

**Zaireen repatriated: FO**  
**F.P. Report**  
ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) on Monday successfully repatriated 268 Pakistani zaireen (pilgrims) through two special flights from the Iraqi city of Basra to Karachi and Islamabad, according to a statement. The ministry said it is working closely with Iraqi Airways and Iraqi authorities to repatriate the zaireen and ensure their "safe and timely return".

 @thefrontierpost

First national English daily published from Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Karachi and Washington D.C

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIXII

No. 137

Regd. No. 241

ZIL HAJJ 20 1446 -- TUESDAY, JUNE 17 2025

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30

## Tel Aviv bombs Tehran state TV

TEHRAN: The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) building was struck in an Israeli attack on Monday, cutting live coverage immediately. The blast occurred as the presenter was live on TV lambasting Israel before she was seen leaving the live broadcast, Iranian media reported, sharing a video of the incident.

Iran fired a new wave of missile attacks on Israel early Monday, trig-

## PM reaffirms solidarity with Iran

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Monday reiterated Pakistan's condemnation of the recent Israeli aggression against Iran and expressed the nation's sympathies with Iran over the martyrdom of innocent civilians. The prime minister met Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam on the occasion of Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Discussing the current regional situation, the prime minister expressed Pakistan's solidarity with Iran and its people during this time of heightened tension. Referring to his recent telephone conversation with Iranian President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, the prime minister said that Pakistan supported Iran at the United Nations Security Council meeting, adding Israeli attacks were a complete violation of the UN Charter and the international laws.

gery air raid sirens across the country as emergency services reported at least five killed and dozens more wounded in the fourth day of open warfare between the regional foes that showed no sign of slowing. Iran announced it had launched some 100 missiles and vowed further retaliation for Israel's sweeping attacks on its military and nuclear infrastructure, which have killed at least 224 people in the country since last Friday.

The attacks raised Israel's total death toll to at least 18, and in response the Israeli military said fighter jets had struck 10 command centers in Tehran belonging to Iran's Quds

other sites like this near the coast, in the south." The MDA added that paramedics had evacuated another 87 wounded people to hospitals, including a 30-year-old woman in serious condition, while rescuers were still searching for residents trapped beneath the rubble of their homes.

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said Monday that Iran's state television and radio were "about to disappear" after an evacuation warning was issued for the district in Tehran where the broadcaster is based. "The Iranian propaganda and incitement megaphone is about to disappear," he said in a statement. "Evacuation of nearby

## Iran does not seek nuclear weapons: Masoud

TEHRAN: Iran does not intend to develop nuclear weapons but will pursue its right to nuclear energy and research, President Masoud Pezeshkian said today, reiterating Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's religious edict against weapons of mass destruction. Iran had claimed the existence of the fatwa for years before making the text public for the first time in 2010, when it was being accused by the West and Israel of seeking to secretly acquire the atomic bomb. While asserting that Iran remains opposed to developing weapons of mass destruction, Esmail Baghaei, Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson, said the Iranian parliament is preparing a bill to leave the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The Iranian president, speaking during a parliamentary session on Monday, also called for unity and solidarity "more than ever" against the Israeli aggression, Press TV reported. Pezeshkian asserted that Iran had the right to benefit from nuclear energy and research that served the nation's interests, adding that no one had the right to deny this right. — Agencies

Force, an elite arm of its Revolutionary Guard that conducts military and intelligence operations outside Iran. Powerful explosions, likely from Israel's defense systems intercepting Iranian missiles, rocked Tel Aviv shortly before dawn on

residents has begun." "In the coming hours, the (Israeli military) will operate in the area, as it has in recent days throughout Tehran, to strike military infrastructure of the Iranian regime," the military said in a post on X in Persian.

## Dar warns against fake news — highlights Pakistan's role in Iran-Israel de-escalation

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Monday expressed deep concern in the Senate over the spread of false information and AI-generated content on social media after the June 13 events, warning that such misinformation could threaten national security and undermine diplomatic efforts.

Ishaq Dar said that a widely circulated interview of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, purported to be recent, was in fact from 2011. "Such deceptive content is causing confusion and is being monitored closely by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs," he told the House. He pointed to a fabricated news graphic that falsely claimed Pakistan could have 70% of its debt written off by rolling back its nuclear program. "This is a blatant lie and a product of artificial intelligence," he said, also flagging a manipulated video involving Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and US President Donald Trump as another example of digital misinformation.

He urged the public and media to exercise caution. "This is a sensitive time; spreading fake content can be disastrous," he emphasized. Regarding Pakistan's role in de-escalating tensions between Iran and the US, Dar revealed that the foreign ministers of Iran and Oman kept Pakistan in the loop during the negotiations. "Four rounds of talks were held in Muscat and Rome," he said.

Dar noted that because Iran is not a member of the United Nations, Pakistan facilitated a UN Security Council meeting. "Iran formally thanked Pakistan, Russia, China, and Algeria for standing with them diplomatically," he added. He said that Iran had conveyed its intention to retaliate after the attack but also expressed willingness to resume dialogue if Israel refrained from further aggression. In response to the Iran-Israel conflict, Dar said Pakistan had taken swift steps to

assist its nationals. "We established a Crisis Management Unit in the Foreign Office and activated a 24/7 hotline at our embassy in Tehran," he said, adding that 251 Pakistani students in Iran are being brought back to Quetta. He said over 500 Pakistani pilgrims in Iraq were also being assisted, including 209 who had traveled by road, and arrangements were being made for their safe return. Dar shared that Iran requested Pakistan's help in repatriating around 20,000 Iranian Hajj pilgrims currently in Saudi Arabia. "We assured them that these pilgrims would be received in Karachi and sent back with full honor—they are our guests," he stated. Saudi Arabia has also announced that these Iranian pilgrims would remain as guests until conditions stabilize, he added. Dar strongly refuted a fake video being circulated on social media that falsely quoted an Iranian general as saying Pakistan would attack Israel if Iran was targeted. "This is completely false and artificial; even the Daily Mail picked it up. It's dangerous and irresponsible," he warned. Reflecting on Pakistan's nuclear history, he reminded the House of the 1998 nuclear tests. "At the time, regional peace and security made it necessary. It was a bold decision taken by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif," he said.

Dar said India later requested a ceasefire in recent years, underscoring Pakistan's position of strength. "We are neither signatories to the NPT, nor are India and Israel. National defense is our sovereign right," he declared. He also cautioned against any attack on nuclear facilities, warning that targeting the nuclear assets of any country would not only violate Article 51 of the United Nations Charter but would also amount to a serious international crime. "Such an act could result in catastrophic consequences for regional and global peace," he said. In reply to a question from Opposition Leader of Senate, Senator Shibli Faraz, Dar said: "We do not take any news or situation lightly.

## 5 Khwarij killed in operation

**F.P. Report**

RAWALPINDI: Five Khwarij belonging to Indian Proxy, Fitma al Khwarij, were killed in two separate engagements in KP, military's media wing said on Monday.

According to ISPR information, on 15-16 June 2025, an intelligence based operation was conducted by the Security Forces in Peshawar District, on reported presence of Indian sponsored Khwarij. During the conduct of operation, own troops skillfully surrounded and effectively engaged the Indian sponsored khwarij location, and after an intense fire exchange, four Indian sponsored khwarij, including Kharji Haris and Kharji Baseer, were sent to hell.

Another intelligence based operation was conducted in North Waziristan District and in ensuing fire exchange, one more khwarij was neutralized by the security forces. Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the Indian sponsored killed Khwarij, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in these areas. Sanitization operations are being conducted to eliminate any other Indian sponsored khwarij found in the area, as the security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of Indian Sponsored Terrorism from the country.

## Shehbaz unveils Maritime Vision

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday declared the blue economy as Pakistan's "new economic frontier," calling for a unified national effort to unlock its vast potential.

Speaking at the soft launch of the 2nd Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference (PIMEC 2025), the prime minister laid out the vision for transforming Pakistan into a regional maritime powerhouse. "It is a great pleasure to see the Pakistan Navy, under the patronage of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and in collaboration with key partners, organizing the second edition of PIMEC," said the prime minister. He lauded the leadership of Naval Chief, Admiral Naveed Ashraf and Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, for their strategic foresight and dedication in steering this important initiative.

Highlighting the critical role of the Navy in national defense and regional security, he said, "The Pakistan Navy has been a formidable force through all conflicts and remains a strong pillar of our national security." Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to international peace and maritime law, he cited the AMAN Exercise - featuring participation from over 50 countries as a symbol of Pakistan's global engagement and cooperative maritime posture.

With over 1,000 kilometers of coastline and a position at the crossroads of vital sea lanes, Pakistan, the Prime Minister said, was uniquely positioned to harness the trillion-dollar global blue economy. "Even tapping a fraction of this economy could be a real game-changer," he asserted. "Our coastal trade already brings in

UN inspectors would remain present in Iran and inspect the nuclear facilities "as soon as safety conditions allow."

He warned that "military escalation

Tetelbaun was in his apartment in Tel Aviv when the alerts came in shortly after 4 a.m. (0100 GMT). "As usual, we went into the (shelter) that's right across the street there. — Agencies

## Pakistan keen to benefit from UAE's experiences in modern system

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said the United Arab Emirates has positioned its country among the developed countries with its modern management system, and Pakistan was keen to benefit from its experiences. The prime minister made these remarks in a meeting with UAE's Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for Competitiveness and Knowledge Exchange, Abdulla Nasser Lootah here, a Prime Minister's Office news release said. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met with a high-level delegation from the United Arab Emirates led by Abdulla Nasser Lootah, Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for Competencies and Knowledge Exchange and flanked by UAE Ambassador, Hamad Obaid Al Zaabi and Abdullah Al Balouki and Ibrahim Al Ali from the Government Knowledge Exchange Office.

## PM for advanced IT trainings for youth employability

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the authorities concerned to formulate modern training programs for the youth to ensure their employability and develop Pakistan as a regional hub of information technology. The prime minister, chairing a review meeting on IT training for youth and establishment of training ecosystem in Pakistan, said that a sustainable and advanced ICT (Information Communication Technology) system would be established to position Pakistan as a central hub for the IT sector in the region, according to a PM Office press release. In this regard, local companies will be provided with a skilled workforce to enable them to meet international standards and generate foreign exchange. Instructing the formulation of clear Terms of Reference (TORs) for consultancy regarding the training system and setting a timeline for its establishment and implementation, the prime minister said the training programs should be positive and constructive, enabling youth to ensure their productivity at an international level.

nearly \$7 billion a year and just imagine the potential if we fully develop this sector," he said

He urged the nation to take inspiration from global success stories such as Japan, which rose from limited maritime resources to become a

global leader in marine infrastructure and regional trade. "Let there be open competition," he added, emphasizing the importance of resilience, innovation, and strategic investment.

(Continued on Back Page)

# The Frontier Post

**Man gets triple death penalty**  
**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: The Child Protection Court here Monday in its landmark judgment, sentenced a man to death on three counts for molesting and murdering three children in separate incidents. The convict, named Sohail alias Malanga, was also handed three life sentences and fined a total of Rs 2.7 million. According to the prosecution, the harrowing crimes took place in July 2022 at three different locations.





ISLAMABAD: A view of dead fish seen on dry Rawal Dam due to shortage of rain. —INP Photo

## PTI call of protest to be failed like previous two calls: Muqam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam has said that Chief Minister KPK Ali Amin Gandapur keeps calling for protests to keep his party and government's declining reputation alive, his protest will also fail like the previous two protests, he is making fun of the people by asking them to take the approval of the province's budget from the founder PTI.

Speaking to "APP" in his chamber at the Parliament House on Monday, Engineer Amir Muqam said that the people of KP should be given relief in the provincial budget, so far the Chief Minister is talking about budget approval from the founder PTI, which is a complete joke with the

people, "the founder PTI is in jail for his corruption, nor is he a member of any assembly, so it is foolish to talk about taking the approval of the budget from him".

He said that in fact, he is left with only words to give relief to the people in the budget. In response to a question, he said that by repeatedly calling for protests, Ali Amin Gandapur keeps on giving oxygen to the declining reputation of his party and the government, the protest call will fail like the previous protests.

He said that we have not allowed any new tax to be imposed on the people of the merged districts of FATA and PATA, 10 percent sales tax is imposed on raw materials, regarding which it is said that the goods made from this imported raw materi-

al are sold in other populated areas.

Muqam said that we have also proposed steps to provide relief to FATA and PATA from the federal government in the current budget. He said that a political group is creating a false narrative to mislead the public for point scoring.

He said that this is the same party that has imposed sales tax on services in areas like Malakand, Bajaur, Swat, and Khyber through CAPRA since July 25, 2023 and it is now trying unsuccessfully to become an angel in front of the public.

He said that if he really sympathizes with the people of FATA and PATA, he should get his government to abolish the taxes imposed by CAPRA. The people have rejected his false narrative before and will not listen to his propaganda in the future either.

## Governor lauds overseas Pakistanis

KARACHI (PPI): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tesori extended a heartfelt tribute to Overseas Pakistanis, celebrating them as the unsung heroes bolstering the national economy through their dedication and financial contributions.

In his statement on the occasion of International Family Remittances Day, Governor Tesori emphasized the pivotal role that expatriates play in sustaining the economic stability of Pakistan. He remarked, "Your hard work, sacrifice and sincerity not only light up homes but also manage the country's economy." He acknowledged the profound impact of their remittances, which he described as not merely financial transactions but as beacons of hope, stability, and prosperity for countless families across the nation.

The Governor also pointed out that the increase in remittances mirrors the success of the current government's economic policies. He proudly stated, "Your commitment to the homeland in every difficult time is a matter of pride." Tesori concluded his message with a salute to the overseas Pakistanis on behalf of the nation, underscoring their invaluable contributions and affirming that their efforts will always be remembered. His words serve as a reminder of the critical economic lifeline provided by millions of Pakistanis living abroad, whose remittances continue to support their homeland in times of need.

## Additional IGP attends strategic meeting

KARACHI (APP): Additional Inspector General of Police - Karachi, Javed Alam Odho, participated in a high-level meeting at the CPK Control Room located in Defence Police Station.

According to spokesperson for Karachi Police on Monday, the session was attended by CPK Chief Murad Soni, his team, and DHA Vigilance officials to discuss matters related to surveillance and public safety.

Senior police officers including SSP South, SSP Traffic, and others were present alongside key members of the CPK team.

The meeting focused on the effectiveness, technical upgrades, and coordination of city-wide CCTV camera networks, control room operations, police response, and traffic management.

Additional IGP Javed Alam Odho commended the role of CPK cameras in crime prevention. He highlighted the effectiveness of the 238-camera surveillance project within the jurisdiction of Darakhshan police station.

## Punjab cabinet meeting approves development-oriented budget

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chaired the 27th meeting of the provincial cabinet on Monday, where a historic, zero-tax, and development-focused budget for fiscal year 2025-26 was formally approved.

Addressing the cabinet, the CM said, "Public funds are a sacred trust of the people, and we are accountable to Allah Almighty." She emphasized that the new budget reflects her government's vision of transparency, service delivery, and accelerated development.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif stated that Punjab has presented a record Rs 740 billion surplus budget, despite complying with IMF conditions, and declared a province-wide development emergency. "We are not only giving a zero-tax budget but also the largest development budget in Punjab's history. Last year's development spending was a record, and this year, we will surpass even that," she said.

The CM said 100 new and innovative development programs had been launched, while 700 roads were under construction. The government aims to construct and expand 12,000 kilometers of roads, an unprecedented milestone. She noted that no previous administration had allocated such a massive budget for health and education. "Free medicines will be available

in all government healthcare facilities, and we are on track to provide essential facilities in public schools across the province this year," she added.

CM Maryam also praised the province-wide cleanliness campaign carried out during Eid and reiterated that her government will focus on expanding the tax net instead of raising tax rates. She announced the minimum wage has been fixed at Rs 40,000 per month and emphasized the need to digitize the wage system for improved transparency and accountability.

The CM shared that Punjab's local debt burden has been reduced by a record 94 percent, citing it as a clear reflection of financial discipline and effective governance. She underlined that every rupee spent will be accounted for and all progress will be transparently presented in the Punjab Assembly. "Thanks to e-tendering and transparent procedures, not a single scandal has surfaced," she noted.

CM Maryam Nawaz appreciated the tireless efforts of Senior Minister and Minister for Planning and Development Marriyum Aurangzeb, who worked through the night to finalize the budget. She also lauded the Chief Secretary and the entire cabinet team for their dedication, mentioning that PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif had also expressed his appreciation.

## Police arrest 1000 suspects

KARACHI (APP): In a continued crackdown on criminal activities, Karachi police engaged in 11 encounters with armed robbers over the past week, resulting in the deaths of three suspects and the arrest of 16 others, including 13 injured in exchange of fire.

According to a spokesperson for Karachi Police on Monday, the arrested suspects were found in possession of 13 illegal weapons of various types and five motorcycles used in crimes. During operations conducted in the East, West, and South zones of the city, police apprehended more than 1058 suspects involved in various criminal activities.

As part of their anti-narcotics campaign, law enforcement agencies recovered 22,566 kg of hashish, ice/crystal meth, and heroin, worth millions of rupees, from various locations across Karachi.

Additionally, over 86 illegal firearms with ammunition reportedly used in muggings and other crimes were seized from the arrested suspects. Police also recovered a total of 32 snatched and stolen motorcycles and two large vehicles during separate operations.



LAHORE: Police personal stand alert during Punjab Government unveils Rs5.35 trillion 'tax-free' budget for 2025-26 at Punjab Assembly in Lahore. —INP Photo

## Guru Arjan Dev Ji's martyrdom day observed

LAHORE (APP): A spiritual and dignified central religious ceremony was held at Gurdwara Dera Sahib, Lahore, on the martyrdom day of the fifth Sikh Guru, Baba Guru Arjan Dev Ji.

A large number of Sikh pilgrims from Pakistan and abroad, along with the local Sikh Sangat, attended the event.

The ceremony was graced by Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs and President of the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (PSGPC), Chairman of the Evacuee Trust Property Board, Dr. Sajid Mehmood Chauhan, members of PSGPC and Sikh community.

During the ceremony, religious rites including Kirtan, Ardas, and other spiritual practices were performed with great devotion and participation.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Ramesh Singh Arora said that Baba Guru Arjan Dev Ji preached truth, religious harmony, peace, tolerance, and humanity. His martyrdom stands as a timeless symbol of sacrifice for religious freedom and truth. He emphasised that religious minorities in Pakistan enjoy full freedom, and the government is taking serious steps for the upkeep and restoration of their sacred sites. He announced that the Punjab government has allocated a budget for the restoration of 15 Gurdwaras.

Ramesh Singh Arora criticised the Indian government for not allowing Sikh pilgrims to visit Pakistan, saying this decision has hurt the sentiments of Sikhs worldwide. He affirmed that

## Matric annual results on July 24

LAHORE (APP): The annual matriculation results will be announced on July 24.

Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) sources here said that All education boards across Punjab will release the results at the same time.

According to sources, this date was finalised in the meeting of the Punjab Board Committee of Chairman. The release of results is being delayed due to incomplete marking of papers in the education boards.

## PFA discards 1,200 litres of oil derived from animal waste

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) enforcement team failed an attempt to supply contaminated oil extracted from animal fat during an operation conducted in the Mahmood Booti area, here on Monday.

Acting on the directives of PFA Director General Muhammad Asim Javaid, the food safety team seized 1,200 litres of loose, substandard oil being transported in an unregistered vehicle. The oil was immediately discarded on the spot.

The operation was carried out due to the absence of mandatory documentation and licenses required for transporting such hazardous material.

## Govt working for implementation of solarization: Nasir

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Energy and Planning & Development Syed Nasir Hussain Shah on Monday said that Rs 25 billion had been allocated in the budget to provide relief to the public in electricity costs through solarization.

He expressed gratitude to PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto and Chief Minister Sindh for this initiative.

He said that it was Chairman Bilawal Bhutto's vision to provide affordable and free elec-

tricity to the people of Sindh especially the underprivileged and impoverished segment of the society.

The government is actively working on supplying solar panels and implementing solarization across the province, he said adding that the Sindh Energy Department was taking all possible steps on a priority basis in this regard.

He also criticized the conduct of opposition members during the Chief Minister's budget speech,

stating that they crossed ethical boundaries by obstructing the Chief Minister's dais, despite prior agreements on speech timings.

Nasir Shah stated that elected representatives are the voice of the people in the assemblies. Through block allocations, schemes proposed by assembly members will be included. On Iran-Israel war, the Minister said that the international community should play its part to stop the war.

## Pakistan Railways delegation visits PITB

LAHORE (APP): A delegation from Pakistan Railways visited the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) to discuss ongoing IT interventions and explore opportunities for future collaboration aimed at modernizing railway operations through digital transformation.

The visiting delegation was led by Pakistan Railways Director IT Syed Ali Raza, and included senior officials Abdul Qayyum, Khurram Shahzad, and Syed Zafar Gilani. During the session, Syed Ali Raza provided a detailed overview of the current digital systems being implemented within the Railways and shared insights into the department's upcoming IT-driven initiatives.

The PITB team, led by Additional Director General (ADG) Syed Qasim Ifzal, presented an overview of PITB's flagship digital governance projects, highlighting successful implementations across various government departments. PITB Joint Director Arsalan Manzoor was also present during the meeting.

The visit concluded with a tour of PITB's state-of-the-art Data

Center, where the delegation took keen interest in PITB's digital infrastructure and discussed potential areas for integration and support in line with Pakistan Railways' long-term digital strategy.

In his message, PITB Chairman Faisal Yousaf remarked, "PITB is committed to empowering public institutions like Pakistan Railways with secure, scalable digital solutions that enhance efficiency and transparency. This collaboration marks a step forward in modernizing services through technology."

The Pakistan Railways delegation appreciated PITB's efforts and expressed interest in continued coordination to bring modern, efficient, and citizen-centric systems to the country's rail network.

**PR launches crackdown against ticketless passengers :** On the special directives of CEO Pakistan Railways Amir Baloch, a strict crackdown has been initiated against ticketless passengers to curb revenue losses and ensure transparency in the system.

According to the PR spokesperson on Monday, the operation was led by

the Headquarters Group under the supervision of Chief Commercial Manager (CCM) Ali Rizwan Rizvi and Deputy CCM Kamran Saeed. During the surprise raids conducted at multiple trains in the Multan Division, a total of 154 ticketless passengers were caught traveling without valid tickets.

