

Two children swept away

PESHAWAR (APP): Heavy rains have lashed Peshawar and other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, breaking the heat-wave and bringing much-needed relief to residents. However, the downpour has also caused flooding in several areas, leading to fatal incidents. According to reports from different districts on Sunday, in Khyber district, flash floods swept away two children where rescue operations are underway to locate them.



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# IMF official praises Pakistan's 'strong' economic progress

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Resident Representative for Pakistan, Mahir Binici in his comprehensive guest lecture at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), shed light on the evolving economic landscape across the MENA region and Pakistan, and reaffirming the Fund's continued support for Pakistan's economic and climate reform agenda.

Addressing economists, researchers and policy experts at SDPI, Binici stated that the growth across the Middle East, North Africa (MENA) region and Pakistan was expected to strengthen in 2025 and beyond.

However, he cautioned that elevated trade tensions, geopolitical fragmentation

and weakening global cooperation continued to generate exceptional uncertainty and weigh on the global economic outlook, underlining the urgent need for prudent and forward-looking policy actions, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

Focusing on Pakistan, Binici noted that the country's performance under the IMF's Extended Fund Facility (EFF) has been "strong so far," adding that the successful completion of the first review by the IMF Executive Board in May 2025 was a key milestone.

"Early policy measures have helped restore macro-economic stability and rebuild investor confidence, despite persistent external challenges," Binici remarked. He emphasized that structural reforms

remain central to Pakistan's long-term economic sustainability, particularly reforms that strengthen tax equity, improve the business climate, and encourage private-sector-led investment.

He also spotlighted Pakistan's progress on climate-related reforms under the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF). According to Binici, the RSF is designed to help countries like Pakistan bolster resilience to climate-related vulnerabilities and meet international climate commitments.

He mentioned that the key areas of reform under the RSF included enhancing public investment planning, promoting efficient and sustainable use of water resources, improving institutional coordination for disaster preparedness

and financing, expanding the availability and transparency of climate-related data.

Binici stressed that "support through the RSF will not only strengthen Pakistan's climate resilience but also help unlock green investments and foster a more climate-conscious economic trajectory."

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director SDPI welcomed the IMF representative's outreach, noting the importance of informed economic dialogue and multilateral cooperation in Pakistan's journey toward sustainable development.

The lecture concluded with an interactive discussion on fiscal and monetary policy frameworks, external buffers, and the role of international institutions in fostering inclusive growth.



ISLAMABAD: IMF Resident Representative for Pakistan, Mahir Binici addressing a press conference.

## Kashmiris' right to self-determination Zardari, Shehbaz reaffirm Pakistan's support

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif have reiterated Pakistan's political, moral, and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people until they are granted right to self-determination as per the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and their aspirations.

In their separate messages on the occasion of Kashmir Martyrs' Day being observed today, they said the day serves as a reminder of the inherited resilience, resistance against brutal forces, and

unwavering determination of Kashmiris for their freedom.

President Asif Ali Zardari lauded unwavering courage, determination, and sacrifices of the Kashmiri people, who have resisted Indian occupation for decades and continue their struggle for self-determination.

He urged the international community and human rights organizations to take immediate notice of the Indian state terrorism and grave human rights abuses in the occupied territory.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in his message said

the people of Kashmir have been, and continue to, sacrifice their lives in pursuit of their legitimate struggle for the right to self-determination.

Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Muqam has paid a rich tribute to the martyrs of Kashmir.

In a statement today, in connection with the Kashmir Martyrs' Day, he said the sacrifices rendered by the martyrs of Jammu in the love with Pakistan will always be remembered.

The Minister expressed hope that the blood of Kashmir's martyrs will not go in vain, and the

Kashmiris will achieve freedom from India.

Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has paid glowing tribute to brave Kashmiri martyrs of July 13, 1931.

In his message on Kashmir Martyrs Day today, he said that sacrifice of the martyrs of Srinagar Central Jail is a reminder that the spirit of freedom can never be suppressed by bullets.

The PPP Chairman said his party has always stood shoulder to shoulder with the Kashmiri people in their just struggle for self-determination.

## Kundi, Fazl, Khattak discuss political situation

### Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: A high-level meeting was held in Nowshera on Sunday, bringing together key political leaders to discuss pressing issues related to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the newly merged tribal districts.

The meeting was attended by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, and Adviser to the Prime Minister on Petroleum and former Chief Minister

Pervez Khattak.

During the session, the leaders exchanged views on the evolving political situation in the province and discussed the opposition's strategy for the upcoming Senate elections.

A significant portion of the discussion focused on the deteriorating law and order situation in the merged tribal districts, also known as the former FATA region.

The participants expressed concern over the increasing unrest and emphasized the need for concrete measures to

restore peace and stability. The meeting also reviewed the performance of the special committee formed by the Prime Minister to address the challenges faced by the tribal areas.

The leaders highlighted the importance of effective governance and development efforts in the region.

Underscoring the urgency of the matter, the participants called for immediate action to address the grievances of the tribal population and ensure long-term peace and development in the newly integrated districts.

## Youm-e-Shuhadas-e-Kashmir being observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Kashmiris on both sides of Line of Control (LoC), including the rest of the world, on Sunday are observing the Youm-e-Shuhadas-e-Kashmir, 13 July 1931, when the Dogra forces brutally martyred 22 Kashmiris in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in British India.

The Martyred Day is being observed on the call of All Parties Hurriyat Conference and supported by all pro-freedom leaders and organizations

It is pertinent to mention here that the Indian government had removed the observance of the day as an official holiday in December 2019. Yet the day is still marked by the Kashmiris living in the valley and across the world, including Pakistan, to continue their fight against Indian state-sponsored terrorism and brutality.

The government of Pakistan has issued various statements and messages to reaffirm its support for the Kashmiri cause on the Martyred Day today.

All the electronic, radio, social media/digital media are filled with tributes paid to these Muslim protesters in the Kashmir valley.

To honour the martyrs, rallies, seminars, and conferences are being organized in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan, and major capitals across the world.

In Muzaffarabad, Kashmir Liberation Cell, in collaboration with the All Parties Hurriyat Conference AJK Chapter, is holding a public gathering followed by a rally.

## DPM to participate in SCO Council

ISLAMABAD (APP): At the invitation of Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi, Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Foreign Minister of Pakistan Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar will lead Pakistan delegation to the meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) being held on 14-16 July 2025 in Tianjin (China).

Foreign Ministers of all SCO member States, including Pakistan, China, Belarus, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan will participate in the CFM meeting. Foreign Minister of Belarus will attend the CFM for the first time as member of SCO.

## Reserved seats verdict unconstitutional: Saif

### F.P. Report

SWAT: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Muhammad Ali Saif, has strongly criticized the Supreme Court's verdict on reserved seats, calling it one of the most disgraceful, unconstitutional, and undemocratic decisions in Pakistan's history, adding that the entire nation will have to bear the consequences of this decision.

Speaking at a press conference in District Swat Press Club, Barrister Dr. Saif said that the ruling is a blatant attempt to sideline Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

(PTI), adding that the party will strongly resist it on all forums. "Under the guise of the 26th Constitutional Amendment, the public mandate is being brazenly trampled," he said. "Awarding PTI's reserved seats to other parties is a day-light robbery of public mandate. And when it comes time to uphold justice, even the institutions tasked with it betray the people."

Commenting ANP leader and former Chief Minister Haider Khan Hoti, Dr. Saif said that by refusing to accept reserved seats allotted through this unjust ruling, Mr. Hoti has upheld democratic principles and set an example for those who truly

believe in constitutionalism. "His principled stance is worthy of praise," he added.

Dr. Saif also criticized JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, saying he is among the foremost beneficiaries of the Supreme Court's flawed ruling, yet continues to lecture others while claiming to represent Islam. "If he's sincere, he should relinquish those unlawfully acquired seats."

Commenting on former Prime Minister Imran Khan, Dr. Saif said, "He is being punished for crimes he never committed. Frivolous cases have been filed against him, he has been arrested and imprisoned, all in an effort to suppress PTI's popularity.

## Kim offers Russia full support on Ukraine

SEOUL (AFP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un offered Moscow his full support for its war in Ukraine during talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Pyongyang state media said Sunday.

Lavrov's visit to North Korea was the latest in a series of high-profile trips by top Moscow officials as both countries deepen military and political ties amid Russia's offensive against Kyiv.

Pyongyang sent thousands of troops to Russia's Kursk region to oust Ukrainian forces and has also provided the Russian army with artillery shells and missiles.

Moscow said Lavrov's talks with Kim were held in a "warm comradely atmosphere."

Lavrov expressed "sincere gratitude to Pyongyang" for its role in Kursk and support of Russia's operation, the Russian foreign ministry said in a statement.

Moscow also said the two sides "agreed" that the West was to blame for "the growing tension" on the Korean peninsula.

The ministry earlier posted a video on Telegram of the two men shaking hands and greeting each other with a hug.

It said the talks were held in Wonsan, a city on North Korea's east coast where a massive resort was opened earlier this month — one of leader Kim's pet projects.

Kim told Lavrov that Pyongyang was "ready to unconditionally support and encourage all the measures taken by the Russian leadership as regards the tackling of the root cause of the Ukrainian crisis", KCNA said.

The North Korean leader also expressed a "firm belief that the Russian army and people would surely win victory in accomplishing the sacred cause of defending the dignity and basic interests of

the country".

He lauded Putin's "outstanding leadership", the report said.

The two men otherwise discussed "important matters for faithfully implementing the agreements made at the historic DPRK-Russia summit talks in June 2024", KCNA said, referring to North Korea by its official acronym.

Lavrov told Kim that Putin "hopes for continued direct contacts in the very near future", according to Russia's TASS news agency.

He left Pyongyang and landed in Beijing on Sunday to attend a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Foreign Ministers' Council, TASS reported on its Telegram account.

Ahead of Lavrov's recent visit, Russia announced that it would begin twice-a-week flights between Moscow and Pyongyang.

### Naqvi pays tribute

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has paid glowing tribute to the brave Kashmiri martyrs who sacrificed their lives on July 13, 1931. He saluted the ultimate sacrifice of the 22 martyrs who faced bullets with courage and dignity in reverence of the call to prayer (Azaan). He stated that July 13, 1931, was the harbinger of free conscience against a system that sought to silence the oppressed.

## PTI warns of 'do or die' movement against government within 90 days

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has described PTI's latest protest campaign against the current government as a "do or die" effort, stating that the movement will determine the party's future direction.

"Within 90 days, we will take this movement to its peak and make a decisive move — do or die. From now on, the matter will be with the decision-makers," he said while addressing a press conference in Lahore, accompanied by party leaders including Salman Akram Raja.

He further stated that

Imran Khan has made it absolutely clear that, despite the injustices faced by him and his wife, he remains willing to engage in negotiations for the sake of Pakistan.

CM Gandapur strongly criticised the involvement of state institutions in political affairs, stating that running or toppling governments is not their job.

Gandapur said, "The nation is now aware; February 8 proved that the people have awakened. There is nothing substantial in the cases against Imran Khan, which is why those cases aren't being pursued."

He claimed that no political party in history

faced the kind of oppression and brutality that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has. "State institutions are engaged in work that is beyond their constitutional mandate," he said. "I'm the son and brother of a soldier. Let's accept our mistakes and fix things collectively."

Gandapur also criticised the arrest of Imran Khan's wife, terming it unjustified. "Imran Khan has expressed willingness to negotiate for the sake of Pakistan," he added.

He called out rival political parties for relying on "others' shoulders" to gain power, saying these parties have been rejected by the people. "If I have betrayed the country, prove it and

hang me in the public square."

The chief minister said the PTI founder taught them to work not just for politics but for future generations. He mentioned that the PTI's campaign for change starts now. "The 90 days of change Imran Khan always talked about — they start from today."

Gandapur announced that PTI would request permission for a peaceful rally in Lahore. "We are here peacefully and will return the same way."

He concluded by stating, "They claim I've met with someone. Yes, I've met with everyone — for Pakistan. My leader and his wife are in jail. This is Pakistan's battle."

## Israeli strikes kill at least 30 in Gaza as Palestinian war deaths top 58,000

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP): Israeli strikes in the Gaza Strip killed at least 30 people on Sunday, including six children at a water collection point, while the Palestinian death toll passed 58,000 after 21 months of war, local health officials said.

Israel and Hamas appeared no closer to a breakthrough in indirect talks meant to pause the war and free some Israeli hostages after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Washington visit last week. A new sticking point has emerged over Israeli troops' deployment during a ceasefire.

Israel says it will end the war only once Hamas surrenders, disarms and goes into exile, something it refuses to do. Hamas says it is willing to free all the remaining 50 hostages, about 20 said to be alive, in exchange for an end to the war and the full withdrawal of Israeli forces.

Throughout the war in Gaza, violence has surged in the Israeli-occupied West

Bank. Funerals were held there Sunday for two Palestinians, including Palestinian-American Sayfollah Musallet, killed by Israeli settlers, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry.

In central Gaza, officials at Al-Awda Hospital said it received 10 bodies after an Israeli strike on a water collection point in nearby Nuseirat. Among the dead were six children.

Ramadan Nassar, a witness who lives in the area, told The Associated Press that around 20 children and 14 adults had been lined up to get water. He said Palestinians walk some 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) to fetch water from the area.

The Israeli military said it was targeting a militant but a technical error made its munitions fall "dozens of meters from the target."

In Nuseirat, a small boy leaned over a body bag to say goodbye to a friend.

and bare hands.

Separately, health officials said an Israeli strike hit a group of citizens walking in the street on Sunday afternoon in central Gaza City, killing 11 people and injuring around 30 others.

Dr. Ahmed Qandil, who specializes in general surgery, was among those killed, Gaza's Health Ministry said. A ministry spokesperson, Zaher al-Wahidi, told the AP that Qandil had been on his way to Al-Ahli Arab Baptist Hospital.

In the central town of Zawaida, an Israeli strike on a home killed nine, including two women and three children, officials at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital said.

Israel's military said it was unaware of the strike on the home, but said it hit more than 150 targets over the past 24 hours, including what it called weapons storage facilities, missile launchers and sniping posts. Israel blames Hamas for civilian casualties because the militant group

operates out of populated areas.

Gaza's Health Ministry says women and children make up more than half of the over 58,000 dead in the war. The ministry, under Gaza's Hamas-run government, doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants in its count. The U.N. and other international organizations see its figures as the most reliable statistics on war casualties.

The Hamas-led attack on Oct. 7, 2023, that sparked the war killed some 1,200 people and abducted 251.

Israel's Energy Minister Eli Cohen told right-wing Channel 14 that his ministry will not help rebuild infrastructure in Gaza. "Gaza should remain an island of ruins to the next decades," he said.

In the West Bank, which has seen violence between Israeli troops and Palestinians and Israeli settlers' attacks on Palestinians, funerals were held for a Palestinian-American and a Palestinian friend.





## CM Maryam pays tribute to Kashmiri martyrs

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has paid rich tribute to the brave martyrs of Kashmir, including the 22 martyrs of July 13, 1931, who laid down their lives in the struggle against tyranny during the Dogra Raj.

In her message on Kashmir Martyrs' Day, the CM said, "We salute every Kashmiri martyr who became the voice of truth against oppression. The martyrs of 1931 stood tall against the Dogra Raj, and today, Indian occupation forces are repeating that same dark

chapter of brutality."

She said that despite decades of oppression, the spirit of the Kashmiri people remains undefeated. "Whether it was the Dogra rule of the past or the oppressive tactics of today's Indian forces, they have never been able to break the will of the Kashmiri people," she added.

