committee Mr. Hasbanullah; IMC member Mr. Kachkol Khattak; faculty members, and other staff who appreciated the efforts of the Special Assistant and the collaborating industries.

## SACM inspects operation to control fire in forests

F.P. Report

MALAKAND: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Forests, Environment, Wildlife, and Climate Change, Pir Musavir Khan visited Malakand to review the ongoing operation to control the fire that broke out in private forests on the Kot Hazarna mountain range.

During the visit, he met with officials and local community members participating in the firefighting operation and appreciated their dedication and efforts in protecting the forests. On this occasion, Chief Conservator of Forests Malakand Forest Region III, Asghar Khan, Conservator Abid Mumtaz, and officials from the Forest Department, Rescue 1122, and district administration were also present. Officials briefed the Special Assistant on the progress of the operation, highlighting the joint efforts of the Forest Department, Rescue 1122, Levies, district administration, and local residents.

In this regard, the residents of the villages, Nek Banda Allah Bakhsh Maken, Abdul Fattah Bhatti, Mumtaz Ali Varkh and other media representatives said that we have repeatedly demanded the officers and elected representatives of Qambar Shahdadkot district to provide a boundary wall for the cemetery, but no officer or elected representative seems serious. They demanded from the C.M Sindh, Deputy Commissioner Qambar Shahdadkot, MPA Sindh Assembly Nawab Sardar Khan Chandio and Chairman Union Council Khairpur Joso to provide a boundary wall for the ancient mass cemetery of the said villages so that the graves of the villagers' loved ones could be protected from desecration.

The cemetery premises is also underway. Due to the recent heavy rains, the graves of most of the relatives and relatives buried in the cemetery have been arranged, while Meanwhile, half of the cemetery has become empty due to the villagers building a passage through the cemetery. The residents of the said villages expressed concern and said that they will not be able to leave the graves of their loved ones in the cemetery forever.

Meanwhile, the Sindh High Court Circuit Bench Sukkur has issued an order to the high officials of all districts to provide boundary walls for the cemeteries, in which they have also been obliged to provide boundary walls for the cemeteries. Unfortunately, non-compliance with such orders also proves to be a

regrettable act.

## Qambar District historic cemetery falling

F.P. Report

SHAHDADKOT: The ancient cemetery of the residents of Ali Muhammad Varkh, Deddar and Ghoghari villages of Qambar Shahdadkot district in the northern region of Sindh is falling apart due to the district administration's negligence and lack of a boundary wall, the graves, which are over 85 years old, are disappearing because they have become a haven for animals, donkeys and stray dogs, due to the lack of a boundary wall, most of the people of respondents also leave their donkeys and cattle to graze in the cemetery.

On the other hand, a road has been built through the cemetery to reduce the distance while going to the fields, and the process of making mud bricks from

oners. Police had arrested three more prisoners who had escaped from Malir District Jail eight days ago, bringing the total number of prisoners taken into custody so far to 152.

The jail officials said that raids are being conducted for the arrest of 73 prisoners, who are still at large. A total of 225 prisoners had escaped from the jail, which prompted the authorities to launch a major search operation dur-

ing which one prisoner was killed.

The incident also led to the removal of top prison officials, and DIG Jail Sukkur Aslam Malik was appointed as DIG Malir Jail instead. More than 20 constables and head constables were also suspended over gross negligence. According to a notification issued by the chief secretary Sindh, Additional IG Malir will probe the incident.

## 157 Malir Jail prisoners in police custody after four more rearrested

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Police in Karachi have apprehended four more prisoners who had escaped from Malir District Jail, also known as Bacha Jail, over a week ago, bringing the total number of prisoners rearrested so far to 157, while the manhunt for 68 prisoners is underway.

The jail officials have said that raids are being conducted on the homes of these pris-

# People's labor bureau to hold countrywide protest

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The People's Labor Bureau (PLB) has declared the Federal Budget 2025-26 oppressive and cruel, announcing a countrywide protest against it in collaboration with trade unions across Pakistan. This was stated by Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmed, Incharge of the People's Labor Bureau Pakistan, while addressing a crowded post-budget press conference at the Central Secretariat of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmed said this is a budget by the rich, for the rich. The government has increased the budget for each of its institutions manifold but claims to have no money for poor laborers, industrial workers, farmers, elderly pensioners, and salaried employees. The salaries of ministers have been increased by 215.28 percent, and their allowances have also been increased. The budget of the Prime Minister's Office has been increased by over 124 million rupees. The Supreme Court's budget has been increased by nearly 2 billion 10 crore rupees. Similarly, the National Assembly's budget has also been increased by 3 billion 55 crore 33 lakh rupees. But when it comes to low-ranking government employees, ministers mock them. A mere 10 percent and 7 percent increase in salaries and pensions is shameful. There has been absolutely no increase in EOBI pension and the minimum wage for workers. The height of cruelty and oppression is that the family pension after a pensioner's death has been limited to only ten years. Should the widow of the deceased pensioner beg for alms to survive after ten years?

Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmed said the government did not consult the Pakistan People's Party during budget preparation, nor were the proposals of the People's Labor Bureau included. Due to two wrong decisions of the government, the circular debt for electricity and gas has exceeded 6400 billion rupees. What kind of injustice is it that people have to pay for electricity without even using it? Electricity consumers are crying, workers are crying, teachers and doctors are crying, farmers are crying, even the provinces are crying. Agriculture is being deliberately

destroyed so that the unemployed from villages come to the cities, providing cheap labor for the capitalist class's industries.

He said that in Pakistan's history, the highest salary increases were given by the Pakistan People's Party. A historic increase of 135 percent was made during the tenure from 2008 to 2013. Even in the 2011 budget, the previous ad hoc relief was merged into the basic salary. He said Chairman Bilawal Bhutto is fighting Pakistan's case on the international front, and we are fighting the case of the working class here. We will bring this situation to the notice of the Chairman upon his return to the country.

Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmed said we are contacting trade unions and labor organizations across the country and will hold a nationwide protest against the budget together. He demanded that the budget proposals be reviewed, salaries and pensions be increased by at least fifty percent, and all ad hoc allowances be merged into the basic salary. EOBI pensioners receive only ten thousand rupees monthly pension; this should be increased by one hundred percent. All privatization, outsourcing, and the process of closing down important national institutions like Utility Stores, PASC, NFC, Pak PWD, etc., be immediately stopped. All terminated employees, including the 5000 employees of Utility Stores, should be immediately reinstated, and all contract and daily wage employees be regularized. Industrial workers and laborers should be given flats with ownership rights for housing. All types of workers and peasant laborers should be registered in EOBI and Workers Welfare Fund, as the Sindh government has already done.

Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmed said we will present the concerns and objections of the salaried and working class regarding the federal budget to the top leadership of the People's Party and will try to ensure that the Finance Bill presented by the government is not passed by the parliament in its current form. He was accompanied by former MNA Gulham Murtaza Satti, President of People's Labor Bureau Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shah Zulqarnain, General Secretary Sindh Province Fayyaz Ali Shah,

Deputy President Central Punjab Muhammad Ijaz, Provincial Secretary Information Sajjad Hussain Sajid, Central President People's Unity of PIA Hidayatullah Khan, Secretary General People's Labor Federation Pakistan Tariq Chaudhry, President People's Labor Union Sui Southern Gas Ijaz Baloch, Rizwan Ahmad Malah and Asghar Ali Baloch, Patron-in-Chief Municipal Labor Union Raja Abdul Majeed, former President HBFCL Workmen Union Raja Parvez Akhtar, General Secretary OGDC Labour Union Chaudhry Ansar Warraich, President Pak PWD Alliance Union Syed Zeeshan Shah, former General Secretary Murree Brewery Workers Union Waseem Hussain Shah, Abbas Ali Bangash of United Staff Organization Radio Pakistan, Chairman EPCA Federal Syed Ghulfaraz Kazmi, along with leaders of numerous other trade unions.

The People's Labor Bureau also presented its 11-point Charter of Demands for the federal and provincial budgets: 50 percent increase in salaries, as done by the PPP government in 2010, 50 percent increase in pensions, as done by the PPP government in 2010, Merge all ad hoc allowances into the basic salary, 100 percent increase in EOBI pension and provision of medical treatment facilities to retired employees, Increase house rent and conveyance allowances according to market rates, Increase death grant from 8 lakh to 10 lakh rupees and marriage grant from 4 lakh to 5 lakh rupees, as done by the PPP government during its tenure. Immediately stop all privatization, outsourcing, and the process of closing down important national institutions like Utility Stores, PASC, NFC, Pak PWD, etc. Immediately reinstate all terminated employees, including the 5000 employees of Utility Stores. Regularize all contract and daily wage employees, as done by the PPP government during its tenure from 2008 to 2013, Provide industrial workers and laborers with flats on an ownership basis for housing, which were approved by the PPP government but have not been implemented yet and Register all types of workers and peasant laborers in EOBI and Workers Welfare Fund, as the Sindh government has already done.

## Fair budget share for universities urged

F.P. Report

MUZAFFARABAD: A joint meeting of the Academic Staff Association and the Administrative Staff Association of the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) was held at the Chehla Campus Committee Room to discuss key issues related to higher education in the region.

The session was jointly presided over by Dr. Rehana Kausar, President of the Academic Staff Association, and Israr Saeed Qadri, President of the Administrative Staff Association, along with the elected office-bearers of

both bodies.

The meeting focused on a two-point agenda: the establishment of a dedicated Higher Education Department in Azad Jammu and Kashmir on the pattern of four provinces of Pakistan and the formal inclusion of public sector universities in the annual state budget. After thorough deliberation, the agenda was unanimously approved by all participants, who also offered constructive suggestions for the betterment of higher education institutions.

Following the meeting, representatives from both associations held an emer-

gency discussion with Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nadeem Haider Bukhari and Director Finance Prof. Dr. Muhammad Basharat. The delegation highlighted the pressing challenges faced by university faculty and staff, and shared their concerns regarding institutional development and resource allocation.

On the occasion, Dr. Rehana Kausar and Israr Saeed Qadri expressed hope that all university stakeholders will stand united with their representative forums in the collective struggle for academic progress and the resolution of staff grievances.

## Saudi official visits Dept of Libraries

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Renowned Library Professional Ikram-ul-Haq, Library Officer of King Saud Bin Abdulaziz University of Health Sciences, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, held an important meeting with Sheikh Muhammad Arshad, DG, Department of Libraries, Islamabad.

Ikram Ul Haq has been serving as a Librarian/Lecturer in KSA for the last ten years. Earlier, he served as Librarian in Armed Forces Post Graduate Medical Institute Rawalpindi for 20 years. He contributed more than 100 Research Papers for



Library Professionals and wrote four books.

In the meeting, discussions were held on running Pakistan's public libraries under a robotic system in accordance with modern requirements and other important professional matters. Comparing the public libraries of Gulf countries

and Pakistan, Library Officer Ikram-ul-Haq said that, unfortunately, public libraries are not given priority in Pakistan. To make the public aware, it is essential to build more libraries in public places and parks on modern standards on the basis of educational emergencies.

## Teacher accused of molesting orphaned student

F.P. Report

SUJAWAL: SSP Sujawal Dr. Khalique Pirzada has ordered a comprehensive investigation into the child molestation case reported from Daro town of Sujawal district on Wednesday evening. An eighth-grade student, reportedly an orphan, disclosed during a media interaction that his teacher, Siddique Memon, took him to his guesthouse locally called Otaque on the pretext of providing him with new clothes for Eid.

Instead of giving him clothes, the suspect allegedly locked him in a room

where he subjected the teenager to sexual molestation and also filmed the act. "He issued me death threats in case I disclosed the incident to my relatives," claimed the 13-year-old victim, adding that his parents had passed away a few years ago and he was being cared for by his paternal family.

The revelation of this deeply disturbing incident sent shockwaves across Sujawal district. Subsequently, the alleged suspect also approached local reporters to assert his innocence, claiming the allegations against him were merely a political maneuver

by his opponents.

ایسر ہیڈ کوارٹرز (پونٹ) پشاور

ٹھیکہ برائے صفائی



ایسر ہیڈ کوارٹرز (پونٹ) پشاور کو برائے سال 2025-26 متعلقہ رہائشی کمپ کی صفائی اور کوڑا کرکٹ اٹھانے کے لیے سر بمبر در خواست فوری مطلوب ہیں۔ غواہ شد حضرات در خواست مندرجہ ذیل پتے پر 30 جون 2025، بوقت 9:00 بجے تک کروائیں۔ فیڈرل راسی دور 10 بجے تک پکھولے جائیں گے۔ تنگیں بنیاد پر کوئی بھی درخواست مسترد کی جاسکتی ہے۔

آفیسر انچارج، پری سیل سکواڈرون

ایسر ہیڈ کوارٹرز (پونٹ) پشاور

فون: 091-9210777-6811

موبائل: 0323-9403312



113th International Labour Conference in Geneva

# Labour Minister represents Pakistan

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Labour, Mr. Fazal Shakoor Khan, represented Pakistan at the 113th International Labour Conference held in Geneva. Addressing the conference, the provincial minister expressed Pakistan's strong interest in the International Labour Organization's (ILO) efforts to provide technical assistance.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to inclusive development, employment generation, and the promotion of human rights across the Asia-Pacific region.

In his speech, the minister emphasized the growing importance of multilateral cooperation in today's interconnected world. He acknowledged the ILO's crucial role in safeguarding labour rights and promoting global peace.

He praised the ILO for its technical support, its leadership in setting labour standards, and its initiatives to promote peace in the region.

Mr. Fazal Shakoor Khan urged for increased institutional and donor support to enhance employment, rights, and economic development in the Asia-Pacific. He highlighted Pakistan's significant progress over the past year, including the ratification of three key international conventions related to forced labour and labour statistics.

He reiterated Pakistan's desire to continue technical cooperation with the ILO to promote reforms in labour institutions and ensure better protection of workers' rights. He also noted Pakistan's intention to ratify two additional ILO conventions by the end of this year.

The provincial minister commended the ILO Director-General's report on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories. Expressing deep concern over the destruction of infrastructure, restricted access to employment, and economic sanctions, he said that the current situation in Palestine have severely impacted the livelihoods of the Palestinian people.

He stressed that Palestinian workers and employers are facing conditions contrary to the core principles of the ILO Constitution.

Calling upon the international community, he urged immediate action to protect the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people. He reaffirmed Pakistan's full support for all regional and global initiatives aimed at ensuring social justice, decent work, and inclusive development.

In conclusion, Mr. Fazal Shakoor Khan expressed his gratitude to Japan for its initiatives in Asia, as well as to the ILO and Bangladesh for their continued cooperation.



PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar Riaz Khan Mehsud talking to a tribal jirga.

## Revolutionary step in organ transplant system

# Advisor health, Transplant Authority Administrator meet

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: A high-level meeting was held at the office of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Transplant Authority between advisor Health Ihtesham Ali and Administrator of the Transplant Authority, Professor Dr. Asif Malik. The meeting focused on strengthening, streamlining, and integrating the province's organ transplant system.

During the meeting, it was unanimously agreed that all organ transplant services would be consolidated under one roof and managed by a dedicated and autonomous Board of Governors (BoG). This initiative aims to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the transplantation process.

Special emphasis was also placed on promoting cadaveric donation — the donation of organs after death — across the province. The advisor health congratulated the Transplant Authority on successfully conducting the province's first-ever cadaveric organ donation and transplantation.

He particularly lauded the historic case in which the organs of a 14-year-old donor were successfully retrieved and transplanted, giving new life to several patients. Advisor health Ihtesham Ali termed this a proud milestone in the province's medical history and an inspiring example of compassion and humanity.

The advisor health further announced that the provincial government would formally recognize and honor the family of the young donor.

Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will personally meet the family to pay tribute to their selfless sacrifice, which became a beacon of hope for many patients.

He reiterated the government's full support for the Transplant Authority and committed to expanding the deceased organ donation program throughout the province to save more lives and foster a culture of donation.

**Health Advisor Ihtesham Ali Expresses Profound Grief Over Plane Crash in India**

Health Advisor Ihtesham Ali has expressed his deep sorrow and grief over the recent plane crash in India, which tragically claimed the lives of 242 individuals.

The Health Advisor described the unfortunate incident as heartbreaking, extending his heartfelt condolences to the affected families. "In this moment of distress and grief, we share equally in the sorrow of the affected families," he stated.

Ihtesham Ali further added that this period is nothing short of torment for the bereaved families, and he prayed that Allah Almighty eases their difficulties. On a humanitarian note, he supplicated to Allah Almighty to grant immense patience to the grieving families. The Health Advisor emphasized that this is a profound human tragedy that has left the entire populace in mourning.



PESHAWAR: Members of All Primary Teachers Association holding protest outside Peshawar Press Club. — INP photo

## Pakistan budget 2025–26

# Propagandists claim of 80pc allocation to defense sector as ‘unrealistic’

PESHAWAR (APP): There is a common perception in Pakistan that most of the national budget was spent on defense sector that was termed 'unrealistic' and incorrect by the security experts.

"This claim is frequently echoed on social media and in public discourse, suggesting that 70% to 80% of Pakistan's total national budget is allocated to the military which is totally false and unrealistic" said Brigadier (Retd) Mahmood Shah while talking to APP.

He said these claims were not only baseless but also seems to be part of a deliberate attempt to promote a negative narrative aimed at misleading the public and sowing distrust toward national institutions.

"The India's aggressive designs under the fascist Modi government, and evolving trends in modern warfare including cyberattacks, drone technology, artificial intelligence, and information warfare have made it imperative for Pakistan to upgrade its defense preparedness" he said.

In light of these realities, he said the federal government has proposed a 20% increase in the defense budget for the fiscal year 2025–26 which is positive and realistic approach.

The amount allocated for defense affairs and services in the federal budget has been raised to Rs. 2,557.95 billion, which is 20.2% higher than the original estimate of Rs. 2,128.78 billion for FY 2024–25, and 16.8% higher than the revised estimate of Rs. 2,189.91 billion.

According to budgetary allocations, Pakistan Army has been earmarked Rs. 1,058 billion, Pakistan Air Force is set to receive Rs. 520.74 billion compared to Rs. 451 billion in the previous fiscal year while Pakistan Navy will receive Rs. 265.97 billion, up from Rs. 230 billion.

"Despite this clear facts, certain negative groups including propagandists, anti-state elements, individuals engaged in misleading journalism, and proponents of foreign agendas attempt to portray the increased defense budget negatively.

These entities repeatedly claim, falsely, that 70% to 80% of the budget is spent solely on the military. The objective behind such negative statements is to create the impression that national resources are consumed exclusively by the defense sector, leading to the neglect of development projects and public welfare.

In reality, Pakistan's annual budget is divided among various sectors, including education, health, development programs, subsidies, debt servicing, and administrative functions. The defense budget, while significant, constitutes only a limited portion allocated to ensure national security.

He said considering current regional and global security dynamics, increasing the defense budget was a logical and necessary step for any responsible state.

Historically, he said Pakistan's defense budget has hovered between 2% to 2.5% of the GDP, covering all three branches of the Pakistan Armed Forces — the Army, Air Force, and Navy.

He said out of this landmark budget, 48% is allocated to the Army, 20% to the Air Force and 10% to the Navy.

The senior defense analyst said the remaining portion goes to inter-services organizations, the Defense Production Division, and the Pakistan Military Accounts Department.

Brigadier Mahmood Shah said that a large portion of the defense budget was spent on personnel salaries and related benefits, adding other key areas of expenditure include healthcare, training, operations, maintenance, procurement of equipment, and infrastructure.