Railway authorities recovered a sum of Rs. 252,760 from these passengers in the form of fines and ticket fares. The collected amount has been deposited into the national treasury.

CEO Amir Baloch and CCM Rizvi reiterated their commitment to taking stern action not only against fare evaders but also against any railway staff found negligent in their duties.

The CEO emphasized that the ongoing crackdown will be expanded to other divisions and continue without any compromise.

The initiative is part of Pakistan Railways' broader reforms aimed at improving efficiency, reducing financial leakages, and ensuring a more disciplined and reliable transportation system for the public.

## Punjab govt presents people-friendly budget: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has praised the Punjab annual budget 2025-26 as a "people-friendly" initiative, reflecting the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.


In a statement issued on Monday, he said the budget presents a historic opportunity to transform the healthcare system of the province.

Highlighting major health initiatives, he noted that a 915-bed state-of-the-art Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment and Research is being constructed in Lahore at a cost of Rs 72 billion. Additionally, Nawaz Sharif Institutes of Cardiology are underway in Lahore and Sargodha with estimated costs of Rs 8.8 billion and Rs 8.6 billion, respectively.

The government has also announced the establishment of the Nawaz Sharif Medical City in

Lahore, with a total investment of Rs 54 billion.

He said that three new medical colleges are planned for Narowal, Okara, and Layyah with a combined cost of Rs 16 billion. Burn units are being introduced in Bahawalpur and Rahim Yar Khan with an allocation of Rs 4 billion, while a teaching hospital in Sialkot will be set up with Rs 7 billion. A dedicated Children's Hospital in Rawalpindi is also on the cards, with Rs 8.5 billion allocated.

**MobilinkBank**

### PUBLIC NOTICE AUCTION OF GOLD

Branch: Chakdara	Auction Date: 18-06-2025	Branch code: 0022	Time: 11:00 AM
------------------	--------------------------	-------------------	----------------

Finance facilities were extended by Mobilink Bank against the security of deposit and pledge of gold to the customer mentioned below. The customer who has neglected and failed to repay the finance extended to them by Mobilink Bank along with the markup thereon.

Customer Name	CNIC #	Address	Gold Weight (GM)	Detail of Gold Ornaments
Ikram Ullah	15602-0537064-5	Post Office Manglor Khas, Tehsil Babu Zai, District Swat	31.5	1 Necklace, 2 Balyan, 1 Bindia

Notice is hereby given to the customer in above mentioned that if payment of entire outstanding amount financed along with markup is not made by them to Mobilink Bank within 1 day of the publication of this notice, Mobilink Bank shall auction the gold ornaments and no further Public Notice shall be issued to call upon the customer to make the payments.

### بیان حلقی

من کی ملی کمر آفریدی ملے فیل جان آفریدی سکے

State Bank Street 5/6، پلاٹ نمبر 31، چارڈارہ

ہوئے۔ فیل جان میرے والد صاحب جو کہ فوت ہوئے ہیں

نومبر 16/11/2001 کو آپ میں تمام بینک بھائیوں کی تصدیق شدہ دیں، یہاں کہان کہان کو عداوتہ راکھی وارث نہیں ہے۔

(1) زید محمد انان آفریدی (جیلر، میان)، (2) علی اکبر آفریدی، (3) میر اکبر آفریدی، (4) جان اکبر آفریدی، (5) نظیر اکبر، (6) زاہد، (7) ذکیہ، (8) عزرا بی بی، (دختران عودانان آفریدی)، (9) عودانان، (10) محمد اکبر بونٹ، من کی کمر آفریدی، پلاٹ نمبر 31، چارڈارہ، دیں

کہان کہان کے علاوہ من کی حلقی یا حلقی وارث نہیں ہیں۔ اگر گھانا نہیں ذمہ دار ہوں گا۔





PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah, chairing a weekly review meeting attended by administrative secretaries and relevant officials to assess progress across multiple governance and service delivery areas.

## Barkwal thanks CM for providing funds to Karak

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Agriculture Minister Major (retd) Sajjad Barakwal has said, when Imran Khan has a mandate and Khan's Rep Ali Amin Khan Gandapur is the Chief Minister and as a Khan's worker, he is the representative of Karak, then Karak will definitely have historic share in the budget as well as in all the development schemes of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government.

In a statement, Provincial Minister for Agriculture said days were the gone when the Khattakzeena was deprived of its rights by making gas royalty the basis. Giving details of the projects included in the FY 2025-26, he said, upgradation of RHC Ahmedabad to Type D Hospital and DHQ Hospital Karak to Category

A, budget also includes the establishment of BHUs in remote and deprived areas, functionality of the BHUs Mandawah and Shaheedan, and equipping of all the BHUs and RHCs with modern facilities.

Similarly, functioning of the Girls Degree College Latamber, Model School Karak and Girls School Winki this year is also part of the budget, the Minister said.

He added, in order to solve the drinking water problem of the local population and various union councils including Kunda Ahmedwala, Surati Kala, Zaney Kala, Seekot, Rehmatabad and Tor Dhand and adjacent populations, work will also start on mega water supply schemes and overhead tanks at appropriate places in the entire district this year.

Barakwal also gave good

news of the construction of Karak Safe City Project, Warana Muskan Link Road, Khora Road, CPEC Link Road via Palusa Sar, rehabilitation of City Hospital Karak, Zarin China Water Supply Scheme, Indi Karak Nashpa Banda Charpara Bahadur Khel Road, construction of sports complex, Karak Greater Water Supply as per revision, Kurd Sharif Road and Indus Uplift Karak Irrigation Canal in the coming financial year.

The Minister announced that he will personally pursue and coordinate all these schemes with the relevant departments so that Khan's mission and the blessings given to Karak by the Chief Minister can be implemented.

Furthermore, he will also keep the public informed about the umbrella schemes time to time.

## KPRA collects Rs.47 billion tax target

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA) has successfully achieved its annual tax collection target of Rs 47 billion by June 15, well before the fiscal year-end.

KP Finance Adviser Muzzammil Aslam confirmed the achievement after reviewing a detailed report presented by KPRA Director General Fauzia Iqbal.

The adviser expressed confidence that with continued efforts, the authority could potentially reach Rs 50 billion by the end of June.

Muzzammil Aslam commended the KPRA team for their performance, stating the early achievement demonstrates improved tax administration and compliance in the province.

## Lake Shore City hosts prestigious launch event organized

PESHAWAR (APP): In a landmark event held here on Monday, Lake Shore City unveiled its vision for a new era of urban development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The ceremony brought together prominent figures from the real estate and political spheres, including Lake Shore Chairman Mr Syed Sadat Hussain Shah and CEO of FK Marketing Mr Farhan Khan Khalil, who delivered an insightful presentation on the society's unique offerings and future prospects.

The event was further elevated by the presence of former Governor of KP, Haji Ghulam Ali, who served as the chief guest.

In his address, he lauded the Lake Shore City initiative, calling it "a timely and much-needed housing solution that reflects the aspirations of today's generation."

He highlighted the project's commitment to quality, sustainability, and community, emphasizing that such societies are essential for the region's growth and modernization.

Ex Governor Ghulam Ali expressed optimism that this project would provide the people of KP with a secure, well-planned, and high-standard living environment."

As a token of appreciation for his contributions to public service and his support for the real estate sector, Ex Governor Ghulam Ali was presented with an honorary shield and Souvenir. In addition, several individuals who played a vital role in the project's development were recognized with awards and certificates for their dedication and efforts.

## BRT fares increased

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Urban Mobility Authority (KPUMA) has issued a notification announcing an increase in BRT fares on Monday. According to the notification, a Rs. 10 increase has made in all stages of BRT fare. The current minimum fare of Rs. 20 has been increased to Rs. 30. For Express Routes, a premium and faster service, the fare has been revised from Rs. 60 to Rs. 70.

# Chief Secretary chairs weekly review meeting

### Governance, price control, infrastructure and public service delivery reviewed

#### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shahab Ali Shah, chaired a weekly review meeting attended by administrative secretaries and relevant officials to assess progress across multiple governance and service delivery areas.

A key highlight of the meeting was the ongoing capacity-building initiative for government officers in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) project procurement and contract management. It was informed that 20 officers are currently enrolled in a diploma course by NUST, while 23 officers have already obtained the APMG CP3P

foundation certification, enhancing their specialization in PPP frameworks.

The meeting also reviewed the prices of 12 essential commodities. Officials briefed that a live dashboard is actively monitoring prices, enabling data-driven oversight. The Chief Secretary directed Deputy Commissioners to engage with wholesalers in districts experiencing supply chain challenges to ensure stability and effective price control mechanisms.

Shahab Ali Shah emphasized the provincial government's commitment to delivering maximum relief to the public. A briefing on the releases and expenditures under the develop-

ment portfolio was also presented, along with updates on the province's routine immunization efforts and the ongoing polio eradication campaign.

The Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) presented progress updates on several infrastructure projects including the Missing Link of the Northern Section Ring Road, the New General Bus Terminal in Peshawar, and measures to address traffic congestion in the city. The Chief Secretary instructed the concerned departments to improve road furniture along University Road to enhance traffic flow, while ordering immediate initiation of repair works on the Ring Road.

Furthermore, the budget for the LUBCA (Land-Use and Building Control Authority) has been approved and the organization has been restructured to accelerate the enforcement of building control measures. The meeting also reviewed ongoing efforts to ensure proper sewerage management systems in hotels and restaurants, particularly in tourist areas. It was noted that 92 establishments have upgraded their sewerage systems in the past 15 days following a provincial directive.

The weekly review concluded with directives to maintain momentum on public service reforms and development projects across the province.

## PHC turns death penalty into lifetime imprisonment

### Humayun Khan

Monday.

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court has partially accepted the appeal of a convict in a murder case and commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment, on

The convict, Arsalan Ilyas alias Sani, was accused of killing a widow, Musammnat N, after she refused to marry him.

The court had earlier sentenced him to death

and a fine of Rs. 500,000.

The convict was accused of torturing and killing the widow in front of her children after she refused to marry him.

The police registered a case against the convict and arrested.

The Additional Sessions Judge Kohat had sentenced the convict to death and a fine.

The Peshawar High Court partially accepted the convict's appeal and commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment.

## Unbalanced tax reforms threaten business confidence: Aun Ali Syed

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Mr. Aun Ali Syed, Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Chairman Prosper Pakistan, has expressed grave concerns regarding the recently introduced taxation provisions under the FBR framework.

He argues that these amendments grant disproportionate and unchecked powers to tax authorities, potentially undermining the trust, stability, and growth of Pakistan's business ecosystem.

In a detailed statement, Mr. Aun Ali Syed highlighted several provisions that he believes could have detrimental effects on businesses:

- \* Section 11E authorizes tax assessment and recovery based solely on suspicion, without the need for thorough investigation or concrete evidence. Mr. Syed warns that such discretion may lead to misuse, arbitrary actions, and widespread harassment of genuine business entities.
- \* Section 14AE permits the forcible seizure of business premises and property without adequate safeguards, posing a direct threat to property rights and disrupting operations across all sectors.

- \* Section 32B grants private auditors quasi-legal authority over businesses, which has been deemed a dangerous overreach and a breach of legal norms.

- \* Section 33 introduces severe penalties, including 10 years imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 10 million for tax fraud, which may unjustly entangle businesses in criminal proceedings even for unintentional errors or misinterpretations of the law.
- \* Sections 37AA and 37B allow tax authorities to arrest individuals on mere suspicion and detain them for 14 days, extendable by judicial approval. Mr. Syed emphasized that this unprecedented grant of power severely undermines the rule of law and the presumption of innocence until proven guilty.

- \* Section 58C threatens the confidentiality between taxpayers and their advisors by allowing Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) officials access to the offices of tax

consultants in case of suspected return discrepancies. This move not only disrupts professional sanctity but also breeds distrust between businesses and advisory institutions.

Mr. Aun Ali Syed cautioned that such excessive and coercive measures will not contribute to enhanced revenue collection. On the contrary, they are likely to create a hostile and fear-driven environment, encouraging evasion rather than compliance.

He emphasized that economic growth cannot be forced; it must be fostered through a balanced, collaborative, and trust-based approach.

He further noted that the misconception that economic development, GDP growth, and exports are solely the responsibility of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and a few government institutions must be corrected. Mr. Syed stated, "Nation-building is a collective endeavor. It requires synergy between policymakers, administrators, and the business community. It demands a working environment built on confidence, cooperation, transparency, and above all

faith in each other's role and capabilities."

These excesses of the tax authorities can never result in increased revenue collection but will hamper the growth and FBR and the business community will be playing hide and seek. There is a big misconception that FBR and other govt. Departments are only concerned for economic development, GDP, exports and their sustainability but remember that is a team work and teams work with cohesive approach, trust, confidence in ability of teammates and above all Faith. That is the only way we can rise and achieve the goal of "Uraan Pakistan".

Calling for urgent reconsideration and stakeholder dialogue, Mr. Syed reaffirmed FPCCI's commitment to constructive engagement for reforms that are fair, transparent, and business-friendly. "If we truly envision a 'Prosper Pakistan,' we must replace fear with facilitation and enforcement with engagement. Only then can we rise to the dream of a nation soaring towards prosperity, inclusivity, and sustainable growth," he concluded.

## Budget neglect fuels sports decline in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

PESHAWAR (APP): Once a cradle of sporting legends, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has started grappling with a decline in athletic activities—a reflection of years of administrative apathy and chronic underinvestment.

The recently announced KP budget has come under heavy fire from opposition figures and civil society alike for its meager allocation to the sports sector and broader developmental shortcomings.

Despite tall claims about youth engagement and sporting revival, the PTI government has earmarked just Rs. 11.6 billion for the Sports and Youth Affairs Department in the 2025-26 budget.

This figure, critics say, is emblematic of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) declining focus on sports development during its third consecutive term in the province.

The Annual Development Program (ADP) for the province includes only two new sports-related projects that is a gymnasium in Buner district and indoor sports facilities for women in divisional headquarters.

The minimal scope of these initiatives, according to former MNA Shahge Gul Afridi, reflects the PTI-led government's "jugglery of words" rather than any sincere commitment to

sports revival.

"Talks of promoting sports in KP ring hollow when you consider the reality in the 35 districts, including merged tribal areas, where sports infrastructure is either absent or decaying," Afridi said. "Even after establishing a separate Directorate of Sports for Merged Districts, the lack of funding and vision has rendered sports ineffective."

He further criticized the sports administration's approach of hastily organizing events in June, seemingly to exhaust remaining funds rather than foster long-term sports culture. "Is sports development now reduced to fuel receipts, office meetings, and unused funds?" he asked.

Another sore point is the continued delay in completing the Arbab Niaz Cricket Stadium in Peshawar. Sahibzada Hamza Khan, PML-N Nowshera President, alleged that instead of prioritizing its completion, the PTI government attempted to rename the stadium—an act met with public resistance.

"The cost has ballooned due to delays, and the youth of Peshawar remain deprived of a vital facility," Hamza said.

Hamza also took aim at the overall fiscal policy of KP, questioning the basis for a Rs. 2,119 billion budget

when actual provincial revenues are estimated at just Rs. 129 billion. He called it "hypothetical budgeting" built largely on the assumption of receiving over Rs. 1,500 billion from the federal government.

He challenged PTI's claims of financial self-reliance and surplus budget, pointing out that even basic financial promises—such as net hydel profit arrears and gas royalties—were not fulfilled during PM Imran Khan's federal tenure.

While PTI has declared an "education emergency" in the province, critics argue that the ground reality tells a different story. Of the 5.5 million out-of-school children in KP, many are located in areas where basic infrastructure is still lacking.

"About 2,800 schools don't have boundary walls, 2,500 lack clean water, and 2,000 are without furniture," Hamza said, lamenting the paltry Rs. 13 billion allocated to education.

Even more alarming, he said, is the administrative vacuum as 24 of the province's 34 universities are operating without vice-chancellors, and reports suggest that the government may shut down 18 universities while auctioning off institutional properties.

Critics are particularly angered by the stark contrast in fund allocation—Rs. 153

billion for a 200-kilometer road projects versus minimal amounts for education and health. Hamza also highlighted systemic neglect of local governments and opposition members, who he claims have not received development funds in over 13 years.

He accused the PTI administration of introducing 810 new schemes without proper planning, while shelving 310 ongoing projects from previous years. Citing alleged financial mismanagement, he claimed that Rs. 200 billion had been siphoned through fake cheques in Kohistan, questioning the integrity of other district-level projects.

"In hospitals, even basic items like Panadol or syringes are missing. The Sehat Card scheme is riddled with fraud—cases like the same patient undergoing 20 surgeries on the same day are not unheard of," he alleged.

Under the PTI, KP's provincial debt has reportedly skyrocketed—from Rs. 30 billion to over Rs. 2,000 billion, with projections estimating it could hit Rs. 2,880 billion by year's end.

As the budget debate intensifies, sports and youth—once a cornerstone of PTI's political narrative—appear to be among the biggest casualties of KP's fiscal mismanagement.

## No curbs on mourning for Imam Hussain: Muharram Committee Secretary



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A representative meeting of the Muharram Committee Imamia Jirga was held yesterday under the chairmanship of Akhunzada Muzaffar Ali, the General Secretary of the Muharram Committee Imamia Jirga Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The meeting was attended by members of the Muharram Committee, religious scholars, prominent Zakireen, community elders, organizers of Majalis, caretakers of Imambargahs, procession organizers and license holders, leaders of mourning groups, student organizations, and members of the Imamia Jirga from across the province. Addressing the meeting, Akhunzada Muzaffar Ali stated that, like previous years, this year too, all programs of Muharram including mourning gatherings (Majalis), processions, offerings (Mannat, Niaz), flag rituals, and night vigils will be conducted with full fervor.

He emphasized that Shia Muslims will play an active role in maintaining peace and order across the province. He noted that due to seasonal conditions this

year, there might be changes in the timing of certain processions and gatherings. He stressed that from 1st Muharram to 8th Rabi-ul-Awwal, all mourning rituals across the province will be observed peacefully. Cooperation will be extended to the administration and relevant authorities for maintaining law and order, but no restrictions will be tolerated on the mourning of Imam Hussain (AS), as it is a constitutional, legal, fundamental, and human right of the Shia community.

He condemned the activities of banned organizations which, under the guise of religious gatherings, spread hate against Shia Muslims by chanting offensive slogans against revered personalities. He demanded an immediate end to such actions. Muzaffar Ali affirmed that, like previous years, mourning gatherings at homes will also be conducted with full devotion. He highlighted that Muharram teaches the values of peace and brotherhood, and these should be upheld throughout the year. He also expressed a strong stance against anti-Pakistan elements and assured full

cooperation with the government. Strong condemnation was expressed over Israeli terrorism in Iran. Iran was praised for giving a strong response to Israel, and the Government of Pakistan was urged to immediately declare Jihad against Israel. Addressing the gathering, Allama Syed Alam Shah of Parachinar demanded the immediate opening of blocked routes to Parachinar and the punishment of terrorist elements.

He stated that Muharram is the only month during which key Islamic events occurred, especially the tragedy of Karbala, where the grandson of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) made the ultimate sacrifice for truth and justice. He further noted that Iran's role on the global stage is becoming increasingly significant. Just as Pakistan silenced India with a strong response, Iran is now writing a new chapter in history and is expected to eliminate Israel from existence. He praised Iran's tributes and extended heartfelt thanks. He also thanked representatives of all religions and Islamic sects in Pakistan for expressing solidarity with the Islamic Republic of Iran against Israel.





## In brief

Helmets distributed  
F.P. Report

BUNER: District Police Officer Buner distributed helmets among motorcyclists during awareness campaign to ensure road safety, on Monday. DPO Saud Khan personally participated in a special campaign at Hashim Sar on the Daggar -Torwarsak road. On this occasion, Press Club President Mukhtar Khan and senior journalist A.R. Abid and Traffic Warden Saeed Khan were accompanied him. DPO distributed helmets among motorcyclists and presented water bottles to the children riding with them and shook hands and gave a message that wearing helmets is very important for the safety of the driver and the family of the rider. The motorcyclists appreciated this exemplary initiative of DPO Saud Khan and termed the safety awareness campaign of wearing helmets. Talking to the media, DPO Saud Khan said that the aim of this campaign is to reduce the distance between the police and the public and promote better relations between them. He said that the job of the police is to protect the public and expressed the hope that the public will cooperate with the police and become responsible citizens and contribute to the formation of a good society.

Allegations rejected  
Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWAHERA: The representatives of Muhammad Pharmacy in Qazi Medical Complex Nowshera have denied allegations of illegality and claimed that the pharmacy is being targeted by vested interests. Muhammad Pharmacy claims to have a legitimate contract with Qazi Medical Complex, obtained through a tender process. The pharmacy is accused of being involved in illegal activities, but its representatives deny these allegations. Protests are being staged against the pharmacy, allegedly backed by two unemployed politicians who are trying to further their own interests. The pharmacy's representatives have stated that they respect the courts and government institutions and that Muhammad Pharmacy is a facility for the people of Nowshera and surrounding. The pharmacy claims to have obtained its contract through a legitimate tender process and pays rent and utility bills for its container in the complex. Muhammad Pharmacy emphasizes its commitment to public service and providing facilities to patients.

Awareness walk held  
F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: An awareness walk has been organized at Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Kamalia on the occasion of World Anti-Dengue Day. Dr. Mian Adeel Arif, MS THQ Hospital, told the Media that dengue is a viral disease that is transmitted from a sick person to a healthy person through the bite of a mosquito. This mosquito breeds in clean water and is more active during morning and evening hours. We should not allow clean water to accumulate around our house and take care of cleanliness. There is no need to worry in case of dengue. Just use paracetamol and plenty of water and do not use antibiotics on your own. Do not use painkillers at all. Dengue tests are being provided free of charge in all hospitals. In case of dengue, it is mandatory to monitor temperature and platelets.

## UN delegation visits Khar farms

Saqib Mushtaq

MULTAN: A high-level United Nations delegation visited Khar Farms in Kot Addu, Punjab, Pakistan, on June 15, 2025. The delegation was led by Muhammad Yahya, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan, and Fernanda Guimaraes, Country Director for IFAD.

The delegation participated in a mango plantation ceremony, symbolizing their commitment to environmental sustainability and agricultural development. The delegation met with the local community, discussing rural development, poverty reduction, agriculture, and social welfare. They also met with mango farmers, exploring possibilities for cooperation in global mango



exports.