CM Maryam Nawaz added that the sacrifices of Kashmiri martyrs echo a powerful message, saying that chains can never imprison courage. The fragrance of freedom, loyalty,

and sacrifice has permeated the soil of Kashmir. She termed Kashmir Martyrs' Day not just a remembrance, but a call to awaken the conscience of the international community, especially the United Nations and the Muslim Ummah.

The CM said that U.S. President Donald Trump's recent statement in support of resolving the Kashmir issue is encouraging and should be taken seriously by the international community. Pakistan will continue to extend political, diplomatic, and moral sup-

port to the Kashmiri people on every global platform. The sacrifices of Kashmiri martyrs have shown the world that no amount of force can suppress their quest for freedom, she said.

The CM expressed solidarity with the Kashmiri people, saying that the entire Pakistani nation considers the suffering of the Kashmiris as its own. Every child of Pakistan stands with them in their struggle for the right to self-determination, she added.

## Siddiqui attends certificate distribution Ceremony



F.P. Report

KARACHI: A grand Certificate Distribution Ceremony was held today by the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTC) at Auditorium of Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi.

The event was graced by the Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, as the chief guest.

The ceremony aimed to honor young trainees who successfully completed their vocational and technical courses by awarding them certificates and laptops to help them begin their professional journeys with confidence and empowerment.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said:

"Women are an essential part of Pakistan's success. In the NAVTC video shown earlier, you saw how a daughter of this nation secured a job as a welder in South Korea. This is no small achievement. I urge all parents and husbands to allow women to pursue their professions after completing their education."

Speaking on the significance of Karachi in Pakistan's economic future, he added:

"The entire nation now realizes that if we do not allow Karachi to prosper, we risk losing our exports to neighboring countries like Bangladesh and others."

Highlighting Karachi's diversity, he remarked:

"Karachi is rightfully known as 'Mini Pakistan' due to its ethnic diversity, and it's heartening to see that the recipients of these

certificates today represent all communities of Pakistan."

Dr. Siddiqui also shared the government's efforts to enhance digital access among youth:

"We are distributing laptops to deserving students so they can overcome the fear of not getting their due share and focus on skill development. Freelancers alone have contributed around half a billion dollars to Pakistan's economy — a promising step toward economic independence."

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui was presented with a token of appreciation. He also personally distributed certificates and laptops to deserving youth — the future of Pakistan — encouraging them to play their part in national development.

## 55,000 FIRs registered against power pilferers

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Police, on the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, has intensified its province-wide crackdown on electricity theft, aiming to curb massive financial losses to the national exchequer.

According to a Punjab Police spokesperson, more than 55,000 FIRs have been registered this year across Punjab for electricity theft, leading to the arrest of 37,756 suspects. Furthermore, challans for 34,641 cases have been completed and submitted to relevant courts for legal proceedings.

In addition, over 2,000 offenders involved in large-scale power theft and damage to national resources have been fined and sentenced under relevant laws.

In the provincial capital Lahore, the campaign remains in full swing. Police have registered over 14,000 FIRs related to electricity theft and arrested 17,923 accused individuals, making it one of the most targeted areas in the ongoing drive.

Inspector General of Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that this crackdown must continue with full force and a zero-tolerance approach. He instructed all RPOs, CPOs, and DPOs to take priority-based action against those involved in this illegal activity and ensure no leniency for repeat offenders.

## Police issue 4.5m licences

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Police are actively advancing its mission to improve public service delivery and enforce traffic laws across the province.

As part of this effort, over 4.544 million driving licences have been issued in 2025 alone, reflecting the department's commitment to road safety and legal compliance.

According to a Punjab Police spokesperson, more than 6.751 million traffic violation tickets have been issued this year, resulting in fines exceeding Rs. 4 billion. Additionally, action has been taken against 245,000 smoke-emitting vehicles, with 22,000 of them impounded at police stations. Furthermore, the fitness certificates of 209 vehicles were confiscated due to non-compliance with safety and environmental standards.

Inspector General of Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that the crackdown on traffic violators will continue with full force. He also highlighted the police department's efforts to educate and empower citizens, noting that 127 driving training schools are operating across the province to provide professional driving education and ensure long-term behavioral change on the roads.

Shakoor stated that Gwadar could become a game-changer for regional commerce under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) if the government takes concrete action. Despite operating since 2007, Gwadar handles minimal cargo compared to Karachi and Port Qasim due to the absence of surrounding industrial and commercial facilities. Terrorist and insurgent activities have also hampered Gwadar's progress, deterring foreign investors and shipping firms. Numerous CPEC-related projects, including

tion of the Amended Kite Flying Prohibition Bill. He directed RPOs, CPOs, and DPOs to accelerate action against kite flyers, manufacturers, and sellers, especially those involved in online sales of banned items. "There will be no leniency for those endangering lives through this unlawful activity," said Dr. Usman Anwar.



LAHORE: A view of dark clouds hovering over the sky in the Provincial Capital. —APP Photo

## Azma slams Gandapur's 'theatrics'

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari on Sunday issued a sharp rebuke to KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, warning that while he was welcomed as a peaceful visitor, any attempt to bring armed elements or incite chaos would be met with firm action under the law.

Speaking on the occasion of Kashmir Martyrs' Day, she paid tribute to the sacrifices of the Kashmiri people and reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering diplomatic, moral, and political support for their just struggle. She lamented the ongoing Indian brutality in Occupied Kashmir, comparing it to the oppressive Dogra rule.

Taking a direct swipe at Gandapur, Azma challenged him to return to Punjab with his cabinet and MPAs, stating, "We will show him how garbage is cleaned in Peshawar, how scholarships are awarded to talented students, and how hospitals like Nawaz Sharif Hospital are built within a year." She underscored that programs like the laptop scheme represent visionary youth empowerment

— not empty political slogans.

Criticising Gandapur's failure to express condolences over the tragic loss of 10 lives in Swat, Azma accused him of selective empathy, citing his earlier dramas over the Sahiwal tragedy. "This fake Maula Jatt act no longer fools the people," she said. "A man who can't endure the summer heat can't shoulder the pain of the public."

She condemned PTI's history of violence and divisive politics, pointing to Gandapur's silence on the martyrdom of Punjabis in Balochistan and the tragedy in Swat. Azma also denounced the deepfake campaign against the army chief, calling it a vile act by the enemies of the state.

Referring to the May 9 incidents, she accused the PTI of conspiring against the state and trying to provoke a "Sri Lanka-style collapse" through letters to the IMF. On the Al-Qadir Trust case, Azma Bokhari named Shehzad Akbar as the main accused and lamented that those who looted the country still roam free. "The PTI

has become a symbol of chaos, not political stability," she declared.

Mocking former First Lady Bushra Bibi, Bokhari remarked, "She's the only woman known to demand five-carat diamonds." She further stated that the PTI seems most distressed whenever Pakistan receives good economic news. "Their propaganda cell cannot stop the country's development," she added. Commenting on Gandapur's recent visit to Kahna, Azma claimed he failed to gather even 4,000 people, describing his conduct as consistent with a pattern of disruption and provocation. "You've set a 90-day deadline—start by fixing yourselves first," she warned PTI.

Concluding her address, Azma Bokhari highlighted the Punjab government's progress under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, stating that the province is now setting a new benchmark through its initiatives in health, education, infrastructure, and social welfare. "Other provinces are now looking to Punjab's model of development," she said.

## Kundi pays tribute to Kashmiri martyrs

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, in his message on the occasion of Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Kashmir (Kashmir Martyrs' Day), paid rich tribute to the sacrifices of the Kashmiri people.

He said that this day marks a significant moment for all, as it commemorates the bravery and martyrdom of those who stood against the oppressive Dogra regime on July 13, 1931.

"The sacrifices of these brave individuals remain alive in our hearts and continue to serve as a beacon of hope in the struggle for freedom," the Governor said.

He emphasized that the people of Kashmir have always strived for their right to self-determination, and the martyrs' sacrifices inspire us to remain resolute in supporting their cause.

He said the struggle for the freedom of Kashmir has gained international recognition because of these sacrifices, and it is the collec-

tive responsibility of Pakistanis to stand with the Kashmiri people and amplify their voices.

Governor Kundi further added that the day is not only a remembrance of past sacrifices but also a renewal of Pakistan's commitment to the Kashmiri cause. "We stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Kashmir and will continue to raise our voice for their rights."

He appreciated the role of Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, saying that Bilawal presented Pakistan's and Kashmir's case effectively during recent Pakistan-India tensions. As Foreign Minister, Bilawal carried forward the vision of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto regarding Kashmir.

The Governor stressed the importance of reminding the international community about the grave human rights violations taking place in Indian-occupied Kashmir and

called for global pressure to stop these abuses. Muqam meets Governor Kundi to discuss political strategy, Senate Elections

Federal Minister and Provincial President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Engineer Amir Muqam, held a special meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at the Governor House here on Sunday.

During the meeting, both leaders discussed the prevailing political situation in the province, upcoming Senate elections, and strategic approaches for the opposition parties.

They also exchanged views on various proposals aimed at strengthening coordination among opposition ranks. The discussion also included the progress of ongoing contacts with opposition parties and members of the provincial assembly, reflecting efforts to build a broader political consensus ahead of key developments in the province.

Senior Provincial Minister Maryam Aurangzeb in her recent statement has said that our war against smog is not just seasonal, it is ongoing on a permanent basis under system-based reforms and environmental emergency. Work has begun to achieve the largest forest coverage in the country's history, a total of 51 million trees, in the current fiscal year 2025-26.

She said that likewise, under the "Plant for Pakistan" initiative, a target of planting 34.2 million trees has been set, the scope of the "Green Pakistan Program" will be expanded by planting trees on an area of 41,345 acres. Similarly work has started on planting more than 1.5 million trees on 18,385 acres, she added.

Punjab Forestry Department official sources confirmed on Sunday that work has been started to plant 1.8 million trees on 3,000 kilometers along canals and roads, thus a total of about 51 million trees will be planted in this financial year.

They said that 104 Forest Command and Control Centers have been established across the province, 24-hour monitoring of forests is being ensured, and international standard facilities are being provided in Lal Suhanra National Park and Salt Range to promote eco-tourism.

## Mayor orders action on drug addicts

KARACHI (APP): The Mayor of Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Sunday directed an immediate and citywide crackdown on drug addicts occupying roads, sidewalks and other public spaces in response to multiple public complaints regarding the rising incidents of theft from bridges, public buildings, poles, and boundary walls in the city.

The Mayor has ordered that drug addicts found in public spaces be safely shifted first to the city wardens headquarters and then to rehabilitation centres.

Dedicated City Warden teams have been deployed

in every district to ensure that the process is carried out in a secure, humane, and structured manner with a strong focus on preventing repeat occupancy of these public areas.

Spokesman for Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) Daniyal Siyal said:

"This issue has repeatedly come up in various high-level meetings chaired by the Mayor, especially concerning the theft and damage of public infrastructure. KMC has already offered land for the development of large-scale rehabilitation centres as part of a long-term solution. On

the Mayor's directives, the matter is being taken up as a high-priority project.

The Spokesman said, "These individuals are not only damaging critical infrastructure through theft but they are also tearing at the social fabric of our city. For the sake of a few rupees, they are putting the beauty, safety, and public property of Karachi at risk."

KMC remains committed to restoring order in public spaces, preserving public assets, and working towards the social reintegration of affected individuals through comprehensive rehabilitation efforts.

## Punjab on high alert amid monsoon rains

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister and Chairman Cabinet Committee on Disaster Management Khawaja Salman Rafique has said that, on the special directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, all relevant departments including the administration, WASA, and rescue agencies have been placed on high alert in view of ongoing and expected monsoon rains across the province.

The minister made these remarks during his visit to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Head Office on Sunday, where he reviewed

the current weather situation and monsoon preparedness. Director South PDMA, Hameed Ullah Malik, briefed the minister on the latest developments related to rainfall and emergency response plans.

The minister stated that Rescue 1122 has been instructed to finalize all precautionary arrangements in advance. He added that PDMA Punjab has already issued alerts to the administrations across all districts to remain vigilant.

"The PDMA Control Room and Provincial Emergency Operation Centers are fully activated

and monitoring the situation round the clock," he said. "All available resources will be utilized to ensure the safety of citizens."

He further directed that WASA and related agencies remain active to ensure timely drainage, especially in low-lying areas prone to water accumulation. Citizens were advised to follow safety guidelines issued by PDMA to avoid any untoward incidents. Additionally, the administration has imposed Section 144 along rivers, canals, and streams to prevent public movement in hazardous areas during heavy rainfall.

## Police launches crackdown to eradicate kite flying

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Police, in a decisive move to curb the dangerous practice of kite flying and the use of metallic string, has intensified its province-wide crackdown to eliminate this life-threatening activity.

According to the Punjab Police spokesperson, on the direction of Inspector General Police Dr Usman Anwar, strict enforcement of

the Anti-Kite Flying Act continues across Punjab, including Lahore. So far in 2025, 4,425 individuals have been arrested and 4,341 FIRs registered in connection with kite flying and the use or sale of metallic string. Police have also recovered 469,892 kites and 17,671 spools of metallic string, while challans in 3,871 cases have been submitted for

legal proceedings.

In Lahore alone, police arrested 1,206 offenders, registered 1,175 cases, and seized 27,612 kites, along with 1,393 spools of string. The capital remains a key focus of operations, given the high risk posed to public safety. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar has issued strict instructions for the full implementa-



# CM KP statement of 90-day movement confession of defeat: Amir Muqam

PESHAWAR (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan, and SAFRON, and President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Amir Muqam on Sunday while strongly reacting to the recent statement by Chief Minister KP, urged the public not to fall for the conspirators' deception and to remain united for Pakistan's progress and stability.

In a statement here, he said the nation has rejected their sit-ins, long marches, and violent agenda and now they are merely flailing in their lust for power.

The Federal Minister said that PTI founder Imran Khan and his allies are once again trying to mislead the nation.

Engineer Amir Muqam questioned how those who, in the past, openly challenged state institutions and constantly spewed venom against the judiciary, the armed forces, and the government, can now speak of negotiations with any credibility.

He said Ali Amin Gandapur's threats that "either Imran Khan will be released within 90 days or we will quit politics are nothing but another act in a drama.

"Those who always ran away from the negotiation table are now talking about negotiations again."

He added that CM Ali Amin Gandapur was powerless himself and that the 90-day movement is merely a stunt to save the provincial government, which is under threat from within PTI itself.

"Even before it began, the 90-day movement has already flopped by bringing up the idea of negotiations. This 90-day announcement was a confession of defeat and the beginning of a worse outcome than the so-called final call."

He said the federal government stands with the Constitution, the law, and the state institutions.

"If Imran Khan truly wants negotiations, he should first submit himself to the law, admit his mistakes, and renounce the politics of hate."

Engr Amir Muqam said the people of the province were demanding accountability for the poor 11-year-long rule of PTI in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"Ali Amin should first answer to the people of the province. You have seen development in Lahore what have you done in your own province? Nothing."

Engr Amir Muqam said the people of the province cannot tolerate this anymore and will make PTI leadership accountable.

## To offer scholarships and affordable Education IPS Education System collaborates with christian community



**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: In a significant step toward inclusive education and community development, the IPS Education System has announced a partnership with the Christian community in Peshawar to provide scholarships and affordable discounts for deserving students.

As part of this initiative, Dr. Bilal Afridi, Director of IPS Education System, was formally invited to the Anglican Orthodox Church of Pakistan - University Campus Church, located at M.S. Lane, near Nursery Chowk, Peshawar. The invitation came from Bishop Ernest Jacob, along with Assistant Priests Rev. Asif Pervaiz and Rev. Jamil, in recognition of IPS Education System's commitment to making quality education accessible for all.