Historical defense budget figures (in USD)

Year	Defense Budget (USD)
1990	\$2.65 billion
1993	\$3.10 billion
1996	\$3.37 billion
1999	\$4.24 billion
2002	\$4.86 billion
2005	\$5.86 billion
2008	\$6.80 billion
2011	\$7.67 billion

include, 1990: \$2.65 billion, 1993: \$3.10 billion, 1996: \$3.37 billion, 1999: \$4.24 billion, 2002: \$4.86 billion, 2005: \$5.86 billion, 2008: \$6.80 billion and 2011: \$7.67 billion respectively.

The selected annual budget allocations includes in 2014–15: Total budget Rs. 3,945 billion; defense Rs. 700 billion (17.75%), 2015–16: Rs. 4,300 billion; defense Rs. 780 billion (18.13%), 2016–17: Rs. 4,400 billion; defense Rs. 860 billion (19.55%), 2017–18: Rs. 5,003 billion; defense Rs. 920 billion (17.35%), 2018–19: Rs. 5,932 billion; defense Rs. 1,100 billion (18.54%), 2019–20: Rs. 7,022 billion; defense Rs. 1,150 billion (16.37%), 2020–21: Rs. 7,136 billion; defense Rs. 1,290 billion (18%), 2021–22: Rs. 8,487 billion; defense Rs. 1,373 billion (16.17%).

The salaries takes Rs. 481.59 billion, operating costs stands at Rs 327.13 billion, assets remains Rs. 391.49 billion while civil works stood Rs. 169.77 billion.

For 2022–23, Rs. 1,523 billion was allocated for defense while salaries take Rs. 567 billion, operations costs remained Rs. 368 billion, procurement & ammunition imports are Rs. 411 billion besides Rs.175 billion for civil works.

In 2023–24, the defense budget stood at Rs. 1,523 billion, about 2 to 2.5% of GDP.

For 2024–25, defense was stood at 11.23% of the total budget — Rs. 2,122 billion out of a total Rs. 18,877 trillion, meaning 87.77% went to non-military sectors.

For 2025–26, the federal government has proposed a total budget of Rs. 17,573 billion, with Rs. 2,550 billion allocated for defense. "The simple arithmetic shows that this amounts to only 14.51% of the total budget."

While referring to the percentage calculation, he said one percent of the total budget is equal to Rs. 175.73 billion while Rs. 2,550 billion ÷ Rs. 175.73 billion = 14.51%.

Dr Mehmood said this proves that only 14.51% of the total national budget is allocated to defense and not 70% or 80%, as falsely claimed by propagandists.

He said it was also important to understand that the Rs. 2,550 billion defense budget was not designated for just one branch, but for the combined expenses of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. This amount covers salaries, operational costs, training, procurement of defense equipment, and expenses related to ongoing counterterrorism efforts.

He said Pakistan is a nuclear power facing multiple internal and external security challenges. The region's geopolitical situation, relations with neighboring countries, border tensions, and the threat of terrorism necessitate a strong and active defense system.

He said under such circumstances, maintaining a reasonable and balanced defense budget was crucial for ensuring the country's sovereignty and security.

Undoubtedly, in any democratic society, he said it is the right of citizens to question government policies, budgets, and institutions for the sake of improvement.

However, such criticism should be rooted in truth and aimed at constructive reforms — not driven by falsehoods, deception, or propaganda.

Brigadier Mahmood said true patriotism demands that even when we disagree, we do so with honesty, responsibility, and a commitment to facts.

He said now it was the time to base national discussions on facts rather than rumors and propaganda. As patriotic citizens, instead of unfairly targeting the armed forces, we should recognize that even with limited resources, Pakistan's military continues to defend the country against both internal and external threats with remarkable efficiency.

## Khizer says CM's statement is no more than empty threat

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Arbab Khizer Hayat, the Additional Secretary of Information for Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has strongly reacted to the recent statement by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, calling it nothing more than empty threats aimed at appeasing party workers.

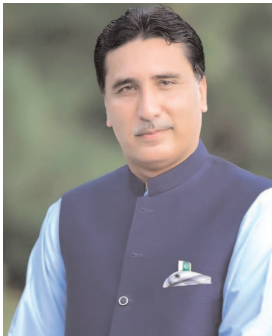
In his statement, Arbab Khizer Hayat said, "The Chief Minister's repeated threats of launching an attack on the federal government are nothing but hollow bravado meant to please his supporters. In reality, he doesn't have the courage to cross Attock, let alone march with a force. We still remember how he abandoned his workers in Blue Area and fled the scene. We suggest he participate in a marathon instead-he's likely to win that."

He added that Ali Amin Gandapur is issuing bizarre statements merely to save his own position, and advised Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers not to take him seriously.

Addressing the Chief Minister's remarks about facing bullets during a possible future march on Islamabad, Hayat said, "The PTI founder's dream of seeing the state shed the blood of its own citizens will never come true. The Chief Minister's comment about taking bullets to the chest and retaliating with bullets to the stomach of security forces is a direct challenge to the state. Such language is unbecoming of a province's chief executive."

Arbab Khizer Hayat also accused Ali Amin Gandapur of being involved in massive corruption in the province and misleading workers with false promises about the release of PTI's founding chairman. He asserted, "The day the PTI founder is released from jail will be the last day of Ali Amin's tenure as Chief Minister. That's why he will never want the founder to be freed."

The PML-N leader concluded by urging PTI supporters to see through Gandapur's tactics and recognize the political maneuvering at play.



## District admin launches crackdown on illegal billboards

PESHAWAR (APP): District administration, in line with the directives of the provincial government has launched a large-scale three-day crackdown on illegal signboards and billboards across the district.

During this campaign, joint teams of Peshawar Development Authority (PDA), Capital Metropolitan Government and concerned Town Municipal Administration (TMAs) under the supervision of District Administration Peshawar, removed 58 illegal signboards and billboards from different localities of Peshawar with the help of heavy machinery, operating at different times of the day and night.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar Sarmad Saleem Akram, who is personally supervising the operation has directed the concerned officers not to give in to any pressure or suggestion and to continue the campaign without interruption until the complete removal of illegal boards from the city.

He said that these illegal boards could collapse during heavy winds, rains and storms that pose a threat to precious human lives and property.

He emphasized that the protection of the lives of citizens is the top priority of the district administration and no leniency will be tolerated in achieving this goal.

The Deputy Commissioner Peshawar directed businessmen, shopkeepers, companies and advertising agencies to immediately remove their illegal signboards and billboards in compliance with the law, otherwise strict legal action will be taken against them.

The district administration will continue to take vigorous measures to protect the lives and property of the people and improve the city and no negligence or illegal activity will be tolerated.

## Federal budget or a manifesto for the elite: Wasi

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: In a scathing indictment of Pakistan's recently announced 2025-26 federal budget, Abdul Wasi, Central Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, accused the government of crafting an economic framework designed to serve the privileged few while deepening the burdens on salaried and struggling segments of society.

Released through the party's provincial headquarters, Wasi's statement labeled the budget "a reflection of class interests," alleging that it does not address the needs of the average citizen but rather functions as a blueprint for further empowering the country's economic elite.

"This budget is a document of disconnect, one that prioritizes the privileges of the powerful while ignoring the real pain of the public," he stated.

Among his chief concerns was the alleged neglect of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the newly merged tribal districts. Despite their significant contribution to national electricity generation, Wasi claimed these regions had been left in the dark, both figuratively and literally. "We give power to the country, yet we are kept in darkness," he remarked pointedly.

Particularly troubling, according to Wasi, is the imposition of an 18% sales tax on solar panels. He described the move as "a punishment for self-reliance," noting that it would severely impact millions who have turned to solar energy to escape soaring electricity bills.

He also expressed alarm at the Rs. 8207 billion earmarked for interest payments on national debt, calling it a "policy contradiction" and a "philosophical conflict," especially in light of the Supreme Court's ruling against the country's interest-based financial system.

Further, the government's goal of raising Rs. 87 billion through privatization of state-owned enterprises drew sharp criticism. Wasi warned of the "fire-sale of public assets," suggesting it would undermine transparency and public trust.

Rather than focusing on inflation relief or true economic recovery, Wasi argued that the budget seemed more concerned with "polishing statistics" to project an illusion of stability. "Once again, real challenges faced by the poor have been pushed to the background," he said.

Echoing concerns raised over previous budgets, he concluded, "These decisions were not made with the people, they were imposed on them."





## In brief

### Scholar defends PhD thesis F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Mr Said Alam Khan, PhD Scholar in Department of Physics, University of Malakand, on Thursday successfully defended his PhD thesis under the supervision of Dr Muhammad Javed and Dr Zahid Ali, Department of Physics, University of Malakand. The External Examiners were Dr Hazrat Ali, Department of Physics, Abbottabad University of Science and Technology, Abbottabad, and Dr Arbab Muhammad Toufiq, Department of Physics, Hazara University, Mansehra. The Chairperson, Department of Physics, UoM Prof Dr Iftikhar Ahmad and Faculty Members congratulated Dr Said Alam Khan and his research supervisors for PhD public defense. On this occasion, Prof. Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad, along with the faculty members, extended their heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Said Alam Khan and his supervisors on the successful culmination of the PhD defense.

### Bar bans police entry into court F.P. Report

LARKANA: District Bar Association Larkana issued a letter banning police from entering the court. The letter duly issued by the General Secretary of the District Bar Association clearly states that the law and order situation in Larkana district and city has deteriorated to the point that no positive role is seen from the police. On the other hand, the lawyers of the Larkana District Bar Association protested at the main gate of the court, raised slogans against the police's inaction, and demanded the removal of Deputy Inspector General of Police Nasir Aftab Pathan and the appointment of an honest regional police officer to improve the law and order situation.

### Tourists reached Orakzai in Eid F.P. Report

KALAYA: Tribal district Orakzai is really a beautiful and peaceful district of Kohat Division, where the natural and scenic beauty, culture and hospitality of every place is amazing. In the scorching heat of June, Orakzai's cool, silent, lush skirt seems to be the realization of a dream. The lush green mountains here, the quiet atmosphere and the cold air that touches the soul, no noise, no pollution, only peace in the embrace of nature touches the heart. With the efforts of Chairman DDAC and MPA former Senator Aurangzeb Khan Orakzai and the present district administration, ideal peace is established in the district, which is the basic condition for the promotion of tourism. Under his leadership, Orakzai is on the path to progress and prosperity. Statistics shows that there has been a record increase in the tourism in Orakzai district this year compared to last year. According to the details, 25994 tourists visited the Sambuk Top, 9566 Samana Top and 4800 Kalaya while thousands of tourists have come in Godaro, apart from this which is a record. Indeed, Orakzai is not only a safe district for tourism, but education and development are also being given a lot of attention here. All these steps show that Orakzai is now bringing a new and bright face in front of the world. Therefore, there is no exaggeration that the district is a confluence of Orakzai nature, peace and culture. The people here are not only the hospitable but open-hearted and welcome all the tourists by heart.



**KOHAT: Deputy Commissioner, Abdul Kalam presenting shield to Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme, Senator Rubina Khalid.**

## APC rejects conversion of govt hospitals into MTI

Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: The All Parties Conference in Swat has strongly condemned the government's decision to convert Saidu Teaching Hospital into a Medical Teaching Institution (MTI) and demanded to restore immediately DHQ hospital and announced plans for a robust protest.

The conference, held at Saidu Medical College, brought together Young doctors association Saidu group of teaching hospitals, health employees coordination council, leaders from various political parties, lawyers, business organizations, social groups, and civil society representatives.

Prominent leaders, including Irshad Ali Khan (PML-N), Shamsher Ali

Khan (PPP), Akhtar Ali Khan (Jamaat-e-Islami), and Malakand traders federation president Abdul Rahim Khan and others, participated in the conference.

They criticized the provincial government for failing to provide basic healthcare and education facilities, accusing it of attempting to privatize the Saidu Group of Teaching Hospitals through the MTI system.

Speakers at the conference expressed disappointment with the eight provincial assembly members and three national assembly members from Swat, stating that they have failed to provide relief to the people. The decision to run Saidu Hospital under the MTI system was seen as a clear indication of their incompe-

tence and lack of seriousness.

The participants demanded that the District Headquarters Hospital's current identity be maintained and upgraded to category (A) DHQ hospital, and that Saidu Medical College be granted university status to provide better opportunities for local students. If these demands are not met, a phased strike will be called across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, accompanied by street protests.

The conference concluded with a unanimous declaration, calling on the government to take immediate and serious steps to address the concerns. The participants vowed to spread the movement across the province if their demands are not met.

## Action body announces strike schedule

F.P. Report

PABB: The Action Committee of Pabbi has announced a protest movement against the unjust and oppressive load-shedding of electricity, starting on June 17. The committee has declared that the Grand Trunk (GT) Road will be blocked in phases, beginning from the Taru Jabba area.

The GT Road will be closed to all types of traffic from 9 am to 7 pm. The Action Committee includes various political parties and organizations, such as Pakistan Peoples Party, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Parliamentarians (Pervaz Khattak Group), Tanzeem Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat, Jamaat-e-Islami, Anjuman Tajiran Pabi Bazar, Anjuman Dakandaran Sheikh Shahbaz Baba Road.

Chairman of the Pabi Tehsil Council and President of the Action Committee, Muhammad Ilyas, General Secretary of the Action Committee and President of the Pabi Press Club.

The protest will start at Taru Jabba, where thousands of people from the surrounding villages will block the GT Road for a week. The GT Road will be blocked at Pabi Ziarat Stop, and a complete shutdown strike will be observed in Pabi Bazar and Sheikh Shahbaz Baba Bazar. A large public gathering will also be held, where the next phase of the protest movement will be announced.

## Educational seminar held

F.P. Report

WANA: A significant educational seminar was held in the Gazha Peza area of Wana, under the auspices of the Zhwandoon Educational Welfare Association (ZEW). The event aimed to highlight the importance of education and community-driven development in the region.

The seminar saw participation from a wide spectrum of society, including local elders, school principals, representatives of various welfare organizations, members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, traders, and civil society activists.

Saif Rehman, who attended as the chief guest, praised ZEW's consistent efforts over the past seven years. In his address, he commended the organization for carrying out numerous welfare and educational initiatives despite facing resource constraints. He urged the local population to extend full support to welfare organizations working for the betterment of South Waziristan, stating that such efforts not only bring societal progress but also spiritual rewards.

During the seminar, speakers highlighted ongoing challenges in the education sector and stressed the need for collaborative efforts between community leaders, educational institutions, and civil society to overcome them. Saif Rehman also paid tribute to Chairman Farmanullah Wazir and the entire ZEW team for their tireless work in uplifting the region through education and welfare initiatives.

## Siraj rejects federal budget, terms it 'IMF dictated budget'

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Former Jamaat-e-Islami chief Senator Siraj ul Haq has slammed the federal government's newly announced budget, calling it a "suicidal attack" on the poor and a document "prepared by the IMF."

Speaking to journalists in Timergara on Thursday, Siraj accused the government of surrendering economic sovereignty to international lenders. "Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has only signed the budget; it reflects the will of the IMF, not the needs of the people," he said.

The JI leader criticized the budget for granting relief to capitalists and feudal lords while burdening the poor. "It is a budget of economic slavery where the rich are given concessions and the poor are crushed," he stated. Siraj also expressed disappointment over the exclusion of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from mega development projects, claiming the province had been "completely ignored." He warned that

online businesses would suffer under the new fiscal policies, which he said threaten already struggling segments of the economy.

**Action against absentee staff:** Authorities at Samarbagh Hospital have initiated disciplinary action against staff members who have been receiving salaries without performing their duties.

Following directives from the Director General of Health, Medical Superintendent Dr. Adil issued final notices to absentee employees and those working at other stations, instructing them to report back to Samarbagh Hospital within seven days. The move comes after it was revealed that several individuals on the hospital's payroll had long been absent or working elsewhere.

"If they fail to report within the deadline, their salaries will be stopped and departmental proceedings will be initiated," said Dr. Adil in his official order. Sources say the decision aims to restore transparency and discipline within the institution. The crackdown

has been welcomed by local communities and healthcare observers.

**Levies personnel promoted:** The Dir Levies Force has promoted ten of its personnel to higher ranks following departmental reviews. According to a statement by Commandant of Dir Levies and deputy commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan, the promotions include Subedars, Naib Subedars, Hawaldars, Naiks, and Lance Naiks. A formal ceremony was held at the DC office to mark the occasion.

Zahid Khan was promoted to Subedar, Haider Zaman to Naib Subedar, while Nasir Khan and Wajid Ali were elevated to Hawaldar. Mohammad Ashraf, Bakht Wazir, Akhtar Munir, and Mohammad Numan were promoted to Naik rank. Sepoys Naveed Khan and Anwar Hameed Khan advanced to Lance Naik. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan, along with AC Timergara Zaid Safi, pinned the new ranks on the officers during the event.

## Import of soapstone, coal halt at Torkham border

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: More than seven hundred vehicles, loaded with soapstone and coal, imported from Afghanistan have been stuck at Torkham border for the last eleven days due to lack of certificate of origin. Importers and officials confirmed.

The custom officials in Torkham said that they had been directed by the hiphup not to clear the soapstone and coal loaded vehicles, imported from across the border without presenting a certificate of origin.

The aim of the fresh regulation, implemented was to confirm the real origin of the product, he added. The

unexpected restriction introduced by the custom officials multiplied miseries of importers and other trading communities, clearing agents and transporters said.

President All Torkham Clearing Agents Association Mujib Shinwari said that without their consultation, the custom department imposed producing of certificate of origin, an obligatory document during the clearing process of soapstone and coal, imported from Afghanistan that was unfair to the business community. The custom officials should clear the stranded hundreds of loaded trucks through the previous clearing system and then convene a joint meeting of

all the stakeholders to sort out an acceptable solution for the matter, he suggested.

Shinwari maintained that sudden implementation of the new regulation will certainly suffer Pak-Afghan bilateral trading. Because of the new custom rule drivers of the stranded vehicles were suffered and most of them spent Eid-ul-Azha on the Landi Kotal -Torkham road.

They asked to clear the presently parked trucks as the certificate of origin law was made compulsory when they had already crossed-in into Pakistan. He demanded of the authorities concerned to relax import export policy at Torkham border to enhance business via Torkham crossing.



**CHARSADDA: District Police Officer, Suleman Zafar presenting certificate of appreciation and cash reward to Charsadda Police spokesperson Safiullah in recognition of his commendable and responsible service.**

## 93 wheelchairs distributed among deserving persons

F.P. Report

SARGODHA: Ninety-three wheelchairs were distributed among differently-abled deserving persons, here on Thursday. These wheelchairs were distributed in a ceremony which was held at the Sargodha Arts Council under the auspices of the Department of Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal. The initiative is part of the Punjab Chief Minister's Punjab vision to make differently-abled individuals empowered and active members of society.

Commissioner Sargodha Jahanzaib Awan was the chief guest and other notable attendees included Member of Punjab Assembly Mian Ikram-ul-Haq, former parliamentarian Hameed Hameed, Abdul Razzaq Dhillon, ADCG Muhammad Abu Bakar, Director Social Welfare Shakira Noreen, and Deputy Director Zeba Andlib.

Addressing the ceremony, the Commissioner Jahanzaib Awan said that the real guests of honour were the special individu-

als present, who deserve society's utmost care, compassion, and support.

He stated that the Punjab government is turning the vision of a welfare state into reality through special programs for persons with disabilities. He highlighted that a total of 910 applications from differently-abled individuals across the division were received, which were being carefully processed in phases for the provision of wheelchairs, prosthetic limbs, and other assistive devices.

In the current phase, 93 individuals were provided with wheelchairs. The Commissioner also acknowledged the special interest of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, in the welfare of these individuals.