The visit included a traditional breakfast and folk dance performance, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of South Punjab. The delegation aimed to promote sustainable agriculture, community engagement, and cultural exchange between the UN and local stakeholders. The visit highlighted

the importance of international cooperation in addressing development challenges and promoting sustainable practices. The visit is expected to foster greater collaboration between the UN and local stakeholders, potentially leading to new opportunities for agricultural development and community empowerment.

## Dr. Khalid attends IAC to present research paper

F.P. Report

BAHAWALPUR: Dr. Khalid Mehmood, Assistant Professor, Department of Clinical Medicine and Surgery, Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, attended the 3rd International Agrobiodiversity Congress (IAC) to present his research paper in Kunming, China.

The Congress was co-organized by Yunnan Agricultural University (YNAU) and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS). Dr. Yi Wu Associate Professor, Institute of Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, Yunnan Agricultural University, Kunming, Yunnan Province, China



had invited Dr. Khalid Mehmood. This visit was fully sponsored by the College of Veterinary Medicine, Yunnan Agricultural University, covering all expenses.

Dr. Khalid Mehmood visited the Animal Care Hospital and participated in interactive sessions with faculty members and postgraduate students from the Faculty of Life Science and Technology, Kunming University of Science and Technology,

China, and the College of Veterinary Medicine, Yunnan Agricultural University, China, for prospective collaborative research and to apply for research grants under One Belt and One Road. Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Kamran and Dean Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences Prof Dr Khalid Mansoor have praised the international research collaboration of Dr Khalid Mehmood.

## Abduction of Maulana Saeed condemned

F.P. Report

WANA: Mounting concern and anger continue to grip South Waziristan following the alleged abduction of a prominent religious and social leader, Maulana Muhammad Saeed Kakakhel, from Sindh's Kacha region. In a strongly worded press conference held at the District Headquarters in Wana, political and civil society leaders condemned what they termed the state's "alarming silence and failure" in recovering the abducted scholar, even after three months of his disappearance.

Speakers at the press conference expressed deep anguish and helplessness, calling it a stark indictment of the country's security and legal apparatus. They criticized the authorities for their inaction, pointing out that no meaningful or effective steps had been taken so far to trace or recover Maulana Kakakhel.

Wana, once an epicenter of militancy and military operations, has struggled for years to achieve lasting peace. The recent incident has rekindled fears among locals, who feel they remain marginalized even after the merger of tribal areas into the national mainstream. "This

disappearance once again highlights the disconnect between the state and its tribal citizens," one speaker remarked.

Adding to the public outrage is the refusal by police stations in Wana and Islamabad to register an FIR, a move the speakers described as both a legal failure and a humanitarian disregard. Maulana Kakakhel, widely respected for his work in education, welfare, and social cohesion, is seen not just as a religious figure, but as a unifying force in the community. His abduction, they said, represents a broader crisis of governance and state responsiveness in the tribal belt.

The leaders warned that if immediate steps were not taken to recover the Maulana, they would be left with no option but to launch a protest movement, one that could quickly spread to other tribal districts. They stressed that the state's silence and delays were becoming increasingly intolerable for the local population.

The press conference concluded with a joint appeal to the Government of Pakistan, the Sindh Government, and law enforcement agencies to utilize all available resources for the safe and immediate recovery of Maulana

Muhammad Saeed Kakakhel. They also demanded strict action against the officials who refused to lodge the initial report.

"Until the people of tribal areas are assured that their lives, dignity, and safety are equal to any other citizen of Pakistan," the leaders warned, "this sense of alienation will continue to deepen—and with it, the state's writ may remain nothing more than a formality on paper."

**Search & strike operation conducted against TTP:** Security forces carried out a major search operation against the banned outfit Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in sensitive areas of Tehsil Bimal, Lower South Waziristan, including Azam Warsak, Karamzi Stop, Kalosha, Landi Doag, and Dana Lagad. The operation involved intense use of heavy and light weapons, accompanied by the thunderous presence of gunship helicopters.

According to sources, during the course of the operation, all entry and exit routes, including the main Azam Warsak-Wana Road, were completely sealed off, effectively confining local residents to their homes for over four hours.

disinfectants, lime powder was applied, and fragrant water was used to freshen the environment. This is the difference that speaks not just through numbers but through real outcomes, and it is precisely this observation that sets Khyber Pakhtunkhwa apart from the rest.

In Peshawar alone, over 9,500 tons of wastes were removed. District, tehsil, and municipal staff worked tirelessly day and night to deliver an unmatched level of cleanliness. Minister for Local Government Arshad Ayub and Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah personally took to the field, supervised cleanup efforts at every site, and ensured that all directives were swiftly implemented. This is more than mere formality, it is a vibrant reflection of a responsive leadership that makes people feel genuinely cared for.

Following the same spirit, ministers in other districts also took active part in the Eid sanitation campaigns, translating the Chief Minister's vision into action

Unknown gunmen shot killed SHO  
F.P. Report

LARKANA : Unknown gunmen opened fire on a car near SP Chowk in the densely populated area of Larkana city, resulting in the death of SHO of Mirpur Buriro Police Station of Jacobabad district, Nazir Ahmed Chandio, on the spot, while the accused fled after firing.

According to police sources, the incident took place due to old enmity. On the other hand, the police have started a series of raids to arrest the accused.

Meanwhile, alleged suicide of Ayaz Hussain Chandio, a resident of Dokri Rice Research Center near Larkana, yesterday, while the heirs suspect murder. According to details, the young man, 35-year-old Ayaz Hussain Chandio, a resident of Dokri Rice Research Center, allegedly committed suicide due to poverty yesterday.

While talking to the media after the heirs conducted the postmortem of the body from Dokri Hospital, the heir of the deceased, Akram Chandio, protested and said that two unknown suspects had entered the house last night and killed Ayaz. When contacted, the Dokri police said that action would be taken only after the post-mortem report comes, while a case of the incident had not been registered till last information.

**AWP protests against budget:** Awami Workers Party (AWP) held a protest demonstration in front of the Press Club, against the provincial and federal budgets. The protesters carried placards and banners and raised slogans against inflation in the budget presented. On this occasion, Awami Workers Party Sindh General Secretary Afar Imam, Comrade Mithal Baloch, Ghulam Qadir Gadehi and others protested and said that the current budget is not only an attack on the country's economic sovereignty but also a declaration of war for the rights, dignity and survival of the working class. They said that the Sindh government's failure to announce a minimum wage for the workers is a complete injustice to the working class, which we condemn in the strongest terms.

The leaders further said that the federal and provincial budgets were prepared on the advice of the International Monetary Fund, which is a conspiracy to further enslave the poor people. They said that the budget neither contains food for the workers, nor land for the farmers, nor has it provided any means of providing employment for the youth, and no provision has been made for the basic needs of the people. They further said that the government representatives, who are mostly bigwigs, landlords, capitalists and elites, have increased their salaries by up to 500% and not announcing the wages of the workers has proven that they are not concerned with democracy but with personal interests, while the salaries and pensions of government employees who are already grinding in the mill of inflation have been increased by only 7 to 10%, which is equal to a drop in the inflation storm. They demanded that the wages of the workers be increased to at least Rs. 70,000, 40% dispensation allowance be given to the employees, the preparation of the budget should be made possible by the participation of public representatives instead of the IMF.

## Fourth Paigham-e-Auliya conference held in Pabbi



F.P. Report

PABBI: The fourth Paigham-e-Auliya Conference was held in connection with the Urs of Syed Pir Rehmat Krim Dag Baba Jan, under the chairmanship of his successor, Sahibzada Hafiz Pir Saeed Hussain Al-Qadri, on Monday.

The conference saw the participation of prominent

religious and political leaders, including Pir of Mankki Sharif, Maulana Abdul Haq Sani, Mian Iftikhar Hussain, and others.

The speakers emphasized the significance of Syed Pir Rehmat Krim Dag Baba Jan's contributions to Islam and highlighted the importance of his legacy. Sahibzada Hafiz Pir Saeed Hussain

Al-Qadri emphasized the continuation of Baba Jan's mission and expressed gratitude to the participants for their presence.

The conference was held to commemorate the Urs Mubarak of Syed Pir Rehmat Krim Dag Baba Jan. The participants discussed the impact of Baba Jan's work and its relevance in contemporary times.

## Students of GDC flay shifting of faculty

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Second semester students of Zoology Department in Government Degree College, Landi Kotal have declined shifting of their faculty classes to Government College, Jamrud, district Khyber due to lack of lab requirements.

Addressing to press conference in district press club, Landi Kotal on Monday college students leader Dawood Shinwari flanked by a dozens of zoology department students said that an inspection team from University of Peshawar (UoP) on pre-text of lack of basic equipments in the zoology lab, the rest of zoology BS classes were shifted to Jamrud College that was an attempt to deprive them of getting high education at their door steps, they



added.

The learners blamed that instead of facilitating them at their own college, the necessary equipment from Landi Kotal college zoology lab were reallocated to furnish Jamrud College and then asked them to attend their rest of classes in the later one that was unacceptable.

It is not only physical and economical sufferings for the students to travel more than forty kilometers to join their rest classes of six semesters in Jamrud College, but also put in risk the future of a dozen students, they regretted.

The students expressed their dissatisfaction over

the dilapidated condition of the government degree college, Landi Kotal and said increase in college fee from Rs.5000 to Rs.12000, shortage of qualified teaching staff would further motivate the UoP officials to drop computer science and other subjects from the BS faculty.

They also criticized the parliamentarians of the constituency and said they had turned blind eyes towards the students' problems. They warned that if the decision of shifting classes to Jamrud College was not revised then they would come to the streets to defend their rights.

## Body announces scholarships for students

Haleem Asad

LOWER DIR: The Dir Think Tank (DTT), a citizens' body comprised of scholars, researchers, and professionals from Lower Dir, has announced a scholarship initiative for deserving students of the University of Malakand (UoM) and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University (SBBU), Sheringal, Upper Dir. The announcement was made during a DTT meeting held at Akhunkhail House, Mandesh, Rabat, here the other day. The meeting was chaired by DTT founder Rahim Shah Akhunkhail, who is also a US national working for overseas Pakistanis.

As part of the new initiative, four students from UoM (two male, two female) and two from SBBU (one male, one female) will be awarded merit scholarships. A formal selection process will be established in collaboration with the universities to ensure transparency and merit.

The meeting also announced the formation of the body's executive team. The new executive team includes Rahim Shah Akhunkhail as President; Dr. Muhammad Usman (Vice President, Operations); Dr. Altaf Hussain Akhunkhail (Vice President, Relationship Management); Dr. Wali Rehman (General Secretary); Dr. Itbar Khan (Treasurer); Dr. Muhammad Ayub Khan (Secretary Information); Dr. Wajid Raza (Focal Executive, SBBU); and Shanzeb Akhunkhail (social media).

The participants noted that DTT, in the past, had arranged successful seminars, jirga meetings, social media sessions, and recognition of top-performing students.

In his address, the founder stated that while DTT's mission remains unchanged, focusing on regional development through research, analysis, policy guidance, and institutional engagement, the organization was shifting towards a more supportive and advisory role. He emphasized setting short-term, achievable goals while aiming for long-term aspirations. The new executive team will serve for at least two years to lay down structural and strategic foundations.

Akhunkhail, a prominent social activist and philanthropist, stated that with its new direction and leadership, DTT was set to expand its impact on education, policy, and regional uplift in Lower and Upper Dir districts. According to Mr Akhunkhail, Dir Think Tank supports regional development through research and analysis, highlighting needs and solutions, guiding law makers, public and institutions in shaping policies, monitoring initiatives, engaging peace building measures and continuous improvements

The meeting also identified priority actions for the next 3 to 4 months. These include strengthening relationships within DTT, sharing the mission with politicians, academic, and civil society stakeholders, hosting

a post-budget seminar with the University of Malakand, and establishing research grant committees at UoM and SBBU. Plans are underway to adopt five schools in Dir, publish policy papers, and assist in forming the proposed Dir Development Jirga (DDJ).

**Child killed:** A child was killed while two other sustained injuries when a motorcar met with an accident in Kaladag Surang and plunged into a ravine over 120 feet deep in the jurisdiction of Balambat police station. The Rescue 1122 recovery team successfully retrieved the vehicle from the ravine and shifted the injured to a nearby hospital.

**Political gatherings, power crisis, and education woes highlight public frustration in Lower Dir:** The Jamiat JUI-F Adenzal chapter organized an Eid Milan party in Gulabad, which drew a large gathering of party office-bearers from various forums, along with representatives of political and social organizations.

Addressing the event, JUI-F Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Deputy General Secretary Maulana Mohammad Raheem Haqqani, district emir Sirajuddin, former finance minister Muzaffar Said Advocate, provincial coordinator Qazi Ayazuddin, Maulana Imran Haqqani, Qari Nazir Mohammad, Hafiz Hussain Ahmad, and other senior leaders strongly criticized the performance of both the provincial and federal governments.

## Eidul Azha &amp; cleanliness in KP, a model for all in Pakistan

Ghulam Hussain Ghazi

**DURING the 3 sacred days of Eid al-Azha, the way animal wastes and remains were collected and cleanliness maintained in nook and corner of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was so exemplary that the public has befittingly started calling it the "Cleanliness Eid."**

Indeed, Eid al-Azha is not just a religious festival but a comprehensive test of communal spirit, sacrifice, physical, spiritual purification, hygiene and social awareness. While in some areas this occasion turns into a mirror reflecting administrative chaos and filthy surroundings, this year in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it emerged as a shining example of order, discipline and remarkable sanitation. The integrated and effective strategy adopted by the provincial government left all other provinces behind and truly made Khyber Pakhtunkhwa the standard-bearer of a "Clean Eid".

On the special directives of

Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, the cleanliness operations were not only efficiently planned but also visibly executed at the grassroots level. Disposing of over 24,939 tons of animal waste promptly and scientifically at designated spots was not just a numerical achievement; it was a clear testament that the government did not merely issue orders but ensured they were executed with sincerity, integrity and unrelenting effort.

Having spent the first two days of Eid in Peshawar and my native district Lower Dir, and later traveling across Malakand Division before heading to Lahore and Karachi on the third and fourth days, I witnessed firsthand the stark contrast. In other provinces, reeking piles of waste still greeted citizens in streets and alleys, with social media and newspapers flooded with complaints and images that mocked the authorities. In another contrast, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had completed the cleanup within the first two days. Every locality was sprayed with

disinfectants, lime powder was applied, and fragrant water was used to freshen the environment. This is the difference that speaks not just through numbers but through real outcomes, and it is precisely this observation that sets Khyber Pakhtunkhwa apart from the rest.

In Peshawar alone, over 9,500 tons of wastes were removed. District, tehsil, and municipal staff worked tirelessly day and night to deliver an unmatched level of cleanliness. Minister for Local Government Arshad Ayub and Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah personally took to the field, supervised cleanup efforts at every site, and ensured that all directives were swiftly implemented. This is more than mere formality, it is a vibrant reflection of a responsive leadership that makes people feel genuinely cared for.

Following the same spirit, ministers in other districts also took active part in the Eid sanitation campaigns, translating the Chief Minister's vision into action

at the local level. In Swat, Minister for Livestock Fazal Hakim Yousafzai led from the front; in Lower Dir, Advisor for Prisons Humayun Khan took charge; in Malakand, Environment Minister Pir Musawir Shah was on the ground; in Mardan, it was Food Minister Zahir Shah Toru; in Mansehra, Tourism Advisor Zahid Chanzab and in Lakki Marwat, Agriculture Minister Sajjad Barakwal. They not only appreciated the municipal staff but also mobilized their respective departments. From Chitral to Dera Ismail Khan and in the merged districts, commissioners and deputy commissioners were tasked with supervising operations.

As the saying goes, "The lamp must burn before it shines." Despite limited financial resources, shortage of personnel and localized challenges in some areas, the KP government shouldered its cleanliness responsibility with such diligence that it not only set a high benchmark but also offered a practical lesson for

other provinces. In regions where cleanliness was considered the sole domain of private or non-governmental organizations, KP's government mobilized state machinery to prove that where intentions are pure, execution becomes transparent.

Regarding public complaints on sanitation, the performance was equally commendable. Only 1,289 complaints surfaced across the province, of which all but one were promptly resolved. In stark contrast to the citizens of other provinces who took to social media to lament the dismal state of cleanliness, people in KP expressed satisfaction and admiration, offering public affirmation that both government and citizens had fulfilled their duties responsibly.

As rightly put by Information Advisor Barrister Dr. Muhammad Ali Saif, this was not just about sanitation, it was a manifestation of good governance. The KP government transformed Eid al-Azha into a celebration of administrative success, not with noise or

boastful claims, but through quiet, effective execution.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that when the rest of the country was grappling with sanitation crises during Eid, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa silently established a new standard, not as a one-time effort but as a luminous step towards a better future. Instead of "darkness beneath the lamp," this time the lamp's glow spread from the provincial capital to every corner of the province, leaving every street and bazaar clean, fragrant and shining.

This is the very model of governance that the entire nation yearns for. On Eid, the government and people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa not only offered animal sacrifices but also demonstrated true devotion to hygiene, transparency, and public service, turning this Eid into a memorable event. A memory that now stands as a beacon of excellent cleanliness management, and one that may well become the benchmark for times to come.





# Indian tribes visit UK museum



OXFORD (Reuters): Tribes from the Indian state of Nagaland have held talks at a museum in Britain to secure the return of ancestral remains taken during the colonial era and put on display for decades.

Skulls and other body parts were often brought from Asia, Africa and elsewhere to Britain and to other former colonial powers, as "trophies", to be traded, displayed or studied. There are growing calls worldwide for such remains, as well as stolen art, to be returned to their communities as part of a centuries-old movement demanding reparations for colonialism and slavery.

Just last month, skulls of 19 African Americans were returned to New Orleans from Germany to where they were sent for examination by phrenology - the now discredited belief that the shape and size of a head shows mental ability and character, especially when applied to different ethnic

groups. Historians say some of the remains were taken by colonial officers from burial sites and battlefields in Nagaland, where for centuries headhunting was common practice. Others were looted in acts of violence.

The Pitt Rivers Museum, which displays collections from Oxford University, holds the world's largest Naga collection, including thousands of artefacts, 41 human remains, primarily skulls, and 178 objects that contain or may contain human hair. It removed all remains from public display in 2020, including ancestors of Dolly Kikon, an anthropologist from Nagaland's Lotha-Naga tribe, who teaches at the University of California and who travelled to Oxford last week.

"For the first time, there is a Naga delegation (at the museum) to connect and to reclaim our history, our culture and our belongings," Kikon, 49, told Reuters.

Museum director Laura Van Broekhoven said the timing of the return of the remains was still uncertain due to the bureaucracy involved. The museum is also in talks with other groups to facilitate more items being returned.

The 23 Naga representatives, including elders of several tribes, repeated calls by British lawmakers and campaigners for the government to legislate to protect ancestral remains. Some European countries, such as the Netherlands, have national policies for the repatriation of human remains.

Opponents of reparations argue that contemporary states and institutions should not be held responsible for their past. Advocates say action is needed to address the legacies, such as systemic and structural racism. "One way to confront the colonial legacy is for indigenous people to be able to tell our own stories," Kikon said.

## Relatives wait for remains after Air India crash

NEW DELHI (AFP): Indian health officials have begun handing relatives the bodies of their loved ones after one of the world's worst plane crashes in decades, but most families were still waiting Monday for results of DNA testing.

While mourners have held funerals for some of the 279 people killed when the Air India jet crashed in the western city of Ahmedabad, others are facing an anguished wait. "They said it would take 48 hours. But it's been four days and we haven't received any response," said Rinal Christian, 23, whose elder brother was a passenger on the jetliner.

There was one survivor out of 242 passengers and crew on board the London-bound plane Thursday when it slammed into a residential area of Ahmedabad, killing at least 38 people on the ground as well. "My brother was the sole breadwinner of the family," Christian said. "So what happens next?"

Among the latest victims identified was Vijay Rupani, a senior member of India's ruling party and former chief minister of Gujarat state. His flag-draped coffin was carried in Ahmedabad by soldiers, along with a portrait of the politician draped in a garland of flowers. A two-hour journey away in Anand district, crowds gathered in a funeral procession for passenger Kinal Mistry.

The 24-year-old had postponed her flight, leaving her father Suresh Mistry agonising that "she would have been alive" if she had stuck to her original plan. Air India said there were 169 Indian passengers, 53 British, seven Portuguese and a Canadian on board the flight, as well as 12 crew members. Eighty crash victims have been identified, according to Rajnish Patel, a doctor at Ahmedabad's civil hospital.

"This is a meticulous and slow process, so it has to be done meticulously only," Patel said. One victim's relative who did not want to be named told AFP they had been instructed not to open the coffin when they receive it. Witnesses reported seeing badly burnt bodies and scattered remains. Nilesh Vaghela, a casket maker, was asleep when the crash happened early afternoon.

"Then around 5:00 pm, I got a call from Air India saying they need coffins," he told AFP after delivering dozens. "My work is very sad. All these innocent people died, small children," he said. "Someone has to do it." The Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner erupted into a fireball when it went down moments after takeoff, smashing into buildings used by medical staff.

## World on the cusp of a new nuclear arms race, says SIPRI

STOCKHOLM: The world is becoming more unstable, and the likelihood that nuclear weapons may one day be used is increasing, despite the wishes of humanity.

That is the broad conclusion of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) Yearbook, published on Monday. It is a compilation of SIPRI's recent research into conflicts, arms transfers and military expenditure, but it places particular emphasis on what SIPRI sees as a dawning new arms race among the nine nuclear-armed states - the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel.

Although the number of nuclear warheads in the world is declining as the US and Russia gradually dismantle 1,000 retired warheads, new warheads are entering stockpiles and will eventually outpace these in the absence of any treaties reducing or limiting stockpiles, said SIPRI. Improvements in potency, delivery and accuracy are also bringing about a new nuclear era, it said.

"We are at a step change, which has been going on since just before the pandemic," SIPRI director Dan Smith told Al Jazeera. "It's not just little bits and pieces here and there. It's everybody moving in that direction of upgrading, including the new nuclear weapon state of North Korea and the relatively new ones of Pakistan and India, who went nuclear in the 90s." China is building 350 new launch silos in its northern deserts and mountains. It has assembled 100 new warheads in the past year to reach 600 and is likely to continue expanding at that pace. Although China has a no-first-use policy, it may be developing a launch-on-warning capability - a sort of reflexive counterstrike.