Dr. Bilal Afridi expressed deep appreciation for the warm welcome and reaffirmed IPS's vision of promoting educational opportunities across all faiths and communities. "I am truly grateful to Bishop Ernest Jacob and the entire church leadership for their support and partnership," he said. "This collaboration reflects our shared commitment to empowering youth through education, regardless of background."

During the visit, discussions were held regarding the implementation of discounted fee structures, need-based scholarships, and admissions assistance for Christian students. A formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is expected to be signed in the coming weeks to solidify the partnership.

Dr. Afridi also extended his heartfelt thanks to Mr. Samsun Jacob for his invaluable support in facilitating the connection between the IPS Education System and the church leadership.

This collaboration marks a hopeful beginning for many families seeking educational opportunities in the region. It underscores the role of interfaith cooperation in building a more equitable and educated society.

**About IPS Education System:**

IPS is a rapidly growing education network dedicated to providing high-quality, affordable education across Pakistan. With a focus on inclusivity, character development, and academic excellence, IPS continues to expand its reach across all communities.

## From Chapli Kebab to Matton Tikka: Exploring Peshawar food

PESHAWAR (APP): Nestled in the heart of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar is a city steeped in history, culture, and tradition but for many, its most enduring legacy is its mouthwatering food.

From sizzling street grills to time-honored family kitchens, Peshawar offers a unique culinary journey unlike any other city in Pakistan.

Renowned for its varieties of bold flavors, generous use of meat, and simple yet hearty recipes, Peshawari cuisines are a true reflection of the Pashtun spirit of unpretentious and warm hospitality.

One cannot speak of Peshawari food without mentioning the mouth watering Chappli Kabab along with Qehwa (green tea).

Crisp on the outside, juicy within, and seasoned with a blend of spices including dried pomegranate seeds and green chilies, these flat Chappli Kabab are a staple across the province, attracting foods.

In Namak Mandi, Peshawar's iconic food street, Chappli Kabab is served with piping hot naan and tangy chutney—a combination that has stood the test of time.

"Peshawar's food, especially Chappli Kabab has its own soul," says Nisar Khan alias Charsi, a third-generation kebab vendor at Namak Mandi.

"I inherited its art from my father who started chappli kabab business from a single 'Karahi' 50 years ago. When I was a school boy, I sit on Karahi with my father, who was an expert of Chappli Kabab's making and later joined it practically after his untimely demise."

Keeping in view of family financial hardship at those days, Nisar said he never looked back and established three more such shops one each at Firdous, University Road and Bakhsu Charsadda Road, easing his financial woes.

"We use minced meat and once it is rightly crushed by an experienced labourers, tomatoes, red chili powder, onions, lemon juice, salt, masala and pomegranate seeds go into its marinated meat, making it more delicious," he said, adding it takes only 10 minutes to make a complete Chappli Kabab served with chutney, ketchup, salad, yogurt and naan to customers.

Equally famous is Dumpukht, a dish slow-cooked in sealed pots to let the meat tenderize in its own juices, enriched only by a handful of spices. It's a dish that whispers tradition in every bite.

Under the glow of hanging bulbs and smoky air of open grills, food lovers gather at long wooden benches at Namak Mandai to enjoy Dumpukht and Matton Karhai made from freshly slaughtered lamb, cooked in animal fat and tomatoes with a hint of green chili.

"Namak Mandi is my favorite food place in Peshawar where I have come for the last five years to enjoy its Matton Karhai and BBQ due to its unique taste and energy perspective," said Samad Khan, a tourist of Barikot Swat.

"Whenever I come to Peshawar, I come here to enjoy its delectable cuisines with family," he said.

"It also gave me an opportunity to spend some times with my old university friends here in a relaxed environment as the orders generally take close to an half an hour to prepare, with customers."

After a meat-heavy meal, no trip to Peshawar is complete without Qahwa (green tea)—the Peshawar's signature.

Served in small porcelain cups especially after Chappli Kabab and Dumpukht, Qahwa is not just a drink but a moment of pause of conversation and long tradition of Peshawar goes from generation to generation.

Similarly, Peshawar's historic Qissa Khwani market, which is a home of international storytellers continued its centuries old legacy where Nehari, Rice Polao, Haleem and Chicken Achar are being served till late night.

And for those with a sweet tooth, sohan halwa, faluda and jalebi bring a perfect end to a traditional meal with yogurt lasi-majing Peshawar visit memorable.

Eminent writer and traveler, Qari Javed Iqbal in his book 'Saqafat Sarhad Tarikh K Ayeene Me' (frontier culture in mirror of history) wrote that people of united India were mostly vegetarians but all kings and invaders from the west including Mughals, Turks, Ghazni and Afghans who conquered India loved these traditional fruits of this region.

"In every kabab, every cup of tea, there's a story," says Bakhtzada Muhammad, Assistant Director, Archeology Department.

He said Peshawar is a unique food city that feeds both the stomach and the soul.

"The people of united India were mostly vegetarians but all kings and invaders from the west including Mughals, Turks, Ghazni and Afghans who conquered India were carnivores and stayed here," he said.

These kings and invaders had introduced the habit of eating meat in new ways in United India where Mughals made meat-eating a cultural dish by making it a substitute for beef and buffalo meat by adding various spices and ingredients to it.

Chappli Kabab's recipes were introduced in the Mughal dynasty, which had later gained international fame owing to its appetizing aroma and delectable taste, he said.

Later, its recipe was shifted to Karachi, Lahore, Quetta and other cities of Pakistan besides Jalalabad and Kabul in Afghanistan and Amratsar, Lucknow and Dheli India.

They urged the KP Government to covert Namak Mandi is a full fledged food street on the patterns of GawalMandi Lahore and provide soft loans to shopkeepers enabling them to continue and expand their food businesses.

Food Services and Halal Authority spokesman said countering adulteration in spices products mostly used in traditional cuisines was a big challenge.

To counter the challenge, he said seven mobile testing laboratories were set up at divisional headquarters of KP, adding ten more such labs to be established in Swabi, Batagram, Chitral, Haripur, Manshera, Charsadda, Nowshera, Dir and Chitral.

Three foods training schools at Mardan, Peshawar and Abbottabad were established, underscoring the need for establishment of nutritional wings, food screening laboratories and halal food research wings in all districts besides inclusion of food subjects in curriculum and constant awareness campaign by media and religious scholars to win fight against adulteration in food products.



PESAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar Division Riaz Khan Mehds chairing a meeting regarding steps taken to stop the illegal trafficking of minerals

## Protest on July 22 against the increasing accidents in PESCO F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chairman of All Pakistan Wapda Hydroelectric Workers Union Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Muhammad Iqbal has said that due to severe shortage of staff in the three power companies of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the employees are being made to work for 16 hours instead of 8 hours.

This is not only a violation of the ILO and the prevailing law of the country. Rather, the memory of 1886 is being revived in DISCOs.

These views were expressed by Provincial Chairman Haji Muhammad Iqbal while addressing an extraordinary meeting of the executive body under his chairmanship at Iqbal Labour Complex Peshawar yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Central Chairman Gohar Taj, Provincial Secretary General Noorul Amin Haiderzai, Vice Chairman Yasir Kamran, Deputy Chairman Shafiullah.

Information Secretary Gohar Ali Gohar, Joint Secretary Tariq Khan and Secretary Finance Nasir Khan were present along with executive members from across the province.

Addressing the meeting of the provincial executive body, Provincial Secretary General Noorul Amin Haiderzai and others clarified that the main reason for the increasing number of fatal electrical accidents in PESCO is the pressure of work and the unusual delay in recruitment.

Also, the field staff, which includes the meter readers community in addition to the line staff, are forced to work for 12 to 16 hours. Yardstick and more than their capacity are causing mental distress. Also, due to lack of staff, most of the complaint offices in rural areas have been closed.

While in urban areas, field staff are forced to work for 16 hours. If an 8-hour shift is not arranged in the three companies, then on July 22, 2025, a full-scale protest will be held across the province, including a main sit-in at Wapda House, Shami Road, Peshawar.

Thousands of workers will participate in it. Also, after July 22, no more than 8 hours of duty will be given in the three companies according to the prevailing law. The entire responsibility for which will fall on the government, the Chief Executive Officers of the three companies and the Board of Directors.

This decision was taken in a meeting of the executive body through a unanimous resolution. It should be noted that a strict action plan will be announced for the future if the demands are not met.

## Pakistan on the World Population Day

Dr. Luay Shabaneh

**L**AST week, I participated in a meeting convened by the Minister of Planning to initiate a national dialogue on population management. The meeting was attended by the Ministers of Health and Information along with numerous key stakeholders in Pakistan. Population growth - and the resulting anxiety surrounding it - has become more pressing issues in Pakistan than ever before. Key concerns include a high fertility rate, rapid population increase, rising unemployment, inadequate education, skills development, stunting, and climate change. However, according to Dr. Natalia Kanem, the Executive Director of UNFPA, the real fertility crisis lies in the lack of a reproductive agency. It is often assumed or implied that fertility rates reflect free choices. However, in reality it is rarely the case. Poor health services, lack of education, lack of awareness and backlash against women's rights are the primary drivers of fertility rates in Pakistan.

Misguided beliefs and misperceptions around national narratives on population growth have led many countries to adopt policies that often worsen the problems they aim to solve. In Pakistan, for example, the taxation of contraceptives, the lack of progressive measures against child marriage, barriers to girls' education, limited access to reproductive health services and supplies, and the limitation of women's reproductive rights have all contributed to a rise in unintended pregnancies amplify the challenges associated with population growth. Viewing population growth narrowly - as solely a matter of family planning - while overlooking its broader complex aspects, has resulted in inadequate and ineffective progress on critical population indicators including maternal mortality, unmet family planning needs, contraceptive prevalence, and, most importantly, development of human capital.

World Population Day, commemorated every year on July 11, is an important occasion to reassess the approach to population management. It is a moment to genuinely listen to what women and young generations want and need to create conditions that empower them to exercise their rights, make informed choices and enjoy a hopeful future. This is the only path that can make transformative change in the population and development architecture and normalize fertility behavior that support balanced development agenda. Family-friendly policies - such as affordable, accessible maternal and childcare services, and the active engagement of men in promoting sexual and reproductive health - can help prospective parents balance their career and family goals. Equally important is investment in comprehensive sexuality education equips young people with the knowledge they need to make informed choices. As Dr. Natalia Kanem aptly stated that 'only shared solutions, grounded in human rights, will meet the demands of a demographically diverse world'.

Ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights remains a cornerstone of sustainable and inclusive societies. Pakistan's population agenda faces structural and multi-dimensional challenges - requiring equally comprehensive solutions. At the policy level, it is crucial for Pakistan to secure sustained political commitment and leadership for the population agenda by activating the population federal task force chaired by the Prime Minister and including Chief Ministers and other relevant leaders. This body can serve as a high-level mechanism to align national and provincial efforts.

Revising the National Finance Commission (NFC) formula - from a burden-driven model to a target-focused approach - is essential to garner political commitment at the provincial level. To meet its financial obligations, the government must also increase public expenditure on contraceptives from the current 1 USD to 3.5 USD per capita, as recommended by Council of Common Interests (CCI). An immediate allocation of 10 billion PKR to the Population Fund is necessary to mobilize matching funds from international donors and accelerate progress on the population management agenda. Providing tax exemptions on family planning commodities would further enhance affordability and access. Moreover, it is vital to improve and diversify the allocation and utilization of domestic resources for reproductive health and family planning services and commodities.

At the institutional level, Pakistan needs to strengthen governance and address structural deficiencies to guarantee the effective delivery of sexual and reproductive health services. It is recommended to integrate population concerns into sectoral plans and approach the population agenda from a multi-sectoral viewpoint, ideally led by a cross-sectoral coordination ministry. Enhancing data collection and analysis systems is vital for efficient monitoring and tracking progress. In terms of delivery service, community levels should be enhanced through targeted outreach initiatives. Bridging gaps in family planning programmes and expanding coverage requires increasing both the number and geographical distribution of Lady Health Workers. The government should also prioritize the efficiency of reproductive health commodity security and supply chain management, while encouraging public-private partnerships. Improved coordination is another crucial element. Stronger collaboration among development partners and stakeholders is essential to ensure a unified approach to the population agenda. Additionally, aligning efforts of provincial and federal governments on a common platform is critical to realizing the shared vision of Pakistan's development agenda.

Writer is UNFPA Representative

## Climate Change: A warning sign

Mahnoor Jehan

**C**LIMATE change is the biggest challenge of the 21st century. The words of former U.S. President Barack Obama still resonate: "We are the first generation to feel the effects of climate change and the last generation who can do something about it." Climate change refers to an increase in average temperature of the earth mainly due to anthropogenic activities across the globe. From melting glaciers to raging wildfires, the signs of climate change are undeniable. It poses a significant threat due to several factors. Factors responsible for this issue include greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, and the burning of fossil fuels. Additionally, rapid industrialization, unregulated construction, and outdated farming practices contribute significantly to the crisis.

Despite contributing less than 1% to global carbon emissions, Pakistan remains one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change. According to World Meteorological Organization (WMO), CO<sub>2</sub> is accumulating in the atmosphere faster than any time experienced during human existence. The global average temperature has risen to an alarming rate due to changing climate which not only alters weather patterns but also poses a severe threat to ecosystem, biodiversity and human societies. According to a World Health Organization (WHO) report, between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year from undernutrition, malaria, diarrhea, and heat stress alone. Forests, which are natural carbon sinks, play an important role in mitigating climate change. Unfortunately, Pakistan has a very small forest area, which accounts for only 4.8% of its total area. According to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), to keep global warming below 1.5°C, the main objective of the Paris Agreement, the world must cut down GHG emissions by 22 gigatons annually by 2030, and halting deforestation can help reduce them by up to 4 gigatons per year. Therefore, the role of forests in reversing climate change cannot be neglected. However, with a practical and proactive approach, this issue can be addressed. Government should launch awareness campaigns to educate the public about the importance of protecting the environment. It is time to replace non-renewable energy sources and shift entirely to renewable alternatives. Moreover, plantation and the use of public transportation should be actively promoted. As every cloud has a silver lining so with pragmatic steps and collective efforts, the catastrophic consequences of climate change can be mitigated.

Writers is a graduate of FJWU





## In brief

### Family Health Fair camp Allah Dad Chandio

LARKANA : A Family Health Fair was organized by the Population Welfare Office, Mary Stops Society in collaboration with the Solangi Youth Alliance in village Gand near Badah city of Larkana district, which was inaugurated by Town Committee Chairman Badruddin Sario. In this fair, gynecological diseases experts, lady doctors Bashiran Pahnwar, Mehtab Mirani, and others examined 105 women for their gynecological diseases and provided them with free medicines. In the camp, patients suffering from various diseases including different blood groups, hepatitis B, C, sugar and blood pressure were examined and treated. The camp was attended by Muhammad Ishaq Bhurgri, District Officer of Population Department Larkana, Taluka Officer Wajid Ali, and representatives of civil society.