He lauded initiatives like the "Himmat Card," a revolutionary program under which a monthly financial aid of Rs 10,500 is being provided to eligible persons with disabilities. He further stressed that providing only financial aid is not enough ensuring dignity, employment opportunities, and

full social inclusion is a shared responsibility. Society, he said, must replace sympathy with equality and support so that these individuals can lead lives of dignity and self-respect. Following the addressing, the Commissioner and other dignitaries personally met with the beneficiaries, offered kind words and encouragement, and expressed their heartfelt good wishes.

**23 held for power pilfering:** Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) team nabbed 23 power pilferers from various areas. According to the spokesperson here on Thursday, FESCO task teams led by SDOs along with XEN conducted operations in different areas and held 23 power thieves red-handed. They were identified as---Taimoor, Tahir, Tajamal, Farhat, Furqan, Fahim, Nabeel, Nouman, Ali, Kamran, Sajjad, Waheedullah, Shafi Klyar, Abdullah, Farzand Ali and others. Police registered cases on the reports of FESCO authorities and launched investigations.

## KKKUK hosts one-day training on commercial mushroom farming

F.P. Report

KARAK: Khushal Khan Khattak University Karak (KKKUK) today successfully organized a one day training program on commercial mushroom farming, aimed at equipping students and community members with valuable skills for entrepreneurial ventures and economic empowerment.

The event, held at the university, was a collaborative effort between the Office of Research, Innovation, and Commercialization (ORIC) KK-KUK, the District Youth Affairs Office Karak, and the Deputy Commissioner Office Karak.

The training featured a comprehensive presentation by resource person Muhammad Zeeshan, who delved into the intricacies

and significant economic potential of mushroom farming. His detailed insights highlighted the importance of this sector for income generation and sustainable development in the region.

The training saw enthusiastic participation from both students and active members of the local community, reflecting a keen interest in exploring new avenues for livelihood and skill development.

Distinguished guests and officials present at the training included Mr. Kamran Wazir, District Youth Officer Karak; Prof. Nimat Ullah, Afrasiab, Manager ORIC, Umair Ud Din, Lecturer and Shabeer Ullah, Lecturer in Media Studies. These esteemed individuals actively participated in the training and later distributed certificates to the organizers, acknowledging

their efforts in making the event a success.

"We are delighted with the overwhelming response to this training program," stated Manager ORIC "Commercial mushroom farming holds immense potential for our youth and community members to establish their own businesses and contribute to the local economy. Our collaboration with the District Youth Affairs Office and the Deputy Commissioner Office is a testament to our commitment to fostering practical skills and entrepreneurship in Karak." The initiative underscores KKKUK's dedication to community engagement and its role in promoting innovative agricultural practices that can lead to enhanced economic opportunities for the people of Karak.





Friday, June 13, 2025



LOS ANGELES: A protester arrested by California Highway Patrol near federal building.

## ‘Weaponization’ reviews spark calls to drop prosecutions

WASHINGTON (Reuters): As the federal public corruption prosecution of former Tennessee House Speaker Glen Casada neared trial this spring, his lawyers made one last effort to kill the case, by petitioning senior Justice Department officials that it was "weaponization," according to three people familiar with the matter.

Under President Donald Trump, the department in February created a "Weaponization Working Group" meant to identify improper politically motivated cases, a response to what the Republican says without evidence was the misuse of prosecutorial resources against him under his Democratic predecessor, Joe Biden. In court filings, prosecutors said that Casada's lawyers met with a senior Justice Department official on March 24, where they alleged the "Deep State" had initiated a "weaponized" prosecution and they sought dismissal of the charges.

The plan almost worked, according to three people familiar with the matter. With the Deputy Attorney General's office poised to kill the case, prosecutors in the Justice Department's Public Integrity Section pushed back, reviewing their evidence with the higher-ups, the sources said, adding that the Nashville US Attorney's office and the Criminal Division also supported the case.

The request was rejected the next week, according to court filings. Both Casada and the DOJ declined to comment. The case is among at least seven Reuters identified where defense attorneys or Justice Department officials have sought to have prosecutions reviewed for possible dismissal, citing Trump's "weaponization" argument or making other arguments about weaknesses in the cases. In a speech, Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Galeotti urged defense attorneys to be "conscious about what, when and how" they appeal prosecutors' decisions.

"Seeking premature relief, mis-

characterizing prosecutorial conduct, or otherwise failing to be an honest broker actively undermines our system," Galeotti said. The increase in lobbying started not long after the Weaponization Working Group was created, and after the department's February decision to dismiss criminal corruption charges against New York City Mayor Eric Adams, six sources familiar with the dynamic told Reuters. To date, the Adams case is the only one to be dismissed over "weaponization," three of those sources told Reuters. The lobbying wave comes as the Trump administration has dramatically scaled back the Justice Department's Public Integrity Section, reduced the size of its foreign bribery unit and advised department attorneys that tax enforcement is "not a priority," two of the people familiar with the matter said.

A department spokesman said the DOJ will "continue to enforce our nation's tax laws." Trump has said the changes are necessary to root out Justice Department lawyers he derides as "hacks and radicals" for prosecuting him and some supporters while he was out of power. The working group is empowered to review any "civil or criminal enforcement authority of the United States" exercised under Biden.

A lawyer for Robert Burke, a former Navy admiral who was convicted in May on bribery charges, wrote to the department ahead of trial raising concerns about witness credibility, which failed to convince prosecutors to drop the case. Now the lawyer, Tim Parlatore -- a former Trump defense lawyer -- plans to seek a pardon. "I would be crazy not to at least inquire about a pardon," Parlatore said. Another example is a case involving billionaire Britannia Financial Group founder Julio Martín Herrera-Velutini, who is facing an August trial alongside Puerto Rico's former governor on bribery charges. Herrera-Velutini is represented by former Trump defense

attorney Chris Kise, who has sought to convince the Justice Department to dismiss or reduce the charges, though the outcome of such efforts is unclear, three people familiar with the case told Reuters. Kise did not return requests for comment, and Reuters could not determine what arguments he has made to the department about the case. While many of the reviews of cases are spurred by aggressive lobbying, some requests are coming from within the DOJ. In early February, prosecutors in the department's Tax Division were ordered by senior Justice Department officials to write a memo explaining why the prosecution of Paul Walczak was not an example of "weaponization," two of the people familiar with the matter told Reuters.

Walczak, of Florida, pleaded guilty in November to not paying employment taxes and not filing his individual income tax returns, and the trial team was preparing for his sentencing. Prosecutors were baffled, the people said, and only discovered after a few Google searches that Walczak's mother Elizabeth Fago was a Trump donor who, according to a New York Times report, hosted a political fundraiser where portions of a diary written by Biden's daughter Ashley were circulated. The department let the case proceed, and Walczak was sentenced to 18 months in prison. Trump in April spared him any prison with a pardon, which according to the New York Times, was handed down shortly after Fago attended a \$1 million fundraising dinner for Trump. The White House did not respond to a request for comment on the pardon. An attorney for Walczak said he was unaware of any interactions by the defense team with the Weaponization Working Group. In a statement, the Fago and Walczak families said media reports have painted an "incomplete and inaccurate" picture of the pardon application, and that Trump had "ample grounds to grant the pardon on the merits."

## Sudan paramilitaries claim key zone bordering Egypt, Libya

KHARTOUM (AFP): Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces said its fighters seized a strategic zone on the border with Egypt and Libya, as the regular army announced its withdrawal from the area.

The announcements came a day after the army accused forces loyal to eastern Libyan commander Khalifa Haftar of launching a cross-border attack alongside the RSF, the first allegation of direct Libyan involvement in the Sudanese war. "As part of its defensive arrangements to repel aggression, our forces today evacuated the triangle area overlooking the borders between Sudan, Egypt and Libya," army spokesman Nabil Abdallah said in a statement.

Since April 2023, the war in Sudan has pitted army chief Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan against his erstwhile ally Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, who leads the RSF. In a statement, the RSF said its fighters had "liberated the strategic triangle area," adding that army forces had retreated southward "after suffering heavy losses."

The army said that Haftar's troops in coordination with the RSF attacked its border positions in a move it called "a blatant aggression against Sudan." The war has effectively split Sudan in two, with the army holding the center, east and north, while the paramilitaries and their allies control nearly all of Darfur and parts of the south.

The fighting has killed tens of thousands and displaced 13 million, including four million who fled abroad, triggering what the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Efforts by international mediators to halt the fighting have so far failed, with violence continuing to escalate across the western Darfur region and the Kordofan region in the country's south.

## UK agrees post-Brexit deal over Gibraltar

LONDON (BBC): The UK has agreed a deal with the European Union over Gibraltar's status after Brexit. Talks on rules governing the border of Spain and the British Overseas Territory have been ongoing since the UK left the EU in 2020. The UK said the agreement would avoid the need for checks on people and goods crossing the Gibraltar-Spain border.

For travellers arriving at Gibraltar airport, passport checks will be carried out by Gibraltar and Spanish officials. This is similar to the system in place for Eurostar passengers at London's St Pancras station, where travellers pass through both British and French passport control before boarding international trains. UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy said the deal protected British sovereignty and supported Gibraltar's economy.

He said the "breakthrough" delivered a practical solution, adding: "This government inherited a situation from the last government which put Gibraltar's economy and way of life under threat."

Chief Minister of Gibraltar Fabian Picardo also welcomed the agreement, saying: "I have worked hand in glove with the UK government throughout this negotiation to deliver the deal Gibraltar wants and needs -- one that will protect future generations of British Gibraltarians and does not in any way affect our British sovereignty."

Spanish Foreign Affairs Minister José Manuel Albares and EU trade chief Maros Sefcovic both hailed the deal as "historic", with Sefcovic saying it "reinforces a new chapter" in the EU-UK relationship. All parties have committed to finalising a UK-EU treaty text on Gibraltar as quickly as possible, the UK government said. However, Reform UK criticised the deal, with deputy leader Richard Tice saying: "Once again this Labour government have shown utter disregard for our overseas territories."

## Argentina top court upholds ex-leader's sentence

BUENOS AIRES (AFP): Argentina's Supreme Court upheld the fraud conviction of former president Cristina Kirchner, for which she received a six-year prison sentence and was banned for life from holding public office.

"The sentences handed down by the previous courts were based on the abundance of evidence produced," the Supreme Court wrote in its ruling, adding that Kirchner's leave to further appeal her conviction "is dismissed." The ruling makes 72-year-old Kirchner's conviction and sentence definitive.

The decision brings the curtain down on the career of one of Argentina's most polarizing leaders, who has loomed large over the South American country's political landscape for two decades, inspiring admiration on the left but revulsion on the right. Due to her age, she can potentially avoid jail by requesting to serve her sentence under house arrest.

Kirchner has five days to turn herself over to the authorities. Her arch-foe, libertarian President Javier Milei, welcomed the ruling. "Justice. End," he wrote on X. Kirchner was convicted in 2022 of fraudulent administration relating to the granting of public works tenders during her 2007-2015 presidency.

The case, she claims, is part of a political plot to scupper her career and unravel her legacy of protectionist economics and social programs. She is the second ex-leader since Argentina's transition from dictatorship to democracy in 1983 to be sentenced to prison after Carlos Saul Menem, who was given a seven-year sentence in 2013 for

weapons trafficking. Menem never served jail time because he had immunity from prosecution as a senator.

Addressing hundreds of supporters outside the headquarters of her center-left Justicialist party, Kirchner called the three Supreme Court judges "puppets acting on orders from above" -- an apparent allusion to Milei's government. Her supporters took to the streets of several Argentine cities, burning tires and cutting off some roads leading to Buenos Aires. "The sentence was already written" before her appeal, Kirchner claimed, calling her conviction "a badge of political, personal and historical dignity." Some in the crowd wept while others hugged each other.

Daniel Dragoni, a councillor from Kirchner's party, told AFP he was "destroyed" by the ruling but vowed the former president's left-wing Peronist movement "will return, as always." Kirchner rose to prominence as part of a political power couple with her late husband Nestor Kirchner, who preceded her as president. After two terms at the helm herself between 2007 and 2015, she served as vice president from 2019 to 2023 in the last center-left administration before Milei took power. Milei's election was seen as a widespread rejection of the Kirchners' nationalist Peronist movement, which was accused of widespread corruption and economic mismanagement.

Over the past two years, Kirchner has been one of the fiercest critics of Milei's deep cuts to public spending and deregulation. Before ruling, she

had been planning to run for a seat in the Buenos Aires provincial legislature in September elections. Had she won, she would have gained immunity from prosecution. On the left the threat of her arrest led to a rare display of unity. But historian Sergio Berensztein said he believed the mobilization for her release would be short-lived.

"Cristina today has limited leadership; she is not the Cristina of 2019," he told AFP. Lara Goyburu, a political scientist at the University of Buenos Aires, saw the ruling as a win for Milei, who promised on his election to root out "kirchnerismo" as Argentines refer to Kirchner's brand of protectionist, sometimes populist politics. Kirchner was accused of arranging, as president, for a business associate of her and her late husband to win dozens of contracts for public works in her southern stronghold of Patagonia. Her sentence had already been upheld by a lower court of appeal in 2024.

The initial call by prosecutors for her to be jailed sparked demonstrations in several cities in 2022, some of which ended in clashes with police. The following month, she survived a botched assassination attempt when a man shoved a revolver in her face and pulled the trigger -- but the gun did not fire. The gunman said he acted out of frustration with corruption. In March, the United States banned her and one of her former ministers from entering the country, accusing them of corruption. "They (her political opponents) want me in prison or dead," Kirchner herself has repeatedly claimed.

## Dutch colonial rule cost Indonesia \$31 trillion

JAKARTA: Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto said that the Netherlands extracted as much as \$31 trillion in wealth from Indonesia during more than 300 years of its colonial rule over the region.

Indonesia declared independence in 1945, following centuries of Dutch colonial exploitation that began at the end of the 16th century. With the archipelago being its primary source of spices, the Dutch East India Co. established a virtual monopoly on the global spice trade, when nutmeg, cloves and pepper were considered the most expensive and luxurious spices in Europe.

Its profits were so vast that they made the Netherlands one of the wealthiest European powers in the 17th century.

Prabowo highlighted the impacts of the colonization of Indonesia in a speech at the opening of a defense

exhibition in Jakarta. "There was just one research from a few weeks back, which says that during the period of Dutch colonization, the Netherlands took away \$31 trillion of our wealth," he said, but did not reference the quoted study.

"When the Dutch occupied Indonesia, the Netherlands enjoyed having the world's top GDP per capita ... (History) teaches us that if we had been able to protect our wealth, maybe our GDP would have been among the highest in the world," Prabowo, who formerly served as Indonesia's defense minister before assuming the country's top office, was making a case on the importance of defense spending.

"A nation that does not want to invest in its defense usually will experience their independence being stolen away, will experience the nation being

subjugated to the will of others (and witness) the wealth of the nation being stolen -- this is the lesson of humankind," he said. The period included schemes like the "Cultivation System" -- locally known as the "Forced Planting System" -- in Java, under which Indonesians were forced to grow export crops like coffee and sugar cane for the Dutch at the cost of their own livelihood and staple food crops to make significant profits for the colonial power. The system led to widespread famines on the island of Java.

According to a study by British historian and economist Angus Maddison, the Forced Planting System in Indonesia significantly drove up the Dutch state income, contributing to about 31.5 percent of its gross domestic product between 1851 and 1870. -- Arab News

## US immigration officials raid meat production plant, dozens detained

WASHINGTON (Reuters): An immigration raid at a meat production plant in Omaha, Nebraska was the "largest worksite enforcement operation" in the state during the Trump presidency, the Homeland Security Department said. US Congressman Don Bacon told local media 75-80 people were detained. The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement raid happened at a plant of Glenn Valley Foods. The food packaging company said it was surprised by the raid and had followed the rules regarding immigration status.

Chad Hartmann, president of Glenn Valley Foods in Omaha, said the plant that was raided used E-Verify, a federal database

used for checking employees' immigration status. He told Reuters that when he said this to a federal agent, the agent responded "the system is broken" and urged him to contact his local congressional representative. ICE officers have been intensifying efforts in recent weeks to deliver on US President Donald Trump's promise of record-level deportations. The White House has demanded the agency sharply increase arrests of migrants in the US illegally, sources have told Reuters.

Tensions boiled over in Los Angeles over the weekend when protesters took to the streets after ICE arrested migrants at Home Depot stores, a garment factory

and a warehouse, according to migrant advocates. Local police in Omaha said they were informed by immigration officials about the raid in advance while the company said it got no notice about the operation ahead of time.

Hartmann said federal agents had a warrant that said they had identified 107 people who they believed were using fraudulent documents. "This was the largest worksite enforcement operation in Nebraska under the Trump Administration," the Homeland Security Department said on X, adding no law enforcement official was hurt.

ICE said a criminal investigation was ongoing into what immigration offi-

cials called a large-scale employment of immigrants who are present in the US illegally. "US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and federal law enforcement partners, executed a federal search warrant at Glenn Valley Foods, today, based on an ongoing criminal investigation into the large-scale employment of aliens without authorization to work in the United States," an ICE spokesperson told an ABC News affiliate. More than half of all meatpacking workers in the US are immigrants, according to the Center for Economic and Policy Research, a think tank. Rights advocates, including the ACLU of Nebraska, condemned the raid.

## Bolsonaro denies orchestrating Brazil coup in SC testimony

BRASILIA (Reuters): Former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro denied that he led an attempt to overthrow the government after losing the 2022 election during his trial before the country's Supreme Court, but acknowledged taking part in meetings aimed at reversing the outcome.

Bolsonaro said he and senior aides discussed alternatives to accepting the electoral results, including the possibility of deploying military forces and suspending some civil liberties, but he said those proposals were soon dropped. "The feeling was that there was nothing else we could do. We had to swallow the election results," the ex-president said.

"I never acted against the Constitution," Bolsonaro added, holding a copy of the country's 1988 charter that re-established democracy after two decades of military rule. In March, the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case against Bolsonaro and seven other people, including several military officers, who were charged with plotting a coup to stop Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva from taking office in January 2023.

The charges stem from a two-year police investigation into the election-denying movement that culminated in riots by Bolsonaro supporters in the capital in early 2023, a week after Lula took office.

Bolsonaro, who was the sixth defendant to testify in the case, spent several minutes of his two hours of testimony defending his administration's achievements and his criticism of the country's electoral system. Dozens of witnesses were previously heard by the court, an indication that the case is moving swiftly and could be concluded by the end of the year, avoiding overlap with campaigning for the 2026 presidential election.

Bolsonaro has insisted he will run in that campaign, despite an electoral court decision barring him from seeking public office until 2030. Bolsonaro attended the trial to watch testimony from Mauro Cid,

his former aide turned whistleblower, and then shook his hand. Cid told the court that the former president reviewed a draft decree that was central to the coup plot and made changes, while keeping a section that ordered the arrest of Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who is now overseeing the case against Bolsonaro and his allies. The former president said he only briefly saw the draft decree and never edited it. He also apologized for making unfounded corruption allegations about Supreme Court justices. "Forgive me," he told Moraes. A final ruling on Bolsonaro's case is expected by October.







# How to decode the shifting politics of the anti-Trump protests

**PROTESTS against Donald Trump's mass deportations, now spreading nationwide, could define his presidency, make or break Democratic careers and shape future elections.**

The White House, which thinks it has all the cards, keeps escalating the drama in Los Angeles. Trump's aggression underlines two themes of his second presidency – the desires to look strong and to grab even more power.

Democrats, still looking to explain their 2024 election defeat and to cope with Trump's round-the-clock shock politics, again risk looking weak and overmatched. But in California Gov. Gavin Newsom, at least, they finally have a champion willing to stand up to Trump – even if he's mostly looking to 2028.