China and India may both now be

deploying warheads on missiles during peacetime, changing a longstanding policy of keeping warheads and missiles unattended. India may be developing longer-range missiles as it broadens its traditional focus on Pakistan to include China.

North Korea is estimated to have refined enough fissile material to build 40 bombs in addition to the 50 it possesses, and has said it is about to launch tactical nuclear weapons. Pakistan, too, is stockpiling fissile material and its "nuclear weapon arsenal ... [is] likely to continue to expand over the next decade", wrote SIPRI. The UK is raising its stockpile from 225 warheads to 260 and building a new Dreadnought class of nuclear-capable submarines. France, too, is building a third-generation submarine and designing an air-launched cruise missile, both nuclear-capable.

Israel is thought to be able to launch nuclear missiles from torpedo tubes in its existing submarines, but its latest, the Drakon, is believed to have a vertical launch system as well. All these nations, however, represent just 10 percent of the nuclear arsenal. The remaining 90 percent belongs to Russia and the US, with more than 1,700 deployed warheads each, and 4,521 in storage between them.

In addition to being in the process of upgrading its nuclear-capable missiles, submarines and bombers, the US last year took delivery of 200 "modernised" nuclear warheads, the most in one year since the end of the Cold War. Russia, too, is modernising its air- and sea-based delivery systems, and may have placed nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus. Last year, it expanded its nuclear doctrine. Previously, the use of nuclear weapons was authorised when the very existence of the state was in jeopardy. Now it is authorised when there is a "critical threat"

against Russia's sovereignty or territorial integrity, or if there is a "massive launch of air and space attack means" crossing the state border. Those means include unmanned aerial vehicles, which Ukraine often launches in dozens into Russia at a time.

Russia's new doctrine "could be interpreted to mean that Russia has lowered the threshold for the use of its nuclear weapons", wrote SIPRI. "The mixed performance of Russia's conventional weapons in its war against Ukraine could reaffirm, and potentially even deepen, Russia's reliance on nuclear weapons in its national security strategy." These changes are happening against a backdrop of intensifying conventional armed conflict in the world.

"The estimated overall number of fatalities rose from 188,000 in 2023 to 239,000 in 2024," said SIPRI, citing five major conflicts: Israel's war on Gaza, the Russia-Ukraine crisis, civil wars in Myanmar and Sudan, and "subnational armed conflicts" in Ethiopia. World military spending rose by 37 percent in the past decade, and by 9.4 percent last year alone, to \$2.7 trillion, said SIPRI.

The combination of greater nuclear range, firepower, accuracy and survivability and intensifying conventional conflict feeds a desire for proliferation, said Minna Alander, a fellow with the Transatlantic Defense and Security programme at the Centre for European Policy Analysis (CEPA). "The situation has triggered a nuclear debate even in unlikely parts of Europe: the idea of a 'Nordic bomb' has become a morning radio topic in Sweden and Denmark's ex-Foreign Minister, Jeppe Kofod, recently described a Nordic defence union with own nuclear weapons as 'not only a dream but a strategic necessity'," she said. — Al Jazeera

## UN slashes global aid plan over 'deepest funding cuts ever'

NEW YORK (AFP): The United Nations said Monday it was drastically scaling back its global humanitarian aid plans because of the "deepest funding cuts ever" - leaving tens of millions of people facing dire straits.

The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said it was seeking \$29 billion in funding for 2025 compared to the \$44 billion originally requested in December, in a "hyper-prioritised" appeal. Since US President Donald Trump returned to office in January, the United States - the world's top donor - has heavily slashed foreign aid, causing havoc in the humanitarian sector across the globe.

Drastic US funding cuts have had dramatic consequences for emergency aid, vaccination campaigns and the distribution of drugs to fight AIDS. Other major donor countries have also cut back their contributions in the face of an uncertain economic outlook.

"Brutal funding cuts

leave us with brutal choices," OCHA chief Tom Fletcher said in a statement. "All we ask is one percent of what you chose to spend last year on war. But this isn't just an appeal for money -- it's a call for global responsibility, for human solidarity, for a commitment to end the suffering." In late April, while visiting a hospital in Kandahar in Afghanistan, Fletcher warned: "Cutting funding for those in greatest need is not something to boast about... The impact of aid cuts is that millions die."

With 2025 nearly halfway through, the UN has received only \$5.6 billion out of the \$44 billion originally sought for this year -- a mere 13 percent. In total, the original plan covered more than 70 countries and aimed to assist nearly 190 million vulnerable people. Even so, that plan acknowledged there were 115 million people the UN would not be able to reach.

"We have been forced into a triage of human survival," Fletcher said Monday. The mathematics "is cruel, and the consequences are heartbreaking". "Too many people will not get the support they need, but we will save as many lives as we can with the resources we are given," he said. Aid will now be directed so that it can "reach the people and places facing the most urgent needs", with those in "extreme or catastrophic conditions" as the starting point, said Fletcher.

"This will ensure that limited resources are directed where they can do the most good -- as quickly as possible," the statement said. Fletcher's call came as the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) issued a joint early warning report identifying worsening hunger in 13 hotspots.

Five of those places are facing an immediate risk of starvation -- situations worsened by dwindling funds, the agencies said. Sudan, the Palestinian territories, South Sudan, Haiti and Mali have communities

"already facing famine, at risk of famine or confronted with catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity", said the report.

"The devastating crises are being exacerbated by growing access constraints and critical funding shortfalls," it said. Yemen, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar and Nigeria are now considered of very high concern and requiring urgent attention to save lives and livelihoods, it added, with Burkina Faso, Chad, Somalia and Syria the other hotspots. "This report is a red alert," said WFP chief Cindy McCain.

"Without funding and access, we cannot save lives. Urgent, sustained investment in food assistance and recovery support is crucial as the window to avert yet more devastating hunger is closing fast." In late March, WFP said it was facing an "unprecedented crisis" due to a 40 percent cut in its funding for 2025, risking life-saving aid for 58 million people.

## German court jails Syrian 'torture doctor for life

BERLIN (AFP): A German court on Monday sentenced a Syrian doctor to life in prison for crimes against humanity for torturing detainees at military hospitals under former ruler Bashar al-Assad.

The crimes committed by Alaa Mousa, 40, during the Syrian civil war were "part of a brutal reaction by Assad's dictatorial, unjust regime", said Christoph Koller, the presiding judge at the higher regional court in Frankfurt. Germany has tried several Assad supporters under the legal principle of "universal jurisdiction", which allows for serious crimes to be prosecuted even if they were committed in a different country.

The civil war erupted in 2011 after Assad's brutal repression of anti-government protests, sparking a spiralling conflict that drew in regional actors and cost hundreds of thousands of

lives. Mousa was accused by federal prosecutors of torturing patients at military hospitals in Damascus and Homs on 18 occasions between 2011 and 2012.

In one instance, Mousa was said to have set fire to the genitals of a teenage boy and in another case to have delivered a lethal injection to a detainee who resisted a beating. As well as crimes against humanity, the court found Mousa guilty of murder, torture and war crimes.

He had denied the charges in the trial, which came to a close a few months after Assad was ousted in December 2024. Mousa arrived in Germany in 2015 on a visa for highly skilled workers at the same time as hundreds of thousands of Syrians were fleeing the civil war at home. He continued to practise medicine in Germany, working as an orthopaedic

doctor until he was arrested in June 2020.

According to federal prosecutors, Mousa worked at military hospitals in Homs and Damascus, where political opponents detained by the government were brought for treatment. Instead of receiving medical assistance, the patients were tortured and "not infrequently killed".

In one case, Mousa was accused of pouring flammable liquid on a prisoner's wounds before setting them on fire and kicking him in the face so hard that three of his teeth had to be replaced. Other inmates were kicked and beaten, sometimes with medical tools, according to prosecutors. During the trial, the court heard testimony from colleagues and detainees, who said they recognised the accused, according to German weekly Der Spiegel.

## ICE using no-bid contracts, boosting big firms, to get more detention beds

LEAVENWORTH, Kan. (AP): Leavenworth, Kansas, occupies a mythic space in American crime, its name alone evoking a short hand for serving hard time. The federal penitentiary housed gangsters Al Capone and Machine Gun Kelly — in a building so storied that it inspired the term "the big house."

Now Kansas' oldest city could soon be detaining far less famous people, migrants swept up in President Donald Trump's promise of mass deportations of those living in the US illegally. The federal government has signed a deal with the private prison firm CoreCivic Corp. to reopen a 1,033-bed prison in Leavenworth as part of a surge of contracts US Immigration and Customs Enforcement has issued without seeking competitive bids.

ICE has cited a "compelling urgency" for thousands more detention beds, and its efforts have sent profit estimates soaring for politically connected private companies, including CoreCivic, based in the Nashville, Tennessee, area and another giant firm, The Geo Group Inc., headquartered in southern Florida. That push faces resistance. Leavenworth filed a lawsuit against CoreCivic after it tried to reopen without city officials signing off on the deal, quoting a federal judge's past description of the now-shuttered prison as "a hell hole." The case in Leavenworth serves as another test of the limits of the Republican president's unusually aggressive tactics to force migrant removals.

To get more detention beds, the Trump administration has modified dozens of existing agreements with contractors and used no-bid contracts. One pays \$73 million to a company led by former federal immigration officials for "immigration enforcement support teams" to handle administrative tasks, such as helping coordinate removals, triaging complaints or telling ICE if someone is a risk to

community safety. Just last week, Geo Group announced that ICE modified a contract for an existing detention center in southeastern Georgia so that the company could reopen an idle prison on adjacent land to hold 1,868 migrants — and earn \$66 million in annual revenue.

"Never in our 42-year company history have we had so much activity and demand for our services as we are seeing right now," said CoreCivic CEO Damon Hininger during an earnings call last month with shareholders. A tax-cutting and budget reconciliation measure approved last month by the House includes \$45 billion over four years for immigrant detention, a threefold spending increase. The Senate is now considering that legislation.

When Trump started his second term in January, CoreCivic and Geo had around 20 idle facilities, partly because of sentencing reforms that reduced prison populations. But the Trump administration wants to more than double the existing 41,000 beds for detaining migrants to at least 100,000 beds and — if private prison executives' predictions are accurate — possibly to more than 150,000. ICE declared a national emergency on the US border with Mexico as part of its justification for authorizing nine five-year contracts for a combined 10,312 beds without "Full and Open Competition."

Only three of the nine potential facilities were listed in ICE's document: Leavenworth, a 2,560-bed CoreCivic-owned facility in California City, California, and an 1,800-bed Geo-owned prison in Baldwin, Michigan. The agreement for the Leavenworth facility hasn't been released, nor have documents for the other two sites. CoreCivic and Geo Group officials said last month on earnings calls that ICE used what are known as letter contracts, meant to speed things up when time is critical.

Charles Tiefer, a contract expert and professor emeritus of law at the University of Baltimore Law School, said letter contracts normally are reserved for minor matters, not the big changes he sees ICE making to previous agreements. "I think that a letter contract is a pathetic way to make big important contracts," he said.

CoreCivic's Leavenworth facility quickly became a priority for ICE and the company because of its central location. Leavenworth, with 37,000 residents, is only 10 miles (16 kilometers) to the west of the Kansas City International Airport. The facility would hold men and women and is within ICE's area of operations for Chicago, 420 miles (676 kilometers) to the northeast.

"That would mean that people targeted in the Chicago area and in Illinois would end up going to this facility down in Kansas," said Jesse Franzblau, a senior policy analyst for the National Immigrant Justice Center. Prisons have long been an important part of Leavenworth's economy, employing hundreds of workers to guard prisoners held in two military facilities, the nation's first federal penitentiary, a Kansas correctional facility and a county jail within 6 miles (10 kilometers) of city hall.

The Leavenworth area's politics might have been expected to help CoreCivic. Trump carried its county by more than 20 percentage points in each of his three campaigns for president. But skeptical city officials argue that CoreCivic needs a special use permit to reopen its facility. CoreCivic disagrees, saying that it doesn't because it never abandoned the facility and that the permitting process would take too long. Leavenworth sued the company to force it to get one, and a state-court judge last week issued an order requiring it.

An attorney for the city, Joe Hatley, said the legal fight indicates how much ill will CoreCivic generated

when it held criminal suspects there for trials in federal court for the US Marshals Service. In late 2021, CoreCivic stopped housing pretrial detainees in its Leavenworth facility after then-President Joe Biden, a Democrat, called on the US Department of Justice to curb the use of private prisons. In the months before the closure, the American Civil Liberties Union and federal public defenders detailed stabbings, suicides, a homicide and inmate rights violations in a letter to the White House. CoreCivic responded at the time that the claims were "false and defamatory."

Vacancies among correctional officers were as high as 23%, according to a Department of Justice report from 2017. "It was just mayhem," recalled William Rogers, who worked as a guard at the CoreCivic facility in Leavenworth from 2016 through 2020. He said repeated assaults sent him to the emergency room three times, including once after a blow to the head that required 14 staples.

When Leavenworth sued CoreCivic, it opened its lawsuit with a quote from US District Court Judge Julie Robinson — an appointee of President George W. Bush, a Republican — who said of the prison: "The only way I could describe it frankly, what's going on at CoreCivic right now is it's an absolute hell hole." The city's lawsuit described detainees locked in showers as punishment. It said that sheets and towels from the facility clogged up the wastewater system and that CoreCivic impeded the city police force's ability to investigate sexual assaults and other violent crimes.

The facility had no inmates when CoreCivic gave reporters a tour earlier this year, and it looked scrubbed top to bottom and the smell of disinfectant hung in the air. One unit for inmates had a painting on one wall featuring a covered wagon. During the tour, when

asked about the allegations of past problems, Misty Mackey, a longtime CoreCivic employee who was tapped to serve as warden there, apologized for past employees' experiences and said the company officials "do our best to make sure that we learn from different situations."

Besides CoreCivic's Leavenworth prison, other once-shuttered facilities could come online near major immigrant population centers, from New York to Los Angeles, to help Trump fulfill his deportation plans. ICE wants to reopen existing facilities because it's faster than building new ones, said Marcela Hernandez, the organizing director for the Detention Watch Network, which has organized nationwide protests against ICE detention.

Counties often lease out jail space for immigrant detention, but ICE said some jurisdictions have passed ordinances barring that. ICE has used contract modifications to reopen shuttered lockups like the 1,000-bed Delaney Hall Facility in Newark, New Jersey, and a 2,500-bed facility in Dilley, Texas, offering no explanations why new, competitively bid contracts weren't sought. The Newark facility, with its own history of problems, resumed intakes May 1, and disorder broke out at the facility Thursday night. Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, a Democrat who previously was arrested there and accused of trespassing, cited reports of a possible uprising, and the Department of Homeland Security confirmed four escapes.

The contract modification for Dilley, which was built to hold families and resumed operations in March, calls its units "neighborhoods" and gives them names like Brown Bear and Blue Butterfly. The financial details for the Newark and Dilley contract modifications are blacked out in online copies, as they for more than 50 other agreements ICE has signed

since Trump took office. ICE didn't respond to a request for comment.

Private prison executives are forecasting hundreds of millions of dollars in new ICE profits. Since Trump's reelection in November, CoreCivic's stock has risen in price by 56% and Geo's by 73%. "It's the gold rush," Michael A. Hallett, a professor of criminal justice at the University of North Florida who studies private prisons. "All of a sudden, demand is spiraling. And when you're the only provider that can meet demand, you can pretty much set their terms."

Geo's former lobbyist Pam Bondi is now the US attorney general. It anticipates that all of its idle prisons will be activated this year, its executive chairman, George Zoley, told shareholders. CoreCivic, which along with Geo donated millions of dollars to largely GOP candidates at all levels of government and national political groups, is equally optimistic. It began daily talks with the Trump administration immediately after the election in November, said Hininger.

CoreCivic officials said ICE's letter contracts provide initial funding to begin reopening facilities while the company negotiates a longer-term deal. The Leavenworth deal is worth \$4.2 million a month to the company, it disclosed in a court filing. Tiefer, who served on an independent commission established to study government contracting for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, said ICE is "placing a very dicey long-term bet" because of its past problems and said ICE is giving CoreCivic "the keys to the treasury" without competition. But financial analysts on company earnings calls have been delighted. When CoreCivic announced its letter contracts, Joe Gomes, of the financial services firm Noble Capital Markets, responded with, "Great news." "Are you hiding any more of them on us?" he asked.



The Frontier Post

Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town, Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

# Imperative all parties act to defuse crisis

THE Middle East stands at a critical juncture following Israel's unprecedented strikes on Iran beginning Friday, which have ignited a perilous cycle of retaliation and heightened fears of a regional conflagration. China's response to the crisis has been swift and unequivocal. Amid the tumultuous developments, the recent telephone calls between Foreign Minister Wang Yi and both the Iranian and Israeli foreign ministers have underscored China's steadfast commitment to calming the situation and promoting peace and stability in the region.

China unequivocally condemns Israel's unilateral military actions, which blatantly violate Iran's sovereignty and international law. The strikes on nuclear facilities and military targets, timed to disrupt the US-Iran talks in Oman, undermine efforts to peacefully resolve the Iranian nuclear issue. Such acts set a dangerous precedent.

The escalation, rooted in decades-old hostilities and interlinked security dilemmas, risks spiraling into a broader regional war with catastrophic humanitarian and global economic repercussions. Israel's pre-strike coordination with the US and the latter's explicit threats against Iran have further inflamed tensions.

The situation demands urgent international restraint and a renewed commitment to diplomacy. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China supports all efforts aimed at immediate de-escalation of the crisis and a return to dialogue. Both Israel and Iran must heed the international community's call to prioritize diplomacy over force. The use of military means only exacerbates tensions and ignores the region's complex ethnic, sectarian and geopolitical dynamics. History shows that lasting peace can only emerge through inclusive political processes.

At an emergency UN Security Council session on Friday, representatives from China and other countries condemned Israel's attacks on Iran, emphasizing that strikes on peaceful nuclear installations are unacceptable. The consensus is clear: Diplomacy, not force, is the only viable path to lasting security for any party. China has urged all parties to avoid provocative actions and reiterated its support for establishing a Middle East nuclear-weapons-free zone.

China calls for a comprehensive security approach to address the legitimate concerns of all parties. It has pledged to steadfastly uphold the nonproliferation regime and regional peace, providing support to ensure a diplomatic outcome. What is needed is dialogue and collective diplomacy to defuse the precipitous situation.

The international community must unite to safeguard stability in the Middle East lest it become a powder keg.

Whatever sympathy Israel received after Hamas' attack on Oct 7, 2023, has evaporated after its military invaded the Gaza Strip, causing an unprecedented humanitarian disaster in the Palestinian enclave. Yet, rather than reining in its war machine, Israel is now seeking to start a war with Iran.

The US has so far seemingly distanced itself from Israel's latest aggression, but it should do more to exert pressure on Tel Aviv so that the latter ceases its reckless acts immediately. Otherwise if the conflict continues, the US will sooner or later be sucked into a war against Iran, as this is widely perceived to be Israel's intention.

Israel's reckless actions seriously violate the principles of the UN Charter and the basic norms governing international relations; the US should not enable it any further. The crisis-ridden Middle East cannot be allowed to plunge any deeper into conflict because of Israel's unbridled aggression. Countries with any influence over Israel, particularly the US, have the responsibility to act as a firewall to ensure Israel adheres to the UN Charter. The UN Security Council should utilize all means conferred upon it to censure Israel and put the brakes on its rogue behavior.

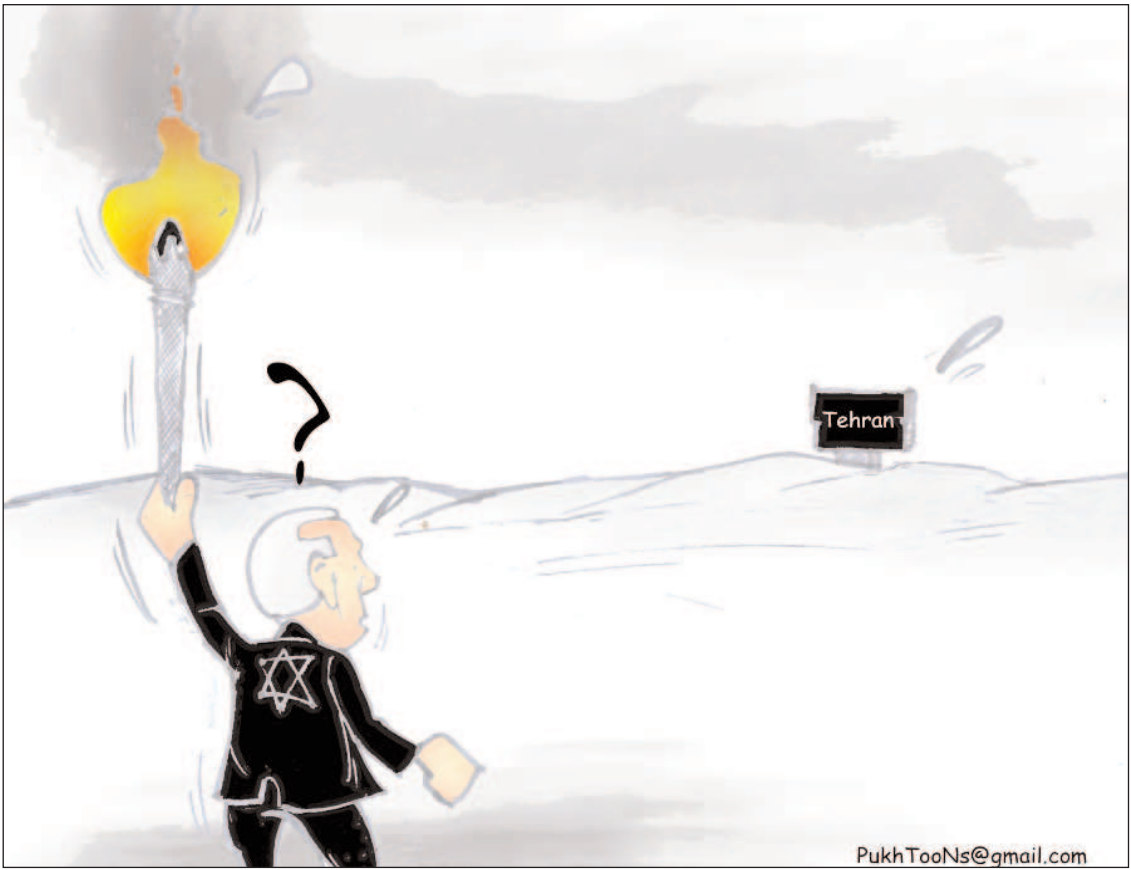
In his telephone conversation with Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar on Saturday, Foreign Minister Wang Yi emphasized that the Middle East cannot remain forever under the shadow of conflict, and Israel should not continue living in anxiety.