### Successful admission test

SUKKUR (APP): Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University (BNBWU) Sukkur on Sunday successfully held an admission test today, attracting 1,200 candidates from across the country, including Sindh. The test was for admission to three master's and 15 undergraduate programs, exclusively for female students. Under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Tehmina Mangan, the university ensured a transparent and smooth conduct of the admission test through meticulous planning and strict supervision. The arrangements were tailored to provide utmost comfort and convenience to the candidates, including fully air-conditioned examination halls, dedicated waiting lounges for parents, clean drinking water, and other essential facilities. Dr. Mangan personally visited the examination venues, interacted with candidates and their families, and appreciated the trust they have in the institution and its high academic standards. She expressed her best wishes to all test-takers, emphasizing BNBWU's commitment to providing a safe, knowledge-friendly, and academically vibrant environment for female students from all over the country. With its focus on quality education, innovation, and student welfare, BNBWU is emerging as a beacon of higher education and women's empowerment in the region.

### Man kills three of his family

KARAK (APP): At least three members of a same family were killed and two children injured in a firing incident, resulting from a domestic dispute in Surdag area of Karak district, police informed on Sunday. According to police, the incident took place in the jurisdiction of Lachi police station where reportedly, a man opened fire on his own family members due to ongoing domestic tensions. The assailant, identified as the brother of one of the victims, fatally shot his brother, sister-in-law, and 12-year-old niece. Two other children were injured during the shooting and were immediately transported to the District Headquarters Hospital in Karak by rescue teams. Police confirmed that the suspect, who is also the brother-in-law of the deceased woman, acted out of rage stemming from a long-standing family dispute. Police arrived at the scene shortly after the incident and initiated an investigation. Efforts to apprehend the suspect are ongoing, and forensic evidence is being collected from the crime scene.

# Minister inaugurates reconstructed road in Kohat

## F.P. Report

KOHAT: Provincial Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Aftab Alam Advocate, formally inaugurated the newly reconstructed Public Health Colony Road in Village Council Sheikhan, Kohat. The project, completed at a cost of approximately Rs. 10 million, is part of the government's ongoing commitment to infrastructure development in the province. The road had remained in a dilapidat-

ed condition for several years and its reconstruction was a longstanding demand of the local residents. Its completion has been widely welcomed by the community.

Upon his arrival in Sheikhan, the Law Minister was warmly received by local elders and PTI workers, who expressed their appreciation for fulfilling the promise. They also acknowledged the contributions of MNA Shehryar Khan Afridi and local PTI representatives.

Speaking at the event, Aftab Alam emphasized that development is a fundamental right of the people, not a favor. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to fulfilling all public promises and delivering practical, sustainable development.

He highlighted the crucial role of infrastructure in socio-economic progress, stating that essential services and basic needs of the population will be addressed on a priority basis.

## President PHCBA visits Kohat Bar



### Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: The President of Peshawar High Court (PHC) Bar Association, Amin-ur-Rahman Yusufzai, accompanied by the General Secretary Ashfaq Ahmad Daudzai, Joint Secretary Asad Zeb Khan, Finance Secretary Subhanullah, Librarian Asad Khan, Press Secretary Malik Muhammad Noman and Executive Member Syed Majid Fluk Bukhari, visited the Kohat Bar Association and thanked them for their cooperation and support in the election.

On this occasion, the President Kohat Bar Association, Amaan Khan Bangash Advocate. Senior lawyers Syed Mufid Shah Advocate, Syed Shafiq Shah Advocate, Samiullah Advocate and Syed Moin Shah Advocate were also

present.

President of Peshawar High Bar Association Amin-ur-Rahman, while addressing the lawyers community and later talking to media, said that the rights of the lawyers community and their problems will continue to be resolved.

He said that the Bar Association is not only a professional organization but also a protector of the rights of lawyers and their problems will be highlighted at every level. A systematic packet form will be provided for bringing junior lawyers forward and train them.

Amin-ur-Rahman said that every possible effort is being made to promote mutual harmony and cooperation between the judiciary and the lawyers. All out efforts are being made to

build judicial complexes and libraries in every district of the province for the lawyers and wherever judicial complexes and libraries exist, it will be expanded.

On this occasion, the new Bar Chamber of Syed Moin Shah, member of the Provincial Council of the Awami National Party, was also inaugurated. Large number of lawyers attended the inaugural ceremony.

The distinguished guests congratulated Syed Moin Shah and appreciated his professional services.

The lawyers of Kohat Bar assured the cabinet of the Peshawar High Court Bar of their full support and expressed the hope that they would continue to play their role effectively in the future for the resolution of the problems of lawyers and the improvement of the judicial system.

## 508 devices blocked, 22 FIRs registered

MULTAN (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) South Zone Punjab has permanently blocked 508 retailer devices and registered 22 FIRs during a recent crackdown on unauthorized deductions and embezzlement in the quarter 4 (April-June) tranche for the financial year 2024-25.

According to BISP officials, field teams conducted rigorous inspections and beneficiary verifications across districts of South Punjab, leading to firm action against corrupt ele-

ments.

Law enforcement agencies have so far arrested 23 individuals involved in illegal deductions and financial malpractice.

Zonal Director South Zone Punjab, Sayema Bashir, said that the measures reflect BISP's commitment to ensuring transparency, accountability and protection of payments meant for marginalized families.

She added that monitoring teams are actively present in the field to oversee the disbursement process,

ensure strict compliance and respond swiftly to complaints.

She urged beneficiaries to immediately report any unauthorized deductions or misconduct through the BISP helpline (0800-26477) or by visiting the nearest BISP office.

Sayema Bashir reiterated that no deductions from the grants of poor families will be tolerated under any circumstances and that the Programme remains dedicated to delivering full payments to deserving families with dignity.

## Shafqat flays Indian occupation in Kashmir

SUKKUR (APP): Prominent Senior politician Syed Shafqat Ali Shah has strongly condemned India's occupation and brutal atrocities in Kashmir on the occasion of Kashmir Martyrs' Day.

In his statement on Sunday, he expressed solidarity with the people of Kashmir, saying their sacrifices will not go in vain.

He criticized India's decision to adopt a path of

oppression and violence in occupied Kashmir, instead of implementing UN resolutions.

Shah reiterated that Pakistan will continue to raise its voice globally for the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people.

Shafqat Shah praised the bravery and resilience of the Kashmiri people, saying they have written a new chapter in the history

of the struggle for freedom.

He condemned the Indian government's actions in occupied Kashmir, emphasizing that Pakistan stands in solidarity with the Kashmiris in their quest for their rights.

The statement reflects Pakistan's continued support for the Kashmiri cause and its commitment to highlighting the issue on the global stage.



QUETTA: Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Balochistan, Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman addressing a press conference. — INP photo



SWAT: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Muhammad Ali Saif in a group photo during his visit to Regional Information Office.

## No place for criminals in Malakand, says DC

MALAKAND (APP): Deputy Commissioner Malakand Hameed-ur-Rehman has stated that there is absolutely no space for criminals in Malakand, while peaceful citizens are always welcome to approach his office with any complaints or concerns.

Speaking to media representatives on Sunday the DC emphasized that under the vision of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and the Chief Secretary, significant improvements are being made across various sectors in the district.

He highlighted that the current law and order in Malakand is exemplary, and despite limited resources, the Malakand Levies are always prepared to deal with any circumstances, strictly preventing the entry of criminal elements into the district.

The DC further said that a crackdown has been ordered against individuals involved in drug trafficking without any discrimination, and lists of known criminals have already been compiled to bring them to justice. He reiterated that any citizen facing issues is welcome to visit his office at any time, but criminal elements will not be tolerated within Malakand's jurisdiction.

Hameed-ur-Rehman also noted that improvements have been made in hospitals, educational institutions, and various other district departments. Additionally, under the provincial government's directives, the district administration has developed a comprehensive plan to deal with emergencies, especially during the monsoon season.

Rescue 1122 personnel have been instructed to remain alert, and all Assistant Commissioners, ADCs, and Levies post commanders have been directed to stay prepared and keep the district administration promptly informed. The DC assured that he personally oversees these operations and, when necessary, visits affected areas to manage the situation firsthand.

He expressed hope that in the coming months, Malakand would be regarded as one of the most peaceful districts in terms of law and order.

## Dera Police foil robbery attempt

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Dera Police on Sunday successfully foiled a robbery attempt on the Dera-Zhob Highway, engaging in an exchange of fire with the suspects, police spokesman said.

According to the spokesperson of Dera Police, the incident occurred when the police received a timely alert regarding an armed robbery attempt on a passenger bus. Acting swiftly, a police team responded and intercepted the culprits, triggering an exchange of fire.

As a result, one robber was killed while another sustained injuries.

The deceased suspect was identified as Baloch Khan, son of Sial Gul. Police also recovered weapons and ammunition from the possession of the suspects.

## Work on Hangu Road in full swing: MPA

### F.P. Report

HANGU: With the funds of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Parliamentary Secretary on Science and Information Technology and Chairman DDAC Kohat Shafi Jan MPA, the asphalt work on the 16-kilometer stretch of the main Hangu Road "Peshawar Chowk to Kachha Pakka" is in full swing under the supervision of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Highway Authority.

Deputy Director PKHA Fahad Noor has along with the Assistant Director Bilal Ahmed inspected the ongoing developmental work on the road and also checked

the quality of the material. He strictly directed the contractor that no negligence or unnecessary delay will be tolerated in the construction of road and the quality of work should be ensured at all costs.

It may be recalled that due to the poor condition of the Hangu road, the citizens were facing severe difficulties for a long time and an increase in traffic accidents was also being seen. The construction of the road will not only provide better travel facilities to the people but will also promote the socio-economic activities in the area.

Deputy Director Fahad Noor said that modern

machinery and high-quality materials are being used in the construction of Hangu Road to ensure its durability. He said, if the weather remains favorable, the project will be completed in the next few weeks.

Meanwhile, asphalt work has also been started on the Gulabad Road with the funds of Shafi Jan MPA and MNA Shehryar Afridi and is in the final stages of completion. According to Shafi Jan, the top priority of the PTI government after education and health, is the construction of roads because the importance of roads cannot be ignored in the socio-economic development of any area.

## PFA seizes 100kg adulterated tea

MULTAN (APP): In a major crackdown against food adulteration, the Punjab Food Authority (PFA) seized 100 kilogram adulterated tea and 40 kg counterfeit packaging material during a raid on a tea repackaging unit in Pirowal.

Acting on the special directions of Director

General PFA, Muhammad Asim Javed, a food safety team conducted a raid at the unit and seized a large quantity of fake packaging material. During the test, the presence of synthetic colors illegally mixed into the tea was found.

The team also recovered counterfeit packag-

ing labeled under various well-known tea brands.

Samples of the seized tea were sent for further laboratory analysis. An FIR was lodged against the owner of the unit. DG PFA Muhammad Asim Javed said that those involved in adulteration would be dealt with strictly.

### Swat tragedy

## Pressure builds on Govt to hold officials accountable

SWAT (APP): A growing chorus of voices from civil society, political leadership, and the general public is demanding swift and transparent implementation of the inquiry report into the River Swat tragedy, which claimed the lives of 18 tourists in broad daylight.

The tragedy, which shocked the entire nation, has now become a rallying point for public calls for accountability and systemic reforms to avert such unfortunate incidents in future.

Last month, a scenic family of Punjab and Mardan outing along the Swat River turned catastrophic when a sudden surge of floodwater swept away a group of tourists and later their bodies were recovered from different places of the killer river.

Haunting footage of victims clinging desperately to rocks, crying for help, spread rapidly across social media, igniting grief and outrage nationwide.

In response to public outcry, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government formed a high-level Provincial Inspection Team (PIT) to investigate the tragic incident.

The team submitted a 63-page report last week to Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, detailing a cascade of institutional failures that led to the tragedy.

The PIT report paints a damning picture of systemic negligence by the different departments. It identified glaring lapses by the district administration, Rescue 1122, local government, irrigation, and police departments.

Among the most serious findings were poor inter-departmental coordination during emergencies and non-functional early warning systems besides delayed response by rescue teams and lack of trained

personnel and equipment.

Negligent hotel management, who failed to inform guests about flood risks, unregulated riverside construction, with over 1,000 kanals of encroached land and structures built without proper safety considerations were also reported.

The PIT did not merely list the shortcomings but it also recommended disciplinary action against specific government officers and proposed an overhaul of existing safety regulations.

Civil society members and political leaders have called on the KP government to ensure the report does not gather dust and justice to be seen.

Misal Khan, a retired government servant, said, "The Swat tragedy deeply saddened the nation and laid bare the negligence of authorities. Swift disciplinary action is the only way to bring solace to the victims' families."

He said such incidents make bad impact on culture and tourism of Swat where large number of people relied on as for their families livelihood is concerned. Hamza Khan, PML-N KP Nowshera President, stressed the urgency of accountability: "The victims waited for hours for help that never arrived. If this report ends up in cold storage, it'll be an insult to their memory."

He said Swat tragedy exposed hallow slogans of good governance of PIT.

Besides poor preparedness and lackluster response, PTI Govt failed to provide helicopter for rescue of the victims who cried for help almost the whole day. Former Secretary of Environment, Zahur Khalil, labeled this a "test case" for the provincial leadership. "If real consequences don't follow, we are bound to see more such disasters in future" he

cautioned. Chief Minister KP has accepted the PIT's recommendations and set a 60-day deadline for disciplinary actions against the nominated officials for showing negligence of duties.

Additionally, a comprehensive set of reforms and safety measures have been rolled out including oversight committee led by the Chief Secretary to supervise implementation, river safety regulations to be integrated into the monsoon contingency plan.

The crackdown on illegal construction has already led to the sealing of 127 buildings, removal of encroachments over 1,019 kanals, and installation of 174 safety barriers.

Public awareness campaigns on river safety to be launched province-wide and 36 new rescue stations, procurement of modern rescue equipment worth Rs. 739 million, and a Rs. 200 million digital monitoring system will be established. Despite the government's announcements, public trust hinges on visible and meaningful action. The next two months will be crucial for the KP government to demonstrate that it is serious about reform and accountability.

"This isn't just about one tragedy," said Zahur Khalil. "It's about setting a precedent. If the responsible go unpunished, then the government has learned nothing."

As the province watches closely, the River Swat tragedy stands as a stark reminder that natural disasters often turn deadly not because of nature, but because of human failure.

Whether the KP government turns this tragedy into a turning point or a missed opportunity will determine not only its credibility, but also the safety of future generations.





# Trump intensifies trade war with threat of 30% tariffs on EU, Mexico

WASHINGTON/MEXICO CITY (Reuters): President Donald Trump on Saturday threatened to impose a 30% tariff on imports from Mexico and the European Union starting on August 1, after weeks of negotiations with the major U.S. trading partners failed to reach a comprehensive trade deal.

In an escalation of a trade war that has angered U.S. allies and rattled investors, Trump announced the latest tariffs in separate letters to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum that were posted on his Truth Social media site on Saturday. The EU and Mexico, both among the largest U.S. trading partners responded by calling the tariffs unfair and disruptive while pledging to continue to

negotiate with the U.S. for a broader trade deal before the deadline.

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said she was sure an agreement can be reached. "I've always said that in these cases, what you have to do is keep a cool head to face any problem," Sheinbaum said at an event in the Mexican state of Sonora.

"We're also clear on what we can work with the United States government on, and we're clear on what we can't. And there's something that's never negotiable: the sovereignty of our country," she said.

Trump sent similar letters to 23 other trading partners this week, including Canada, Japan and Brazil, setting blanket tariff rates ranging from 20% up to 50%, as well as a 50% tariff on copper.

The U.S. president said the 30% rate was "separate

from all sectoral tariffs," indicating 50% levies on steel and aluminum imports and a 25% tariff on auto imports would remain.

The August 1 deadline gives the targeted countries time to negotiate agreements that could lower the threatened tariffs. Some investors and economists have also noted Trump's pattern of backing off his tariff threats. The spate of letters showed Trump has returned to the aggressive trade posture that he took in April when he announced a slew of reciprocal tariffs against trading partners that sent markets tumbling before the White House delayed implementation.