As the most significant protest outburst of Trump's second term develops, top leaders in both parties face risky calculations and swift adjustments.

Democrats have a political base itching for a fight back against the president, but must worry that radical reactions from the party's left wing will alienate the voters who walked out on them in 2024.

The White House might be convinced that the confrontations are a political gift that put Democrats in a political vise for now. But Trump is stoking tensions that could be hard to control. And by putting troops into volatile situations in the proximity of protesters and agitators, he risks clashes that could turn tragic and could validate claims that he's risking lives for a callous personal payoff.

The White House's line on the crisis is blunt and ruthless.

"(Democrats') opposition to President Trump has forced them to side with illegal alien criminals in their communities and violent rioters and looters over law enforcement officers who are just doing their jobs," White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Wednesday.

A key goal here is to dehumanize the humans caught up in the deportation effort. The experience of an undocumented migrant often involves broken families and desperate people fleeing persecution or poverty. Even the hardest-hearted voter might feel sympathy. So, Leavitt implied that all those being targeted by ICE officers are "illegal alien murderers, rapists and pedophiles."

Republicans are also reviving a previously successful narrative that helped Trump win power

twice – that Democrats hate the police. "That's how radical Democrats have become. Their opposition to President Trump has forced them to side with illegal alien criminals in their communities and violent rioters and looters over law enforcement officers who are just doing their jobs," Leavitt said.

Next, an assault on the patriotism of Democrats, suggesting that they are disloyal and side with enemies. Leavitt said, "These attacks were aimed not just at law enforcement, but at American culture and

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society itself. Rioters burned American flags, chanted 'death to ICE' and spray-painted anti-American slogans on buildings."

This dystopian picture isn't just for political effect; it's designed to drown out a ballooning constitutional crisis over whether Trump has the authority to use active-duty troops on US soil. And this is the classic argument used by authoritarians everywhere – the fabric of society is so broken that only a strongman can fix it.

"President Trump will never allow mob rule to prevail in America. The most basic duty of government is to preserve law and order, and this administration embraces that sacred responsibility," Leavitt said. She added, "That's why President Trump deployed the National Guard and mobilized Marines to end the chaos and restore law and order. The mob violence is being stomped out. The criminals responsible will be swiftly brought to justice, and the Trump administration's operations to arrest illegal aliens are continuing unabated."

Some of the administration's rhetoric seems also designed to inject momentum into the deportation drive, the volume of which has disappointed some officials, and to normalize the use of the military in the effort. If Trump doesn't use maximum aggression,

Stephen Collinson

the narrative goes, deportations will stop, Americans will be unsafe and a foreign "invasion" will succeed.

Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton made this point in a Wall Street Journal opinion piece "Send in the Troops, for Real" that he used to call for "an overwhelming show of force to end the riots." He wrote: "The threat from the radical left is clear: Don't enforce immigration laws. If you do, left-wing street militias will burn down cities, and Democratic politicians

.....  
**The White House might be convinced that the confrontations are a political gift that put Democrats in a political vise for now. But Trump is stoking tensions that could be hard to control. And by putting troops into volatile situations in the proximity of protesters and agitators, he risks clashes that could turn tragic and could validate claims that he's risking lives for a callous personal payoff. The White House's line on the crisis is blunt and ruthless. "(Democrats') opposition to President Trump has forced them to side with illegal alien criminals in their communities and violent rioters and looters over law enforcement officers who are just doing their jobs," White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Wednesday. A key goal here is to dehumanize the humans caught up in the deportation effort. The experience of an undocumented migrant often involves broken families and desperate people fleeing persecution or poverty. Even the hardest-hearted voter might feel sympathy. So, Leavitt implied that all those being targeted by ICE officers are "illegal alien murderers, rapists and pedophiles." Republicans are also reviving a previously successful narrative that helped Trump win power twice – that Democrats hate the police. "That's how radical Democrats have become. Their opposition to President Trump has forced them to side with illegal alien criminals in their communities and violent rioters and looters over law enforcement officers who are just doing their jobs," Leavitt said. Next, an assault on the patriotism of Democrats, suggesting that they are disloyal and side with enemies. Leavitt said, "These attacks were aimed not just at law enforcement, but at American culture and society itself. Rioters burned American flags, chanted 'death to ICE' and spray-painted anti-American slogans on buildings."**

will back the rioters. The president is absolutely right to reject this threat, enforce immigration laws, and restore civil order."

Trump never undersells his tough guy act. He's ready to go beyond the deployments of 4,000 National Guard troops and 700 Marines he's sent to Los Angeles, who are not yet on the front lines of protests.

"I can be stronger on an attack on Los Angeles," Trump told the New York Post's "Pod Force One" podcast, explaining the greater leeway he feels in his second term. And Attorney General Pam Bondi said on the driveway of the White House Wednesday: "We are not scared to go further ... if we need to."

So, will the belligerence work for Trump politically?

If he can convince the public that the situation is truly dire, he might gain support for his breaching of a taboo on the use of US troops on domestic soil.

There's no doubt that Trump's voters respond to his bullshitness. At his campaign rallies, his most violent rhetoric often got the biggest cheers. Hardline tactics against migrants and demonstrators also go down well with his base.

White House officials also believe that Trump's tough border policy and plan for deportations won over a broader cohort of voters. "America voted

for mass deportations," top Trump aide Stephen Miller posted Wednesday on X.

Immigration issues have often worked in Trump's favor before. But the risk here is that he's inciting a crisis that could spread, get out of control and cost lives. He might pine to run an autocracy, but it's not clear that most Americans want to live in such conditions. And if protesters or police officers and soldiers were hurt in violence he exacerbated, it's on him. Trump lost after his first term because he made a crisis – the pandemic –

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worse. History could repeat itself. And once presidents lose the public's confidence, they tend to find it impossible to regain.

The breaking point could come if the expulsions widen. Recent polls have shown that while Americans do back deportations and a tougher border policy, they don't necessarily agree when friends, neighbors and otherwise law-abiding members of the community get swept up.

In Trump's first term, the zero-tolerance policy of separating migrant kids from their parents caused a public furor encapsulated by the phrase "kids in cages." Most political observers believe the country has moved right on immigration because of the Biden administration's hapless performance at the southern border. But a piece of poignant imagery that encapsulates cruelty or incompetence could yet shatter Trump's credibility.

Democrats face an extraordinarily complex political situation without a leader recognized by most of the country. Combating Trump's demagoguery and spinning of alternative realities would be nearly impossible if the party were firing on all cylinders – never mind when it's wandering in the wilderness.

Newsom's address to Californians on Tuesday night seemed partly calculated to inject some

direction and steel to the party and supporters who've watched Trump assault the Constitution, the rule of law and bastions of the liberal establishment for four turbulent months.

Everything that Newsom says and does will be refracted through the widespread belief that he plans to run for president. For him and other Democratic governors also contemplating a run, this crisis offers opportunity and peril. Great politicians seize their moments. And a strong pushback to Trump could win goodwill among base voters. Certainly, Newsom can raise his profile by going head-to-head with the president every day.

Still, few Democrats come out on top of a confrontation with Trump. Perhaps only former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, with her performative contempt, really got the better of Trump. And the president will use the power of his office to hurt his rivals. Before the Los Angeles protests, he was already trying to cut federal aid to California – seeking to punish its people effectively for the way they voted.

Several sitting Democratic governors – Josh Shapiro of Pennsylvania, Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan and Wes Moore of Maryland – might also be planning runs in 2028, and could end up facing similar challenges to Newsom. Perhaps one of them will solve the dilemma of how to avoid angering base voters sympathetic to migrants while building support among centrists, independents and moderate Republicans who still want tougher border policies. If they do, they will achieve something almost no center-left politician in the Western world has yet managed.

Democratic leaders will also be desperate to make sure the current crisis doesn't unleash reactions inside the party that make it unpalatable to voters more generally.

The Black Lives Matter protests in 2020 provide a warning. While many Americans supported the nationwide marches that erupted after the killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer, calls to "defund the police" from isolated parts of the progressive base morphed into a political disaster that haunted the party in subsequent elections.

And while Trump's deployment of troops to Los Angeles risks challenging constitutional limits, another perennial Democratic warning – that he'll destroy democracy – fell on deaf ears in 2024.

— CNN

# Unjust retaliation

Michael Jansen

Sunni rights activist from Tripoli. The family emigrated to London during the Lebanese civil war (1975-90) when Amal was two. She attended St. Hugh's College, Oxford, and graduated in 2000 with a degree in jurisprudence. She proceeded to the New York School of Law where she received a Master of Laws degree. She is qualified to practice law in England, Wales, and the US. After clerking for high profile US judges and engaging in key cases, she became involved in prosecutions for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia and in the Special Tribunal for Lebanon trying suspects for the 2005 assassination of ex-Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

As well as Khan, Trump has imposed sanctions on four ICC female judges

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**The potential threat against Amal Clooney coincided with George Clooney's Broadway production of "Good Night and Good Luck." The play is a historical drama about CBS television journalist Edward R. Murrow who, in the 1950's, battled Senator Joseph McCarthy's campaign against people he accused of being Communists or Communist sympathisers. By compelling accused persons to defend themselves in Senate hearings, McCarthy caused many to lose their jobs and others to flee the US. When Murrow exposed his terror tactics and lies, McCarthy accused Murrow of being a Communist. After Murrow denied the charge and one of the accused committed suicide, the tide turned against McCarthy. The Broadway play, an adaptation of a 2005 film written by George Clooney and Grant Heslov, coincides with Trump's crusade against liberal media and educational institutions, especially Harvard University, the oldest and most prestigious in the US. Amal Alamuddin Clooney is a British citizen of Lebanese descent. Her father is a Druze businessman from the village of Baakleen in the Chouf mountains overlooking Beirut and her mother a Sunni rights activist from Tripoli. The family emigrated to London during the Lebanese civil war (1975-90) when Amal was two. She attended St. Hugh's College, Oxford, and graduated in 2000 with a degree in jurisprudence. She proceeded to the New York School of Law where she received a Master of Laws degree. She is qualified to practice law in England, Wales, and the US.**

investigating possible war crimes committed by the US in Afghanistan and Israel in occupied Palestine. ICC Second Vice-President Reine Alapini-Gansou (Benin), Solomy Balungi Bossa (Uganda), Luz del Carmen Ibanez Carranza (Peru) and Beti Hohler (Slovenia) have been targeted.

The European Union promptly extended bloc support for the ICC, calling it "a cornerstone of international justice whose independence and integrity must be protected." In a post on X, European Council President Antonio Costa wrote: "The ICC does not stand against nations, it stands against impunity. The rule of law most prevail over the rule of power." The governments of the Netherlands, Belgium and Slovenia have denounced the sanctions as an effort to halt the work of the ICC.

Neither the US nor Israel are signatories of the 2002 Rome Statute which established the ICC which has jurisdiction over genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression.

As non-signatories, the US and Israel argue they cannot be compelled to submit to ICC jurisdiction. However, their citizens

can be prosecuted if they commit crimes in countries – such as Afghanistan and Palestine – which have joined the Rome Statute.

While the International Court of Justice deals with crimes committed by states, the ICC investigates and prosecutes war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by individuals if their home countries fail to deal with accountability. The US argues that joining the ICC would undermine US sovereignty, infringe on national security and the independent of the government and target US personnel for political reasons.

The latest round of sanctions is nothing new. In April 2019, the US revoked the US visa of ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda, a prominent Gambian lawyer, who prepared to investigate possi-

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ble war crimes committed by US servicemen during the war in Afghanistan. After the investigation began, Trump authorised the imposition of sanctions against her and Phakiso Mochochoko who served as head of the court's jurisdiction division. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo charged the ICC with being a "kangaroo court."

Shortly after taking office in 2021, US President Joe Biden lifted the sanctions against ICC personnel although Secretary of State Antony Blinken expressed Washington's objection to ICC efforts to assert jurisdiction of citizens of non-ICC members such as the US and Israel.

As usual, "double standards" have come into play. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Biden welcomed the ICC arrest warrant issued for President Vladimir Putin on charges of transporting Russian children into Russia from Ukraine.

However, once the ICC began considering warrants over Gaza for Netanyahu and Gallant, Biden – a fervent Zionist – denounced the ICC's action as "outrageous" and vowed "ironclad" backing for Israel.

# Cracks appear in myth of Israel's 'brave' armed forces

**ONE morning in early June 1967, when I was 14, I took the bus to school having read in the newspaper over breakfast that Egypt, Syria and Jordan were at war with Israel.**

The first class of the day was history. Our history teacher, Mr. Ferry (teachers in those days did not have first names), was a fervent supporter of the still nascent state of Israel, which had existed for less than 20 years. Enterprisingly, he decided to scrap the lesson he had planned and instead devote the time to his favorite subject.

Jews, he told us, having endured discrimination and persecution in Europe for centuries, now had their own country, in which they could enjoy security and safety, thanks largely to their own indefatigable campaign for a Jewish state, but also due in part to the wisdom and munificence of the UN, based on an original proposal in 1917 by Britain's own Lord Balfour. Warming to his theme, Mr. Ferry waxed lyrical about fit, bronzed and athletic young kibbutznikim, toiling daily under a hot sun to turn the

dry and unforgiving desert green. It was all terribly inspiring.

Mr. Ferry omitted to mention that the territory then comprising the state of Israel had been obtained by means of driving, at gunpoint, about 750,000 Palestinians off the land they had inhabited for centuries, and sending into exile those who were not killed. Or that the "indefatigable campaign for a Jewish state" had been conducted by homicidal thugs from Irgun and the Stern Gang, who nowadays would be referred to as "terrorists" but who nevertheless went on to hold key ministerial roles in successive Israeli governments. Or that much of the "dry and unforgiving desert" was already green, thanks to generations of farming by Palestinian families who were now homeless and stateless.

To be fair, he only had 35 minutes, and it is possible that Mr. Ferry intended all this for a future lesson that somehow slipped his mind: he was, in many ways, an excellent teacher and I am inclined to give him the benefit of the doubt. Anyway, the peroration

of his discourse was that Israelis were inherently brave people who were not about to be deprived of their birthright by Arabs, who had a propensity for fighting among themselves, and the war

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AH-64 Apache attack helicopter or an F-161 Sufa fighter jet in the skies above Gaza, aiming your weapons at a Hamas enemy without air defenses — or, more probably, innocent Palestinian women and children with no defenses of any kind. And it is easy to be brave inside your heavily armored Merkava Mk4 battle tank on the outskirts of Rafah, firing

your 120mm cannon at those few innocent Palestinian civilians who have survived the attack helicopters and the fighter jets.

For a fighting force, the Israeli forces do precious little fighting. And when they are required to do so, they turn out not to be very good at it. When Hamas attacked southern Israel in October 2023, the troops on the unit whose job it was to protect civilians — the 77th Battalion, 7th Armored Brigade (Gaza Division) — appear to have been mostly asleep. Their Re'im base was quickly overrun and reinforce-

ments delayed entering the combat zone even though civilians were under attack (limited enthusiasm there for a fight, evidently). A military investigation described the attack as the "biggest security failure in Israel's history," the army admitted it had "failed in its mission to protect Israeli civilians," and Chief of the General Staff Herzli Halevi had the decency to resign.

You will find no defense of Hamas' cowardly attack here, but there are other signs that cracks are appearing in the fragile carapace of Israel's military invincibility, including shameless mendacity in how it defends its actions. There is by now a clearly defined three-stage process: 1. It definitely wasn't us. 2. Well, it may have been us. 3. OK, it was us.

This has always reminded me of the wild west days of the British tabloid press, before legislation on privacy and other restrictions reined in the worst excesses of Fleet Street. At that time, there was a mantra for newspapers dealing with any difficulties: never apologize, never explain

and, when cornered, lie.

There are countless examples of Israel putting this into practice. When an Israeli sniper assassinated the Palestinian American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh in Jenin in May 2022, the Israeli military lied through its teeth. When Israeli soldiers deliberately killed 15 paramedics and aid workers after opening fire on a clearly identified rescue convoy in Gaza in March this year, the military lied through its teeth. Most recently, Israeli gunfire has killed at least 160 Palestinians as they desperately scrambled for food at shambolic aid "distribution sites" set up by the deeply suspect Gaza Humanitarian Foundation. Since the first such incident, on May 27, when they killed 10 Palestinians, the Israeli military has been lying through their teeth.

The armed forces of Ukraine, currently fighting in the trenches of Donbas to defend their country against an unprovoked invasion by a militarily more powerful and numerically superior aggressor — now that's brave. Israel's army, not so much.





# PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 259 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 259.56 points, showing positive change of 0.21 per cent, closing at 124,093.12 points as compared to 124,352.68 points on the last trading day.

A total of 1,024,633,864 shares were traded during the day as compared to 1,041,129,574 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 50.539 billion against Rs 46,707 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 474 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 170 of them recorded gains and 270 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 34 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Sui South Gas with 55,899,181 shares

at Rs 41.92 per share, Fauji Cement with 50,597,576 shares at Rs 47.36 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 49,327,936 shares at Rs 1.37 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 204.47 per share closing at Rs23,310.33 whereas runner-up was Hoechst Pakistan Limited with Rs122.44 rise in its share price to close at Rs3,249.51.

PIA Holding Company LimitedB witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 2,331.99 per share price, closing at Rs 20,987.89, whereas the runner-up Khyber Textile Mills Limited with Rs 221.55 decline in its per share price to Rs 1,993.94.

**Rupee sheds 21 paisa against US Dollar**

The Rupee on Thursday depreciated by 21 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and

closed at Rs 282.67 against the previous day's closing of Rs 282.46.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 283.25 and Rs 284.75 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs 3.29 to close at Rs 325.93 against the last day's closing of Rs 322.64, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen went up by 02 paisa and closed at Rs1.96, whereas an increase of Rs 1.79 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 382.83 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 381.04.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 05 and 04 paisa to close at Rs 76.96 and Rs 75.35,

respectively.

**Gold prices up by Rs4,000 to Rs356,900 per tola**

The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.4,000 and was traded at Rs.356,900 on Thursday compared to its sale at Rs. 352,900 on last trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs.3,430 to Rs.305,984 from Rs. 302,554 and for 10 grams of 22 Karat it went up by Rs3,144 to Rs.280,495 from Rs. 277,351.

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 up by \$30 to \$3,375 from \$3,345, whereas the prices of silver remain unchanged at \$35.87, the Association reported.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan and Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja discussing revisions in e-commerce taxation framework.

## MOFA hosts festival showcasing Pakistan's mango diplomacy

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs here on Thursday organized a colorful Mango Festival, bringing together members of the diplomatic corps and their families in a celebration of Pakistan's national fruit.

The event served as a unique platform for cultural exchange and informal diplomacy and a tasteful reminder of the country's soft power and cultural diplomacy.

Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan was the chief guest of the event who highlighted the importance of mangoes—not only as Pakistan's national fruit but also as a symbol of friendship and goodwill. “Pakistan's mangoes are among the finest in the world. Through this festival, we aim to share a cherished part of our culture

with our friends in the diplomatic community,” Jam Kamal said in his brief remarks.

He said that while Pakistan is among the top producers of mangoes, there is still significant untapped potential in the mango industry that needs to be explored.

He also referred to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's ‘mango diplomacy’, emphasizing how the country's signature fruit is being used to strengthen diplomatic ties and promote a positive image of Pakistan internationally.

Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch on the occasion highlighted the significance of the event as a celebration of Pakistan's iconic fruit — the mango, often referred to as the ‘king of fruits’. She noted that Pakistan is the fifth-largest producer of

mangoes in the world, that shows the country's strong agricultural potential.