Pointing out that the diplomatic efforts to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue have not been exhausted and there is still hope for a negotiated resolution, he urged Tel Aviv to uphold the vision of common security.

As the situation in the Middle East remains precarious, concerted diplomatic efforts such as China's are imperative to defuse what is a highly combustible and deeply concerning crisis.

## Important Notice

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



# Two conflicts, One agenda: Joint aggression on Muslim sovereignty

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

THE world revolves around power, conspiracies and vested interests. In view of these phenomena, the months of May and June 2025 have become etched in contemporary geopolitical memory for two seemingly separate yet strikingly parallel conflicts—one between Pakistan and India, the other between Israel and Iran. Though separated by thousands of miles, both episodes displayed a common methodology, a mirrored hostility, and an undeniable alliance behind the scenes. These were not coincidental skirmishes but coordinated acts of aggression targeting two Muslim nations. In both theatres, a joint strategic framework between Israel and India was unmistakably visible—an axis of power that seeks regional domination through calculated provocation.

On the morning of May 7, 2025, Pakistan was compelled to respond militarily to an Indian violation of its airspace and sovereignty. According to credible military reports, Indian drones attempted deep aerial reconnaissance over Azad Jammu and Kashmir as well as Pakistan under the guise of a "counter-terrorist maneuver. In retaliation, Pakistan scrambled these drones, successfully repelling the intrusion and conducting limited precision strikes on Indian military outposts along the Line of Control.

However, what set this episode apart was the chilling discovery that the drones were not of Indian origin. Defense analysts and electronic forensics teams traced the downed drones back to Israeli manufacturer Elbit Systems, confirming the presence of Hermes 900 and Harop drones—advanced combat UAVs previously used in Gaza and Lebanon. These drones had been remotely piloted not from Israeli territory, but from a command center near Jaissalmer, Rajasthan. Israeli defense technicians stationed on Indian soil, under a bilateral defense cooperation protocol signed in 2023, were operating these machines. This was no longer a matter of speculation; this was direct collaboration.

More disturbingly, diplomatic cables leaked through anonymous intelligence channels revealed that between May 1 and May 7, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi were in communication at least four times. According to one cable sourced from a European intelligence agency, Netanyahu promised "tactical intelligence, technological support, and political cover in international forums" to India during its brief campaign. The entire exercise, it appears, was designed not only to provoke Pakistan but to assess its rapid response capabilities in the event of a larger future conflict.

This hidden agenda was later confirmed in an interview given by Prime Minister Netanyahu on June 10, only three days before the Israeli strike on Iran. Speaking to "The

Jerusalem Chronicle", Netanyahu openly referred to both Pakistan and Iran as "radical Islamic states possessing or nearing nuclear capabilities," claiming that "the global community must remain vigilant against these ideological regimes with atomic teeth." He further declared, "While we are focused on Iran's ambitions, we cannot ignore Pakistan's strategic position and military potential—especially when aligned ideologically with Tehran." These remarks, though framed in the language of preemptive security, revealed a deep-seated bias and a justification for regional aggression under the veil of self-preservation. Netanyahu's comments clearly exposed a strategic doctrine that does not differentiate

between real threats and perceived ones if they arise from the Muslim world. Interestingly, in the days preceding the May 7 escalation, the U.S. Vice President publicly stated that "the United States has no role to play in the Pakistan-India tension." However, as the situation escalated and global markets wavered, the U.S. President intervened diplomatically, pressuring both sides into a ceasefire brokered through backchannel communication and high-level mediators. This inconsistency in U.S. posture—first denying involvement, then stepping in to halt conflict—reveals the West's careful calibration of when and where to engage, driven not by moral clarity but by geopolitical calculus. Given Iran's remarkable resilience and military effectiveness during the June 13 Israeli assault—where Tehran's air defenses neutralized nearly half of Israel's advanced missile barrage—speculation is now rife that the U.S. President may once again be compelled to intervene diplomatically.

Washington's concern, analysts argue, is no longer only about regional escalation but about Iran's demonstrated capability to withstand and respond to high-tech aggression. The world is watching, and once more, the United States may be forced to abandon passive neutrality in favor of pressured diplomacy. Barely a month after the South Asian crisis, a new chapter of confrontation unfolded in the Middle East. On June 13, 2025, Israel launched a comprehensive military assault on Iran, striking key facilities in Isfahan, Bushehr, and Khorramabad. Over 36 missiles, including the long-range Jericho III and precision-guided Delilah cruise missiles, were deployed, alongside stealth drones from the Israeli Air Force. Among the primary targets were Iran's nuclear fuel enrichment facilities, the Imam Ali military base, and communication hubs suspected of housing IRGC cyber units. Once again, the hand of coordination with India was evident. Just hours before the attack, Netanyahu and Modi exchanged another round of communication, confirmed by international media monitoring encrypted traffic between Tel Aviv and New Delhi.

between real threats and perceived ones if they arise from the Muslim world. Interestingly, in the days preceding the May 7 escalation, the U.S. Vice President publicly stated that "the United States has no role to play in the Pakistan-India tension." However, as the situation escalated and global markets wavered, the U.S. President intervened diplomatically, pressuring both sides into a ceasefire brokered through backchannel communication and high-level mediators.

This inconsistency in U.S. posture—first denying involvement, then stepping in to halt conflict—reveals the West's careful calibration of when and where to engage, driven not by moral clarity but by geopolitical calculus. Given Iran's remarkable resilience and military effectiveness during the June 13 Israeli assault—where Tehran's air defenses neutralized nearly half of Israel's advanced missile barrage—speculation is now rife that the U.S. President may once again be compelled to intervene diplomatically.

Washington's concern, analysts argue, is no longer only about regional escalation but about Iran's demonstrated capability to withstand and respond to high-tech aggression. The world is watching, and once more, the United States may be forced to abandon passive neutrality in favor of pressured diplomacy. Barely a month after the South Asian crisis, a new chapter of confrontation unfolded in the Middle East. On June 13, 2025, Israel launched a comprehensive military assault on Iran, striking key facilities in Isfahan, Bushehr, and Khorramabad. Over 36 missiles, including the long-range Jericho III and precision-guided Delilah cruise missiles, were deployed, alongside stealth drones from the Israeli Air Force. Among the primary targets were Iran's nuclear fuel enrichment facilities, the Imam Ali military base, and communication hubs suspected of housing IRGC cyber units. Once again, the hand of coordination with India was evident. Just hours before the attack, Netanyahu and Modi exchanged another round of communication, confirmed by international media monitoring encrypted traffic between Tel Aviv and New Delhi.

warfare.

Iran, like Pakistan, stood its ground. The Bavar-373 and Khordad-15 missile defense systems intercepted 19 of the incoming missiles mid-flight. In response, Iran launched a limited counterstrike, targeting Israeli intelligence positions in the occupied Golan Heights using Fateh-110 missiles. The swift defense and proportional retaliation reaffirmed Iran's preparedness and capability to confront high-tech aggression. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in a rare address to the nation, denounced the "Zionist-Hindu nexus," calling for greater Muslim solidarity in the face of systematic regional destabilization.

The common thread in both conflicts is stark: Israel and India operating in tandem, combining military, technological, and cyber capabilities to challenge regional Muslim powers. For both, Iran and Pakistan represent ideological, strategic, and geopolitical resistance. While Israel seeks to eliminate Iran as a regional competitor and suppress any challenge to its nuclear monopoly, India eyes Pakistan as an obstacle to its ambitions of unchallenged hegemony in South Asia.

The broader concern, however, lies in the deafening silence of the global community. The United Nations failed to call any emergency session. Western media outlets framed the Pakistan-India conflict as a "border escalation" and the Israel-Iran exchange as a "preventive strike" against alleged Iranian provocation. Not a single resolution of condemnation was issued. This selective morality exposes the hollow core of so-called international justice—a system that blinks at violations when they target Muslim nations.

In the face of such complex aggression, the way forward for Pakistan and Iran is not merely reactive but strategic. Military intelligence sharing, coordinated cyber defenses, joint military exercises, and diplomatic synchronization must become the foundation of a deeper alliance. History shows that isolated states fall, but aligned states endure. Both nations must realize that their survival and dignity are now intertwined not only in faith and culture, but in fate.

The wars of May and June 2025 will be remembered not only for the might of drones and missiles but for the clarity they provided about the shape of the future. The age of hybrid warfare is upon us, where bullets and bytes go hand in hand.

Yet even in this age, there remains a timeless truth: the soul of a nation, when united, cannot be conquered. Iran and Pakistan did not merely survive these attacks—they emerged strengthened, their peoples resolute, their enemies warned. Ultimately, tyranny may march with steel, but history always walks with justice. And justice, though delayed, never dies.

# The real reason Israel attacked Iran

Ori Goldberg

AS the Israeli-confrontation enters its third day, casualties on both sides are mounting. At least 80 people have been killed in Iran and at least 10 in Israel. Despite the deadly response from Iran, Israeli officials have continued to insist that attacks on various Iranian nuclear and military facilities were necessary.

A number of justifications have been broadcast to the Israeli public, but none explains the true reasons why the Israeli government decided to carry out the unilateral, unprovoked assault.

The Israeli government claims that the strike was a "preventive" one, meant to address an immediate, inevitable threat on Iran's part to construct a nuclear bomb. There appears to be no evidence for this claim. Israel's strike was undoubtedly meticulously planned over a long period of time. A preventive attack must carry an element of self-defence, which, in turn, is generated by an emergency. No such emergency appears to have occurred.

Additionally, Israel has suggested that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report released on June 12 that condemned Iran for material violations of its Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) commitments until the early 2000s constitutes such an emergency. But even the IAEA seems to reject that claim. There was nothing in the report that was not already known to the relevant parties.

The Israeli government has also suggested, in direct relation to the notion of a "preventive" strike, that it aimed to "decapitate" Iran's nuclear programme. It is generally agreed by scholars and policymakers that Israel lacks the ability to destroy the programme, especially if it attempts to carry out such a strike on its own.

The nature of the campaign as it unfolds also seems to indicate that Israel never meant to wipe out Iranian nuclear activities.

The Israeli army has been bombing various military and governmental targets, from missile bases to a gasfield and an oil depot. It has also carried out a string of assassinations against senior Iranian military leaders. Ali Shamkhani, a former defence minister and a close adviser to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was among those targeted and is reported to have been killed, though Iranian state media and government are yet to officially confirm his death. Shamkhani is believed to have been a leading figure in the talks with the United States over the past months.

His assassination, alongside others', reflects a favourite Israeli modus operandi. Israel often attempts to "eliminate" specific people in the hope that their deaths would bring about the unravelling of the systems and institutions they lead.

The death of Shamkhani can be construed as an attempt to sabotage talks between Iran and the US. In any case, assassinations also seem to indicate the existence of a thorough plan to demonstrate Israel's might at all levels of Iranian official life and practices. This is not a "decapitation" of the Iranian nuclear programme.

A third suggestion is that Israel has its heart set on jumpstarting "regime change" in Tehran. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said this overtly when he called on the "proud people of Iran" to stand up for their "freedom from an evil and repressive regime".

The assumption that Iranians would simply do Israel's bidding as it bombs them relentlessly and unilaterally seems akin to the notion that if Israel starves and exterminates the Palestinians in Gaza to the required extent, they would rise against Hamas and remove it from power.

Even if that were the case, presuming that all the Iranians are waiting for is an Israeli strike to move against the regime demonstrates a profound lack of understanding with regard to the forces driving Iranian politics. While many Iranians undoubtedly oppose the Islamic Republic, Iranians of all political persuasions are consistently "patriotic", committed to supporting Iranian sovereignty and independence from any attempts by external elements to impose their agendas on their country.

In fact, just as numerous Israelis who would consider themselves uncompromising critics of Netanyahu jumped to attention when the Israeli attack began and are now vocally supporting the government — most egregiously, members of the parliamentary "opposition" — so are numerous opponents of the Islamic Republic now rallying behind the flag in support of Iran's violated sovereignty. Claiming that Israel is merely "laying the groundwork" for a popular Iranian rebellion by striking is, at best, a cynical manipulation.

Israel has not struck Iran for all these reasons. So, what drove the attack? Amid the genocidal campaign in Gaza, Netanyahu is very much aware that his government is running out of options. The international community, as well as regional allies, have started to criticise Israel vocally. Some have also been preparing to carry out unilateral measures, like the mass recognition of a Palestinian state.

The International Criminal Court's warrant of arrest for Netanyahu is looming, and the decision of the International Court of Justice about the legality of Israel's occupation is waiting to be fulfilled. Israel and its military have continuously carried out massacres, denied them, and have been found to be lying.

There is no doubt that Netanyahu planned the strike on Iran for years, waiting for just the right time. This time came on Friday.

It is a desperate attempt to rally the world behind Israel, just as preparations are made to deny it the absolute impunity it has enjoyed since its creation.

Iran is still considered a potential threat by many leading powers of the Global North. By invoking the known tropes associated with unilateral lethal Israeli action — from divine promises to the Holocaust — Netanyahu hoped to re-establish the status quo; Israel can still do whatever it wants.

This is Israel's current definition of "security", the most hallowed principle at its core. It is the seemingly apolitical genesis of Israeliness, the site devoted wholly to Jewish supremacy, which is the only "real" way to ensure the integrity of Jewish lives. "Security" means that Israel can kill whoever it wants for as long as it wants and wherever and whenever it wants without paying any sort of price for its actions.

This "security" is what has motivated Israel's actions from Gaza to Yemen to Lebanon and Syria, and now in Iran. Such a "security regime" must expand continuously, of course. It can never stop. By striking Iran, Netanyahu has gone for broke, staking a claim for complete and absolute impunity for Israel as well as for himself, in The Hague as well as in domestic courts.

Will this be Netanyahu's salvation? Will the Israeli public forgive him for his abject failures at home and horrific transgressions in Gaza? When observing the current sense of jubilation in public Israeli discourse, this may very well be the case.

The long lines stretching from every open store, hardware to food, demonstrate that Israelis have entered blank survival mode. A docile citizenry may be good for Netanyahu, but it portends ill for any attempt to build and defend a robust Israeli society.



# Why it will be hard for Trump to stay out of the conflict with Iran

**P**RESIDENT Donald Trump is desperate not to fight a war with Iran. But can he really avoid it?

Compelling national security arguments and domestic political considerations mean it makes sense to stop short of direct US offensive operations in the long-dreaded conflict that Israel describes as a matter of preserving its own existence.

But powerful forces could suck America deeper into the conflict than its current role in helping to shield Israel from Iran's deadly rain of missiles and drones.

CNN reported that over the weekend, Trump rejected an Israeli plan to kill Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, according to two sources.

But some of this is out of Trump's hands.

Should Iran's battered regime decide it has nothing to lose and attack US bases and personnel in the region, or US targets across the globe, Washington will be forced to respond hard to preserve credibility and deterrence. Another possibility is that Tehran could create duress on Trump to rein in Israel by attacking international shipping in the Gulf or Red Sea and bring on a global energy crisis.

Pressure is also mounting on Trump from inside his own party for action that only the United States could carry out — a mission to destroy Iran's subterranean site at Fordow, which is believed to be beyond Israel's airborne capabilities. The logic of such a strike would be that Iran is now uniquely vulnerable, and a better chance may never come for the US to destroy the possibility of an Iranian nuclear weapon.

CNN's White House team has reported that the president is deeply skeptical about throwing the United States into the fray. Such a move would be fraught with danger. It could lead to the expansion of the conflict beyond its current belligerents and lead to a grueling open-ended war with no clear endgame.

If there is one lesson from the early 21st century, it's that war objectives and analyses of the Middle East drawn up in Washington almost always turn out disastrously wrong. The idea that Iran's brutal clerical regime could fall might be attractive. But the toppling of Saddam Hussein and the civil war in Syria show that Middle East nations can simply splinter when power vacuums open.

A US intervention would also widen deep strains in Trump's political base and dismantle a core principle of his "America first" movement: that the United States should stay out of foreign quagmires after more than a decade of pain in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is only a few weeks, after all, since the president set out a new vision for the

Middle East and American involvement.

"The so-called nation-builders wrecked far more nations than they built — and the interventionists were intervening in complex societies that they did not even understand themselves," Trump said in a major speech in Saudi Arabia in May. "A new generation of leaders is transcending the ancient conflicts and tired divisions of the past and forging a future where the Middle East is defined by commerce, not chaos; where it exports technology, not terrorism; and where people of different nations, religions and

Stephen Collinson

Trump's diplomatic attempt to end its nuclear program, then the United States should be prepared to join the conflict.

"Now, if the Iranians want to stand down, I think the president's made it clear he's willing to enter into negotiations. But there can be no nuclear program of any kind, no enrichment program of any kind," Pence told CNN's Dana Bash. "And at the end of the day, if Israel needs our help to ensure that the Iranian nuclear program is destroyed once and for all, the United States of

example was his turnaround last week in halting deportation sweeps against agricultural workers — partly to avoid angering farmers and employers in the rural heartlands where he draws much of his support.

Trump's preoccupation with the political costs was evident in a conversation with journalist Michael Scherer of The Atlantic on Sunday.

"Well, considering that I'm the one that developed 'America first,' and considering that the term wasn't used until I came along, I think I'm the one that decides that," Trump told Scherer. "For those people

his "art of the deal" approach to foreign policy is a failure.

Putin has ignored Trump's efforts to end the Ukraine war. Xi has twice forced the US leader to fold in their trade war. And Netanyahu's decision to launch the conflict with Iran that American presidents have long sought to avoid appears to have scuttled Trump's Iran diplomacy — and is based on a bet that no American president could afford not to defend Israel even if he differed with its decisions.

At home, presidents must create public trust for their decisions to go to war. Here, Trump may struggle since he's alienated millions of people with his searing approach to affairs at home. This includes his decision to deploy the military in California amid anti-ICE protests last week and warnings he plans to use troops everywhere.

Trump's second term has already belied the notion that the weight of his personality, supposed respect for him among foreign adversaries, and what aides see as an almost magical dealmaking ability would change the world. The promised rush of trade deals shaken loose by his tariffs, for example, has not materialized.

Trump's first peacemaking foray — in Gaza — failed. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are now facing starvation as Israel's pounding of the Strip, triggered by Hamas' attacks in October 2023, continues.

The president's effort to end the Ukraine war never went anywhere. The conflict widened. It spread into Russia with Ukrainian raids on Russian bases that prompted Putin to launch vicious attacks on civilians in Kyiv and elsewhere. The White House made it known that Trump was getting frustrated with the Russian leader and set a two-week deadline to consider tougher sanctions on Moscow. But nothing revealed the risible nature of that spin and Trump's biased attitude to the war more than his excitement on Saturday that Putin had called to wish him a happy birthday.

Events have overtaken Trump's "American first" reticence to get involved abroad and exposed the shallowness of his statesmanship. Worsening crises may offer a preview of a world that becomes more volatile in the absence of steady and constant American leadership.

Trump's increasingly brittle domestic political grounding and his already questionable authority internationally will only complicate his dilemmas. In many ways the Iran conflict is the kind of international crisis with no easy answers that he avoided in his first term. Now it could define his second.

# European powers must push for Iran-Israel ceasefire

**Michael Jansen**

diate talks on the nuclear issue. But this train has well and truly left the station. Iran is unlikely to be willing to negotiate while under bombardment. The most likely answer will be: "make Israel stop and then let's see." Moreover, if Israel and the US are not on board, why would Iran engage?

But as well as engaging in whatever diplomacy is available, European powers should ensure a posture of no direct involvement in this war. Working together and with regional and other actors, they must root

not drop off the agenda. **Calling for a ceasefire is a minimum. The reality is that none of these leaders wish to be publicly seen calling for Israel to stop, as that might invoke lazy accusations of appeasement. But this position hardly looks credible when UK Prime Minister Keir**

**Starmer announces that Britain is building up its forces in the region. Ministers state that the UK may help defend Israel from Iranian strikes. This is the very path of escalation that will give Israel a comfort blanket from which to continue its chosen path of aggression against Iran. European powers need this like a hole in the head. The impact on the price of oil and gas will harm their economies just as many are facing dire economic conditions and are being forced into spending cuts. Defense spending increases were designed to cope with the threat from Russia, not wars in the Middle East. This is why Britain, France and Germany have offered Iran immediate talks on the nuclear issue. But this train has well and truly left the station. Iran is unlikely to be willing to negotiate while under bombardment.**

**The most likely answer will be: "make Israel stop and then let's see." Moreover, if Israel and the US are not on board, why would Iran engage? But as well as engaging in whatever diplomacy is available, European powers should ensure a posture of no direct involvement in this war. Working together and with regional and other actors, they must root their positions in international legitimacy. Both Israel and Iran should be made to understand that their future relations with Europe depend on ending this conflict. Wherever possible, European actors should encourage the Trump administration to cooperate in bringing this to a close. European actors can also work hard to prevent this conflict from spreading. They will have to protect their assets in the region, but also do everything to stop the situation from deteriorating. Netanyahu has engaged in a war of choice against Iran.**

their positions in international legitimacy. Both Israel and Iran should be made to understand that their future relations with Europe depend on ending this conflict. Wherever possible, European actors should encourage the Trump administration to cooperate in bringing this to a close. European actors can also work hard to prevent this conflict from spreading. They will have to protect their assets in the region, but also do everything to stop the situation from deteriorating.

Netanyahu has engaged in a war of choice against Iran. European leaders should make this clear and condemn it as such. Israel was not acting in self-defense and to suggest so risks contempt, not respect. They can also express understanding as to why Israel had fears about the Iranian enrichment program, but at the same time make it clear that military action was not warranted. The US-Iran talks should have been allowed a chance to

succeed, not be bombed into oblivion. To the extent that it was a pre-emptive strike, it was against any possibility of a nuclear deal between the US and Iran.

European powers should also be clear to Iran that, while the Israeli attacks were an aggression, Iran's unwillingness to abandon its nuclear program and its threats against Israel were also unacceptable. Arming nonstate actors across the Middle East to disrupt and undermine regional security was wrong and counterproductive.

Palestine should also not drop off the agenda.