But with the stock market recently hitting record highs and the U.S. economy still resilient, Trump is showing no signs of slowing down his trade war.

He promised to use the 90-day delay in April to strike dozens of new trade deals, but has only secured framework agreements with Britain, China and Vietnam. The EU has hoped to reach a comprehensive trade agreement with the U.S. for the 27-country bloc.

Trump's letter to the EU included a demand that Europe drop its own tariffs. "The European Union will allow complete, open Market Access to the United States, with no Tariff being charged to us, in an attempt to reduce the large Trade Deficit," he wrote.

Von der Leyen said the 30% tariffs "would disrupt essential transatlantic supply chains, to the detriment of businesses, consumers and patients on both sides of the Atlantic."

Mexico's economy min-

istry said Saturday it was informed the U.S. would send a letter during a meeting on Friday with U.S. officials.

"We mentioned at the roundtable that it was unfair treatment and that we did not agree," the ministry's statement said.

Mexico's proposed tariff level is lower than Canada's 35%, with both letters citing fentanyl flows even though government data shows the amount of the drug seized at the Mexican border is significantly higher than the Canadian border.

"Mexico has been helping me secure the border, BUT, what Mexico has done, is not enough. Mexico still has not stopped the Cartels who are trying to turn all of North America into a Narco-Trafficking Playground," Trump wrote.

China is the main source of the chemicals used to make the opioid fentanyl. According to U.S. authorities, only 0.2% of all fentanyl seized in the U.S. comes from across the Canadian border, while the vast majority originates from the U.S.-Mexico border.

Mexico sends more than 80% of its total exported goods to the U.S. and free trade with its northern neighbor drove Mexico to become the top U.S. trading partner in 2023.

The EU had initially hoped to strike a comprehensive trade agreement but more recently had scaled back its ambitions and shifted toward securing a broader framework deal similar to the one Britain brokered that leaves details to be negotiated. The bloc is under conflicting pressures as powerhouse Germany

urged a quick deal to safeguard its industry, while other EU members, such as France, have said EU negotiators should not cave into a one-sided deal on U.S. terms.

Bernd Lange, the head of the European Parliament's trade committee, said Brussels should enact countermeasures as soon as Monday. "This is a slap in the face for the negotiations. This is no way to deal with a key trading partner," Lange told Reuters.

Jacob Funk Kirkegaard, a senior fellow at the Brussels-based think tank Bruegel, said Trump's letter raised the risk of retaliatory moves by the EU similar to the flare-up between the U.S. and China that rattled financial markets. "U.S. and Chinese tariffs went up together and they came back down again. Not all

the way down, but still down together," he said.

Trump's cascade of tariff orders since returning to the White House has begun generating tens of billions of dollars a month in new revenue for the U.S. government. U.S. customs duties revenue topped \$100 billion in the federal fiscal year through to June, according to U.S. Treasury data on Friday.

The tariffs have also strained diplomatic relationships with some of the closest U.S. partners.

Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said last week that Japan needed to lessen its dependence on the U.S. The fight over tariffs has also prompted Canada and some European allies to reexamine their security dependence on Washington, with some looking to purchase non-U.S. weapons systems.

## Strengthening Bilateral Security Cooperation UAE and Pakistan deepen strategic ties

Asif Ali Yousafzai

**I**n a significant step towards deepening bilateral relations, H.H. Lt. General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior of the United Arab Emirates, met with Pakistan's Minister of Interior and Counter-Narcotics, H.E. Mohsin Naqvi, in Abu Dhabi.

The meeting reaffirmed the historic friendship between the UAE and Pakistan and reflected the shared commitment of both nations' leaderships to broaden cooperation across key sectors particularly in security, counter-narcotics, and regional stability.

Focus on Security and Intelligence Cooperation

Discussions centered on enhancing security coordi-

nation, sharing counter-narcotics expertise, and addressing the growing challenges posed by transnational organized crime. Both sides expressed the necessity of staying ahead of such threats through joint strategies and mutual trust.

The UAE emphasized the role of advanced technologies, especially artificial intelligence, in modern policing and surveillance. Pakistan's Interior Minister was given an in-depth briefing on the UAE Ministry of Interior's Customer Visit Monitoring Room, which evaluates police performance, tracks service quality, and employs digital tools to improve operational efficiency.

A Model for Regional Stability

This high-level engage-

ment serves as a reminder of the increasingly strategic nature of UAE-Pakistan ties. As both countries face shared regional challenges, they continue to adopt collaborative models that serve as templates for regional cooperation and peace-building.

Attendees from the UAE side included several top officials:- Major General Salem Ali Al Shamsi

- Major General Sheikh Mohammed bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan

- Brigadier Engineer Hussein Ahmed Al Harithi

- Brigadier Saeed Abdullah Al Suwaidi

- And other senior officers.

The Pakistani delegation, led by H.E. Mohsin Naqvi, also included key aides and experts in interior and narcotics control.

Editorial Insight

As global security threats evolve, partnerships like that between the UAE and Pakistan offer hope for joint resilience. This meeting could lay the groundwork for future agreements in areas such as:

- Cybersecurity
- AI-based policing
- Border control technologies
- Intelligence-sharing networks

With both countries determined to harness technology, training, and intelligence exchange, this diplomatic engagement underscores a mutual vision for peace and stability in South Asia and the Middle East.

Writer is UAE Correspondent of The Frontier Post and Member, Pakistan Journalists Forum - UAE



HUANGSHAN, CHINA: Aerial view of local residents enjoying the coolness at a water park in summer on Sunday in Huangshan City, Anhui Province of China.

## UK police arrest scores of supporters of newly banned Palestinian protest group

LONDON (Reuters): British police arrested scores of supporters on Saturday of a pro-Palestinian protest group that was banned this month under anti-terrorism legislation.

Police said they had arrested at least 41 people in London and 16 others in Manchester for showing support for the group Palestine Action.

Campaign group Defend our Juries said 86 people had been arrested across the UK, with other protests held in Wales and Northern Ireland.

British lawmakers proscribed the group under anti-terrorism legislation earlier this month after some of its members broke

into a Royal Air Force base and damaged planes in protest against Britain's support for Israel.

"Officers have made 41 arrests for showing support for a proscribed organisation. One person has been arrested for common assault," London's Metropolitan Police said in a statement on social media about the demonstration.

After a similar protest in London last week, police arrested 29 people.

Before Saturday's arrests in London, close to 50 protesters had gathered with placards saying "I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action" near a statue of former South African President Nelson

Mandela outside the British parliament.

The International Court of Justice in the Hague is hearing a case brought by South Africa accusing Israel of genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza war, which began after Palestinian militant group Hamas attacked Israel in October 2023. Israel has repeatedly denied committing abuses.

The British government's decision to classify Palestine Action as a terrorist group places it in the same category as Hamas, al-Qaeda and ISIS. Membership now carries a prison sentence of up to 14 years. Opponents of the ban say using anti-terrorism laws is inappropriate

against a group accused mainly of damaging property rather than harming people, although some members have in the past been charged with violence in clashes with police.

Palestine Action generally targeted Israeli and Israel-linked businesses in Britain such as defence company Elbit Systems (ESLT.TA), opens new tab, often spraying red paint, blocking entrances or damaging equipment.

In an unsuccessful court appeal against the ban, a lawyer for Palestine Action said the government ban was the first time Britain had proscribed a group which undertook this type of direct action.

## Farm worker dies after US immigration raid in California

CAMARILLO (AP): A farm worker has died after being injured during a raid by US immigration agents on a legal cannabis farm in California, his family said on Saturday.

Raids on agricultural sites Thursday resulted in the arrests of 200 undocumented migrants, as part of US President Donald Trump's wide-ranging anti-immigration crackdown, and clashes between law enforcement officials and protesters.

The farm worker's family had started a page on the fundraising platform GoFundMe to help support his relatives in Mexico. On Saturday, the page posted an update to say he had "passed away."

Trump campaigned for the presidency on a harsh anti-immigration platform, likening undocumented migrants to "animals" and "monsters," and since taking office he has delivered on promises to conduct a massive deportation drive.

On Friday, he called demonstrators involved in attacks on Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents "slimeballs" and said they should be

arrested.

The chaotic raid on the cannabis plantation in Ventura County, about 56 miles (90 kilometers) from Los Angeles, saw the worker who later died being chased by ICE agents, his family said.

"My uncle Jaime was just a hard-working, innocent farmer," said a post on the GoFundMe page. "He was chased by ICE agents, and we were told he fell 30ft (9 meters)."

The page described his injuries as "catastrophic."

Tricia McLaughlin, a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) spokeswoman, said he was never in custody.

"Although he was not being pursued by law enforcement, this individual climbed up to the roof of a green house and fell 30 feet," McLaughlin said. "(Customs and Border Patrol) immediately called a medevac to the scene to get him care as quickly as possible."

DHS said 200 undocumented migrants were arrested during raids on marijuana growing sites in Carpinteria and Camarillo on Thursday and 10 chil-

dren were rescued "from potential exploitation, forced labor, and human trafficking."

Glass House Brands, which owns the farms, said in a statement that it has "never knowingly violated applicable hiring practices and does not and has never employed minors."

DHS said more than 500 "rioters" had attempted to disrupt the operation and four US citizens are facing charges for assaulting or resisting officers.

Tear gas was used against the protesters, some of whom were seen in television footage throwing projectiles at law enforcement vehicles.

The department said immigration agency vehicles were damaged and a \$50,000 reward was being offered for the arrest of an individual who allegedly fired a gun at law enforcement officers.

In a post on his Truth Social platform, Trump said he had watched footage of "thugs" throwing rocks and bricks at ICE vehicles, causing "tremendous damage."

Trump said he was authorizing law enforce-

ment officers who are "on the receiving end of thrown rocks, bricks, or any other form of assault, to stop their car, and arrest these SLIMEBALLS, using whatever means is necessary to do so."

"I am giving Total Authorization for ICE to protect itself, just like they protect the Public," he said.

Trump has been involved in a showdown over immigration enforcement with Democratic-ruled California for weeks.

The Republican president sent thousands of National Guard troops to Los Angeles last month to quell protests against round-ups of undocumented migrants by federal agents.

California Governor Gavin Newsom has said the troops were not necessary to address the mostly peaceful protests, but his legal efforts to have them removed have failed so far. The cannabis farm in Camarillo was calm during a visit by an AFP reporter on Friday, as workers waited in line to collect their belongings and paychecks.

## Malaysia ex-PM Mahathir, 100, discharged from hospital

KUALA LUMPUR (Reuters): Malaysian former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has been discharged from hospital, his office said on Sunday, after being admitted for fatigue following a picnic celebration for his 100th birthday. Mahathir, leader of the Southeast Asian nation for more than two decades, has a history of heart problems and has undergone bypass surgeries. He has been hospitalised repeatedly in recent years, most recently in October for a respiratory infection.

He was under observation at the National Heart Institute in Kuala Lumpur for fatigue-related issues on Sunday, his office said. "Mahathir has been allowed home as of 4:45 p.m. (0845 GMT)," it said in a statement.

A physician who was a member of parliament



until 2022, Mahathir drove himself on Sunday to the celebration, which also marked the 99th birthday of his wife, Hasmah Mohd Ali, a day earlier, local media

reported. The reports said he cycled for an hour before appearing tired. His birthday was on Thursday.

Mahathir was prime minister for 22 years until

2003. He returned as premier in 2018 after leading the opposition coalition to a historic win, but his government collapsed in less than two years due to infighting.



KHARKIV, UKRAINE: Power lines remain downed after the storm in Kharkiv, Ukraine. On the evening of July 12, heavy rain and gale-force winds hit Kharkiv and the region, with gusts reaching up to 20 meters per second. In the Zmiiv community, a woman died and five people were injured.



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## US tariff war a wild goose chase

The United States' latest tariff threats against trading partners, including the European Union, have once again highlighted its exploitative attitude.

For a long time, the US has cited "security" as a reason to restrict exports of its advanced semiconductors and other high-tech products to many countries from which it imports natural resources and consumer goods. Were it not for this, the US' so-called trade deficits would not have been the size they are today.

And rather than other countries robbing the US of jobs, as the Donald Trump administration claims, it is the high cost of labor in the country that means it cannot compete with emerging market economies for manufacturing jobs. Today, the service sector accounts for more than 70 percent of the US' economy.

The sizable antitrust digital tax that both the European Union and Canada propose to levy on large US multinational tech companies serves as a reminder of the huge surplus in trade of services the US enjoys from its trade with the rest of the world that it intentionally excludes from the calculation of the US' trade balance.

That the US has been able to sustain its "trade deficits" is because the world is compelled to pay the "price" for the US debt, as the US reaps the growth dividends of the whole world by controlling the US dollar's flow worldwide through adjusting its interest rates.

The US' so-called debt pressure is essentially caused by a structural imbalance between government spending and revenue. A considerable part of the state's spending goes to the rich in the forms of government contracts, procurement and investment that are actually approved by their agents in the legislature and government, who also ensure very lenient tax policies for the wealthy. That model explains the widening income gap in the country.

All that being said, the US cannot realize any of the objectives it has set - addressing its "trade deficits" or rebalancing the economy through easing government debt and bringing back manufacturing jobs - by waging its tariff war against the rest of the world. It certainly knows this. So the tariff war is nothing but a tactic to try and cover up the true problems of the US, which will only hurt the country itself.

Hyping up its "reciprocal tariffs" as a means to protect the US people helps the US administration sustain the US model, which runs on the poor footing the bill for the rich and attributing its acute institutional challenges to others.

As for the rising living cost caused by the "reciprocal tariffs", the administration plays it down with feel-not-so-bad bromides: "Well, maybe the children will have two dolls instead of 30 dolls. So maybe the two dolls will cost a couple bucks more than they would normally".

But for the rest of the world the harmful effects of the "reciprocal tariffs" can't be brushed off so easily. That explains why the US administration has again postponed the deadline for trade deals with its trading partners from July 9 to Aug 1, as few have been forthcoming. Even for those economies that it says it is nearing a "deal" with, what the Trump administration has secured is far from being a comprehensive and binding trade pact.

Trump announced on Saturday that 30 percent tariffs will be imposed on the EU and Mexico as of Aug 1, according to letters addressed to the EU and Mexican leaders, which were posted on his social media platform. He has sent more than 20 similar letters to other US trading partners, including Canada, the Republic of Korea, Japan and Brazil, with blanket tariff rates ranging from 20 percent up to 50 percent.