She further emphasized the government's commitment to modernizing the agriculture sector, with a focus on enhancing the export of value-added agricultural products.

The goal, she said, is to empower farmers and exporters to compete effectively in international markets.

She also thanked the Chief Executive Officer of the Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani for supporting the ministry in organizing the event.

During the event, guests were treated to an exquisite variety of mangoes from across Pakistan, including Sindhri, Chaunsa, Anwar Ratol, and Langra. The event also featured mango-based desserts and drinks.

## OGDCL announces oil & gas discovery in Khairpur

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) on Thursday announced a significant oil and gas discovery from its exploratory efforts at the Faakir-I well, located within the Bitrisim Exploration License area in Khairpur district of Sindh. The well is operated by OGDCL with a 95% working interest, in a joint venture with Government Holdings (Private) Limited (GHPL), which holds the remaining 5% stake.

Spudded on December 31, 2024, as an exploratory well, the Faakir-I well was drilled to a total depth of 4,185 meters in the Sembar Formation. The drilling operation was executed using OGDCL's in-house expertise in close collaboration with the Joint Venture Partner.

Following the analysis of wireline log results, two Drill Stem Tests (DSTs) were conducted in the Lower Goru Formation, targeting the Massive Sand and Basal Sand intervals. The cumulative test results indicated the production of 6.4 million standard cubic feet of gas per day (MMSCFD) and 55 barrels per day (BPD) of condensate through a “32/64” choke.

This discovery marks a significant milestone in the Bitrisim Exploration Licence, highlighting the potential of the Lower Goru

Formation (Basal and Massive Sands). The discovery significantly enhances the block's commercial viability and extends the licence's productive life.

The success of the Faakir-I well underscores the Joint Venture's commitment to unlocking the full hydrocarbon potential of the block through an aggressive exploration strategy.

The discovery is expected to make a meaningful contribution toward bridging the country's energy demand-supply gap through indigenous resources and will add to the hydrocarbon reserves base of both OGDCL and Pakistan.

## DC meets president of SCCI, industrial team

SIALKOT (APP): The President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Ikram-ul-Haq, Chairman Small Industrial Estate Association Shahabpura Tahir Majeed Kapoor and representatives of local industrialists and traders held a meeting with Deputy Commissioner Sialkot Saba Asghar Ali here on Thursday.

The DC said a coordinated and systematic campaign had been launched to eliminate encroachments in the city. She said that specific points had been allocated for the cart owners and no one would be allowed to park their carts in the city except these

places. She said that a campaign was underway to improve the urban sewerage system and clean the drains, so that the drainage system could function effectively during rains.

Saba Asghar Ali said that certificates would be obtained from relevant departments, including the Municipal Corporation, Municipal Committee, and the District Council's XEN for Infrastructure and Services to make effective arrangements to avoid sewerage overflow during the rainy season. She appealed to the industrialists and traders to refrain from throwing their garbage into the

drains, so that the sanitation system is not affected and the beauty of the city can be maintained. The meeting also included a detailed discussion on the city's development, cleanliness, elimination of encroachments, and resolving the issues faced by industrialists.

The deputy commissioner emphasised that with the mutual cooperation of the administration and industrialists, a better and organized environment can be provided to the city. Chief Officer Municipal Corporation Malik Ijaz Ahmed and local officials of the relevant departments were also present in the meeting.

## South Korea's stock market rises to 3-year high

ISTANBUL (APP): South Korea's main stock index surged to a more than three-year high on Wednesday, driven by gains in technology and auto stocks, as well as continued foreign investor interest, according to Yonhap News.

The Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI) climbed 35.19 points, or 1.23%, to close at 2,907.04 points, its highest level since Jan. 14, 2022, when it reached 2,921.92 points.

The trading volume was high, with 383.5 million shares exchanged worth 12.3 trillion won (about \$9 billion). Advancers outpaced decliners 600 to 281. Foreign investors extended their buying streak for a sixth consecutive session, boosting sentiment. In Seoul, Samsung Electronics rose 1.18% to 59,900 won, while chip-maker SK Hynix increased 4.12% to 240,000 won.

Hyundai Motor gained 2.03% to 201,000 won, while Kia rose 2.54% to 96,900 won. Hyundai Mobis, an auto parts supplier, rose 4.91% to 288,500 won. Doosan Enerbility,

which operates in the nuclear sector, increased 6.46% to 51,100 won. Kakao, the operator of South Korea's most popular mobile messaging app, rose 2.8% to 51,400 won.

Defense and shipbuilding stocks slipped on profit-taking. Hanwha Aerospace fell 3.31% to 905,000 won, while HD Hyundai Heavy Industries dropped 2.11% to 418,000 won. Financials have also weakened. KB Financial fell 3.34% to 107,200 won, while Shinhan Financial dropped 1.81% to 59,800 won.

## Karachi industrialists denounce 18 per cent tax on solar energy

KARACHI (PPI): Abdul Shakoor Khatri, a key figure in Pakistan's industrial sector and the founding chairman of the All-Pakistan Textile Processing Mills Association (APTMA), on Thursday voiced strong opposition against the newly imposed 18% tax on solar energy, as outlined in the federal budget for 2025-26.

This tax, according to Khatri, undermines Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision of steering Pakistan towards energy efficiency. Khatri shared his stark criticism at a gathering, expressing dismay over what he perceives as a departure from a pro-industry and pro-public financial strategy.

This new taxation on

solar solutions, he argued, places an additional financial strain on industries already grappling with escalating production costs. “With electricity prices already at a peak, this tax on solar energy strips industries of their last vestige of cost-effective power, compelling them to depend on pricier grid electricity. This regressive move not only increases operational costs but also contradicts the global movement towards renewable energy incentives aimed at boosting industrial efficiency,” Khatri pointed out.

Turning to the challenges specific to the textile industry, Khatri lamented the government's overlook on the acute drop in local

cotton production. He advocated for the removal of import duties on cotton to help sustain the textile industry, which is a major employment sector in the country. He called for the implementation of special incentives to aid the textile sector, such as facilitating access to bank loans for importing modern machinery, crucial for enhancing international competitiveness.

Khatri also emphasized the necessity for a unified policy that supports every segment of the textile value chain, from raw material processing to finished goods. He urged the State Bank and the Finance Ministry to work hand-in-hand to develop and execute such a strategy.

Moreover, the industrial veteran made a plea for tax relief measures for senior citizens and stressed the importance of expediting significant infrastructure projects like Ketu Bandar and the K-4 water scheme, which are vital for economic growth and in addressing the burgeoning water and energy crises.

In his concluding remarks, Khatri cautioned that the budget, in its current form, threatens to suffocate industrial expansion and amplify unemployment rates. He strongly urged the government to reconsider the solar tax imposition and realign its fiscal policies to better meet the needs of both the business community and the broader populace.

## Oil Updates — prices ease as market assesses ME tension

SINGAPORE (Arab News): Oil prices eased on Thursday, reversing gains made earlier in the Asian trading session, as market participants assessed a US decision to move personnel from the Middle East ahead of talks with Iran over the latter's nuclear-related activity.

Brent crude futures were down 49 cents, or 0.7 percent, to \$69.28 a barrel at 9:30 a.m. Saudi time, while US West Texas Intermediate crude was 41 cents, or 0.6 percent, lower at \$67.74 a barrel.

A day earlier, both Brent and WTI surged more than 4 percent to their highest since early April.

US President Donald Trump said the US was moving personnel because the Middle East “could be a dangerous place.” He also said the US would not

allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon. Iran has said its nuclear activity is peaceful.

Increased tension with Iran has raised the prospect of disruption to oil supplies. The sides are set to meet on Sunday.

“Some of the surge in oil prices that took Brent above \$70 per barrel was overdue. There was no specific threat identified by the US on an Iranian attack,” said Vivek Dhar, director of mining and energy commodities research at Commonwealth Bank Australia.

Response from Iran is only contingent on US escalation, Dhar said.

“A pull back (in price) makes sense, but a geopolitical premium that keeps Brent above \$65 per barrel will likely persist until further clarity on US-Iran nuclear talks is revealed,”

he added.

The US is preparing a partial evacuation of its Iraqi embassy and will allow military dependents to leave locations in the Middle East due to heightened security risk in the region, Reuters reported on Wednesday citing US and Iraqi sources.

Iraq is the second-biggest crude producer after Saudi Arabia in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Military dependents can also leave Bahrain, a US official said.

Prices weakened having hit key technical resistance levels during Wednesday's rally, plus some market participants are betting on Sunday's US-Iran meeting resulting in reduced tension, said OANDA senior market analyst Kelvin Wong.

Trump has repeatedly said the US would bomb Iran if the two countries cannot reach a deal regarding Iran's nuclear-related activity including uranium enrichment.

Iran's Minister of Defense Aziz Nasirzadeh on Wednesday said Iran will strike US bases in the region if talks fail and if the US initiates conflict.

US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff plans to meet Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Oman on Sunday to discuss Iran's response to a US proposal for a deal.

Separately, US crude inventories fell 3.6 million barrels to 432.4 million barrels last week, the Energy Information Administration said. Analysts polled by Reuters had expected a draw of 2 million barrels.

## Shares stumble after Donald Trump's latest trade threat

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Investors were rattled on Thursday after Donald Trump said he would impose unilateral tariffs on partners in the next two weeks, reigniting trade war fears soon after reaching a deal with China to dial down tensions between the superpowers.

The mood was also shaded by geopolitical concerns after the US president said personnel were being moved from the Middle East as nuclear talks with Iran faltered and fears of a regional conflict grew.

The equity losses snapped a recent rally fuelled by talks between Beijing and Washington in London that saw them hammer out a framework agreement to move towards a pact to reduce levies.

Investors have been on edge since Trump's “Liberation Day” tariff blitz on April 2 that sent shockwaves through stock and bond markets and stoked global recession fears.

Days later he announced a pause in those measures until July 9 to allow for countries to cut deals with

the White House, sparking relief rallies that have pushed some markets towards all-time highs.

However, he once again shook confidence by saying on Wednesday that he intended to send letters telling governments what levies Washington would be imposing.

“We're going to be sending letters out in about a week-and-a-half, two weeks, to countries, telling them what the deal is,” he told reporters.

“At a certain point, we're just going to send letters out. And I think you understand that, saying this is the deal, you can take it or leave it.”

While some analysts indicated that previous threats had been rowed back, the comments added to the ongoing uncertainty about Trump's policies, reviving fears about sky-high levies and the impact on the economy.

They also came not long after he had flagged the London agreement, and posted on social media that “President Xi and I are going to work closely

together to open up China to American Trade”, referring to his counterpart Xi Jinping.

Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management said: “Whether this is a hardball negotiation tactic or a pressure valve reset ahead of another 90-day extension is anyone's guess -- but traders are reading it as another layer of headline risk.”

“The market knows the Trump playbook: bark, delay, then deal. But the closer we get to the cliff's edge, the more likely someone slips.”

Most Asian markets fell on Thursday, with Tokyo, Hong Kong, Wellington, Sydney, Taipei, Mumbai, Bangkok and Jakarta in the red after a broadly healthy run-up this week.

London was flat as data showed the UK economy shrank more than expected in April, while Paris and Frankfurt fell.

There were gains in Singapore, Seoul and Wellington. Shanghai was barely moved.

The weak performance followed losses on Wall

Street, where trade worries overshadowed another below-forecast inflation reading that provided fresh speculation the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates.

Oil prices slipped more than one percent after Wednesday's surge that came after Trump said US personnel were being moved from the potentially “dangerous” Middle East as Iran nuclear talks stutter.

The move came as Tehran threatened to target US military bases in the region if a regional conflict broke out.

The US president said the staff were “being moved out because it could be a dangerous place”.

“We've given notice to move out and we'll see what happens.”

With regard to Iran, he added: “They can't have a nuclear weapon, very simple. We're not going to allow that.”

Trump had until recently expressed optimism about the talks, but said in an interview published on Wednesday that he was “less confident”.

### Lost & Found

My 5 marla plot of Sialkot Motorway City (SMC) registration # 10050 membership # 60135WV7353023 slip of Rs. 44000 dated 29th August 2022 has fallen somewhere and is lost. If anyone finds it please send it to Saifullah Jan son of Muhammad Akbar. CNIC # 17101-0342196-1, R/o Manga Dargai Charsadda. 03459077893.

### Court Notice

In the court of Wadigha Mushtaq Malik Additional District Judge-I, Swabi. Suit No. 26/CR, 27/CR. Institution 14-04-2025 & 21-04-2025 Next date 23-06-2025. Sher Zamin / Sanqat Ali Vs Lal Bacha Notice to. Sher Zada S/o Faqeer Gul R/o Nazari Dheri Gohati Tehsil and District Swat. In the above title case the service of you above named defendants is not possible with ordinary means, hence you are hereby informed through this proclamation to attend this court on 24-06-2025 at 8am in person or through appointed agent/ attorney or through counsel, otherwise you shall be place and proceed against ex-parte.

### Court Notice

In the Court of Jawad Bin Dawood Civil Judge II. Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar.Suit No 33/6. Institution. 4/9/2014. Date of hearing. 28/7/2025 . Case Title: Nurul Huda VS Azizur Rehman etc. Notice to no.7.Amralli Shah.8.Tariq Shah.9.Saif Ali Shah sons of Mst Shamsul Huda.10. Shmsmsher Khan s/o Banaras resident of Angnapur tehseel Daggar district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 28/7/2025 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

### Court Notice

In the Court of Jawad Bin Dawood Civil Judge II. Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar.Suit No 28/1.Institution. 7/2/2025. Date of hearing. 7/2/2025 . Case Title: Mst Mian Zara VS Mian Masren. Notice to no. 3.Bakht Rehman.4. Aalamen.5. Tajjir Rehman .6.Badar Muner sons of Akbar Ghani resident of Daggar Kalay tehseel Daggar district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 7/7/2025 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

### Court Notice

In the Court of Jawad Bin Dawood Civil Judge II. Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar.Suit No. 130/1. Institution. 9/7/2024. Date of hearing. 22/7/2025 . Case Title: Mst Yusuf Jan VS Fazal Ghani etc .Notice to no. 4.Msts Bakhtji Naikzara. 5.Bakht Mena.6.Bakhtaji Mena.7.Samda daughters of Sultan Ghani. 12.Farhad Gul. 13.Siraj Gul sons. 14.Mst Shamsulzari. 15.Muntazira. 16. Rehmanzari daughters of late Mst Zahera d/o Anwar Shah. 17.Muhammud son. 18.Msts Sultanazari. 19.Rifat.20. Mehunnisa. 21.Qamunnisa 22 .Roha.23.Ishrart Begum. 24.Rehmatzari 25.Hajra daughters of late Mst Zaibunisa alias Mashkanrha d/o Anwar Shah.26. Nurulnabi.27.Rehman Ghani. 28.Abdul Haq. 29.Shamsul Haq sons.30.Mst Mumina .31.Lizarna. 32. Alema daughters of late Mst Khirinisaa aliaz Khirana d/o Anwar Shah. 33.Nurul Ghani son. 34.Msts Bibi Naikzara. 35.Bibi Nasira. 36.Basro.37.Romina. 38 . Shamsulmena. 39.Wari. 40.Shabana. 41.Nahida. 42 .Nafisa. 43.Rahila daughters of Khastamir Shah s/o Anwar Shah resident of Agaray tehseel Mandran district Buner.Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 22/7/2025 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.





# South Africa fight back in WTC final against Australia

LONDON (Reuters): Australia took control of the World Test Championship final on Thursday as they stretched their lead over South Africa to 106 runs at tea on the second day after captain Pat Cummins had taken six wickets.

Cummins produced the best bowling figures by a test captain at Lord's as his 6-28 skittled out South Africa for 138 and gave Australia a 74-run first-innings lead.

But two wickets in three balls for Kagiso Rabada shortly before the tea break handed the South Africans some hope as they reduced Australia to 32-2 at the start of their second innings.

Usman Khawaja was

dismissed for six before Cameron Green's comeback woes continued as he was out second ball after also going cheaply in the first innings.

Marnus Labuschagne was unbeaten on 16 and Steve Smith was four not out at tea. But the middle session was dominated by Cummins as he took four wickets after lunch to induce a South African slump after they were 121-5 at the end of the morning's play.

Rain delayed the resumption by 10 minutes, but it did not take long for Cummins to get among the wickets, taking two in four balls to remove Kyle Verreynne leg before wicket for 13 and Marco Jansen without scoring. That left South

Africa limping at 126-7.

Verreynne was initially given not out but Cummins reviewed the umpire's decision and his appeal was confirmed while Jansen lasted only three balls before he chipped a simple return catch back to Cummins.

Cummins' fifth wicket was David Bedingham, caught prodding at the ball to offer an edge that went through to wicket-keeper Alex Carey, ending an innings of 45 off 111 balls.

Bedingham was South Africa's top scorer in the innings, having fought hard in the opening session with captain Temba Bavuma (36) as they put together their team's only meaningful partnership of 64 runs.

After Keshav Maharaj was run out for seven, Rabada was the last South African wicket to fall as he was induced into a pull and well caught in the deep by a forward-diving Beau Webster for Cummins' 300th test wicket.

"It's way more than I could have asked for," the captain said at the end of the innings. "Three hundred is a big number for any bowler so I'm pretty happy."

Australia's second innings started briskly with seven runs off the first over from Rabada but the seamer fought back with 2-15 off six successive overs to keep alive a fluctuating contest that has seen 22 wickets fall in five sessions.

# Pakistan legend Akram praises statue despite mocking



LAHORE (BBC): Legendary Pakistan fast bowler Wasim Akram praised the "effort" that went into his newly unveiled statue, despite it being mocked on social media.

The statue is situated outside the Niaz Stadium in Hyderabad and depicts Akram in Pakistan's 1999 World Cup kit, where they were runners-up.

It captures Akram in his slinky bowling action but his facial features and hair have drawn criticism online.

Some said it had more of a resemblance to actor Sylvester Stallone while another described it as "10% cement, 90% disappointment".

But Akram responded on X with his thanks and appreciation for the

sculptor's effort.

"Lots of talk about my sculpture being erected at Niaz Stadium, Hyderabad.

Mine is definitely better than the tiger," he posted, referencing another statue near his own.

"It's the idea that matters. Credit to the creators, full marks for the effort and thanks to

everyone involved."

The stadium's chief Shiraz Leghari added: "The artist did his best effort, but accepts it doesn't resemble (Akram) a hundred per cent."

Akram, a World Cup winner in 1992, is one of Pakistan's greatest cricketers, having taken 414 wickets in 104 Tests and 502 scalps in 356 one-day internationals.

# PCB retains four out of five selectors for men's team

LAHORE (ESPNCricinfo): The PCB has quietened speculations of wholesale changes to the current selection committee, with four of the five men remaining in position. They are Azhar Ali, Asad Shafiq, Aaqib Javed and former umpire Aleem Dar.

The only change is Usman Hashmi replacing Hassan Cheema as the data analyst. Unlike Cheema, Hashmi will not be a voting member and will only assist the selection committee.

Reports of significant changes, or even a complete disbanding, of the committee were widespread enough for the PCB to issue a statement denying it.

Notably, the statement also appeared to open the door for the head coach and the captain to begin having a say - if not an explicit voting right - on matters of selection. "The selection committee is bound to discuss with the head coach and captain of respected formats before finalising

the team," the statement said.

In October, when the selection committee was announced, the PCB revoked the captain and coach's right to vote on selection matters, leading to some frustration.

It was given voice most notably by Jason Gillespie, Pakistan's Test coach then, who complained he had been reduced to the role of "match-day analyst", stating it was "not what he signed up for".

Both he and white-ball

coach Gary Kirsten departed in the following weeks.