**Calling for a ceasefire is a minimum. The reality is that none of these leaders wish to be publicly seen calling for Israel to stop, as that might invoke lazy accusations of appeasement. But this position hardly looks credible when UK Prime Minister Keir**

**Starmer announces that Britain is building up its forces in the region. Ministers state that the UK may help defend Israel from Iranian strikes. This is the very path of escalation that will give Israel a comfort blanket from which to continue its chosen path of aggression against Iran. European powers need this like a hole in the head. The impact on the price of oil and gas will harm their economies just as many are facing dire economic conditions and are being forced into spending cuts. Defense spending increases were designed to cope with the threat from Russia, not wars in the Middle East. This is why Britain, France and Germany have offered Iran immediate talks on the nuclear issue. But this train has well and truly left the station. Iran is unlikely to be willing to negotiate while under bombardment.**

International actors have so far failed to halt the genocide in Gaza and the settlement frenzy in the West Bank. The message to Israeli leaders should be crystal clear: committing these war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide against Palestinians is unacceptable, cannot continue and will have consequences.

Only by returning to a moral high ground and a rules-based approach can European actors regain the respect they have occasionally benefited from internationally. Judicial bodies should be encouraged to pay close attention as to how both Israel and Iran conduct this war and what they target.

This is a casino war, a reckless gamble in which the stakes are far too high. European leaders cannot be passive observers. They must be at the forefront of a relentless diplomatic onslaught that matches or even surpasses Netanyahu's fondness for war and Iran's desire for retaliation.

# The regional implications of escalating Iran-Israel tensions

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager

**T**HE new Israeli military strikes on Iranian targets did not catch many by surprise. Israel has been uncompromising in its enforcement of a zero uranium enrichment and even zero nuclear policy for Iran — an objective that lies at the core of its national security doctrine. Despite several rounds of US-Iran negotiations, including last month's fifth round that ended without progress, Iran has not conceded on this critical point. US President Donald Trump stated that he told Iran it should reach a deal within 60 days. Now, more than 60 days have passed without an agreement, largely due to Tehran's unwillingness to abandon its nuclear program, or at least scale back enrichment and accept stricter oversight.

While Israel's actions were expected given its stated red lines, what has raised eyebrows is the apparent contradiction in the American position.

The US administration has officially declared that it does not support further military escalation in the region. However, it is now clear that Washington was fully briefed in advance of the Israeli strike and the Israeli leadership was able to secure a green light and clear commitment of US support. This contradiction has prompted questions about whether America tacitly approved the operation, or even encouraged it, and participated in the deception plan that misled the Iranian calculation, despite public claims to the contrary.

Iran has long boasted of its military strength and ability to deter threats and retaliate against them. The second key question, therefore, is how far is Iran prepared to go in escalating the confrontation and does it have the capability to sustain a high-intensity conflict? While Israel can continue targeting Iranian assets, doing so at scale requires American support in

intelligence-sharing, resupply of munitions and diplomatic backing.

Iran still has tools at

temporarily closed

embassies considered to

that allows Tehran to pre-

serve control over its siz-

**Iran has long boasted of its military strength and ability to deter threats and retaliate against them. The second key question, therefore, is how far is Iran prepared to go in escalating the confrontation and does it have the capability to sustain a high-intensity conflict? While Israel can continue targeting Iranian assets, doing so at scale requires American support in intelligence-sharing, resupply of munitions and diplomatic backing. Iran still has tools at its disposal. One of the more dangerous would be a return to asymmetric warfare and covert operations, similar to tactics used in the 1980s, when Iranian-linked groups targeted US and Israeli interests across the region. This scenario is not hypothetical — it is one of the reasons Israel has temporarily closed embassies considered to be at risk of reprisal. There have been discussions about whether Russia could play a mediating role by taking custody of enriched uranium as a confidence-building measure. While Iran may see this as a way to retain its leverage, neither the US nor Israel is likely to support any arrangement that allows Tehran to preserve control over its sizable stockpile of highly enriched uranium, which it accumulated illegally over the past few years. The Arab Gulf states find themselves in a highly precarious position. Geographically and economically linked to Iran, they are deeply vulnerable to the fallout of escalating tensions. Their top priority is to avoid being dragged into the conflict, either as a battleground or as an indirect target of retaliation. A regional war would pose severe risks to the security of their territories and populations, critical infrastructure and economic prosperity. Thus, beyond the fundamental issue of security, there are also deep implications for economic prosperity and development. Gulf economies are fundamentally tied to stability, open trade routes and investor confidence, and any disruption, whether from attacks or threats to energy infrastructure, could have immense repercussions.**

**Iran has long boasted of its military strength and ability to deter threats and retaliate against them. The second key question, therefore, is how far is Iran prepared to go in escalating the confrontation and does it have the capability to sustain a high-intensity conflict? While Israel can continue targeting Iranian assets, doing so at scale requires American support in intelligence-sharing, resupply of munitions and diplomatic backing. Iran still has tools at its disposal. One of the more dangerous would be a return to asymmetric warfare and covert operations, similar to tactics used in the 1980s, when Iranian-linked groups targeted US and Israeli interests across the region. This scenario is not hypothetical — it is one of the reasons Israel has temporarily closed embassies considered to be at risk of reprisal. There have been discussions about whether Russia could play a mediating role by taking custody of enriched uranium as a confidence-building measure. While Iran may see this as a way to retain its leverage, neither the US nor Israel is likely to support any arrangement that allows Tehran to preserve control over its sizable stockpile of highly enriched uranium, which it accumulated illegally over the past few years. The Arab Gulf states find themselves in a highly precarious position. Geographically and economically linked to Iran, they are deeply vulnerable to the fallout of escalating tensions. Their top priority is to avoid being dragged into the conflict, either as a battleground or as an indirect target of retaliation. A regional war would pose severe risks to the security of their territories and populations, critical infrastructure and economic prosperity. Thus, beyond the fundamental issue of security, there are also deep implications for economic prosperity and development. Gulf economies are fundamentally tied to stability, open trade routes and investor confidence, and any disruption, whether from attacks or threats to energy infrastructure, could have immense repercussions.**

its disposal. One of the more dangerous would be a return to asymmetric warfare and covert operations, similar to tactics used in the 1980s, when Iranian-linked groups targeted US and Israeli interests across the region.

This scenario is not hypothetical — it is one of the reasons Israel has

be at risk of reprisal. There have been discussions about whether Russia could play a mediating role by taking custody of enriched uranium as a confidence-building measure.

While Iran may see this as a way to retain its leverage, neither the US nor Israel is likely to support any arrangement

able stockpile of highly enriched uranium, which it accumulated illegally over the past few years.

The Arab Gulf states find themselves in a highly precarious position. Geographically and economically linked to Iran, they are deeply vulnerable to the fallout of escalating tensions.

Their top priority is to

avoid being dragged into the conflict, either as a battleground or as an indirect target of retaliation.

are fundamentally tied to stability, open trade routes and investor confidence, and any disruption, whether from attacks or threats to energy infrastructure, could have immense repercussions.

The Gulf states have consistently upheld a policy of neutrality and noninterference, seeking to balance relations with Iran, Israel and the US. They have condemned Iran's involvement in Arab affairs and its ambitions of regional dominance, while also rejecting Israel's use of force and its disregard for international norms. Similarly, they oppose US policies that violate international law, particularly those that appear to enable further escalation.

The Gulf's diplomatic stance is rooted in a principled call for respect for sovereignty, nonaggression and adherence to international law and human rights.

With the conflict now transitioning into a broader military confrontation, the balance of

power becomes the determining factor. In this respect, the Israeli-American alliance holds overwhelming superiority in terms of firepower, intelligence capabilities and strategic depth. Iran, under increasing pressure both domestically and externally, is showing signs of fatigue and attrition. This raises a third critical question: Will Iran's leadership come to terms with the realities of its disadvantage and move toward de-escalation?

Or will it continue down a path that could lead to further destruction, isolation and internal collapse?

In the coming weeks, the answer to the questions posed above will not only shape the future of Iran, they will also define the contours of regional stability. For the Gulf states, the imperative remains: stay out of the crossfire, safeguard national security and uphold the norms of international legitimacy that offer the only sustainable path out of this crisis.









In brief

Women's league to expand to 14 teams

LONDON (AFP): The English Women's Super League (WSL) is set to expand to 14 teams from 12 for the start of the 2026/27 season after the proposal was voted through by clubs on Monday. The changes still require the approval of the English Football Association but are expected to pass with a promotion/relegation play-off as part of the shake-up to the women's game. Currently, just one club is relegated and one promoted each season. Next season, the top two from the second tier WSL2 will be automatically promoted. Additionally, third-place in the WSL2 will face the team that finishes bottom in the top tier in a play-off. From the 2026/27 campaign, the one automatic relegation and promotion place will return with a play-off between second bottom in the WSL and second top in the second tier. "Subject to the approval of the FA board, expanding the WSL to 14 teams will stimulate movement between leagues and through the pyramid which increases opportunities," said Nikki Doucet, chief executive of Women's Professional Leagues Limited. "The introduction of a promotion/relegation play-off creates distinction for the women's game and introduces a high-profile, high-stakes match." Expansion is part of a 10-year plan to raise standards across the top two tiers of English women's football, focused on improved facilities, staffing and academies. According to financial experts Deloitte, collective revenues in the WSL rose 34 percent to \$65 million (\$88 million) in 2023/24 and are projected to reach \$100 million in the upcoming season. However, Deloitte also found that average attendances across the league dipped by 10 percent last season to 6,642 as the surge in interest generated by England's Euro 2022 success faded.

Hamilton 'devastated' after running over groundhog

MONTREAL (Agencies): Lewis Hamilton says he is devastated after running over a groundhog during Sunday's Canadian Grand Prix. The Ferrari driver hit the rodent during the 13th lap of the race in Montreal, leaving a hole in the floor of his SF-25 car. The 40-year-old ended up finishing sixth, with his team estimating that the damage cost Hamilton about half-a-second per lap for the remainder of the race at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve. But the seven-time world champion, a vegan and well-known animal lover, was more concerned with the "horrible" death of the groundhog. "It was feeling pretty decent up until then. And then, I didn't see it happen, but obviously I heard I hit a groundhog," said Hamilton. "So that's devastating. I love animals, and I'm so sad about it. That's horrible. That's never happened to me here before. "It's never nice to see that - I just hope it didn't suffer." Groundhogs, a type of large ground squirrel native to North America, are commonplace around the track in Montreal, which is on an artificial island in the Saint Lawrence River. Mercedes driver George Russell took victory from pole to win his first race of the season, with reigning champion Max Verstappen second.

# Pakistan triumphs Japan 3-2 in National Cup Hockey in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (DNA): In a thrilling encounter at the National Cup Hockey Tournament in Malaysia, Pakistan edged past Japan with a 3-2 victory, showcasing a spirited comeback and dominant performance in the latter stages of the match.

The match began with both teams exhibiting strong defensive strategies and swift counterattacks. Japan initially took the lead, but Pakistan responded effectively with exceptional teamwork and determination.

Notable performances came from Hanan Shahid and Rana Waheed, whose aggressive play and skillful coordination kept constant pressure on the Japanese defense. Pakistan significantly upped the tempo in the last two quarters, demonstrating tactical superiority and physical endurance.

The match-defining moment came when Pakistan was awarded a



penalty corner late in the final quarter. M. Sufiyan successfully converted it into the third and decisive goal. However, the decision was met with controversy. Japan requested a video referral, and the third umpire ruled against the penalty corner. In an unusual turn, the field umpire did not concur

with the third umpire's decision and upheld the original call, allowing the penalty corner to proceed — much to the frustration of the Japanese side.

Despite the contention, Pakistan maintained composure and held off Japan's attempts to equalize in the dying minutes. The match concluded with

Pakistan emerging victorious 3-2, marking an important win in their campaign.

This victory boosts Pakistan's morale and positions them strongly as the tournament progresses. The team is set to face its next opponent with renewed confidence and national pride.

## Fans found guilty of hate crimes against Vinicius Jr



MADRID (Agencies): Four people have been handed suspended jail sentences after being found guilty of committing hate crimes against Real Madrid forward Vinicius Jr.

The quartet were found guilty of hanging an inflatable effigy of Vinicius Jr over a bridge near Real Madrid's training ground in January 2023, shortly before Atletico Madrid's Copa Del Rey match at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

A banner above the effigy read: "Madrid hates Real".

Three of the group were sentenced to 14 months in prison,

while one was given a 22-month sentence for distributing images of the act online.

However, the sentences have been suspended after all four signed a letter of apology to the Brazil international, Madrid, La Liga and the Spanish football federation (Rfef).

The sentence included a restraining order preventing the quartet from coming within 1km of Vinicius, his home or Real Madrid's training ground, as well as a blanket ban on attending La Liga or Spain national team matches.

According to Real Madrid, 14 people have now been convicted of racist attacks against the club's players.

"This criminal conviction comes in addition to the several already handed down in recent months for racist insults received by Real Madrid players at the stadiums in Valladolid, Valencia, Palma de Mallorca and Madrid," the club said in a statement.

"Real Madrid have joined its player in prosecuting this case, and in many others currently underway, and will continue to work to protect the values of our club and to eradicate any racist behaviour in the world of football and sport."

Vinicius Jr has regularly been the victim of racial abuse since joining Real Madrid in 2018 from Flamengo.

The Brazilian, who has made 316 appearances for the club, was subject to racist chanting by Atletico fans during a La Liga match in September 2022.

The 24-year-old was targeted again later that month during a match against Real Valladolid, with five people later being handed suspended prison sentences.

In December 2022 - one month before the effigy was put up - Vinicius urged La Liga to act on banning those found guilty of racist chanting from attending matches.

## Pakistan-made Fifa 2025 ball receives global acclaim

ISLAMABAD (DNA): As the Fifa Club World Cup 2025 kicks off in the United States this weekend, all eyes aren't just on the competing teams but also on a crucial piece of equipment: the official match ball.

Unveiled earlier this year by Adidas, the Fifa Club World Cup 25 Pro Ball is garnering significant attention not only for its striking stars-and-stripes design but also for its remarkable performance, advanced engineering, and notably, its "Made in Pakistan" label.

Sam Handy, Adidas' general manager for football, described the ball as the culmination of 18 months of meticulous development. The aim, he stated, was to create something "bold, loud, iconic—and unmistakably American."

However, behind its patriotic aesthetic lies a testament to Pakistan's manufacturing excellence and high-performance engineering, with the ball proudly produced in the South Asian nation.

Beyond its origins, the 2025 Club World Cup ball also marks a step towards greater sustainability as it is crafted entirely from polyurethane, this iteration is composed of 61% polyurethane, 30% recycled polyester, and 9% viscose, unlike previous versions.

It also features Adidas' innovative PRECISION-SHELL technology — a 20-panel, thermally bonded structure with strategically placed debossed grooves designed to improve airflow control and enhance flight consistency.

This construction is carried out in Pakistan, where the majority of the world's footballs are manufactured.

Testing conducted at Loughborough University, a leading sports research institution in the UK, demonstrated the ball's superior performance.

Using both human players and a robotic kicker, researchers compared the new Adidas model with balls from the Premier League (Nike Flight), Carabao Cup (Puma Orbita 1), and FA Cup (Mitre Ultimix Pro).

While robot testing showed similar speed and spin across all models, player testing revealed "noticeable differences," according to Professor Andy Harland, who oversaw the analysis.

Players achieved their fastest strikes and higher spin rates with the Club World Cup ball—one even recorded more than double the spin compared to the Nike ball. One player remarked the ball "hits truer for professionals," suggesting its design caters well to high-level, precision-based play.

Players observed that the ball felt firmer and had a smaller sweet spot, demanding more precise contact. However, they appreciated its consistency during open play, particularly for delivering long, accurate ground passes.

Despite the limited sample size, all three players registered their fastest strikes using the Club World Cup ball. "It hits truer for the professionals," one player remarked afterward.

"You had to hit it more precisely," the players noted, highlighting that the Club World Cup ball has a smaller 'sweet spot' compared to others.

In contrast, robot testing—which Harland explained "should give a near-identical kick each time" due to the "fixed" leg speed and ball placement—did not show the Club World Cup ball as the fastest.

The players also described the distinct feel when striking the ball: "Especially the Adidas (Club World Cup) ball, that felt rock-hard," one player said. "It has no grip. Because you have the little grooves, you spin it more," another added.

Two players shared a similar verdict on where it excels: "Probably better in open play. It would be good to hit a long pass with, a grasscutter (a long pass, kept low to the floor) would be perfect."

All the balls were manufactured in Pakistan, which produces the majority of the world's footballs. The distinct construction of the Club World Cup edition is the reason players notice such differences when kicking it.

According to Adidas, the high-grade butyl bladder inside the ball contributes to shape retention and flight stability. The company is so confident in the durability that it offers a two-year shape guarantee.

The ball also includes a motion sensor, sending data 500 times per second to aid in semi-automated offside decisions, player tracking, and touch-point

# Olympic hero Arshad Nadeem joins Forbes' 30 under 30 hall of fame

ISLAMABAD (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's star javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem has made it to Forbes' 30 Under 30 list for South Asia 2025. He was named in the Entertainment & Sports category, becoming the only Pakistani featured this year. Forbes honoured him for both his sports achievements and cultural impact.

Arshad gained global fame after winning Olympic gold in Paris, the first-ever individual Olympic gold for Pakistan. This historic win brought him into the spotlight and made him an inspiration for young athletes across



South Asia. His journey from Mian Channu to international success continues to inspire.

He has also won gold at the Asian Athletics Championship, adding to his list of achievements. So far, Arshad has earned five gold medals in major international events. His success has raised

Pakistan's profile in global track and field sports.

His story shows how hard work and resilience can lead to greatness. Arshad's inclusion in the Forbes list proves that sports heroes can also be cultural icons. It also highlights the growing recognition of Pakistani talent on global platforms.

As Arshad prepares for future competitions, this honour adds another milestone to his already impressive career. He now carries not just the javelin, but also the hopes of millions of Pakistanis, determined to make his country proud.

## ICC unveils 2025 Womens cricket World Cup schedule

2025 Women's ODI World Cup schedule			
Sep 30: IND vs SL, Bengaluru	Oct 16: AUS vs BAN, Vizag		
Oct 1: AUS vs NZ, Indore	Oct 17: SA vs SL, Colombo		
Oct 2: BAN vs PAK, Colombo	Oct 18: NZ vs PAK, Colombo		
Oct 3: ENG vs SA, Bengaluru	Oct 19: IND vs ENG, Indore		
Oct 4: AUS vs SL, Colombo	Oct 20: SL vs BAN, Colombo		
Oct 5: IND vs PAK, Colombo	Oct 21: SA vs PAK, Colombo		
Oct 6: NZ vs SA, Indore	Oct 22: AUS vs ENG, Indore		
Oct 7: ENG vs BAN, Guwahati	Oct 23: IND vs NZ, Guwahati		
Oct 8: AUS vs PAK, Colombo	Oct 24: PAK vs SL, Colombo		
Oct 9: IND vs SA, Vizag	Oct 25: AUS vs SA, Indore		
Oct 10: NZ vs BAN, Vizag	Oct 26: ENG vs NZ, Guwahati *		
Oct 11: ENG vs SL, Guwahati	Oct 26: IND vs BAN, Bengaluru		
Oct 12: IND vs AUS, Vizag			
Oct 13: SA vs BAN, Vizag	Oct 29: Semi-final 1, GHY/CMB		
Oct 14: NZ vs SL, Colombo	Oct 30: Semi-final 2, Bengaluru		
Oct 15: ENG vs PAK, Colombo	Nov 2: Final, BLR/CMB		

DUBAI (Monitoring Desk): The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday announced the schedule for the Women's Cricket World Cup 2025 set to be held in India and Sri Lanka in September.

Pakistan will play all their matches of the 50-over World Cup in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo when India hosts this year's

tournament. Following India's refusal to travel to Pakistan for the Champions Trophy earlier this year, a "hybrid model" was decided upon whereby India would play all its matches in Dubai, chosen as a neutral venue.

Hosts India will get the tournament underway against Sri Lanka in Bengaluru on September 30

at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, with action starting at 3pm local time, according to the schedule.

Defending champions Australia then get their campaign up and running against neighbours New Zealand at Holkar Cricket Stadium in Indore on October 1, while Pakistan will face Bangladesh a day later in Colombo.

The highly anticipated India-Pakistan clash is set for October 5, after which Pakistan will play Australia on the 8th, England on the 15th, New Zealand on the 18th, South Africa on the 21st and Sri Lanka on the 24th.

The semi-finals are scheduled for October 29 and 30, before the final takes place on November 2.

ICC Chairman Jay Shah said: "The confirmation of the schedule only builds further excitement and anticipation" for the world cup.

"With the eight best teams in the women's game descending on India, alongside incredible venues and what promises to be record-breaking crowds, we are all looking forward to an unforgettable tournament."

Pakistan qualified for the World Cup when they beat Thailand by 87 runs during the ICC Women's World Cup 2025 Qualifiers in Lahore in April.

## Maria climbs 43 places in WTA rankings after Queen's win

PARIS (AFP): Tatjana Maria jumped 43 places to 43rd in the WTA rankings published on Monday, the day after completing her fairytale run to the title at Queen's.

The 37-year-old mother of two, who had to come through two rounds of qualifying before reaching the main draw at Queen's, became the oldest winner of a WTA 500 event when she beat American Amanda Anisimova 6-3, 6-4 in Sunday's final.

Maria, who was the first female Queen's champion since Olga Morozova 52 years ago, climbed one place short of her career high-ranking of 42, which she attained last year.

The top three remained unchanged with Aryna Sabalenka, Coco Gauff and Jessica Pegula. Zheng Qinwen climbed one place to fourth, her highest ranking after reaching the semi-finals at Queen's.

Jasmine Paolini dropped one place to fifth while Iga Swiatek who has yet to set foot on grass after an unsuccessful season on clay, slipped one place to eighth.

WTA rankings: 1. Aryna Sabalenka (BLR) 11,553 pts, 2. Coco Gauff (USA) 8,083, 3. Jessica Pegula (USA) 6,483, 4. Zheng Qinwen (CHN) 4,853 (+1), 5. Jasmine Paolini (ITA)

4,805 (-1), 6. Madison

Keys (USA) 4,669 (+2), 7. Mirra Andreeva (RUS) 4,636 (-1), 8. Iga Swiatek (POL) 4,618 (-1), 9. Emma Navarro (USA) 3,697 (+1), 10. Paula Badosa (ESP) 3,684 (-1), 11. Elena Rybakina (KAZ) 3,456, 12. Diana Shnaider (RUS) 3,216,

13. Amanda Anisimova (USA) 3,119 (+2), 14. Elina Svitolina (UKR) 3,035 (-1), 15. Karolina Muchova (CZE) 2,929 (-1), 16. Daria Kasatkina (AUS) 2,801, 17. Barbora Krejickova (CZE) 2,725, 18.