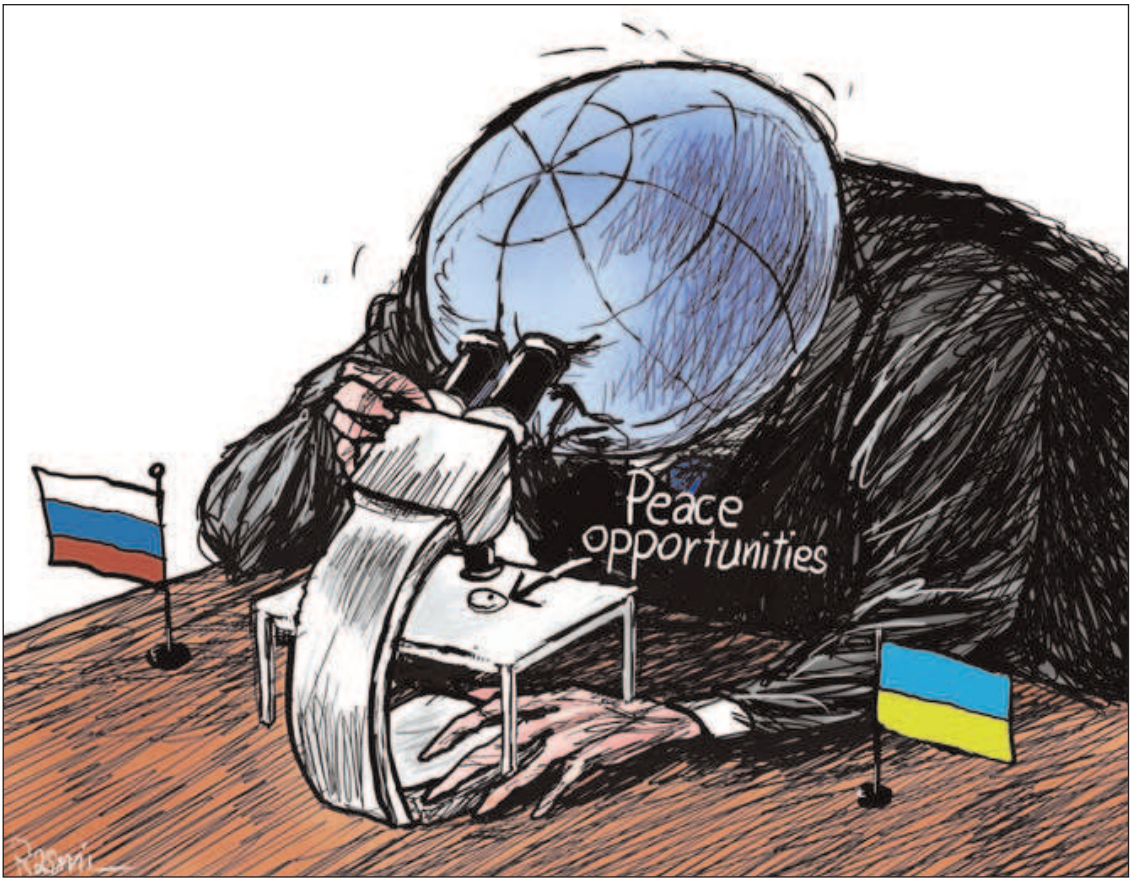
The responses to the US' letters can only be called predictable - the parties concerned are open to trade talks with the US for an agreement before the deadline, but won't rule out taking countermeasures. Bernd Lange, chair of the European Parliament's Committee on International Trade, described the US letter as "both impertinent and a slap in the face" after weeks of negotiations.

The US' attempts to exploit tariffs to subvert the existing international economic and trade order are to prioritize its own interests above the global common good. But these endeavors are doomed to failure.

It can be seen that the tariff rates the US threatens have become incrementally lower, though still exorbitant, and the "period of grace" incrementally shorter, and its intimidation increasingly barefaced, while the responses of those targeted have become more predictable. The odds on the US winning the tariff war are slim.

### Important Notice

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## Trump's African summit was a masterclass in modern colonial theatre

Tafi Mhaka

On July 9, United States President Donald Trump opened a three-day mini summit at the White House with the leaders of Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, and Senegal - by subjecting his distinguished guests to a carefully staged public humiliation.

This was not the plan - or at least, not the part the public was meant to see.

A White House official claimed on July 3 that "President Trump believes that African countries offer incredible commercial opportunities which benefit both the American people and our African partners."

Whether by coincidence or calculated design, the meeting took place on the same day the Trump administration escalated its trade war, slapping new tariffs on eight countries, including the North African nations of Libya and Algeria. It was a telling contrast: Even as Trump claimed to be "strengthening ties with Africa", his administration was penalising African nations. The optics revealed the incoherence - or perhaps the honesty - of Trump's Africa policy, where partnership is conditional and often indistinguishable from punishment.

Trump opened the summit with a four-minute speech in which he claimed the five invited leaders were representing the entire African continent. Never mind that their countries barely register in US-Africa trade figures; what mattered was the gold, oil, and minerals buried beneath their soil. He thanked "these great leaders... all from very vibrant places with very valuable land, great minerals, great oil deposits, and wonderful people".

He then announced that the US was "shifting from AID to trade" because "this will be far more effective and sustainable and beneficial than anything else that we could be doing together."

At that moment, the illusion of diplomacy collapsed, and the true nature of the meeting was revealed. Trump shifted from statesman to showman, no longer merely hosting but asserting control. The summit quickly descended into a cringe-inducing display, where Africa was presented not as a continent of sovereign nations but as a rich expanse of resources, fronted by compliant leaders performing for the cameras. This was not a dialogue but a display of domination: A stage-managed production in which Trump scripted the scene and African heads of state were cast in subordinate roles.

Trump was in his element, orchestrating the event like a puppet master, directing each African guest to play his part and respond favourably. He "invited" (in effect, instructed) them to make "a few comments to the media" in what became a choreographed show of deference.

President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani of Mauritania led the way, both physically and symbolically, by praising Trump's "commitment" to Africa. The claim was as misleading as it was surreal, given Washington's

recent aid cuts, punitive tariffs, and tightened visa restrictions on African nations.

In one especially embarrassing moment, Ghazouani described Trump as the world's top peacemaker - crediting him, among other things, with stopping "the war between Iran and Israel". This praise came with no mention of the US's continued military and diplomatic support for Israel's war on Gaza, which the African Union has firmly

condemned. The silence amounted to complicity, a calculated erasure of

**President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani of Mauritania led the way, both physically and symbolically, by praising Trump's "commitment" to Africa. The claim was as misleading as it was surreal, given Washington's recent aid cuts, punitive tariffs, and tightened visa restrictions on African nations. In one especially embarrassing moment, Ghazouani described**

**Trump as the world's top peacemaker - crediting him, among other things, with stopping "the war between Iran and Israel". This praise came with no mention of the US's continued military and diplomatic support for Israel's war on Gaza, which the African Union has firmly condemned. The silence amounted to complicity, a calculated erasure of Palestinian suffering for the sake of American favour. Perhaps mindful of the tariffs looming over his own country, Ghazouani, who served as AU Chair in 2024, slipped into the role of a willing supplicant. He all but invited Trump to exploit Mauritania's rare minerals, praised him and declared him a peacemaker while ignoring the massacres of tens of thousands of innocents in Gaza made possible by the very weapons Trump provides. This tone would define the entire sit-down. One by one, the African leaders offered Trump glowing praise and access to their countries' natural resources - a disturbing reminder of how easily power can script compliance.**

**Senegal's President Bassirou Diomaye Faye even asked Trump to build**

**you educated? Where? In Liberia?"**

That Trump seemed unaware English is Liberia's official language, and has been since its founding in 1822 as a haven for freed American slaves, was perhaps less shocking than the colonial tone of his question. His astonishment that an African president could speak English well betrayed a deeply racist, imperial mindset.

It was not an isolated slip. At a White House peace ceremony on June 29 involving the DRC and Rwanda, Trump publicly commented on the appearance of Angolan journalist and White House correspondent Hariana Veras, telling her, "You are beautiful - and you are beautiful inside."

Whether or not Veras is

"beautiful" is entirely beside the point. Trump's behaviour was inappropriate and unprofessional, reducing a respected journalist to her looks in the middle of a diplomatic milestone. The sexualisation of Black women - treating them as vessels of white male desire rather than intellectual equals - was central to both the transatlantic slave trade and European colonisation. Trump's comment extended that legacy into the present.

Likewise, his surprise at Boakai's English fits a long imperial pattern. Africans who "master" the coloniser's language are often seen not as complex, multilingual intellectuals, but as subordinates who've absorbed the dominant culture. They are rewarded for proximity to whiteness, not for intellect or independence.

Trump's remarks revealed his belief that articulate and visually appealing Africans are an anomaly, a novelty deserving momentary admiration. By reducing both Boakai and Veras to aesthetic curiosities, he erased their agency, dismissed their achievements, and gratified his colonial ego.

More than anything, Trump's comments on Boakai reflected his deeper indifference to Africa. They stripped away any illusion that this summit was about genuine partnership.

Contrast this with the US-Africa Leaders Summit held by President Joe Biden in December 2022. That event welcomed more than 40 African heads of state, as well as the African Union, civil society, and private sector leaders. It prioritised peer-to-peer dialogue and the AU's Agenda 2063 - a far cry from Trump's choreographed spectacle.

How the Trump administration concluded that five men could represent the entire continent remains baffling, unless, of course, this wasn't about representation at all, but control. Trump didn't want engagement; he wanted performance. And sadly, his guests obliged.

In contrast to the tightly managed meeting Trump held with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on July 8, the lunch with African leaders resembled a chaotic, tone-deaf sideshow.

Faye was especially disappointing. He came to power on the back of an anti-imperialist platform, pledging to break with neocolonial politics and restore African dignity. Yet at the White House, he bent the knee to the most brazen imperialist of them all. Like the others, he failed to challenge Trump, to assert equality, or to defend the sovereignty he so publicly champions at home.

In a moment when African leaders had the chance to push back against a resurgent colonial mindset, they instead bowed - giving Trump space to revive a 16th-century fantasy of Western mastery.

For this, he offered a reward: He might not impose new tariffs on their countries, he said, "because they are friends of mine now".

Trump, the "master", triumphed.

## Netanyahu's inconsequential visit to Washington

Yossi Mekelberg

It might have been naive to believe that the meeting in Washington this week between America's President Donald Trump and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was going to lead to an announcement of a ceasefire agreement in Gaza between Israel and Hamas. After all, there have already been many false dawns.

But having observed the terrible humanitarian tragedy that has unfolded in the territory over the past 21 months, who can blame any decent human being for hoping and praying for this nightmare to finally come to an end?

It is for those who create the obstacles, or who are not using the full weight of their influence to stop this human suffering, to answer the question of what is preventing them from ending a war that no one is winning, and which is only causing immense hurt while harming the prospect of any future peace between the two peoples.

Netanyahu arrived in the US in a very different state of mind compared with his previous visits since the war started. He was much more confident. He is now convinced that Israel's show of force in Iran, with Tehran's proxies considerably weakened, and his success in pulling in the US to participate in an attack on Iran's nuclear installations, have considerably elevated his status in Washington.

Astonishingly, he also managed to drag Trump into an interfering role in the legal proceedings against him. The US president described Netanyahu's corruption trial a witch-hunt, which it most definitely is not, and even threatened to halt American aid to Israel if it was not brought to an immediate halt.

The Israeli prime minister's visit to Washington was part of his attempts to secure his political survival and revival. Trump seemed to play his part, and even took part in a piece of grotesque theater in which Netanyahu presented him with a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Trump, who previously pledged he would be "very firm" with Netanyahu about ending the war in Gaza, on this occasion, and for no apparent reason, completely refrained from putting any pressure at all on the Israeli leader.

While the immediate hopes for a ceasefire agreement were dashed, Israeli and Hamas negotiating teams were still engaged in proximity talks in Doha in an effort to resolve their differences, and Trump expressed cautious optimism when he declared that the negotiations to end the war in Gaza had been "going along very well."

Israeli sources told journalists that 90 percent of outstanding issues have been resolved but the negotiations require more time. While the ability to reach an agreement on most issues is always a positive development, it ultimately means very little because in negotiations of this nature nothing is agreed until everything is agreed - and what remains unsettled includes those issues that are crucial to both sides, including an

Israeli agreement to end the war, whether Israel will maintain a presence in the Gaza Strip, and whether the leadership of Hamas will be exiled.

These sticking points will determine whether or not a ceasefire deal can be reached. Meanwhile, time is running out for the people of Gaza, and very quickly.

What should obviously worry Gazans, and also those who believe in human rights and the rule of law, is that they have suffered immensely, even before the war began and immeasurably since.

They have for months also been subjected to speculation about their possible removal from Gaza altogether. Other reports warn of the prospect of hundreds of thousands of them being pushed into the south of the territory.

The very fact that the

"option" of a so-called "voluntary migration" was even discussed with Netanyahu and his delegation in Washington is disturbing. The euphemisms of a "humanitarian city" and "voluntary migration" serve to sedate and deceive decent people around the world, or ease their consciences, when what is actually being suggested are most probably acts tantamount to horrendous war crimes on a huge scale.

When Netanyahu says in Washington, "If people want to stay, they can stay, but if they want to leave, they should be able to leave," he is being disingenuous. Nearly two years of war have rendered Gaza almost uninhabitable, and instead of suggesting it be rebuilt, Israel's prime minister, with the support of the US, is saying that its residents might be better off going somewhere else.

One cannot imagine a lower level of shamelessness to which this Israeli government might sink. When the war began this displacement was not one of Israel's objectives; it emerged as Israeli forces occupied most of the Gaza Strip, and then the extreme right wing in the country received a boost from Trump's misguided and tactless idea about rebuilding the territory as a "Gaza Riviera" - but not for the Palestinians.

The timing of this Trump-Netanyahu summit, following the 12-day war against Iran last month, gave it a different flavor than previous meetings, as both leaders see themselves, not without reason, as victorious.

The true extent of the damage to Iran's nuclear program is still unknown but one thing is not in question: Israel's initial military success, which gave its air force total freedom to operate in Iran, created the opportunity for Netanyahu to tempt Trump into getting involved to help, allegedly, finish the job using the kind of weaponry only the US possesses.

On the one hand there is a sense in Washington that Netanyahu owes the American president for this assistance and should pay him back by showing more flexibility on the Palestinian issue.

However, although Trump is not the type of person who ever believes he owes anyone anything, what Israel did in Iran actually gave him the chance to demonstrate determination and conviction as the US commander-in-chief and, within 24 hours, also to assert his authority by dictating to Israel that the war was over, to actually conclude it, and to suggest that decisions about the future of Iran's nuclear program should now move to the diplomatic sphere - thus becoming a peacemaker.

Nevertheless, Trump has in mind a larger agenda: the expansion of the Abraham Accords to other countries within the region and beyond. But by now there is a recognition within his administration that this is not feasible without progress, firstly toward the end of war in Gaza and the reconstruction of the territory, and then to establish a genuine peace process between the Israelis and Palestinians that can lead to a two-state solution. Netanyahu and his government remain a major obstacle to this, albeit not the only one. The question now is what Trump will do.

What is quickly becoming clear is that from Netanyahu's perspective the visit to Washington was part of the unofficial launch of his reelection campaign. The cracks in his coalition are growing but the war with Iran has enhanced his position in opinion polls. His trip to Washington reflected his determination to remain in power, and possibly to avoid justice by derailing his corruption trial.

Trump and Netanyahu are not exactly soulmates but they do understand how they can serve each other's interests and personal ambitions. Sadly this will not necessarily help bring an end to the war in Gaza or restore regional stability.



# Gaza reveals the brutal new ethos of global geopolitics

Hafed Al-Ghwel

The systematic destruction of Gaza transcends diplomatic failure and exposes a fundamental realignment in international ethical and political frameworks. This realignment is characterized by deliberate, structured complicity from dominant global powers, facilitating military operations independently verified by UN bodies, human rights monitors, and jurists as satisfying the legal criteria for genocide. Such complicity operates through four measurable channels: continuous arms transfers exceeding \$18 billion documented since October 2023, recurrent diplomatic obstruction via five Security Council vetoes blocking ceasefire resolutions, methodical disinformation campaigns targeting mortality data, and the wholesale deprivation of humanitarian assistance.

Officially confirmed direct fatalities now exceed 56,000, with civilians comprising over 70 percent of this figure. Yet this represents only the immediate kinetic impact. Rigorous analyses — validated by studies of siege warfare in Mosul (2016-2017) and Fallujah (2004) — demonstrate that indirect deaths from engineered famine, hospital collapses, and waterborne diseases consistently quadruple direct casualties.