That there has been no significant change to this committee is almost notable in itself, given the frequency with which Pakistan has changed the selectors in recent years. Since August 2021, Pakistan has used 26 different selectors for the men's national side.

Pakistan's next international assignment is in July, when they travel to Bangladesh for a T20I series.

# Cummins eighth Australian to 300 Test wickets

LORDS (ESPNCricinfo): Australia captain Pat Cummins became the eighth from his country to 300 Test wickets as his 6 for 28, the best figures by a Test captain at Lord's, dismantled South Africa on the second day of the World Test Championship (WTC) final.

It meant that, for the first time in Test history, there was a bowling attack with three players holding 300 or more wickets playing together - Cummins joining Mitchell Starc and Nathan Lyon in this current group.

Josh Hazlewood sits on 280. "It's great, and I've got some family here which is nice," Cummins told the host broadcast at the innings break. "They were batting pretty well so happy we've got a decent lead this way more than I could have asked for. For any fast bowler 300 is a big number, means you've battled a few injuries and niggles, got through it and played well in different conditions."

Cummins, who had

removed Wiaan Mulder on the first evening, claimed all five wickets to fall to a bowler on the second day with the other being the run out of Keshav Maharaj. He broke South Africa's fight back in the morning session when Temba Bavuma drove to cover then after lunch was magnificent in a spell that finished 4.1-4.4.

"When the ball got a bit softer didn't feel like there was too much in it but still feels the odd ball us nipping a little bit," Cummins said.

At that moment, he held the fourth-best strike-rate for a bowler with 300 Test wickets, behind Rabada, Dale Steyn and Waqar Yousif. Overall it gave him 79 wickets at 23.03 for this WTC cycle.

# Mehidy Hasan Miraz appointed Bangladesh's ODI captain

DHAKA (ESPNCricinfo): Mehidy Hasan Miraz has been appointed Bangladesh's ODI captain for the next 12 months. He will take over the captaincy from the three-match ODI series against Sri Lanka next month.

Mehidy's ODI appointment means Bangladesh now have three different captains in the three formats. Mehidy takes over from Najmul Hossain Shanto, who remains the Test captain, while Litton Das is the T20I captain.

"It is a huge honour for me to be entrusted with this responsibility by the board," Mehidy said. "Leading the country is a dream for any cricketer and I am grateful for the confidence the board has shown in me. I have every faith in this team. We have the talent and the belief to play fearless cricket. I want us to perform with confidence, play without inhibition and



continue giving our best for the country."

Mehidy led Bangladesh in four ODIs last year when Shanto was injured, first against Afghanistan and then in the West Indies. Bangladesh lost all four games. Mehidy also stood in as Test captain in the series against West Indies, helping Bangladesh draw the second Test in Jamaica after losing the first Test. He has played 105 ODIs and is the fourth Bangladesh player to do the double of 1000 runs and take 100 wickets in the format.

"The board felt that Miraz's consistent performances with the bat and ball, his ability to fight and inspire the team and his energetic presence on and off the field make him an ideal candidate to lead the ODI side during a transitional time," the BCB's cricket operations chairman Nazmul Abedeen said. "We believe he has the temperament and maturity to take Bangladesh forward in this format."

Abedeen said that Shanto, who was appointed Bangladesh captain in all

three formats in February last year, remained in the leadership group.

"We take this opportunity to thank Shanto for the positivity and character he has demonstrated as captain," he said. "He remains very much a part of the leadership group and we know how important his batting is to the team."

Shanto led Bangladesh to four wins in 13 ODIs since 2023. Bangladesh won the ODI series against Sri Lanka last year but lost to New Zealand and Afghanistan. Bangladesh also exited the Champions Trophy in the first round earlier this year.

Mehidy's appointment also comes with the BCB keeping the 2027 ODI World Cup in mind. Bangladesh are also currently ranked No. 10 in the format. They need to be among the top eight teams to earn an automatic qualification for the World Cup.

# Cunha completes 'dream' £62.5m Man Utd move

MANCHESTER (BBC): Brazil forward Matheus Cunha said his "dream" had become a reality after completing a £62.5m move to Manchester United.

United activated a release clause in Cunha's Wolves contract this month.

The deal, which was subject to a visa and a medical, has now been completed.

Cunha has signed a five-year contract, with the option of a further 12 months.

"It is hard to put into words my feelings about becoming a Manchester United player," he said.

"Ever since I was a child in Brazil watching Premier League games on TV at my grandmother's house, United was my favourite English team and I dreamed of wearing the red shirt.

"I want to thank my family and everyone who has helped me make that dream a reality."

Cunha scored 31 goals in 76 games in all competitions for Wolves after joining from Atletico Madrid in 2023.

"Bringing in Matheus

was one of our main priorities for this summer, so we are delighted to have completed his signing so early in the window," said United director of football Jason Wilcox.

"United lucky they still have historic appeal"

After United scored a record low of 44 goals in 38 Premier League matches last season, bolstering the attack was a clear priority for manager Ruben Amorim.

Although not a traditional centre-forward, Cunha scored 27 goals in 65 league games for Wolves in the past two seasons. Winger Antony and striker Rasmus Hojlund have arrived at Old Trafford for big transfer fees in recent years and struggled to adapt to the Premier League.

Newcastle United, who will play in the Champions League next season, were interested in signing Cunha.

United will not play European football next season and it is more than three years since they last reached the Champions League knockout stages.

"United are lucky they

still have their historic appeal and reputation as a club, so players of the Brazilian's quality and potential want to move there," former England midfielder Fara Williams told BBC Sport.

"There is no doubt he improves the squad."

Cunha was the heartbeat of Wolves' attacking threat in the past two seasons, scoring crucial goals, linking up play and unpicking defences with moments of brilliance.

"Cunha has everything a United team would want," said Williams.

"You cannot question the qualities he possesses and the attitude he has in terms of wanting to do anything to win."

Last season Cunha scored six goals from outside the penalty area and had 51 attempts on target in all competitions, the same figures as United's Bruno Fernandes for United.

"Cunha fits Amorim's system"

After regularly playing as a number nine in his first full season at Wolves, Cunha developed into an attacking midfielder during his second year at

Molineux.

Playing as a left-sided number 10 last term, Cunha often dropped deep to retrieve possession.

Former Wolves coach Edu Rubio said: "He needed some time to adapt to English football but now he is showing his true quality."

"Cunha can help United to get the ball up the pitch quicker with his great dribbling skills and his excellent driving runs which can break opposition lines so effectively."

"He is a top player with great technical ability. He can play as an eight, as a 10, second striker, striker - so he fits very well in Ruben's 3-4-2-1 system."

"He also likes to gravitate to the flank and come inside to hurt the opposition by penetrating into the box with and without the ball."

"United will need to offer him some freedom at front, giving him the opportunity to rotate and exchange positions across the attacking lines."

"In return he can offer United an attacking threat and hard work off the ball too."

NEW YORK (China Daily): FIFA's billion-dollar gamble to revolutionize club soccer begins a week on Sunday with plenty of cash up for grabs but questionable enthusiasm as 32 teams prepare to contest the expanded Club World Cup in 12 stadiums across the United States. The tournament — designed as a glittering curtain-raiser for the 2026 World Cup — has had to contend with the prospect of empty seats along with controversial qualification rules and player welfare concerns after an exhausting European season.

Lionel Messi's Inter Miami faces Egypt's Al Ahly in the opening fixture on June 14 in Miami, with tickets still widely available, while FIFA's website shows seats can still be bought for the July 13 final at New Jersey's MetLife Stadium.

FIFA said it was normal policy not to reveal details of ticket sales ahead of a tournament but pointed to the fact that tickets have been sold to fans in more than 130 countries as evidence of the CWC's broad appeal.

Inter Miami controversially gained its slot by topping Major League Soccer's

regular season standings, despite then losing in the first round of the playoffs, in a decision critics say showed FIFA's desperation to have the Argentina great at the showpiece. Inter Miami was thus included as the host nation representative — instead of MLS champion LA Galaxy — with Los Angeles FC and Seattle Sounders making it three US teams after qualifying through their CONCACAF performances. As well as the winners of each confederation's premier club competition, teams qualified according to a ranking based on their performances over a four-year period.

In another twist that went all the way to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, Club Leon, the 2023 CONCACAF Champions Cup winner, was eventually excluded from the tournament due to having shared ownership with another qualifier.

**Right deal**  
Nailing down a last-gasp \$1 billion TV rights deal with sports streaming platform DAZN six months before the tournament means a total of \$2 billion in expected revenues.

That led FIFA to announce a total prize pot of

\$1 billion, with the winning club to receive up to \$125 million. FIFA said there is also an unprecedented solidarity investment program with a target of an extra \$250 million provided to club soccer across the world and that all revenues from the tournament will be distributed to the club level.

That prize pot might look mouthwatering for club owners but for many players it will feel like a step too far after a long season and the European arm of players' union FIFPro and the European Leagues took legal action against FIFA over the issue.

In response, FIFA said it has "dozens of testimonies from players and coaches positively discussing the tournament" and said it was unfair to blame the CWC for calendar congestion.

"It is a competitive tournament that takes place once every four years with a maximum of seven matches only for the two teams who reach the final," a FIFA spokesman said.

FIFA has also given assurances that NFL stadiums hosting matches will meet their specifications, confirming all venues will feature natural grass and

adhere to standard regulation dimensions following sub-par pitches at last season's Copa America.

**Top contenders**

Divided into eight groups of four teams, top contenders include Real Madrid, winner of six of the last 12 Champions League titles, plus German champion Bayern Munich and 2023 Premier League and Champions League winner Manchester City.

European champion Paris Saint Germain is the in-form team heading into the tournament after its historic 5-0 thrashing of Inter Milan in the Champions League final.

But it must survive a tough Group B featuring South American and Brazilian champion Botafogo and 2024 CONCACAF winner Seattle Sounders plus Spanish giant Atletico Madrid. Whether you call it soccer or football, for FIFA the tournament represents a dress rehearsal and a appetendum on America's referendum for the sport and on the world governing body's vision for its commercial future ahead of the 2026 World Cup being co-hosted by the US, Mexico and Canada.





## In brief

### PHA providing best facilities

RAWALPINDI (APP): Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) is utilising all resources to decorate and beautify the parks and green belts across the city, aimed at providing the optimum recreational facilities to the public. On the special instructions of Director General PHA Ahmed Hassan Ranjha, the PHA cultivated seasonal flowers on the main highway of the city, Double Road, which presented charming sights, said the PHA spokesman. He added that the authority was also taking special measures to protect the plants and flowers planted in parks and green belts from the scorching heat. Regular water supply was being ensured to maintain the freshness, beauty, and the promotion of a lush environment, while water arrangements had been made in the parks for birds, he added.

### 255,822 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 255,822 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 270,639 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1444.32 feet which was 42.32 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 152,400 cusecs and 150,500 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1164.65 feet, which was 114.65 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 37,917 cusecs and 25,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 179,174, 133,709, 97,238 and 41,375 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 26,500 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 23,333 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### 2 accused arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Ganjmandi Police on Thursday held two accused for injuring citizens with a knife and bike wire lock. The accused along with their accomplices wounded citizens using a knife and bike wire locks after an exchange of hot words over a minor issue. The Ganjmandi Police registered the case of the incident four days ago, and used all means including human intelligence to trace and arrest the accused. The accomplices of the arrested accused would also be nabbed soon, the spokesman said.

### Police arrest 20 criminals

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police during actions against criminals across the district on Thursday arrested 20 accused, including drug and liquor suppliers, illegal arm owners, Tenancy Act violators and others. Two drug suppliers were nabbed from different areas with more than 3.5 kilograms of charas. One of the accused was nabbed by the Taxila Police with 1.85 kg charas and the other by the Mandra Police on the recovery of 1.86 kg of the contraband item. Similarly, seven suspects were taken into custody for having liquor and weapons along with ammunition. The Bani Police detained three accused recovering 15 liters of liquor from them, while Naseerabad, Civil Lines, Chautra and Kahuta Police captured one suspect each with illegal weapons and ammunition.

# Islamabad sets cleanliness example on Eidul Azha — sanitation workers honored

ISLAMABAD (APP): A special ceremony was organized in Capital Development Authority (CDA) on Thursday to honor the efforts of sanitation workers, following the successful execution of Civic body's "Zero Waste Operation."

In a commendable display of teamwork and public service, the capital city maintained exemplary cleanliness during Eid ul-Azha, earning praise from citizens and government officials alike, said the interior minister Mohsin Naqvi addressing the employees of CDA.

The initiative, led by Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, saw the participation of over 2,500 sanitation workers and 250 vehicles who worked tirelessly across both urban and rural parts of Islamabad.

Their efforts resulted in the collection of 2,400 tons of offal and waste over just three days.

Addressing the ceremony, Minister Naqvi paid tribute to the dedication of the sanitation staff. "The workers performed their duties day and night with

great commitment," he stated.

He expressed his gratitude to all stakeholders involved, including CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Deputy Commissioner Irfan Memon, Assistant Commissioners, and field teams for their leadership and coordination. To appreciate their hard work, Naqvi announced a bonus equal to one month's basic salary for all employees who took part in the operation. Additionally, daily wage workers will receive a cash reward of Rs. 15,000 each.

Naqvi emphasized that the public's positive response was a true acknowledgment of the CDA's performance. "Citizens expressed great satisfaction with the cleanliness across Islamabad during Eid," he noted. He also praised the cooperation of the public, which he said played a crucial role in the operation's success.

Advanced technology was employed to ensure effective monitoring, with drone cameras helping to oversee the entire cleanliness drive. The Safe City team was particularly com-

mended for its role in maintaining surveillance and coordination.

"All departments including CDA, MCI, District Administration, Islamabad Police, Safe City, and Traffic Police worked in harmony, setting aside institutional differences for the greater good," said Naqvi. "From officers to field workers, everyone delivered as one team."

He urged citizens to continue treating Islamabad as their own and to work together to maintain it as a clean and green city that meets international standards.

The CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa also addressed the ceremony, thanking all the teams involved for their round-the-clock efforts. The event was attended by several key officials, including Federal Interior Secretary Khuram Agha, IG Islamabad Police Ali Nasir Rizvi, DG Safe City, and other senior members of the administration.

The ceremony concluded with renewed commitment from all departments to continue serving the public with dedication and integrity.

## Siddiqui condemns India's actions against Turkish firms

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader and head of the Senate parliamentary party, Senator Irfan Siddiqui, on Thursday strongly condemned India's allegations against Türkiye and its recent actions targeting Turkish companies.

During a meeting with Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Irfan Neziroglu, Senator Siddiqui expressed solidarity with Türkiye, denouncing what he described as unjustified and politically motivated accusations.

Senator Irfan Siddiqui said, "We strongly reject India's accusations against Türkiye and its measures against Turkish companies. While Pakistan desires peace in the region, we have made it clear to India that we will not accept its attempts at dominance and are fully prepared to respond decisively to any aggression."

Senator Irfan Siddiqui said that Türkiye stood by Pakistan as a true and steadfast friend during Indian aggression, and the nation will always remember this support. Pakistan-Türkiye friendship is reaching new heights, with growing opportunities for mutual cooperation, especially in security and

defense, bringing the two nations even closer.

Senator Irfan Siddiqui warmly welcomed the Turkish Ambassador to his office, noting that the strong friendship between President Tayyip Erdogan and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is playing a key role in deepening bilateral ties between Pakistan and Türkiye.

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Senator Siddiqui said that Pakistan desires peace in the region but has made it clear to India that any attempt at dominance will not be accepted, and the country has the strength to respond firmly to any aggression. He emphasized that Pakistan is always ready for comprehensive and meaningful dialogue and noted that the world now clearly sees who is obstructing peace. He added that sustainable peace is not possible without resolving the core issue of Kashmir.

They affirmed that Türkiye and Pakistan are inseparable. Both leaders expressed deep concern and strongly condemned Israel's genocide against the people of Gaza. They agreed on the importance of adopting a united stance at all international forums to uphold peace, justice, and human rights in the face of this oppression.

Turkish Ambassador Dr. Irfan Neziroglu said that upon arriving in Pakistan, he never felt like he was in a different country, but rather in his own homeland. He added that Türkiye will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan in every challenging moment.

The Turkish Ambassador emphasized that both countries should now take concrete, structured, and forward-looking steps to enhance mutual cooperation.

The Turkish Ambassador, Dr. Irfan Neziroglu, praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's leadership, describing him as a deeply trusted and close friend of Türkiye. He noted that under Shehbaz Sharif's leadership, bilateral relations have grown stronger and are advancing on a solid foundation. He also reaffirmed Türkiye's full support for Pakistan's principled stance on the Kashmir issue.

## Rain-thundershower and duststorm forecast

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast a spell of duststorms and rain-thundershowers with occasional gaps in upper and central parts of the country from June 13-16.

The prevailing severe heatwave conditions are likely to subside during this

period.

According to the Met Office, moist currents were currently penetrating the upper parts of the country, while a westerly wave was also likely to approach the region on June 13.

Under the influence of these weather systems, duststorms and rain-thundershowers, accompanied

by isolated hailstorms, are expected in Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Murree, Galliat, Chitral, Dir, Swat, Malakand, Mansehra, Battagram, Shangla, Kohistan, and Abbottabad from June 13-16 with occasional gaps.

Duststorm and rain-thundershower activity, along with isolated hailstorms, are also expected in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mianwali, Sargodha, Hafizabad, Mandi Bahauddin, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Faisalabad, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh, Haripur, Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Charsadda, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, Kohat, Bannu, Karak, Dera Ismail Khan, Waziristan, Zhob, Barkhan, and Musakhel on June 13 and 16 with occasional gaps.

Duststorm and thunder-rain are also expected in all the districts of southern Punjab and upper Sindh during the same period.

The PMD has warned that windstorms, dust-thundershowers, hailstorms, and lightning may cause damage to loose structures such as electric poles, trees, vehicles, and solar panels, particularly in the upper and central parts of the country including Islamabad.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar presiding over a meeting.

## IGP visits Security Division, Safe City

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi visited the Security Division and Safe City Command and Control Center to review progress on ongoing development projects.

A public relations officer told APP on Thursday that SSP Security Division Muhammad Sarfraz Virk and Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Captain (R) Syed Zeeshan Haider briefed the IGP in detail about various ongoing projects, including the "Cascade" system.

IGP Rizvi directed officials to ensure timely completion of all development initiatives under the Security Division.

IGP Rizvi also visited the Safe City Command and Control Center, where Director General Safe City Shaker Hussain Dawar briefed him on the system's technical capabilities, rapid response mechanisms, and its role in crime prevention.

IGP Rizvi appreciated the performance of the Safe City team and directed officials to take further steps to enhance the system's overall effectiveness.

## World Day against Child Labour observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The people observed World Day against Child Labour on 12th June (Thursday) worldwide, including in Pakistan by focusing on building a world free of child labour.

Child labour refers to the employment of children in work that deprives them of their childhood, education and potential, often leading to serious harm to their physical and mental development.

In Pakistan, child labour remains a persistent issue, particularly in sectors like agriculture, domestic work, brick kilns, and informal industries, despite ongoing efforts to curb it.

While experts emphasized the need for urgent and coordinated actions including comprehensive policy implementation, targeted awareness campaigns, economic support for families and stricter enforcement of child protection laws.

Chairperson of the Punjab Child Protection and Welfare Bureau, Sara Ahmad, also a Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA), emphasized the need for stricter laws and proactive media campaigns to prevent child labour.

She reiterated the bureau's commitment to safeguard vulnerable children and called for collective action to ensure a brighter, safer future for all.

The country's top leadership also reaffirmed its commitment to ending child labour and promoting a better quality of life for every child in Pakistan.