Ekaterina Alexandrova 2,378 (+1), 19. Jelena Ostapenko (LAT) 2,200 (+1), 20. Liudmila Samsonova (RUS) 2,141 (-2).



GALLE: Najmul Hossain Shanto and Dhananjaya de Silva pose with the series trophy against the backdrop of the Galle fort.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 254,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 254,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 293,992 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1450.85 feet which was 48.85 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 177,400 cusecs and 151,800 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1167.20 feet, which was 117.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 31,750 cusecs and 17,658 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 186,304, 137,105, 90,219 and 33,560 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 23,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 30,417 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### ANF recovers over 199 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting six operations across the country, recovered as many as 199,372 kilograms of drugs worth more than Rs 200.1 million and arrested four suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Monday. He informed that 490 ecstasy pills weighing 254 grams were recovered from an accused riding in a vehicle near Bahria Town Phase 4, Islamabad. As many as 3 kgs of ice were recovered from a passenger's luggage at Allama Iqbal International Airport. In another operation, 2,218 kgs of opium were recovered from a passenger's luggage travelling to Qatar at Jinnah International Airport, Karachi. As many as 70 grams of weed were recovered from a parcel sent from the UK at a courier office in Chaklala Garrison, Rawalpindi. Similarly, 13.2 kgs of hashish were seized from a vehicle near the Sabzi Mandi Interchange Expressway, and the suspect was arrested. As much as 100 kgs of heroin and 80 kgs of morphine were recovered, hidden for smuggling near Quetta Kachlak-Yaro Bypass Road. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and further investigations are underway.

### Cultural festival held

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Punjab Arts Council organized a family festival under special directives of the Punjab government, featuring performances by renowned artists that attracted a large number of tourists and locals. The colourful show included performances by singer Aoun Abbas, stage artists Saleem Albela, Sajjad Jani and Honey Albela, while the duo Zain-Zohaib mesmerized audiences on Murree's picturesque mountain backdrop. Internationally acclaimed singer Ali Zafar delivered the lead performance. "This festival serves dual purposes, providing wholesome entertainment while nurturing young artistic talent," said the Executive Director, Punjab Arts Council Murree during the event hosted by anchor Ayesha Jehanzeb and poet Ali Zaryon. The ceremony was attended by Director Arts Council Sajjad Hussain, former Rawalpindi Arts Council Director Waqar Ahmed, Assistant Directors Muhammad Aslam and Muhammad Ashraf, Anum Khalid, media representative, numerous tourists and local residents who praised the government's cultural initiative.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, received a high-level UAE delegation led by Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for Competitiveness, Abdullah Nasser Lootah.

## Int'l community should stop Israeli aggression: Daniyal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Secretary and Broadcasting Barrister Daniyal Chaudhry has said that Israel, whose is pursuing a policy of "might is right" that is unacceptable to anyone. The international community should take steps to stop Israeli aggression that can destabilize the region.

Talking to the media outside the Parliament House on Monday, he said that Israel's aggressive actions against Iran will destabilize the region, and the international commu-

ty should stop Israel's policy of aggression against other countries, and this process should stop now because this policy is unacceptable to anyone.

Barrister Daniyal Chaudhry said that despite the strict conditions imposed by the IMF, the government is trying to provide relief to the people. Positive suggestions from allies and the opposition will also be welcomed.

He said that Pakistan is moving towards development, the country's economic indicators are indi-

cating growth. The targets set in the current fiscal year budget have been met. No new taxes have been imposed in the new budget, maximum relief has been given. Hopefully, this will be the last budget under the strict conditions of the IMF and more better budgets will be given in the future.

In response to a question, he said that no budget is perfect, every budget has room for improvement, and we will try to remove the concerns raised by the allies and the opposition regarding the budget.

## Murder accused of student arrested

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have arrested the main suspect involved in the brutal murder of a 22-year-old female student of the International Islamic University, tracing the blind case through modern investigation techniques, said Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Islamabad Muhammad Jawad Tariq on Monday.

DIG Tariq held a press conference at Rescue 15, where he was accompanied by SSP Investigations, SP Sadder Zone, DSP CIA, and other senior police officers. He said the suspect, identified as Feroz, a resident of Jhang, had gone into hiding after committing the crime. DIG Tariq said the accused had entered the Kainat Girls Hostel with criminal intent and opened fire, which resulted in the tragic death of the university student, Imaan.

DIG Tariq said multiple police teams were formed under the supervision of SSP Operations and SSP Investigations, which worked round the clock using Safe City camera footage, sketches of the suspect, and videos obtained from nearby buildings to track down the accused.

DIG Tariq said the arrested suspect has a criminal history, including cases of rape and several incidents of motorcycle theft. DIG said a case has been registered against the accused, and a thorough investigation is underway. He said the accused will be presented in court with solid evidence to ensure he receives appropriate punishment.

## Commissioner directs for identifying land for Sahulat Bazaars

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Commissioner Engineer Aamir Khattak on Monday directed deputy commissioners of all the five districts of Rawalpindi Division to immediately identify 3 to 5 kanals of government land in each tehsil for setting up new Sahulat Bazaars.

The Sahulat Bazaars, which was a flagship project of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, would help provide essential commodities to the public at affordable prices, he added. The commissioner was chairing a meeting on the establishment of Sahulat Bazaars, a DPR news release said.

The meeting was attended by senior officers of the Commissioner's Office and heads of various departments, while the deputy commissioners of Jhelum, Murree, Attock and Chakwal participated through video link.

Commissioner Khattak directed that the Sahulat Bazaars be completed and made functional before the next holy month of Ramadan. Necessary financial resources had been provided for the timely completion of the project, he added.

Moreover, he said, funds had also been allocated for the Punjab Sahulat Bazaar Authority in the Annual Development Programme 2025. The commissioner said the Sahulat Bazaars would be a practical expression of the government's efforts for providing relief to the people in the time of inflation. The establishment of Bazaars, he added, would help control inflation, stabilize prices in the general market and prevent hoarding.

## Romanian envoy calls on Ayaz Sadiq

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Romania, Dan Stoenescu Monday called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at the Parliament House.

During the meeting, both sides held a detailed exchange of views on matters of mutual interest, including bilateral ties, parliamentary cooperation and the evolving regional situation.

Ayaz Sadiq said that Pakistan attached high importance to its longstanding and friendly relations with Romania, which were based on mutual respect, trust and shared interests. He also said that vibrant parliamentary cooperation would further strengthen bilateral collaboration.

Ayaz Sadiq said Pakistan-Romania Friendship Group in the National Assembly had played a pivotal role in

promoting substantive and enduring parliamentary engagement between the two parliaments.

He stressed the need for expanding cooperation in key sectors, including education, trade, industry and information technology.

Ayaz Sadiq said Pakistan was actively seeking international partnerships in these areas and viewed Romania as a valuable partner.

The ambassador appreciated the Speaker's views and acknowledged Pakistan's efforts to deepen bilateral ties. He said Romania attached great value to its relations with Pakistan and was keen to further develop collaboration in the parliamentary, academic, and economic domains.

Ayaz Sadiq lauded Pakistan's progress in the IT sector and underlined the importance of fostering

direct institutional linkages between the two parliaments, saying such efforts would not only reinforce bilateral relations but also strengthen democratic norms across the region.

The ambassador also noted that Pakistan's parliamentary diplomacy continued to play a constructive role in promoting regional peace and development. He expressed Romania's willingness to benefit from Pakistan's experience and explore avenues for mutual cooperation.

It was agreed that parliamentary exchanges between the two countries would be further enhanced and joint efforts would be undertaken to pursue shared objectives.

Both sides expressed readiness to facilitate the exchange of high-level parliamentary delegations in the future.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq receiving Ambassador of Romania Dan Stoenescu at Parliament House. —APP Photo

## Suthra Punjab Incharge expresses satisfaction on cleanliness

RAWALPINDI (APP): Incharge of the 'Suthra Punjab' Programme Asim Mahmood on Monday expressed satisfaction over the cleanliness in the Rawalpindi city and the positive public feedback in this regard.

He was on a visit to the city on the special directives of Punjab Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif to have a first-hand account of the cleanliness situation there, an RWMC news release said.

Flanked by Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) Chief Executive Officer Rana Sajid Safdar and other senior officers, and Assistant Commissioner Eman Zafar, Asim Mahmood took round of various areas including Murree Road, Committee Chowk, Liaquat Road, Gawalmandi Bridge, Fawara Chowk, Raja Bazaar, Mochi Bazaar, Bani Chowk and others to inspect the cleanliness situation.

During the visit, he interacted with the public to get their feedback about the cleanliness, especially in the wake of Eidul Azha. The city residents appreciated the improved cleanliness arrangements made by the RWMC and termed the 'Suthra Punjab' Programme a positive and effective initiative of the Punjab Government. The praised the RWMC particularly for the timely and efficient disposal of animal waste and remains during the Eidul Azha days. Commending the performance of RWMC's sanitation staff, Asim Mahmood urged the public to play a positive role and help the authorities in ensuring a clean and healthy environment.

"Maintaining cleanliness is not the responsibility of government or institutions only but a collective duty of all citizens also," he said. Asim Mahmood also met the representatives of traders community and urged them to fully cooper-

ate with RWMC staff in order to further improve the cleanliness system. He observed that the RWMC was implementing a comprehensive cleanliness plan aimed at providing a clean, green, and pleasant environment in the city. He emphasized that garbage bins should be installed outside shops so that the waste generated from commercial activities could be collected in an organized manner instead of being dumped on streets, roads or open spaces around markets. The RWMC staff, he said, would clean those garbage bins during the second shift, which would further improve the overall cleanliness of the city.

The traders also acknowledged the improvement in the cleanliness of the city and markets. The RWMC workers cleaned the markets in two shifts, which had significantly improved the standard of cleanliness, he added.

## ICT admin conducts anti-encroachments operation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has carried out an anti-encroachment operation in Blue Area where vendors had occupied public space outside electronics market and authorities cleared the footpaths and arrested 12 violators.

The spokesman of ICT administration said in an operation led by Assistant Commissioner City, several encroachments set up on footpaths in Blue Area's electronics market, were removed.

According to the district administration teams, vendors had extended their shops illegally onto the pedestrian walkway, affecting public movement. During the operation, 12 shopkeepers were taken into custody for violating public space regulations. These individuals were shifted to the local police station for further legal proceedings. The action was part of ongoing efforts

to reclaim public space and ensure compliance with municipal rules.

The Assistant Commissioner, along with enforcement teams, monitored the entire operation. Staff ensured that shop extensions, display racks, and stalls set up outside the allotted shop areas were dismantled. Items, placed unlawfully on the footpaths, were seized and shifted to storage by the enforcement team.

The officials stated that the operation was launched after multiple public complaints about the blocked walkways and increased congestion in the area. The district administration emphasized that commercial activities must remain within approved premises to avoid inconvenience to the public.

According to the ICT administration, shopkeepers had previously been warned against encroachment. Notices had also

been issued, but non-compliance led to the enforcement action. The administration made it clear that similar operations would continue across the city, especially in commercial areas, where public access is being disrupted.

The administration also urged traders to cooperate and follow the official guidelines. Authorities stated that the aim is to keep markets accessible and organized for both businesses and visitors.

The district administration has reiterated its commitment to reclaim public areas and warned shopkeepers against any future encroachment. Officials confirmed that violators may face fines, arrest, and legal proceedings if they continue to occupy footpaths.

More operations are expected in other commercial zones of the city as part of the broader initiative to ensure lawful use of public spaces.



RAWALPINDI: RDA worker install plant pots along a roadside bridge as part of a beautification and greening drive in the twin cities. —APP Photo

## Rawalpindi gets Rs. 27.5 bn for flyovers, underpasses projects

RAWALPINDI (APP): Besides a range of development projects and water schemes, the Punjab Government has allocated a huge amount worth Rs. 27.5 billion for the fiscal year 2025-26 for various flyovers, underpasses and a link road connecting the city with Islamabad.

Engineer Qamar ul Islam MNA, who is also Chairman of the Coordination Committee for Rawalpindi District, has confirmed APP on Monday that historic transformative projects will reshape Rawalpindi's future.

"Rs. 27.5 billion will be spent on projects for various flyovers to be built on Kachehri Chowk, Jinnah Park Vhokw, and Amar Chowk, along with underpasses at GPO Chowk, T.M. Chowk on Mall Road and AFIC Chowk for pedestrians", he said.

Moreover, the development package announced by the government also features underpasses at Charing Cross, Race Course, Iftikhar Janjua Road and COD Chowk. The expansion of Range Road is also included in the development projects for the next fiscal year.

To a question Raja Qamar-ul-Islam informed that to improve Islamabad

access from Rawalpindi, Marble Factory Road nearing Westridge area will be widened as an alternative route. "These projects will significantly ease traffic congestion across the city," said the Chairman Coordination Committee.

Additionally, the Punjab Government has allocated Rs. 6.0 billion for construction of a state of the art Children's Hospital and Rs. 5.0 billion for air-conditioned E-buses serving the residents of the Pindi Division. A Rs.135 billion Tourists Glass Train will connect Rawalpindi with Murree has already been envisioned by the CM Maryam Nawaz for which Rs. 1.0 billion have been allocated for the fiscal year 2025-26. Qamar termed these initiatives as projects to improve quality of life.

Moreover, Rs 2.3 billion has been fixed for dualization of Gorakhpur-Khasala Khurad Road and Rs1.7 billion for Tulsu Morr Adiala Road Underpass to reduce travel time between Adiala Road and Gorakhpur. Qamar termed the significant development projects 'gift by CM Maryam Nawaz' to the people of Rawalpindi.



Bid to smuggle of drugs foiled

HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): The smuggling of more than 250 kilograms of drugs to Iran has been prevented in Herat on Monday. Police spokesman Ghulam Nabi Nabizada said anti-narcotics department personnel foiled the bid to smuggle the drugs to Iran. He said the drugs included over 163kgs of crystal, 42 kilograms of opium, and 70 kilograms of heroin. The drugs were seized at Islam Qala port based on an intelligence report, but no one has been arrested in connection with this case.

Kazakhstan appoints envoy

KABUL (Pajhwok): Kazakhstan has named Yerkin Tukumov as the country's special representative for Afghanistan on Monday. Tukumov was appointed to the position by the President of Kazakhstan. Tukumov previously served as the head of Kazakhstan's Centre for Strategic Studies. In March this year, while serving in that role, he visited Kabul. Since 2022, he has been leading the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the Office of the President.

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

AIU expansion:  
Land to be allocated  
in new Kabul city

KABUL (Pajhwok): As many as 500 acres of land will be allocated to the Afghan International Islamic University (AIU) in new Kabul city to support the campus's expansion, the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing (MoUDH) announced on Monday.

The decision was made during a meeting chaired by Acting Minister Sheikh Hamdullah Nomani and also attended by representatives from the ministries of Higher Education, Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Finance, Information and Culture, Energy and Water, as well as the National Environmental Protection Authority, MoUDH said in a statement.

Nomani said the meeting was convened to implement a directive from the leadership of the Islamic Emirate, under which the land was to be granted for the university's expansion.

He added: "In accordance with the order of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), and to ensure the sound upbringing and bright future of the Islamic generation, it is essential to allocate this land for the university's expansion under the New

Kabul City scheme."

The statement added that if the full area could not be provided in a single location, the land may be allocated in multiple locations.

According to the ministry, the university complex in New Kabul City would include buildings for various faculties, laboratories, research centres, libraries, residences for lecturers, dormitories for students, conference halls, guesthouses, sports facilities, service and transport areas, green spaces, water reservoirs and other essential infrastructure.

Ex-secretary  
gunned  
down in  
Faryab

MAIMANA (Pajhwok): A former secretary of the provincial council in northern Faryab province and Almar District Chief in the previous government has been killed by unknown gunmen, an official said on Monday.

Provincial media official Maulvi Abdullah Muradi told Pajhwok Afghan News Mohammad Saleh, known as "Secretary Saleh", was gunned down in Al-Malik area shortly after 7pm yesterday while he was traveling from Maimana city to Almar district. He died after being transferred to Maimana Hospital.

He said the attackers fled from the scene taking advantage of darkness and have not yet been identified.

According to Muradi, security forces have launched an investigation and are trying to identify the attackers.

A tribal elder, who did not want to be named, told Pajhwok that Mohammad Saleh was targeted by two gunmen on a motorcycle.

Harassment,  
creating issues  
on social media  
criminalized

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Ministry of Propagation of Virtue says causing problems and harassing people on social media is a legal crime and those who commit it will be dealt with legally.

On its X platform, The Ministry of Propagation of Virtue, Prevention of Vice and Hearing Complaints (MoPVPE) wrote social media is for reliable information, education, business and public awareness, and these goals should be pursued.

"Threatening, insulting, causing problems and harassment to people through anonymous or private addresses on social media is a crime under law and is subject to prosecution and legal action by MoPVPE", it added.

The ministry expressed its hope that no one would misuse social media.

2 children  
hurt in mortar  
shell blast

ASADABAD (Pajhwok): Two children injured in a mortar shell explosion in eastern Kunar province, an official said on Monday.

Police spokesman Fari-dullah Dehqan told Pajhwok that the children were herding livestock when the shell exploded in the Dosaraka area of Sarkano district on Sunday.

The injured were taken to Kunar Civil Hospital for treatment.

This incident follows a similar blast on Sunday in the Kama district of neighboring Nangarhar province, where a 16-year-old boy was killed and his brother and sister were injured when a mortar shell exploded.

Mass wedding  
ceremony for  
16 couples held

BAMYAN (BNA): A mass wedding ceremony for 16 young couples took place in Bamyan, organized by a group of philanthropists in collaboration with the Imam Sadiq (A.S.) seminary.

The event aimed to alleviate the financial burden on families, allowing those who cannot afford traditional weddings to participate. Religious scholar Mohammad Ali Ahmadi emphasized the significance of marriage as a Quranic commandment, urging society to prioritize this essential institution.

Hojjat-ul-Islam Nematullah Sadeqi, a preacher at the Imam Sadiq seminary, praised the event as a means to foster community solidarity and promote the culture of Islamic marriages. Tahir, a relative of one of the grooms, expressed his joy, noting that his nephew had long struggled to afford a wedding ceremony.

CEO stresses expansion  
of power networks

KABUL (BNA): The Chief Executive Officer of Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), in a meeting with the district governor and tribal elders of Charkh District in Logar Province, stated that the process of balanced and ongoing development of power networks across the country continues, and that the planned expansion of these networks to remote areas is a priority.

According to a press release issued today by Breshna Company, Dr. Abdul Bari Omar, CEO of Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat, met in his office with the district governor and tribal elders of Charkh District, Logar Province to discuss the development of the power network.

The tribal elders of



Charkh praised the recent and ongoing efforts of the leadership of DABS in electricity production and the balanced expansion of the power grid. They called for the extension of

the power network to their district.

Dr. Abdul Bari Omar reassured the elders that the fair and balanced development of power networks across the country is con-

tinuing. He emphasized that the planned expansion to remote areas is a top priority and, once implemented, will provide electricity to hundreds of thousands of citizens.

Khost students study beside  
cemetery and unsheltered

KHOST CITY (Pajhwok): In the Sabari-Yaqubi district of southeastern Khost province, students of a high school named Khalbasat are forced to attend classes beside a cemetery due to the lack of a proper school building.

Carrying their books in bags slung over their shoulders, the students walk early each morning to the graveyard — their makeshift classroom under the open sky, with no shelter, desks, or chairs.

Despite the lack of basic educational facilities, these students remain committed to their studies. They say they are exposed to the scorching sun and rain, and have no proper classroom equipment.

**Students study under scorching sun**

Bakhtullah Jan, an 11th-grade student who keeps his books in a gray plastic bag, told Pajhwok:

"Whenever there's a funeral, school is dismissed. The students scatter, teachers leave, and we go home. This place is not meant for learning or building a future."

He added that, besides physical discomfort, students face significant psychological stress: "The place where we study is completely unsuitable. We call on the government to build us a proper school."

Bilal Masoom, another student, shared similar concerns. He said the current environment is not conducive to learning and urged the government to provide proper shelters for schools like theirs.

"Our school is surrounded by a cemetery on one side. When it rains or the heat becomes unbearable, we can't continue classes because there's no building,"

Ghafoorullah Elham, a

12th-grade student, said he has spent the past 12 years studying at the school without any form of shelter.

Although he is about to graduate, he emphasized that younger students deserve better facilities: "Many students faint from the heat. This is a tribal cemetery, and funerals are held here once or twice a month, which leads to school closures. Classes are also canceled when it rains or the wind is too strong."

**School without building for years**

Mohammad Hussain Wesal, the school principal, said the school has operated without a building for around 20 years.

According to him, 18 teachers educate 1,075 students in extremely difficult conditions.

"I've seen many schools lacking shelter where students study under the sun.

During rain or wind, classes are canceled. You've seen for yourself how tough it is for these students," he told Pajhwok.

**119 Khost schools lack buildings**

Officials from the Khost Provincial Education Department acknowledged that 119 schools across the province still have no buildings.

Khairullah Khairkhwa, Deputy Director of the Khost Education Department said, "The department oversees 372 schools. Of these, 119 — a legacy from the previous government — are still without shelter. The leadership of the Islamic Emirate is working to secure funding to construct buildings for them."

According to the department, about 300,000 students are currently enrolled in schools throughout Khost province.

UN rights chief: Women removed  
from public life in Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): The UN Human Rights Chief warned that women in Afghanistan have been systematically removed from public life, facing severe restrictions and discrimination.

Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, warned about the deteriorating condition of Afghan women during the 59th session of the UN Human Rights Council.

Speaking on Monday, June 16, Türk stated that women and girls in Afghanistan have been "erased from public life" under the current authorities, raising global concern.

He further emphasized that LGBTQ+ individuals and people with disabilities also face grave threats in Afghanistan, calling for greater international attention to their protection and rights.

Türk also expressed concern over shrinking international support, noting that some countries have reduced humanitarian funding for



Afghan women at a time of growing vulnerability.