Applied to Gaza's density (5,791 persons per sq. km) and a 92 percent acute food insecurity rate, the adjusted mortality projection easily surpasses 250,000. It is the obliteration of some 10 percent of Gaza's pre-conflict population within 19 months, which exceeds the cumulative death tolls of Bosnia (1992-1995) and surpasses the pace of Rwanda's 1994 genocide.

What is more, the denial infrastructure operates with clinical precision, beginning with systematic data suppression that dismisses Gaza Health Ministry figures — historically corroborated by the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Human Rights Watch — despite admissions of lacking alternative methodologies. The denial even exten-

nds to linguistic obfuscation, where over 14,000 child deaths are classified as "collateral damage" despite targeting protocols permitting 100:1 civilian-to-combatant ratios and documented deployment of 2,000-pound bombs on designated safe zones.

Simultaneously, physical erasure manifests through the destruction of 87 percent of Gaza's cemeteries and enforced mass anonymous interments, denying both life and dignity after death through the obliteration of burial rites. Together, these mechanisms transmute tacit consent into active participation in normalizing atrocities.

Furthermore, the sys-

***The EU's migration containment expenditures demonstrate similar disparity: \$4.6 billion paid to Türkiye since 2016, \$1.9 billion to Libya's coast guard since 2017, and \$102 million to Mauritania in 2025 alone — transactions documented by the EU's own auditors as directly reinforcing regimes with UN-verified torture rates exceeding 40 percent among detained migrants. These financial flows correlate with a 300 percent increase in Mediterranean migrant fatalities since 2020, according to IOM missing migrants data.***

tematic inversion of ethical language serves as both instrument and symptom of collective moral abdication. Military operations documented to violate international humanitarian law, including the destruction of 72 hospitals and 85 percent of educational facilities per the UN's Satellite Center analysis, persistently receive the paradoxical designation of "the world's most moral army."

Such linguistic corruption extends to the reframing of ceasefire demands to prevent further child casualties (12,500-plus UN-verified deaths) as antisemitic acts rather than humanitarian imperatives. Simultaneously, documented state rhetoric explicitly denying a people's existence and invoking territorial expansion from "river to sea" — a phrase historically associated with settler-colonial projects — faces negligible diplomatic consequence, receiving merely three UN General Assembly condemnations versus 47 for comparable territorial claims

elsewhere since 2020.

Historical guilt over genocide is weaponized to legitimize current atrocities, despite demographic reality: 82 percent of contemporary Gaza's population descends from refugees displaced before 1948, bearing no conceivable responsibility for European crimes. It generates a grotesque paradox wherein institutions from historically perpetrator nations now systematically accuse genocide victims' descendants of bigotry — a tactic deployed in 68 percent of university protests suppressed according to American Civil Liberties Union documentation. The perversion culminates in

the silencing of Shoah

descendants themselves, with Jewish-led ceasefire advocacy groups such as IfNotNow facing state surveillance at five times the rate of non-Jewish organizations. The ensuing linguistic ecosystem transforms legal prohibitions into justificatory tools: Where international law prohibits collective punishment, it is reframed as "self-defense"; where the Genocide Convention criminalizes starvation, it becomes "sanction enforcement." It creates a self-replicating corrosion that transcends semantics, operating as the ideological infrastructure enabling the annihilation of Gaza.

Overall, the operational pattern emerging from Gaza reveals more than isolated policy failures; it constitutes a blueprint for systemic value erosion overtaking global geopolitics. When states providing 74 percent of Israel's arms imports between October 2023 and July 2025 simul-

taneously sanction International Criminal Court prosecutors investigating potential war crimes, they actively dismantle the judicial mechanisms created to uphold their proclaimed "rules-based order."

This material contradiction manifests in quantifiable terms: While the US allocated \$61.4 billion in emergency aid to Ukraine within 60 days of invasion, the UN's \$2.7 billion humanitarian appeal for Gaza remained 67 percent underfunded after eight months of bombardment that destroyed 62 percent of housing units and 84 percent of health facilities.

Moreover, the selective

application of principles becomes statistically unambiguous when examining parallel crises. Sudan's conflict displaced 8.6 million civilians by mid-2025 — the largest internal displacement crisis recorded by UNHCR — while pushing 15.3 million into emergency hunger levels, according to IPC assessments. Yet donor conferences secured barely 23 percent of required funding, contrasting sharply with the \$186 billion mobilized for Ukraine.

The EU's migration containment expenditures demonstrate similar disparity: \$4.6 billion paid to Türkiye since 2016, \$1.9 billion to Libya's coast guard since 2017, and \$102 million to Mauritania in 2025 alone — transactions documented by the EU's own auditors as directly reinforcing regimes with UN-verified torture rates exceeding 40 percent among detained migrants. These financial flows correlate with a 300 percent increase in Mediterranean

migrant fatalities since 2020, according to IOM missing migrants data.

Inevitably, Gaza has become a horrifying consequence of raw power consistently redefining ethical boundaries. Weapons shipments to conflicts violating international humanitarian law quadrupled among major exporters between 2023-2025, while referrals to the ICC decreased by 38 percent during the same period. When judicial processes face obstruction rates exceeding 90 percent for cases involving powerful states, as indicated by the ICJ's pending docket, the operational precedent becomes clear. Rules apply precisely inversely to geopolitical influence, with consequences calculated in millions of avoidable casualties.

The international legal architecture, painstakingly built post-1945, faces unprecedented disrepute. The unchecked ability of powerful states to flout provisional measures from the ICJ regarding genocide risk, and to actively punish the ICC for pursuing arrest warrants, signals a dangerous erosion of much-needed accountability. When core instruments such as the Genocide Convention are rendered unenforceable against specific allies through political obstruction and threats, the entire framework loses legitimacy in the eyes of the Global South.

To conclude, the clear hypocrisy is fueling a deepening rift, irrevocably damaging Western claims to moral leadership. The consequence is a world where "might makes right" is the operational doctrine, humanitarian law is negotiable based on political alignment, and the value of human life is explicitly quantified by passport and geopolitical utility.

Gaza stands as the most potent symbol of this new, brutal ethos: a live demonstration of impunity and the effective nullification of universal norms when applied to the disfavored. The lasting repercussions is the entrenchment of a global system where abdication of morality is normalized, and raw power is the sole remaining arbiter.

# Russian-NK cooperation at a critical juncture

Luke Coffey

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is currently visiting Pyongyang for high-level talks with North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un. The relationship between the countries has grown significantly in recent years, underscored by a defense alliance treaty signed last year. Article 4 of that treaty commits both countries to supporting one another in the event of foreign invasion.

That clause has already been tested. After Ukrainian forces entered Russia's Kursk Oblast last September, North Korea answered Moscow's call for help by deploying thousands of troops to the region.

Even before this treaty, though, Russia and North Korea shared a long history of defense and economic ties dating back to the Cold War and Soviet times.

North Korea has supported Russia's war against Ukraine in two primary ways: manpower and materiel. In terms of manpower, more than 10,000 North Korean troops were sent to Kursk to help retake territory seized by Ukrainian forces in late 2024.

This intervention came at a steep cost. Open-source intelligence estimates suggest about 4,000 North Korean soldiers were killed during the operation, approximately the size of a full brigade. These troops were drawn from North Korea's special forces and led by some of Kim's most trusted generals.

Their rules of engagement included a brutal provision: they were ordered to kill themselves rather than be taken prisoner. This is why social media feeds have been filled with images and videos of deceased North Korean soldiers, while only a handful have been captured alive.

According to senior Ukrainian officials, the North Korean forces performed poorly at first but quickly adapted. After suffering early losses, they learned fast on the battlefield, particularly in countering modern threats such as drone attacks. By early this year, the assessment by Ukrainian troops was that many North Korean soldiers were more disciplined and better trained than their Russian counterparts.

So far, however, North Korean soldiers have operated only inside Russian territory. They have not yet been involved in offensive operations on Ukrainian soil.

North Korea's materiel support to Russia has also been extensive. From the early stages of the war, ballistic missiles manufactured in North Korea have been used by Russian forces to strike Ukrainian cities. Since the deployment of North Korean troops, additional artillery and multi-launch rocket systems from the country have been observed in use alongside Russian forces.

But the most critical contribution has come in the form of artillery shells and manufacturing capabilities. In a war defined by the use of mass artillery, North Korea has helped fill a massive shortfall in supplies, with Russia reportedly firing tens of thousands of shells each week.

North Korea's willingness to expend its stockpiles, and to manufacture new materiel for Russia, is not without risk. Pyongyang must always keep one eye on the Korean Peninsula, especially its adversary to the south. Yet

Kim appears willing to accept this gamble in exchange for key benefits from Moscow.

The most obvious question is therefore what is North Korea getting in return? Firstly, it is believed to be receiving advanced technology from Russia, especially in the form of strategic weapons. Open-source reporting indicates that Moscow has shared submarine-launched ballistic missile technology with Pyongyang, something that is of major importance to North Korea's long-term nuclear-deterrence strategy.

Secondly, North Korea has reportedly received drone technology, including the designs and know-how for loitering munitions, such as the Russian Lancet and the Iranian-origin Shahed drone platform, which Moscow now pro-

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duces under license. These drones have already changed battlefield dynamics in Ukraine and could similarly enhance North Korea's future capabilities.

But beyond the materiel and technological gains, North Korea is also benefiting from the geopolitical implications of helping Russia. For Kim, the opportunity for his soldiers to gain real-world combat experience is, despite the high casualty rate, a rare opportunity. In a society such as North Korea's, in which public dissent is suppressed and military sacrifice is glorified, this is politically sustainable.

Furthermore, Pyongyang's involvement in the conflict complicates the strategic picture for Washington. The US supports Ukraine and also maintains a strong military presence on the Korean Peninsula to deter North Korean aggression. Any steps Kim can take to increase the pressure on the US, either in Europe or Asia, serve his interests.

Looking ahead, the future of Russian-North Korean cooperation will likely be high on Lavrov's agenda during his visit. Reports suggest that Pyongyang might be preparing to send as many as 30,000 additional troops to assist Moscow. This time, they might not be confined to defensive operations within Russian territory. If North Korean forces begin to participate in offensive operations inside Ukraine, it would mark a dangerous escalation.

Even if the forces stop short of crossing into Ukraine, new deployments are expected. North Korea might send engineering troops with reconstruction expertise to help Russia rebuild damaged infrastructure in Kursk Oblast, for example. These forces could also assist in fortifying Russia's border with

Ukraine, helping to build new defensive lines. One thing is clear: The Russian-North Korean relationship is likely to deepen further. North Korea's growing involvement in support of Russia's war in Ukraine is a stark reminder that global conflicts are increasingly interconnected. The security of Eastern Europe cannot be separated from the security dynamics of East Asia. This alignment between Moscow and Pyongyang presents a challenge not only for Ukraine, but for the broader international community. US President Donald Trump, who has made it a priority to pursue a negotiated settlement to the war, cannot ignore the role that North Korea is now playing. Any serious diplomatic strategy must factor in not only Russia's behavior but also its external enablers. The outcome of Lavrov's trip will determine how deeply both sides want to take their current relationship.

# Gaza is running out of blood

Donya Abu Sitta

I live near Nasser Hospital in the west of Khan Younis city. Almost every day, I hear desperate calls for blood donations made on loudspeakers out of the hospital. It has been like that for more than a year.

The hospital, like other barely functioning health facilities in Gaza, has been regularly overwhelmed with victims of continuing Israeli air attacks. Since the end of May, it has also received many victims shot by Israeli soldiers at aid distribution sites.

I had donated blood before, and I felt it was my duty to do it again. So one morning last month, I headed to Nasser Hospital.

While the blood was being drawn from my arm, I felt severe dizziness, and I thought I was going to faint. My friend, Nurse Hanan, who was one of the workers in the blood donation campaign, rushed to me and raised my legs to increase the blood flow to my brain until I felt better. She went to test my blood, and after 10 minutes returned to tell me that I was suffering from severe anaemia and malnutrition. My blood did not contain

the minimum nutrients necessary for donation.

Hanan told me that my case was not an exception. She explained that most of the people who visited the hospital to donate blood suffer from anaemia and malnutrition as a result of the ongoing Israeli blockade and the absence of nutritious food, such as meat, milk, eggs and fruits. Two-thirds of the blood units donated at the hospital have extremely low haemoglobin and iron levels, which makes them unusable for blood transfusions.

In early June, Dr Sofia Za'arab, director of the Laboratory and Blood Bank, told the media that the severe shortage of donated blood units has reached "critical" levels, threatening the lives of patients, many of whom require urgent blood transfusions. The whole of Gaza needs 400 units daily.

"Despite contacting the Ministry of Health in the West Bank to transfer blood units, the occupation authorities prevented their entry [into Gaza]," Dr Za'arab said.

After the failed blood

donation, I returned home crushed.

I knew the famine was affecting me. I have lost a lot of weight. I suffer from constant fatigue, chronic joint pain, headaches, and dizziness. Even when I write my journalistic articles or study, I need to take short breaks.

But the revelation of how bad my health condition is really struck me.

For months now, my family and I have been eating only pasta and rice, due to the astronomical cost of flour. We eat one meal a day, and sometimes even half a meal to give more food to my younger siblings. I worry about them being malnourished. They have also lost a lot of weight and are constantly asking for food.

We have not seen meat, eggs, or dairy products since Israel imposed the full blockade on March 2, and, even before that, we rarely did.

The Gaza health authorities have said at least 66 children have died from starvation since the start of the Israeli genocidal war. According to UNICEF,

more than 5,000 children were admitted to health facilities across the Strip for treatment of acute malnutrition in May, alone.

Even if some of these children are miraculously saved, they will not have the opportunity to grow up healthy, to develop their full potential, and enjoy stable, secure lives.

But beyond the anxiety I felt about the toll starvation has taken on my body and on bodies of my family members, I also felt pain because I had failed to help the wounded.

I wanted to help those who are suffering from war injuries and fighting for their lives in the hospital because I am a human being.

After all, the urge to help another person is one of the most human instincts we have. Solidarity is what defines our humanity.

When you want to save a life but are prevented from doing it, it means a whole new horizon of despair has opened. When you want to help with whatever little you have — in this case, part of yourself — but are denied, this leaves a deep scar on

# Entente cordiale: Macron's visit helps reset UK-France relations

Andrew Hammond

French-UK relations have often been in the political and economic "deep freeze" since Brexit. Yet the two G7 and G20 nations have reemerged in recent years as regional leaders, including building Europe's relationship with US President Donald Trump's administration.

The warmer Franco-UK ties were showcased again this week with President Emmanuel Macron making his first UK state visit, to London and Windsor Castle. The last such state visit by a French president to the UK was by Nicolas Sarkozy almost two decades ago in 2008.

While Starmer enjoys a good relationship with Macron, the warming of UK ties with France actually began under his predecessor as prime minister, Rishi Sunak, after the latter agreed to a deal on the so-

called Northern Ireland protocol between London and Brussels. This removed a huge post-Brexit barrier in UK relations with the 27 EU member states.

Moreover, both Macron and Sunak assumed their nation's highest public office at an early age. Previously, both had served as finance ministers having previously earned their fortunes in the financial services industry.

The warming of the so-called UK-French entente cordiale has continued under Starmer, and with King Charles and his mother, the late Queen Elizabeth, both playing a key role in bilateral relations in recent times, too. Charles made a state visit to France in 2023, and Macron spoke of the late queen's affection for France when he attended her funeral.