On this occasion, the International Labour Organization (ILO) reiterated its call for the full ratification of ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age and the effective implementation of Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

These measures are essential to achieving the objectives outlined in the Durban Call to Action, which urges countries to enhance prevention, strengthen protections and build partnerships to eliminate child labour globally.

## Minister calls for awareness about child rights

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law, Justice and Human Rights, Senator, Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday said that protecting children from forced labour required collective responsibility and he called for greater awareness of children's rights and urged every segment of society to play its part in ending child labour.

He made these remarks while speaking at an event organized by the Child Protection Institute in Islamabad to mark the World Day Against Child Labour.

Senator Tarar said that the government alone cannot eliminate child labour and that the community must also participate in this effort.

He pointed out that everyone, from individuals to institutions, must contribute to protecting children from being forced into work.

Tarar highlighted the key role being played by the Child Protection Institute, which worked to safeguard children's wellbeing. "Institutes like these are essential in addressing child protection issues," he said.

While discussing broader national challenges, the federal minister also linked child protection with larger development concerns. "Pakistan's rapidly growing population is a major issue that directly affects the country's resources and governance," he said.

He added that there was a need to make Islamabad a

model city in terms of human rights, law and order, and cleanliness. For this, he said, all provinces and stakeholders must work together.

On the issue of laws, Senator Tarar said that legislation to prevent child labour was already in place. However, he stressed the importance of proper enforcement. "Strong implementation of these laws will help curb forced labour among children," he said.

He added that raising awareness is not only a policy matter but also a moral responsibility. "We must create a society where children are protected, educated and allowed to grow in a safe environment," he said.

Tarar acknowledged that child labour was often linked to poverty and lack of access to education. He said that unless these root causes were addressed, the problem would persist. He also underlined the need for coordination between government departments, civil society and international partners.

The federal minister said that ensuring children's rights was essential for the country's future. "These children will grow up to become the workforce, the leaders and the citizens of tomorrow," he said.

Participants at the event included government officials, child rights activists, students and representatives of civil society. Speakers discussed the challenges faced by children, particularly those

who are pushed into work at an early age.

Many shared the view that awareness campaigns and stronger institutional support were needed to end child labour. It was also noted that a lack of education, health facilities and social safety nets are contributing factors.

Some speakers called for better data collection on child labour, so that targeted interventions could be designed. Others stressed the need for community-based monitoring systems and regular inspections of workplaces.

Senator Tarar said that the government would continue to work with provinces and relevant institutions to improve child protection systems. He said policies will be reviewed and updated to reflect the current situation.

He also encouraged young people to take part in community-based campaigns. "Change starts from the ground. Youth engagement is vital in spreading awareness and creating a culture that respects children's rights," he said.

While concluding his speech, Senator Tarar reaffirmed the government's commitment to fulfilling its national and international obligations regarding child protection. "Pakistan is a signatory to various conventions on child rights. We are responsible for making sure that these commitments are honoured in practice," he said.

## Assistive Technology and Inclusion Summit held

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Assistive Technology and Inclusion Summit (ATIS-2025), themed "Transformative Solutions for Inclusive Development: The Role of Innovation in Fueling an Accessible and Equitable World," was successfully held at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) on Thursday, bringing together over 200 changemakers, experts, and stakeholders from across Pakistan.

Jointly organized by NUST and the Pak Everbright Development Organization (PEDO), the summit served as a critical platform to address the growing need for assistive technologies, especially digital devices, aimed at enhancing the quality of life for differently-abled individuals and senior citizens.

The event underscored the importance of bridging the gap between users and service providers, raising awareness, and ensuring the cost-effective availability and maintenance of assistive devices within the country.

A major highlight of the summit was a high-level panel discussion titled "Innovation for Accessibility: The Role of Academia, Industry, and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in Advancing Inclusion." The session featured thought leaders and industry professionals who shared insightful perspectives on current resources, challenges, and collaborative strategies to foster an inclusive future.

Adding to the summit's milestones was the inauguration of the NUST Disability Resource Center (NDRC). Launched in collaboration with PEDO, the center aims to promote inclusive education at the tertiary level and provide an accessible and supportive environment for differently-abled students.

"ATIS-2025 marks a significant step towards a truly inclusive society in Pakistan," stated Shahab Ud Din, CEO of PEDO.

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## ICT Police arrest key member of gang

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's Kohsar Police station team carried out a major operation and apprehended a key member of an organized gang involved in theft incidents at commercial centers.

An official told on Thursday said that the arrested suspect was identified as Kamran Masih, who

was wanted for his involvement in multiple theft cases targeting businesses in the area.

He said that stolen cash was recovered from the possession of the accused during the operation.

He said that a case has been registered against the accused at Kohsar Police Station, and further investigation is underway.

He said that all legal requirements would be fulfilled to ensure the accused is brought to justice and given due punishment under the law.

Large-scale crackdowns are being launched against organized and active criminal gangs operating in the capital under the special directives of DIG Muhammad Jawad Tariq.



2 killed in Farah collision

FARAH CITY (Pajhwok): Two people have been killed and five others injured as a result of traffic accident in Farahrud district of western Farah province of Afghanistan, an official said on Thursday. Mullah Mohammad Sadiq Jahadmal, the administrative chief of Farahrud district, said the accident occurred late Wednesday night when a Filder-type vehicle collided with a 404-model passenger bus on the Herat-Kandahar highway.

Fire inflicts financial losses

PAKTIKA (Amu TV): A late-night fire in Paktika caused heavy financial damage to local shopkeepers and investors. The blaze broke out Wednesday night in the Khairkot district, near the provincial capital, engulfing parts of a timber market and a nearby fuel station, the sources told Amu. The fire is believed to have started in a Mazda truck parked near the market. Approximately 500,000 Pakistani rupees in cash, reportedly stored inside the vehicle, were also destroyed in the flames.

WHO warns Congo virus cases rising

KABUL (Pajhwok): The World Health Organization's representative office in Afghanistan says Congo fever cases are on the rise and advised people with symptoms such as fever, headache, and muscle pain to see a doctor. The WHO in Afghanistan on its Facebook page without providing specific statistics on the number of people infected with the disease: "CCHF is a serious viral disease that is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected tick, or contact with the blood or meat of an infected animal, especially during or immediately after slaughter. It is increasing in Afghanistan and puts many communities at risk". "CCHF" is preventa-

ble... Early action can save lives; protect yourself and prevent the spread of this disease". Organization's messages Do not pull the tick with your fingers or pull it out of its skin — use tweezers to gently remove it from the head and close to the skin. Wash the bite site with soap and water or an antiseptic for at least one minute. Watch for fever, headache, or muscle aches within 2 weeks. If you have these symptoms, see a doctor and tell them about the tick bite. "Early action can save lives, protect yourself and prevent the spread of CCHF": the report added. On the other hand, spokesman for the Ministry

of Public Health Dr. Sharafat Zaman, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "The figures will be collected next week. We can't say anything until the figures come in, but last year, the numbers increased during Eid-ul-Adha." Dr. Faridullah Omari, a trainer and infectious disease specialist at the National and Specialized Infectious Diseases Hospital in Kabul, explained: "After Eid, Congo cases started surfacing, they are increasing day by day, and we have taken our precautions; that is, after Eid, it will reach its peak approximately a week later, the cases are increasing". Currently, there are 16 Congolese patients hospitalized in the hospital.

‘122m people forcibly displaced worldwide’

KABUL (TOLONews): The International Rescue Committee (IRC), citing new figures released by the United Nations, stated that 122 million people across the world are now forcibly displaced. According to the committee, this number is equivalent to the combined population of Spain and the United Kingdom and has increased from 120 million last year. The report notes: "Today's UN figures show that the number of forcibly displaced people worldwide has reached a record high, surpassing 122 million — more than the combined populations of Spain and the United Kingdom. This number stood at 120 million last year." IRC said that most of these people were forced to leave their homes due to war and natural disasters, and that the number has doubled over the past decade. According to the organization's data, nearly 40 percent of all displaced persons are under the age of 18. Climate-related displacement has also risen significantly, increasing from 26.3 million last year to 45.8 million this year, the report said. One-third of all forcibly displaced people in the world come from just four war-affected countries: Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, and Ukraine, according to the report.

Uzbekistan, Afghanistan discuss boosting economic ties at Tashkent Forum

KABUL (Ariana News): President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev has met with Afghanistan's Acting Minister of Industry and Trade, Nooruddin Azizi, during the International Investment Forum in Tashkent to discuss expanding bilateral economic cooperation across key sectors. The two sides engaged in comprehensive discussions focused on enhancing collaboration in trade, transport and logistics, energy, agriculture, and the exploration and extraction of minerals. Both parties acknowledged the steady growth in business relations in recent years. Trade volumes between the two countries have increased, joint ventures are multiplying, and regular business missions and trade fairs are helping to deepen commercial engagement. Uzbekistan's International Trade Center in Termez remains a vital hub for cross-border activity, while the opening of new Uzbek trade houses in Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif in May 2025 has further strengthened the country's economic footprint in



Afghanistan. Mirziyoyev meanwhile stressed the need to expand the legal and institutional framework guiding bilateral economic relations, particularly in trade and investment. A focal point of the discussion was the swift launch of the Hairatan Industrial Center, envisioned as a manufacturing base for pharmaceuticals, textiles, furniture, construction materials, and agricultural products. The two officials also reiterated their joint com-

mitment to key regional infrastructure projects, including the construction of the Trans-Afghan Railway and the Surkhan-Pul-e-Khumri power transmission line—initiatives seen as crucial for boosting connectivity and economic integration in Central and South Asia. Separately, on the sidelines of the Tashkent International Investment Conference, Azizi met with Uzbek Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade Laziz Kudratov. The two signed two important docu-

ments aimed at deepening economic cooperation between the two countries. In his keynote address at the conference, President Mirziyoyev reaffirmed Uzbekistan's support for a peaceful and sustainable future for Afghanistan. He called for Afghanistan's development to remain a global priority and emphasized the importance of maintaining open dialogue with the Islamic Emirate, urging the international community to avoid isolating the country.

Helmand River water transfer underway, pushes for continued flow

KABUL (Ariana News): Iranian government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani announced this week that a portion of Iran's allocated water from the Helmand River is currently being received, as diplomatic efforts continue to ensure the sustained flow. Speaking on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting, Mohajerani emphasized that the issue of Iran's water rights from the Helmand is longstanding and remains a priority for the government. "Fortunately, part of the water is currently being transferred, and negotiations for main-

taining this flow are still underway," she said. Mohajerani also highlighted the environmental dimensions of the dispute, expressing hope that ongoing dialogue and cooperation would lead to a resolution that addresses ecological concerns in the affected regions. The dispute stems from a decades-old agreement between Iran and Afghanistan, signed in the 1970s, which outlines Iran's right to water from the Helmand River—a key water source along the shared border. Since the Islamic Emirate's return to power

in Afghanistan nearly four years ago, Iranian officials have repeatedly urged Kabul to honor the treaty. Iran continues to push for a diplomatic resolution to the issue, stressing the need for regional cooperation to prevent further environmental degradation and water insecurity. In response to Tehran's complaints, Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) officials have maintained that water flow to Iran depends on the natural availability of water and weather conditions. They have denied intentionally restricting the flow and

argue that prolonged drought and lower reservoir levels have made it impossible to fulfill the full allocation as stipulated in the treaty. IEA representatives have also accused Iran of politicizing the issue and claim they remain committed to the treaty "in principle," provided that water resources are available. In previous statements, IEA officials have invited Iranian experts to inspect the Kajaki Dam and other water infrastructure to verify the situation on the ground—a proposal Tehran has yet to publicly respond to in detail.

Taliban's mandatory dress code forces some students out of school

KABUL (Amu TV): The new Taliban-imposed dress code in schools that mandates traditional clothing, including turbans, long shirts, and trousers has discouraged many from continuing their education, students said. The policy requires all male pupils and teachers to wear white shalwar kameez, turbans, or caps. Some students who attempted to resist the mandate said they were warned by school administrators and eventually barred from attending classes. "Because of the Taliban's dress rule, I dropped out of school," said Mohammad, a high school senior using a pseudonym for safety reasons. "They told us to wear white shalwar kameez and a turban. I refused and was

warned twice. Then I wasn't allowed back. Several of my classmates left for the same reason." The regulation, officially issued in April 2023 by the Taliban's Ministry of Education, outlines not only the required garments but also their color and measurements. The directive, signed by Taliban acting education minister Habibullah Agha, notes that the order was approved by Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada and must be implemented across all provinces. Some students who have continued attending school under the new dress code also expressed unease. "These rules are causing people to quit school," said Naveed, a student in eastern Afghanistan. "Other countries are progressing,



and we are stuck debating uniforms." Human rights advocates say the dress code, alongside other Taliban education policies, is contributing to a broader erosion of access to education in Afghanistan. They warn that the growing number of dropouts could lead to long-term social consequences. "When we talk about education, we should be talking about global standards — not about clothing restrictions imposed by religious edicts," said Mina Rafiq, a human rights activist. "This is an infringement on personal freedom — for both men and women — and it's driving students away from learning." Rafiq added that the education system under the Taliban has already undergone significant changes, including curriculum shifts toward religious schooling modeled after seminaries in Pakistan. "Now, even the uniforms must change — all to align with a specific ideology," she said. While the Taliban has defended the policy as a measure to promote "discipline and Islamic identity," critics argue that enforcing such rules through coercion undermines educational goals. Several students who spoke with Amu called on the Taliban to reconsider. "We ask them to think about the conditions families and students are in," said Naveed, a student. "They should revise their decision so we can focus on learning, not on what we wear."

Floods in Badakhshan lead to destruction



BADAKHSHAN (BNA): Badakhshan province has faced devastating floods following heavy rains, resulting in substantial financial losses for local residents. According to Mawlawi Mohammad Akram Akbari, head of the Disaster Management Department, the Teshkan,

Khash, and Tagab districts have been particularly hard-hit. Initial reports indicate that over 12 houses have been destroyed, along with approximately 1,500 jerbis of agricultural land and 2,500 livestock. Akbari emphasized that these figures are preliminary and

may change as further investigations are conducted. In response to the disaster, a delegation has been dispatched to assess the situation on the ground. Akbari urged aid and charitable organizations to provide immediate assistance to support the affected communities.

Afghan refugee Kubra Rezai found murdered



KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghan refugee Kubra Rezai was brutally murdered, with her remains found in an Iranian suspect's home nearly 50 days after disappearance. The remains of Kubra Rezai, a young Afghan migrant who had been missing for nearly 50 days, have been discovered in the home of an Iranian man in Pakdasht, Iran. The case has shocked both Afghan and Iranian communities. According to the Iranian media outlets, the suspect, identified by the initials "A.Kh", is a 32-year-old married man employed as a factory security guard. Reports suggest that he was acquainted with the victim. Iranian police reportedly searched the suspect's home after Rezai's family

raised suspicions. Inside, they found dismembered body parts of the victim. There were signs that acid had been used in an attempt to destroy evidence. During initial interrogations, the suspect denied involvement. However, upon being presented with forensic evidence, he confessed. He allegedly committed the crime after learning of Rezai's engagement, which triggered a violent emotional reaction. The brutal nature of the killing and attempted concealment has raised serious concerns about the safety of migrants, especially Afghan women, living in vulnerable conditions in Iran. The human rights organization Hengaw had earlier reported on June 9 the discovery of the mutilated body of a 26-year-old Afghan woman in Tehran, identifying her as Kubra Rezai, also known as "Shaqayeq". This murder underscores a broader crisis facing Afghan refugees in Iran, where reports of discrimination, abuse, and gender-based violence have been steadily increasing amid growing economic and political instability. Human rights advocates have called for a transparent investigation and stronger protections for refugees. They stress the need for both Afghan and Iranian authorities to coordinate on justice and safeguard vulnerable communities from further violence.

Provincial hospital lacks medicines: Faryab residents

MAIMANA (Pajhwok): Some residents in northern Faryab province have been complaining about a shortage of medicines in the provincial hospital and urge officials to pay serious attention to resolving this problem. They complain about economic problems and their inability to buy medicines from private pharmacies. Jamaluddin, a resident of Ghormach district of Badghis province, said he admitted his father to the hospital in Maimana city and bought all medicines he needed from the market except for one ampoule. He had so far bought medicines worth 5,000afs. He explained if he had financial means, he would not have visited this hospital. He asked the Islamic

Emirate to provide medicines to patients for free, taking into account their economic problems. Noorullah, a resident of Lolash district of Faryab, has a heart condition. He said he has been hospitalized in the Maimana hospital since more than a week. Doctors are taking care of his examinations, but there is no medicine. "My financial position is weak, so I didn't go to a private hospital. I thought that services and medicines in the government hospital were free, but there is nothing here, they only gave me a packet of tablets, but I bought medicines from the market for 6,000afs". Charity foundations should cooperate with the Afghan Ministry of Public Health in this area because most people cannot afford

to buy medicines, District Chief Mullah Abdul Jalil said. Faryab health officials Dr. Mohammad Ibrahim Karimi, chief physician at Maimana city hospital, confirmed the shortage of medicines and said the hospital included internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics, polyclinic and emergency department and had 100 beds. According to him, the provincial hospital's budget, the Health Emergency Response Project (HER), is for 100 beds, and medicines and equipment provided are not enough for Faryab's two million population. Maulvi Khan Agha Asad, deputy head and acting public health director of the province, explained such problems not only

plagued raised the provincial hospital, but all health centers in Maimana city and districts. Faryab is the second largest province in the north and northeast of the country with a population of more than two million people. The establishment of a provincial hospital and health services, which is planned by a contracted NGO and a donor, is for 100 beds, while up to 300 patients from Faryab and two districts of Badghis province visit this hospital for treatment daily. "The failure of the NGO (SAF) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to deliver promised medicines has also led to complaints that both organizations have

problems with each other, but they blame each other" The hospital up-gradation to a 300-bed facility has been approved by MoPH, while there is staffing and space capacity, but UNICEF does not accept its budget. If 300 beds are included in the UNICEF program, there will be no problem in the health sector. Solidarity of SAF Dr. Ibrahim Khel, head of Afghan Families Organization in Faryab (SAF), explained health services are provided in accordance with BPHS and EPHS policies of MoPH through 66 health centers and 547 health posts under the name HER or (Health Emergency Response). A total of 950 personnel, including 584 men and 366 women, are working, and

the contract for this project has been signed with UNICEF office. "The current project is HER project, which has budget constraints due to the health project contracts, and medicines for a number of diseases that are not included in the list are not stocked in health centers for this purpose." The contract for the Maimana Provincial Hospital is for 100 beds, but currently 250 beds are active, and according to EPHS policy, the minimum number of employees should be 101 and the maximum 161, while 202 employees work at the provincial hospital and on average more than 157,400 patients are treated on an outpatient basis every month, he added. "Based on the contract,

100 items of medicines will be distributed by UNICEF and 40 items of medical supplies by the implementing agency (SAF) to health centers. We receive medicines from UNICEF on a quarterly basis and distribute them to health centers. UNICEF purchases these medicines from national markets, which must have quality control certificates, but sometimes the number of items does not match the suppliers, which is why there are sometimes delays in the supply of medicines". The Pajhwok News journalist shared the issue with Mohammad Dawood Royan, head of the UNICEF office in the relevant department, but did not receive a response after about ten days.





ISLAMABAD: US Charge d’Affaires, Natalie Baker, called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Ishaq Dar.

## Ukraine and Russia exchange wounded, ill prisoners of war

KYIV (Reuters): Ukraine and Russia exchanged another group of ill and severely wounded servicemen on Thursday, officials from both countries said. All of the Ukrainian troops need treatment, Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a message on the Telegram messaging app that did not go into details on the numbers involved.