Richard Bennett, UN Special Rapporteur for Afghanistan, presented his latest report focusing on access to justice and protections for Afghan women and girls under Taliban rule.

Bennett reiterated that the situation for Afghan

women has worsened and urged the creation of a new, independent accountability mechanism to address ongoing human rights abuses.

The UN officials' remarks come amid continued global alarm over systematic gender apartheid in Afghanistan, where women face bans on education, work, and free movement.

With little accountability in place, human rights experts argue that without strong international mechanisms and consistent pressure, the situation is likely to deteriorate further for women in Afghanistan.

3 killed,  
11 injured  
in traffic  
accidents

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): Three individuals were killed and 11 others injured in two separate traffic accidents in the Aab Band and Gelan districts of southern Ghazni province.

According to a statement from the provincial police headquarters, the first accident occurred in the Spin Band area along the Kabul-Kandahar highway, involving a collision between a tanker, a passenger vehicle, and a rickshaw.

Two people were killed and nine others injured in the incident.

In a separate accident on the same highway in the Gelan district, a Corolla-type vehicle veered off the road and overturned, with one individual lost his life and two others injured.

Reconstruction  
of 8 school  
buildings  
underway

HERAT (BNA): The Reconstruction work on eight school buildings in Guzara and Zir Koh districts has commenced, with a budget exceeding 4 million Afghanis, officials said Sunday.

Mawlawi Rahmatullah Jabar, Head of the Herat Education Department, told Bakhtar News Agency that the project, funded by a partner organization, will cost approximately 4.48 million Afghanis. On completion, these facilities will provide thousands of students in the region with a more conducive learning environment.

Since the Islamic Emirate's return to power, hundreds of school and religious education buildings have been constructed nationwide.

IEA to facilitate  
transfer of  
Iranian pilgrims

KABUL (Ariana News): Amir Khan Muttaqi, Acting Foreign Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), in a telephone conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi expressed Kabul's readiness to cooperate in the safe transfer of remaining Iranian pilgrims from Saudi Arabia via Afghan territory.

The call came amid escalating tensions and conflict between Iran and Israel.

During the conversation, Muttaqi strongly condemned Israel's airstrikes on Iranian territory, calling them a blatant violation of international law and reaffirmed the Islamic

Emirate's solidarity with the Iranian people, according to a statement released by Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry.

In response, Araghchi thanked the Islamic Emirate for its firm stance in condemning the Israeli attacks and welcomed Kabul's offer to facilitate the transfer of Iranian pilgrims. He also described Afghanistan as a friendly and empathic neighbor of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Earlier, Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz ordered authorities to provide comprehensive support and services to all Iranian pilgrims stranded in the kingdom due to regional unrest.





ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo during soft launch of Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference.

## Soft launch of second edition of Pakistan int’l maritime expo

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Soft launch of 2nd edition of Pakistan International Maritime Expo & Conference (PIMEC) was held at Islamabad. Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Upon arrival, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf received the Chief Guest. PIMEC-2025 is scheduled to be held from 3-6 November 2025 at Karachi Expo Centre.

While addressing at the ceremony, the Chief Guest appreciated Pakistan Navy for taking initiative to exhibit potential of Pakistan's maritime sector through PIMEC. He said that Pakistan offers enormous opportunities for profitable investments, joint ventures and trade in the maritime sector. He highlighted that oceans bring the nations closer and therefore, there is a need to make them a safer place through collaborative efforts of

all stakeholders. Pakistan, as a responsible state, is committed to playing its role for international peace, stability and order, and this transcends to the maritime domain as well. He also acknowledged the efforts of Pakistan Navy for being at its best both when it comes to defending our sea frontiers as witnessed in MARKA-E-HAQ and promoting Pakistan's maritime interests.

He underscored that Pakistan is blessed with a maritime potential that can contribute hugely to the national economy. Development of efficient ship-breaking industry, trans-shipment ports, fisheries industry, coastal tourism, water sports and aqua culture are few of the areas which deserve special focus. The Prime Minister emphasized on the integration of public-private partnership amongst maritime industry to achieve optimum results. He further added that the potential of academic and R&D organizations must be incorpo-

rated for enhancing efficiency and productivity of our maritime sector. He assured that the government will continue to create a business and investment friendly environment. The Chief Guest hoped that avenues generated through PIMEC will grow and bring Pakistan closer to the cherished goals of realizing regional peace and shared prosperity through collaborative efforts.

Earlier, Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar expressed his sincere gratitude to the Chief Guest, Chief of the Naval Staff and all worthy guests for gracing this event. He emphasized that PIMEC is a flagship event of Pakistan which will open avenues for demonstrating latest technology of national and international maritime industry. The soft launch was attended by Federal Ministers, Senior Armed Forces Officers, Ambassadors, and distinguished guests from all walks of life.

## PTI urges PPP to boycott federal budget

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In a strategic move to block the approval of the upcoming federal budget, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has formally proposed to the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) that it abstain from participating in the budget vote.

Senior PTI leader Asad Qaiser held an important meeting with senior PPP leader Raja Pervaz Ashraf at the Parliament House, during which the possibility of a joint opposition strategy was discussed. According to sources, during the meeting, Qaiser referred to PPP's recent statements and said that if the PPP is truly serious about boycotting the budget, then PTI is willing to support such a move.

He emphasised that unity among opposition parties on a national issue like the budget could increase pressure on the government. On this occasion, Ashraf assured Qaiser that he would present PTI's proposal to the party leadership, including Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. He mentioned that Bilawal would be coming to Parliament today, and the matter would be discussed with him.

This meeting took place at a time when debate on the federal budget is ongoing in the National Assembly, and criticism from various opposition parties is intensifying. While PPP's final stance on the budget is yet to be announced, PTI's proposal has stirred considerable discussion in political circles.

## IAEA warns Israel-Iran conflict

VIENNA: The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Grossi, has warned that escalating hostilities between Israel and Iran, now in a fourth day, pose grave dangers to diplomacy and nuclear safety and has urged all parties to exercise maximum restraint.

Speaking at an emergency session of the United Nations nuclear watchdog's Board of Governors on Monday in Vienna, Director General Grossi stressed that the region is at a critical juncture. "Military escalation threatens lives, increases the chance of a radiological release with serious consequences for people and the environment, and delays indispensable work towards a diplomatic solution for the long-term assurance that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon," Grossi said.

The IAEA chief's remarks came amid growing concern that the conflict could permanently damage efforts to revive nuclear talks with Tehran, already strained by years of mistrust and United States President Donald Trump's torpedoing of the 2015 nuclear accord brokered by world powers with Iran. Grossi also delivered a technical update on the status of Iranian nuclear facilities after Israeli bombardments.

Natanz, Iran's main uranium enrichment plant, was among the sites hit on Friday. While its underground section was spared a direct strike, Grossi warned that vital equipment may have been damaged due to a power outage triggered by the attack. He noted that radiation levels outside the facility remained normal and, critically, there was no evidence of contamination spreading beyond the site.

"The level of radioactivity outside the Natanz site has remained unchanged and at normal levels, indicating no external radiological impact to the population or the environment from this event," he said. In addition to Natanz, four nuclear installations in Isfahan province were also damaged. However, the Fordow enrichment site, the Bushehr nuclear power plant and a reactor still under construction appeared unaffected.

IAEA personnel remain on the ground in Iran and are ready to resume full monitoring once the security situation allows, Grossi said. Meanwhile, Iran's government is facing pressure at home to take a harder line. A bill reportedly being prepared in parliament could pave the way for Iran to exit the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, a move that would deal a severe blow to global nonproliferation efforts. — Aljazeera

# PTI govt turned KP into ruins: Ibad

E.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Leader of the Opposition in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Dr. Ibadullah Khan here Monday said that this is the 12th budget of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) provincial governments, but he believes this will be their last.

He said PTI came to power 13 years ago, promising a better education system, healthcare, social justice, and housing for the people, but once in power, it reneged on every single promise of its manifesto. Speaking at the start of the general debate on the 2025-26 budget in the KP Assembly on Monday, he said the provincial government has once again claimed to present a surplus budget, just like it did last year. "If last year's budget was really surplus, then why was there a need for a supplementary budget today?"

He added that the KP government is heavily dependent on funds from the federal government, with only 7% of its total budget coming from its own resources and 93% from federal funds. "So how can they claim to have a surplus budget?" Dr. Ibadullah pointed out that in 2013, the provincial budget was Rs 319 billion, whereas today it is being shown as Rs 1.6 trillion. "If this large amount was truly spent on development, then where exactly was it spent?" He said current expenditures are at 12%, but growth is only at 1%. In 2013, the province had a debt of PKR 150 billion; today, it exceeds Rs800 billion.

He remarked that while PTI paints a picture of KP as paradise on social media, in reality, the province has been turned into ruins. "Your leader used to say he'd prefer suicide over taking loans, but in practice, no one has been spared." He reminded the government that the people of KP brought them to power three times. He criticized the Chief Minister's recent claim about digging a tunnel to Adiala Jail for Imran Khan's release, saying, "You don't even have the money to build that tunnel."

He continued, "On one hand, you cry that the federation isn't giving you funds, and on the other, your Chief Minister claims to be in a position to lend money to the federation." He challenged the government, asking how many times the Provincial Finance Commission has been convened, questioning their ability to utilize even the allocated funds for the Annual Development Program. "You've financially weakened this province to the lowest level, yet can't present even a single mega project."

He highlighted that the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project remains incomplete for years, and the Swat Motorway, built on

a BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) basis, does not contribute a single rupee of revenue to the provincial treasury. He also mentioned corruption scandals emerging from various districts, including the theft of Rs 40 billion from a government account in the underdeveloped Kohistan district.

Thousands of schools in the province lack basic facilities, and the health sector is being run by someone who resides in the United States. He emphasized the need for a fair system to distribute development funds, especially to uplift the least developed districts.

Meanwhile, KP Assembly Speaker Babar Saleem Swati ruled that after amendments in the rules, there is no restriction on Advisor on Finance Muzammil Aslam sitting in the assembly. Seats have already been allocated for advisors. The Law Minister has been instructed to inform Muzammil Aslam so he can attend the session and answer members' questions. Previously, Opposition Leader Dr. Ibadullah had stated that the person who prepared the budget should be present in the house to hear and respond to queries. Law Minister Aftab Alam had merely presented the budget in the assembly.

Opposition Leader Dr. Ibadullah accused the provincial government and Finance Advisor of repeatedly misrepresenting facts. He said the federal government has already allocated Rs 538 billion for KP's development projects under the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP), while the advisor falsely claims only Rs 550 million were allocated. Speaking during the general debate on the 2025-26 budget in the KP Assembly, PTI's Munir Hussain Laghmani said the provincial government has presented a balanced budget despite facing tough conditions.

He praised the government for presenting a tax-free budget as a service to the people. He pointed out the shortage of teachers in schools in the Kaghan Valley and urged the government to address this issue and promote tourism in the region. Rajab Ali Abbasi said that by including cochlear implants in the health card program, the government has won people's hearts. He added that KP is an agricultural province, and the government should launch livestock development programs.

JUI's Adnan Wazir criticized the budget as being full of contradictions and word-play. He said the provincial government's claim of receiving fewer funds from the federation is false, as—aside from the merged districts—the province has received more funds in every sector from the federal government.

## IHC serves notices against accused sentence in May 9, riots case

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday issued notices to the parties on appeals against the sentence of accused in case regarding Ranna police station attack on May 9, and sought responses by June 19.

A division bench comprising Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro and Justice Azam Khan heard the appeals against the 10-

year imprisonment sentence of convict Sohail Khan and others. Advocate Babar Awan, Sardar Bushak, Advocate Amina Ali and others appeared on behalf of the petitioners. Babar Awan argued that those who were sentenced were not nominated in the case, adding that the peaceful rallies are allowed.

Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro said that notices are given on appeals. The lawyer requested that

notice be given of the short date, all the sentences have been given and it has also been said that identification has not been done. He said no one was injured, died or kidnapped in the case but they say this is terrorism.

He said that according to the police, two sticks have been recovered from the accused, on May 9. According to the FIR, the accused had sticks, PTI flags and firearms.

## Shehbaz unveils Maritime Vision

(Continued from Page 1)

PM Shehbaz Sharif stressed the need to transform Pakistan's maritime sector into a driver of inclusive, sustainable economic growth while calling for synergy among public and private sectors. "The time has come to take the lead," he said.

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry outlined the government's strategic roadmap for the maritime sector. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to building a vibrant blue economy and introduced the "Maritime at 100" Vision, a long-term plan to grow the sector into a \$100 billion economic force by 2047 marking Pakistan's centennial. "PIMEC 2025 will be more than an exhibition; it will be a catalyst for investment, innovation, and regional cooperation," the Minister told a gathering of policymakers, maritime professionals, and international stakeholders.

The minister while underscoring the immense potential of the sector, highlighted key economic drivers such as a Rs88 billion fisheries industry, the Gaddani Ship Recycling Yard, with recovery potential exceeding Rs30 billion, and a strategic location linking global trade routes. "The oceans are not just water bodies, they are economic lifelines. Pakistan must position itself as a regional maritime hub," he said.

To guide the sector's future, the Minister announced that three major policy frameworks National Maritime Policy, National Shipping Policy, and National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy that were nearing completion and would ensure growth aligned with sustainability and innovation. He also

announced the creation of a Maritime Chamber of Commerce and Industry, a centralized Maritime Complaint Cell for transparency and efficiency, federal investment of Rs12 billion in the revival of the Gaddani Ship Recycling Yard, acquisition of four new ships for the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation, raising the national fleet to 14 vessels, progress on a major dredging project at Port Qasim, and development of a multi-modal logistics corridor from Gwadar to bolster trade and connectivity.

He also emphasized Pakistan's push to attract foreign investment and promote eco-friendly maritime practices, expressing optimism over Pakistan's bid for a seat on the International Maritime Organization's Council (Category C) in the upcoming elections in December 2025. In his welcome remarks, the co-organizer of the event, Zohair Naseer, CEO of Badar Expo Solutions, said, "It is a moment of pride for us to collaborate with the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Pakistan Navy for the second edition of PIMEC. This event will feature a high-level maritime conference, B2B networking sessions, and a dynamic exhibition attracting global industry leaders, exhibitors, and trade delegations. The upcoming PIMEC 2025 is scheduled to take place from November 3 to 6 at the Karachi Expo Centre."

He added that today's soft launch ceremony was aimed at building momentum for what was expected to be Pakistan's most significant maritime event to date. Commodore Ahsan Ali Khan, Assistant of the Naval Staff, emphasized the vast economic potential of oceans in his remarks. "Oceans are not

only a source of countless marine species and seabed resources - they also serve as the most cost-effective medium for transportation and global trade," he said.

He noted that oceans were increasingly being tapped for tourism, renewable energy, aquaculture, and extraction of valuable resources like hydrocarbons and minerals. "With rising global populations, ocean-based economic activity is surging," he stated. He highlighted Pakistan's strategic location, offering the shortest sea access to Central Asian republics, Afghanistan, and western China via Karachi and Gwadar ports. "CPEC is a practical demonstration of Pakistan's commitment to unlocking the blue economy's potential and enhancing regional connectivity," he said, adding that PIMEC represents a key milestone in that direction.

**PM takes notice of media reports over tax defaulters' arrests, forms special committee:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif took a notice of media reports regarding the arrest of tax defaulters and issued strict instructions that no such legal amendments should be used to harass the business community or taxpayers under any circumstances.

The prime minister directed the formation of a special committee on this matter. The prime minister chaired a review meeting of matters related to the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister was briefed that the legal provisions for the arrest of sales tax defaulters had been part of the law since the 1990s, however, in the light of decisions by the courts, amendments were being made to these clauses to make them more coherent.

## Israel-Iran tensions trigger fuel crisis in Balochistan

QUETTA: As hostilities between Iran and Israel intensify, their ripple effects are increasingly evident in Pakistan's Balochistan province, where a growing fuel shortage is disrupting daily life on a large scale.

According to the reports, from Quetta to remote districts like Turbat, Gwadar, Panjgur, and Chagai, fuel pumps are closing down, transport is being halted, and panic is rising due to the collapse of petrol supply chain. In Quetta alone, more than 70% of filling stations have shut, while the few still operational are overwhelmed with long lines of desperate customers. Officials fear a complete halt of petrol sales in the provincial capital within a day if the situation persists.

The crisis, however, is not limited to Quetta. Fuel shortages are worsening across Makran and Chagai divisions as well. The provincial administration has indefinitely sealed all border crossings with Iran — the primary source of Balochistan's fuel — citing increased security threats in the region. The shutdown includes key points in Mashkel, Turbat, and Gwadar, where trade routes and fuel pipelines from Iran once sustained local demand. In Chagai, the closure of the Mashkel border — a major hub for fuel trade — has halted supply and impacted nearby towns and rural areas.

In Gwadar, local authorities confirmed the suspension of both fuel transport and civilian movement at the Gabad-Kalatuk corridor. Panjgur officials similarly enforced a full stop on foot traffic and petroleum imports from across the border. "These steps are essential for maintaining regional stability in view of current global tensions," the Panjgur administration said in a public statement.

The crisis had already been escalating prior to the border closure. In Quetta, mini-fuel stations selling Iranian petrol had been shut for two weeks following an intensified crackdown by authorities. In Chagai's border belt, residents report being stranded as trade and transport systems collapse. Despite visible signs of crisis, the Balochistan government downplayed the situation. Provincial spokesperson Shahid Rind dismissed reports of a widespread emergency, blaming "fuel smugglers" for spreading misinformation.

"These shortages are artificially created to pressure the government into lifting the ban on illicit Iranian fuel," he said. He also linked the smuggled fuel trade to multiple fire incidents across Quetta in recent weeks. Rind warned of legal action against any station hoarding fuel or refusing customers, insisting that only registered pumps supplying legal fuel would be allowed to operate. — Agencies

## SBP keeps policy rate unchanged at 11 per cent

E.P. Report

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan on Monday decided to keep the policy rate unchanged in the final meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) for the fiscal year 2025. The current policy rate of the State Bank stands at 11%.

The important meeting, chaired by the Governor of the State Bank took place at the State Bank, where economic indicators were reviewed, followed by the announcement of the new policy rate. It is worth noting that the State Bank has been reducing the interest rate since June 2024, with a total cut of 11 percentage points across eight meetings held since then.

Meanwhile, the business community had demanded that the interest rate be brought down to single digits. "Going forward, inflation is expected to trend up

and stabilise in the target range during FY26," the statement said. The MPC also noted that economic growth is gradually recovering and is expected to gain further momentum next year, driven by the lagged impact of earlier policy rate cuts.

"At the same time, the Committee noted some potential risks to the external sector amidst the sustained widening in the trade deficit and weak financial inflows. "Moreover, some of the proposed FY26 budgetary measures may further widen the trade deficit by increasing imports. In this regard, the Committee deemed today's decision appropriate to sustain the macroeconomic and price stability," according to the statement.

"First, the real GDP growth for FY25 is provisionally reported at 2.7%, and the government is targeting a higher growth of 4.2% for next year.

"Second, despite a substantial widening in the trade deficit, the current account remained broadly balanced in April.

"Third, the revised budget estimates indicate the primary balance surplus at 2.2% of GDP in FY25, up from 0.9% last year. For next year, the government is targeting a higher primary surplus of 2.4% of GDP. "Lastly, global oil prices have rebounded sharply, reflecting the evolving geopolitical situation in the Middle East and some ease in US-China trade tensions," read the statement.

"Furthermore, the Committee emphasised the timely realisation of planned foreign inflows, achievement of the targeted fiscal consolidation and the implementation of structural reforms as essential to maintain macroeconomic stability and achieve sustainable economic growth," the statement concluded.

## Solitary confinement can't silence Imran: Saif

E.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Barrister Dr. Saif, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, stated that the fake federal government couldn't break Imran Khan by keeping him in solitary confinement. He termed this another failed attempt by an illegitimate regime.

He said that through the 26th Constitutional Amendment, the judiciary has been paralyzed. Despite court orders, neither Imran Khan's family members nor party leaders are being allowed to meet him. Dr. Saif said the 26th Amendment has caused irreparable damage to the

country.

He further stated that the fake government had shackled the justice system with the chains of the 26th Amendment and has compromised the judicial process for temporary political gains. Imran Khan, along with all PTI leaders, are prisoners of conscience. The fake regime cannot harm Imran Khan, but it has certainly pushed the country to the brink of disaster.

Dr. Saif emphasized that Imran Khan would fight for the true freedom of the nation until his last drop of blood. Unlike Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari, he will never seek a deal or flee the country. He added that fake cases had been fabricated against Imran

Khan by the federal government, which fails to prove them in court, leading to repeated adjournments.

He said that no matter what this fake government did, it cannot remove Imran Khan from the hearts of the people he lives in their hearts. "Imran Khan is enduring imprisonment for the sake of his nation's freedom. If he only cared about his own well-being, he would have long ago left the country like Zardari and Nawaz Sharif". He added, Dr. Saif concluded by saying that Imran Khan was the last hope for the youth, and the day was not far when he and all PTI leaders will be honorably vindicated.

## Punjab unveils Rs5.3tr budget 2025-26

E.P. Report

LAHORE: Punjab Finance Minister Mian Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman presented the provincial budget for the fiscal year 2025-26 during the Punjab Assembly session on Monday amid strong protest led by Opposition benches members.

In his address, he combined a strong nationalistic tone with a review of the government's development initiatives and future goals. Out of this total, Rs 2,706.5 billion have been allocated for non-development expenditures, which include salaries, pensions, and service-related expenses.

The minister noted that only a 6% increase has

been made in overall expenditures compared to the previous fiscal year, reflecting the government's efforts to maintain fiscal discipline. He said Punjab government is presenting a record-breaking development budget, with Rs 1,240 billion proposed for development projects across various sectors.

Highlighting key education and welfare initiatives, he stated that over 50,000 students have been provided with laptops so far under the government's youth empowerment program. Additionally, he shared that with an investment of Rs3.5 billion, more than 400,000 children in over 3,500 public schools are now being provided with

milk to ensure better nutrition and health for students across the province. Punjab's Finance Minister announced that a total of Rs148 billion has been allocated under the development head for the education sector in the 2025-26 provincial budget.

The government plans to launch new educational projects while continuing work on ongoing initiatives. In a major boost for students, Rs 15 billion has been earmarked for scholarships for high-achieving students. The minister also highlighted the continuation of the Undergraduate Scholarship Programme worth Rs 5.9 billion, which supports deserving university students.