Kyiv and Moscow agreed to a large exchange of POWs and the remains of thousands of dead soldiers during talks in Istanbul earlier this month. Since then, Russia and Ukraine have swapped dozens of prisoners of war, focusing on under-25s and the severely wounded and sick. There are hopes they could build into some of the biggest exchanges in the war that was triggered by Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Russia’s defence ministry said a group of Russian troops had returned from Ukraine and crossed into neighbouring Belarus, in accordance with the agreements made on June 2.

“They are being provided with the necessary psychological and medical assistance,” the ministry said on Telegram. On Wednesday, Ukraine said it had brought home the bodies of 1,212 troops killed in the war with Russia. Kremlin aide Vladimir Medinsky said Ukraine had returned the bodies of 27 Russian soldiers. Meanwhile, the Russian forces

launched a fresh drone assault across Ukraine, killing three people and wounding 64 more, Ukrainian officials said.

One of the hardest-hit areas was the city of Kharkiv in northeastern Ukraine, where 17 attack drones struck two residential districts, said Mayor Ihor Terekhov. Emergency crews, municipal workers and volunteers worked through the night to extinguish fires, rescue residents from burning homes, and restore gas, electricity and water services. “Those are ordinary sites of peaceful life — those that should never be targeted,” Terekhov wrote on Telegram.

Three people were confirmed killed, according to Kharkiv regional head Oleh Syniehubov. In a statement, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that 64 people had been injured and reiterated his calls for greater international pressure on Moscow. “Every new day now brings new vile Russian attacks, and almost every strike is telling,” he said. “We must not be afraid or postpone new decisions that could make things more difficult for Russia.”

Without this, they will not engage in genuine diplomacy. And this depends primarily on the United States and other world leaders. Everyone who has called for an end to the killings and for diplomacy must act.” Kharkiv has been frequent-

ly targeted in recent months as Russia launched repeated large-scale drone and missile attacks on civilian infrastructure.

Moscow’s forces have deployed high numbers of drones and missiles in recent days, with a record bombardment of almost 500 drones on Monday and a wave of 315 drones and seven missiles overnight on Tuesday. The attacks come despite discussions of a potential ceasefire. The two sides traded memoranda at direct peace talks in Istanbul on June 2 that set out conditions. However, the inclusion of clauses that both sides see as nonstarters make any quick deal unlikely.

Wednesday’s strikes also caused widespread destruction in Kharkiv’s Slobidskiy and Osnovianskiy districts, hitting apartment buildings, private homes, playgrounds, industrial sites and public transport. Images from the scene published by Ukraine’s Emergency Service on Telegram showed burning apartments, shattered windows and fire-fighters battling the blaze. “We stand strong. We help one another. And we will endure,” Terekhov said. “Kharkiv is Ukraine. And it cannot be broken.” Ukraine’s airforce said that 85 attack and decoy drones were fired over the country overnight. Air defense systems intercepted 40 of the drones, while nine more failed to reach their targets without causing damage.

### PTI leaders denied meeting with Imran

E.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: A group of senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders was denied access to meet the party’s incarcerated founder, Imran Khan, at Adiala Jail after visiting hours expired.

The leaders, who gathered at the prison gate on Thursday following a wait at Factory Naka, were informed that the official meeting time had ended. As a result, they were unable to meet with Imran Khan and had to return without any interaction.

Among those who attempted the visit were Nisar Jutt, Alamgir Khan, Changez Khan Kakar, and Rizwan Siyan. Additional PTI figures including Syed Fakhar Jehan, Fazal Hakim, and Arshad Sahi also arrived at the prison seeking a meeting with Khan. This development comes amid heightened political tensions and increased interest in the condition and legal situation of Imran Khan, who remains imprisoned on multiple charges.

### Mahrang approaches SC

E.P. Report

QUETTA: Rights activist Mahrang Baloch on Thursday moved the Supreme Court against the Balochistan High Court’s (BHC) May 22 order that dismissed constitutional petitions challenging her detention and that of two other Baloch leaders, more than two months after they were held under Section 3 of the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance (MPO).

Mahrang’s sister had challenged the detention in the BHC but the court had asked the petitioner to approach the home department for her release. The sister had subsequently filed constitutional petitions in the high court challenging the detentions but those were dismissed.

Mahrang’s petition, filed in the Supreme Court (SC) through senior counsel Faisal Siddiqi and lawyer Jibran Nasir, pleaded for the right to appeal against the May 22 order and requested the apex court to set aside the BHC judgment and allow the constitutional petitions. Mahrang argued the BHC judgment was “without jurisdiction, illegal, and liable to be set aside”.

She said that the continued detention was “unjustified and disproportionate” as her name was already placed in the Fourth Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, subjecting her to stringent restrictions on movement, liberty, and livelihood and enabling the government to maintain oversight through measures including good behaviour bonds, movement restrictions, reporting requirements and asset inquiries.

“It is submitted that further preventive detention under the MPO, in addition to these restrictions, amounts to excessive and punitive control which fails the legal tests of legality, necessity, and proportionality,” the petition said, adding that she was entitled to be released from preventive custody so she may lawfully defend herself in pending cases and seek appropriate legal remedies.

## Israeli strikes kill 52 across Gaza

GAZA: Israeli attacks have killed at least 52 people across Gaza since dawn, medical sources told Al Jazeera, as the United Nations General Assembly prepares for a vote urging an unconditional ceasefire in the besieged enclave.

Sources told Al Jazeera that at least 26 of the people killed on Thursday died in Israeli drone attacks while waiting for food and basic supplies being distributed by the controversial United States and Israel-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF). Gaza civil defence official Mohammed el-Mougher told AFP news agency that al-Awda Hospital received at least 10 bodies and about 200 others who were wounded “after Israeli drones dropped multiple bombs on gatherings of civilians near an aid distribution point around the Netzarim checkpoint in central Gaza”.

El-Mougher said that Gaza City’s al-Shifa Hospital also received six bodies after Israeli attacks on aid queues near Netzarim and in the as-Sudaniya area in northwest Gaza. Since the GHF began its operation in Gaza in late May, dozens of Palestinians have been killed while trying to reach

the aid distribution points, according to Gaza’s civil defence agency.

The previously unknown GHF has come under intense criticism from the United Nations, which says its distribution model is deeply flawed. “This model will not address the deepening hunger. The dystopian ‘Hunger Games’ cannot become the new reality,” Philippe Lazzarini, the chief of the UN Palestinian refugee agency (UNRWA), wrote on X.

“The UN including @UNRWA has the knowledge, expertise & community trust to provide dignified & safe assistance. Just let the humanitarians do their jobs,” he added. Separately, a medical source at al-Shifa Hospital told Al Jazeera that two Palestinians were killed as a result of Israeli shelling targeting the Bir an-Najja area west of Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza.

Meanwhile, Hamas condemned on Thursday what it described as an Israeli decision to cut off communication lines in Gaza, describing it as “a new aggressive step” in the country’s “war of extermination”. “We call on the international community to assume its responsibility to stop the aggression and

ensure the protection of civilians and humanitarian and civilian facilities.”

The disruption of communications has resulted in the UNRWA losing contact with its colleagues in the agency in Gaza, the UN’s main humanitarian provider in Gaza said. Deputy UN spokesperson Farhan Haq said on Thursday that there was a full internet blackout in Gaza, likely the result of military activity damaging the last cable into the territory.

Haq said that “lifelines to emergency services, humanitarian coordination, and critical information for civilians have all been cut”. The latest developments come as the UN General Assembly is set to vote on a draft resolution that demands an immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire in the war in Gaza.

The 193-member General Assembly is likely to adopt the text with overwhelming support, diplomats say, despite Israel lobbying countries this week against taking part in what it called a “politically motivated, counterproductive charade”. Last week, the United States vetoed a similar effort in the Security Council. — Aljazeera

## SC seeks detail report regarding property case

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The Supreme Court of Pakistan’s three-member bench has sought a detailed report from the Advocate General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regarding the case property vehicles in all police stations across the province. The bench, comprising Justice Musarat Hilali, Justice Shakeel Ahmad, and Justice Ishfaq Ibrahim, heard a petition filed by Muhammad Imran and others.

During the hearing, the Advocate General, Shah Faisal Utmankhel, and police officers appeared before the court. The court inquired about the current status of the case property vehicles and sought a

detailed report.

The Advocate General informed the court that 1,119 vehicles were parked in the warehouse of the Daudzai police station, and 36 vehicles were temporarily parked in the warehouse of the Mathra police station. Justice Musarat Hilali expressed concern over the alleged misuse of case property vehicles, stating that a vehicle retrieved by the court was found in good condition, despite being five years old, and had no record of being stored in the warehouse.

Justice Shakeel Ahmad remarked that if the allegations are true, the court might initiate contempt proceedings against the responsible officers. The court directed the Advocate

General to submit a comprehensive report detailing the current status of case property vehicles in all police stations across the province.

The report should include information on the location, condition, and ownership of each vehicle. The court warned that any inaccuracies in the report could lead to action against the responsible authorities.

The court adjourned the hearing until July and directed the Advocate General to submit the report, emphasizing that the misuse of case property vehicles would not be tolerated. The court emphasized the importance of transparency and accountability in the management of case property vehicles.

## Finance Minister briefs NA Committee on Finance

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday apprised the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue that the country’s macroeconomic indicators have shown resilience, which was attributed to the prudent economic policies of the incumbent government.

The minister briefed the committee on the government’s fiscal strategy for the upcoming financial year and shared outcomes of supplementary financial measures implemented during the current year. During the session, the Finance Minister outlined key structural reforms introduced in Budget 2025-26, emphasizing future policy direction, improved tax compliance, and efforts to

streamline the tax system.

He highlighted the government’s achievements in stabilizing the economy, noting improvements in macroeconomic indicators and growing confidence from international financial institutions. Senator Aurangzeb informed the committee that during the current fiscal year, inflation dropped significantly, from 23.4% to 4.6% over the past year, adding that the interest rates were lowered from a record 22% to 11%.

For the first time in history, Pakistan’s economy surpassed the \$400 billion mark, he said, adding that GDP grew by 10.5% compared to the previous year, and the tax revenues of rose by 26%, he added. The meeting was informed that the national debt was reduced in proportion to GDP, and Rs. 1 trillion was

repaid ahead of schedule. Remittances are projected to reach \$38 billion, with a \$10 billion increase over two years.

He said that the exchange rate remained stable, while foreign reserves grew from \$9.4 billion to \$11.5 billion. The primary fiscal surplus reached 3% of GDP, the highest in two decades, adding that the current account recorded a \$1.9 billion surplus, compared to a \$1.3 billion deficit last year.

The minister told the meeting that exports increased by nearly 7%, with IT exports rising by 21%. These developments, Aurangzeb noted, have been acknowledged by global financial bodies, survey firms, and rating agencies, including Fitch, which upgraded Pakistan’s credit outlook.

### PHC annoys appointments of Tribunal member

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court Justice Ijaz Anwar remarked that the provincial government’s practice of making appointments to various tribunals without consulting the Peshawar High Court would lead to problems. The court strives to nominate officials with unblemished past records to avoid issues, on Thursday.

Justice Ijaz Anwar made these remarks during the hearing of a complaint against a member of the MTI Tribunal. The court observed that the member had allegedly demanded expensive mobile phones from some doctors in exchange for a favorable decision in their case.

The complaint stated that the member had demanded mobile phones and threatened to modify the decision if the demand was not met. The court noted that the member’s actions had led to the modification of the decision, which was initially in favor of the doctors.

The Advocate General informed the court that a committee had been formed to denotify the member, but the legal requirement of providing a personal hearing had delayed the process.

## Marines gear up for LA as California heads to court

CALIFORNIA (AFP): California will face off with Washington in court on Thursday over President Donald Trump’s deployment of US troops in Los Angeles after demonstrators again took to the streets in major cities to protest Trump’s immigration crackdown.

Some 700 US Marines will be on the streets of Los Angeles by Thursday or Friday, the military said, to support up to 4,000 National Guard troops in protecting federal property and federal agents, including on immigration raids. Trump’s decision to dispatch troops to Los Angeles over the objections of California Governor Gavin Newsom has sparked a national debate about the use of the military on US soil and further polarised the country.

Street protests have broken out in multiple cities besides Los Angeles, including New York, Chicago, Washington and San Antonio, Texas. A federal judge in San Francisco will hear arguments Thursday as part of California’s lawsuit against Trump. The state is requesting a temporary restraining order to block the troops’ participation in law enforcement activities.

California ultimately wants a court ruling that

returns its National Guard to the state’s control and declares that Trump’s action was illegal. The LA protests broke out last Friday in response to a series of immigration raids. Trump, in turn, called in the National Guard on Saturday, then summoned the Marines on Monday.

“Los Angeles was safe and sound for the last two nights. Our great National Guard, with a little help from the Marines, put the LA Police in a position to effectively do their job,” Trump posted on social media on Thursday. “They all worked well together, but without the Military, Los Angeles would be a crime scene like we haven’t seen in years.” State and local leaders dispute that, saying Trump has only escalated tensions with an unnecessary deployment of federal troops, while Democrats nationally have condemned his action as authoritarian.

Trump is carrying out a campaign promise to deport immigrants, employing forceful tactics consistent with the norm-breaking political style that got him elected twice. Los Angeles on Wednesday endured a sixth day of protests that have been largely peaceful but occasionally punctuated

by violence, mostly contained to a few blocks.

In downtown LA, shortly before the second night of a curfew over a one-square-mile (2.5 square km) area on Wednesday night, police said demonstrators at one location threw commercial-grade fireworks and rocks at officers. Another group of nearly 1,000 demonstrators was peacefully marching through downtown when police suddenly opened fire with less lethal munitions in front of City Hall.

Marlene Lopez, 39, a Los Angeles native, was demonstrating as flash bangs exploded just a few meters away. “I am out here because of the fact that our human rights are being violated every day. If we give up, it’s over. We have to stand our ground here in LA so that the nation will follow us,” Lopez said. An undetermined number of arrests were made, in addition to some 400 over the previous days.

New York police said an unknown number of people had been taken into custody on Wednesday after saying on Tuesday that 86 had been taken into custody, of which 34 were arrested and charged, while the others received a criminal court summons.

## Ahsan says PTI has become a proxy of India

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal, while highlighting development priorities of the government, said here on Thursday that Balochistan has been put on accelerated development path for which Rs230 billion have been earmarked in the federal budget 2025-26.

Addressing a press conference here, the minister said, development of Balochistan was being treated as a national responsibility, in line with the directives of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. The initiative aims to transform the socio-economic landscape of the province over the next two years through targeted investment in critical infrastructure projects to improve connectivity.

A key highlight of the development plan is the N-25 Chaman-Quetta-Karachi highway, for which Rs100 billion has been allocated. The project is expected to be completed within two to three years and will serve as a strategic corridor. In addition work will also accelerate on the M8 and several other regional infrastructure schemes aimed at boosting connectivity, promoting investment, and ensuring inclusive development.

Ahsan said, with growing concerns over the use of water as a geopolitical tool, the government attached great importance to water sector, emphasizing the urgent need to complete critical reservoir projects to safeguard Pakistan’s water security. He said, India has attempted to use water as a weapon. While India cannot legally stop Pakistan’s water under the Indus Waters Treaty - nor will it be allowed to - it may try to disrupt flows.

To counter potential threats and ensure long-term resilience, the government is moving swiftly to complete Diamer Bhasha and Mohmand dams with storage capacity of 6 million acre feet and around 1 million acre feet respectively, bringing the total capacity to around 7 million acre feet. The minister acknowledged that tight fiscal space, driven by structural constraints, has reduced its ability to fund development projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). He said, the development budget has declined from 2.6% of GDP in 2017-18 to just 0.8%-a trend described as a serious structural concern for national development.

Looking ahead, the government aims to meet development and other expenditures through domestic resources, however, achieving this

goal requires raising Pakistan’s tax-to-GDP ratio to at least 16%-a level already maintained by regional peers. Talking about performance of economy, he said, the country’s economic turnaround was the result of bold, politically unpopular decisions taken by the coalition government under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, aimed at ensuring long-term stability.

He said, when the PDM government came into power, many predicted it would last only a few weeks. “It was the Prime Minister’s courageous leadership and tough economic measures that saved Pakistan from collapse,” he said, adding that these reforms came at the cost of political capital but were necessary for national interest. Iqbal highlighted the challenges faced at the start of the coalition’s tenure, including the devastating 2022 floods causing over \$30 billion in damages. “Despite the crisis, we continued development funding-unlike the previous PTI government, which withheld funds for an entire quarter,” he said, accusing PTI of leaving behind a ballooning trade deficit of \$50 billion and engaging in hate-based politics rather than development.

He praised the resilience of the Pakistani nation and armed forces, referencing the events of May 9 as a

clear rejection of PTI’s anti-state narrative. “The PTI has become a proxy of India,” Iqbal claimed, alleging both sought to undermine the IMF program, target national institutions, and spread instability.

Iqbal noted a series of positive economic indicators: inflation down to 4%, policy rate reduced from 23% to 11%, and a booming stock market. He added that international institutions, have acknowledged Pakistan’s recovery, with global journals calling it a “miracle turnaround.” Tax reforms have led to a record 29% increase in FBR revenue collection. Development spending also rose sharply, with the total outlay increasing by 50% in FY2025.26 to Rs4.224 trillion from Rs2.832 trillion, supported by improved provincial allocations.

Reforms in the energy sector, including restructuring subsidies and resolving issues with IPPs, have improved fiscal discipline. The government is now focusing on sustained growth driven by domestic resources, enhanced exports, and rising remittances, which have grown from \$27 billion to \$37 billion. He said, government’s development plan, branded URAAN Pakistan, is already bearing fruit and projects GDP growth to rise from 2.7% to 4.2% in the coming fiscal year.

Ahsan emphasized that enhancing exports and increasing revenues were essential to placing Pakistan’s economy on a path of sustainable growth and breaking free from recurring boom-and-bust cycles.

He said that without expanding the country’s revenue base and export capacity, economic progress would remain vulnerable to external shocks. The government, he added, is committed to long-term reforms aimed at achieving stability through self-reliance and improved fiscal management. Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said development of infrastructure was also a government priority adding the government was focusing on fast-tracking key regional connectivity projects, including those under the CAREC initiative, CPEC, the Indus Highway, the N-5 dualization project, the Coastal Highway project in Gwadar, and the Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway.

Additionally, construction will begin this year on the Peshawar-Torkham Expressway, which is part of the Khyber Pass Economic Corridor. Work will also commence on the 88 km long section of the Karakoram Highway located within the Diamer Basha Dam area. On technology, he said, under the Prime Minister’s program, more than 200,000 students

have been provided with IT skills. The program, led by the Ministry of IT, aims to equip youth with modern technological education to prepare them for the digital economy.

He said, the government would launch a “Silicon Valley Pakistan” initiative to integrate various national technology programs under one platform, creating a hub for emerging technologies. In addition, it will establish a National Centre for Quantum Computing, National Centres for Nanotechnology, National Centre for Advanced Manufacturing, and Integrated Automation and Robotics Program. To revive and strengthen the agriculture sector, the government will launch new research initiatives, particularly focused on increasing cotton production, which has declined in recent years.

While on health sector, government has allocated Rs. 64 billion for new projects, with a major focus on the elimination of Hepatitis C. The target is to achieve zero cases of Hepatitis by 2030. On education and healthcare, the minister said, two major projects - Jinnah Medical Complex and Danish University - will place Pakistan on the global map for medical advancement and higher education. Danish University will be established as a state-of-the-art research institution.