Queen Elizabeth made many trips to France during her reign. Her first was in 1957, four years after her coronation; her last state visit was in June 2014, when she visited Paris and Normandy. This week, Macron laid flowers at her tomb in Windsor.

Specific issues on the agenda this week included migration, and shared foreign policy and security goals, such as Ukraine and the Trump administration's trade tariffs. There is a potential upside in many of these issues from a stronger UK-France relationship.

Take the example of security whereby London and Paris are nuclear states with UN Security Council permanent membership, unlike other European partners. The 2010 Lancaster House agreement opened a window to jointly update nuclear arsenals which is,

as yet unfulfilled, and there is potential for broader military coordination.

Positive as this all is, however, bilateral ties continue to have some challenges in the post-Brexit era. During those long UK-EU divorce negotiations, France took one of the hardest lines on the UK's exit from the Brussels-based club.

This reflects the complex, contradictory relationship that Paris has long had with London in the context of EU affairs. The ardently pro-Brussels Macron, who believes Brexit to be an act of political vandalism to the Continent, was frequently accused by UK ministers of holding up progress in exit negotiations after the UK's 2016 referendum.

Macron's Brexit posi-

tioning, including his robust stance on precluding future UK access to the single market, was reinforced by broader French plans to pitch Paris as a competing financial center to London which began in earnest under the presidency of Francois Hollande. This saw former Finance Minister Michel Sapin and Hollande's Brexit Special Envoy Christian Noyer, former Bank of France governor, openly promoting Paris with key financial firms.

This has continued under Macron as he hailed the decision to relocate the European Banking Agency to Paris from London as "recognition of France's attractiveness and European commitment." French officials hope that the EBA's relocation will help bring still more UK

banking jobs to the French capital.

What France's position on Brexit underlines is how each EU state has distinctive political, economic, and social interests that have informed their stance on the UK's exit. Thus, while the EU-27 were in general remarkably unified in their negotiations with London, the positions of the individual countries varied according to factors such as trade and wider economic ties and patterns of migration with the UK, domestic election pressures, and levels of Eurosceptic support within their populations.

The divergent and complex positions of EU states thus range from the UK's fellow non-eurozone member Sweden, whose political and economic interests are broadly aligned with UK positions, to countries that

have more complicated positions, including France. While the position of Paris has now moderated, especially in the wake of the Northern Ireland protocol deal, the two nations remain misaligned in some key areas, including fishing rights.

Take another example of migration where Sunak and Macron struck an initial agreement to stop people illegally crossing the English Channel. That deal stepped up UK payments to France to increase patrols on its beaches and led to closer police collaboration.

However, the numbers making the crossing did not decline. This led Sunak to announce a law to try to make asylum claims inadmissible from those who travel to the UK in small boats.

Today, Starmer is under growing pressure to deliver on this agenda, too, includ-

ing from the new Reform UK party led by top Brexiteer Nigel Farage. This week, Starmer and Macron agreed on a new "one in, one out" return scheme under which the UK would deport to France undocumented people arriving in small boats in return for accepting an equal number of legitimate asylum-seekers with UK family connections. Only time will tell how successful this will be in halting illegal migrants making so-called small boat crossings of the English Channel.

Taken together, this underlines that relations are positive between Starmer and Macron. However, the distinctive post-Brexit interests of Paris and London will continue to drive bilateral tensions from time to time, and this will remain a barrier to a full reset of relations.





# Experts urge strategic shift to overcome trust deficit

## F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Addressing the persistent trust deficit between Pakistan and Afghanistan is essential to strengthening the core of their bilateral relationship and setting it on a stable and sustainable path. Confidence-building measures that incorporate long-term, people-centric engagement and a coherent, integrated framework are crucial for both nations and the stability of the region. In this context, a strategic shift toward a '4P' approach - prioritization, partnership, participation, and persistence - is a viable path forward.

This was discussed by former ambassadors, scholars, and researchers during

a session on "Evolving Political Dynamics of Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations" at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The session featured insights from Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice-chairman IPS, Amina Khan, director CAMEA, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, Ambassador (r) Ayaz Wazir, Brig (r) Said Nazir, defense analyst, ?Ambassador (r) Nasrullah Khan, Brig (r) Khurshid Khan, IPS associate, Tahir Khan, senior journalist, Dr Lutfur Rehman, author and researcher, Brig (r) Tughrul Yamin, IPS associate, Dr Azhar Ahmad, IPS associate, Amanullah Khan, former member, RCCI,

Sheharyar Khan, executive director, National Dialogue Forum, and Dr Sadia Sulaiman, assistant professor Quaid-i-Azam University.

Speakers emphasized that foundational tensions continue to strain bilateral ties. While the Taliban's return to power in 2021 initially sparked hope for a more stable western border, this expectation was dampened by a surge in cross-border attacks by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Speakers noted that although the Taliban claim to have limited control over TTP, ground realities suggest otherwise.

The evolving governance structure in Afghanistan reflects a mix of authoritarianism and

pragmatism, with the Taliban gaining de facto internal and external recognition despite lacking formal international legitimacy. However, their compartmentalized foreign policy, which engages selectively based on national interests, has limited meaningful regional cooperation and complicates diplomacy. Speakers emphasized the need for a reset in bilateral relations, grounded in political will and pragmatic diplomacy. This includes addressing each other's core concerns, security for Pakistan and trade for Afghanistan, and pursuing economic interdependence, refugee management, and regional dialogue through trilateral forums.

The relationship, they

argued, has failed to evolve due to the dominance of the security lens and the absence of a genuine bilateral essence. To address this, a '4P' approach was recommended: aligning 'priorities', fostering 'partnerships', enabling 'participation' of both peoples, and ensuring 'persistence' in engagement. It is vital to find common ground and invest in domains such as shared human capital. People-to-people contact, especially involving the global presence of Afghan alumni from Pakistani institutions, was highlighted as a practical tool to counter propaganda and build goodwill.

Media narratives and a coherent national story also play a critical role in shap-

ing perceptions. In response, speakers called for independent media engagement, stronger public diplomacy, and a proactive role by Pakistani missions in Afghanistan to promote the country's contributions to various sectors of Afghanistan.

Speakers concluded that Pakistan and Afghanistan must reorient their relationship around shared interests and mutual respect. A regional, rather than rigidly systematic, approach was considered more effective for achieving sustainable peace and cooperation.

Concluding the session, Khalid Rahman emphasized that local, regional, and global dynamics must be taken into account when addressing the challenges in



Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. He stressed the development of an indigenous narrative rather than relying on a Western lens to interpret the Pakistan-Afghanistan enigma. Rahman underscored the need for a medium- to long-term strategy to build trust with Afghans, utilizing all available tools and

remaining vigilant for opportunities.

He also stressed confidence-building measures that highlight the cultural and social commonalities between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Such efforts, he argued, would foster a more meaningful engagement between both countries.

## Ahsan chairs meeting to review implementation of action plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday chaired a high-level meeting to review the implementation and finalization of the sectoral action plan based on the Chinese Experts' Report.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Planning Awais Manzoor Sumra, Vice Chancellor PIDE, Chief Economist, Project Director CPEC Secretariat and senior officials from various ministries and divisions, said a press release.

The report shared by the Chinese Embassy was prepared by Chinese Working Teams following their visit to Pakistan to assess potential areas of enhanced economic cooperation.

The report outlined key observations and recommendations in different sectors such as connectivity, the development of a national agricultural plan, Gwadar Port linkages, IT collaboration, and other strategic areas. The ministries were requested to review the report and provide feedback.

In line with the directions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, 10 federal focal groups were constituted to develop sector-specific action plans in response to the technical assessments presented by the Chinese expert teams.

Since then, the Ministry

of Planning under the chairmanship of Minister Ahsan Iqbal, has held multiple rounds of meetings to shape the final action plan and has consistently encouraged the ministries to align their inputs with Chinese recommendations and outline a clear path forward. Today during the meeting, all relevant ministries discussed the sectoral suggestions made by the Chinese teams and presented updates on their respective projects.

Minister Ahsan Iqbal directed that each ministry must prepare a comprehensive response based on the Chinese Experts' Report so that the CPEC Secretariat

can compile and submit a unified, detailed reply to the Chinese side.

He also directed that China should be formally informed about the progress made by Pakistan on the recommendations, and efforts should be made to fully capitalize on the areas and projects for which China has already expressed willingness to cooperate. The meeting marks a significant step towards deepening Pakistan-China economic cooperation and ensuring that both sides move forward with a shared understanding and commitment to mutual development goals.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal chairing a high-level meeting to review implementation and finalization of sectoral action plan based on Chinese Experts' Report.

## PIAF wants govt to scrap harsh tax laws

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) on Sunday strongly opposed the recently introduced taxation measures that it says are stifling business activity and undermining trust in the formal economy. In a joint statement, PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol, Senior Vice Chairman Nasrullah Mughal, and Vice Chairman Tahir Manzoor Chaudhary demanded the immediate reversal of controversial laws empowering the tax authorities to arrest taxpayers on allegations of fraud and disallowing business expenses based on payment modes or supplier registration status.

The PIAF leadership criticized the introduction of laws that enable the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to arrest individuals without conviction and treat legitimate business transactions in cash as suspicious. According to the newly inserted Sections 21Q and 21S of the Income Tax Ordinance, any transaction above Rs200,000 made in cash will result in the disallowance of 50 percent of claimed expenses, effectively increasing taxable income. Similarly, a 10 percent disallowance has been imposed on purchases from suppliers who do not possess a National Tax Number (NTN), even if those suppliers are part of informal supply chains vital to small and medium enterprises.

Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol noted that these measures have triggered unrest across the country's business landscape, where traders and manufacturers are already struggling with high

input costs, inflation, and regulatory burdens. He said that while PIAF has always advocated for broadening the tax net and improving documentation, such punitive steps will backfire by driving more businesses toward informality and non-compliance. Saigol argued that instead of building a relationship of trust with the business community, the government seems to be criminalizing entrepreneurship by giving unchecked powers to tax officials.

Senior Vice Chairman Nasrullah Mughal said that the business sector had already shown patience despite shrinking margins and uncertain market conditions, but the recent amendments were seen as the last straw. He warned that these policies are creating a climate of fear rather than fostering transparency or reform. Mughal urged the government to consult stakeholders before rolling out such measures and demanded the repeal of arrest powers granted to tax officers, the withdrawal of the cash expenditure disallowance clause, and the suspension of deputation of FBR staff in industrial units.

He warned that if these demands are not met, PIAF members may not be able to hold back from joining the wider agitation campaign being considered by affected businesses nationwide.

Vice Chairman Tahir Manzoor Chaudhary emphasized that while PIAF supports digitalization and formalization of the economy, it cannot support abrupt enforcement without practical infrastructure, capacity-building, or support for smaller enterprises. He said many

businesses operate in cash not out of choice but due to supply chain realities and low digital penetration in certain markets. Penalizing them without offering viable alternatives amounts to punishing survival strategies. Chaudhary said the implementation of e-invoicing without phased adaptation is creating compliance chaos and disrupting regular operations.

The PIAF leadership also expressed concern over the broader economic environment, saying that business confidence is rapidly eroding. Investors are wary of bringing capital into a system where the rules change overnight and businesses are treated as suspects. The government, they said, must realize that no amount of taxation can compensate for the loss of trust. Instead of relying on coercion, it should pursue policy reforms through meaningful engagement and practical incentives.

They also stressed that the arrest provisions violate the principles of justice and due process, as the power to detain someone for alleged tax fraud should only rest with the courts, not enforcement officers.

They emphasized that tax evasion must be dealt with, but within a legal and transparent framework—not through intimidation or harassment.

PIAF concluded that its doors remain open for dialogue and policy cooperation, but it expects the government to take immediate corrective action before the situation escalates further. If these laws are not suspended promptly, the organization fears irreversible damage to industrial activity, employment, and economic stability.

## PFC CEO seeks stronger Pak-UK trade ties

LAHORE (APP): Chairman Pak-UK Joint Business Council and CEO Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Mian Kashif Ashfaq has said that expanding trade ties with the United Kingdom could provide Pakistan and its industries with a valuable alternative market to achieve sustainable socio-economic development, qualitative industrialization, and export growth.

He emphasized that UK-based investors of Pakistani origin could play a crucial role in this process.

Talking to a delegation of UK-based Pakistani businessmen and investors led by Pak-British Friendship Council (North West Chapter, UK) President Muhammad Arbab Khan, here on Sunday, he noted that bilateral trade during FY24 stood at \$2,014,768 in exports and \$781,996 in imports.

He said enhancing cooperation across diverse sectors could bring mutual benefits to both nations. He proposed a multifaceted approach to deepen bilateral trade, including the establishment of reciprocal trade houses, Preferential Trade Agreements (PTA) or Free Trade Agreements (FTA), regular exchange of business delegations, country-specific expos and product festivals, information sharing, and the formation of a Pak-UK Industries Corridor of Knowledge.

Mian Kashif also praised the commitment of British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott, to strengthening strategic partnerships in vital sectors such as finance, healthcare, education, engineering, and energy.

He called for a more coordinated and consultative approach involving policymakers, investors, economic strategists, and trade experts to reinforce Pakistan-UK economic ties. He also stressed the vital role of Pakistan's trade and commercial attachés posted in the UK and European Union, urging them to actively promote Pakistani products and investment opportunities.

He concluded by encouraging Pakistani-origin politicians and decision-makers in

the UK to contribute positively toward fostering stronger bilateral trade relations.

## APBF urges govt to consult businessmen

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) President Syed Maaz Mahmood emphasized that real stakeholders—particularly businessmen—must be taken into confidence before laws are formulated, as their role is central to the economy and policy success. He stressed that the government must engage directly with the business community to seek feedback and foster ownership of economic reforms. "We have observed that in the absence of proper stakeholder consultation, laws are often misused by officials of government departments for their own vested interests," he warned.

Syed Maaz Mahmood, in a press release issued here today, called for safeguards to prevent such exploitation and underscored the need for transparency, dialogue, and trust-building to ensure smooth implementation of tax policies.

He took note of the federal government's recently introduced tax-related policy decisions aimed at documenting the economy, broadening the tax base, and encouraging digital transactions.

While expressing general support for the objectives behind these reforms, APBF leadership has urged the authorities to ensure that the rollout of new measures is handled with clarity, fairness, and coordination to prevent disruption for businesses—particularly small and medium enterprises.

Syed Maaz Mahmood appreciated the government's resolve to build a transparent tax culture and limit undocumented financial activity. He noted that global best practices encourage traceable, non-cash transactions, and Pakistan's journey toward such a model is both timely and essential.

However, he pointed out that the private sector's cooperation depends on the government's ability to strike a balance between enforcement and facilitation.

The All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) Chairman Ibrahim Qureshi echoed the sentiment, stating that Pakistan's economy is at a pivotal juncture where structural improvements in tax compliance can yield long-term benefits.

He added that while deterrents for fraudulent behavior are justified, they must be accompanied by safeguards to ensure genuine businesses are not unnecessarily penalized or subjected to procedural bottlenecks.

The APBF leadership offered friendly advice to policymakers, suggesting that effective communication and stakeholder engagement would enhance the success of recent fiscal amendments.

In particular, there is a need for clear guidance around the treatment of cash-based transactions and the recently enacted clauses that disallow a portion of expenditures in cases where payments exceed Rs200,000 without using banking channels.

The forum also advised a gradual adjustment period for the implementation of these clauses so that businesses can align their accounting and procurement practices with the new requirements.

On the issue of granting arrest powers to the tax authority in cases of suspected fraud, the forum emphasized the importance of judicial oversight and institutional checks. Rather than criticizing the initiative, the All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) stressed that such provisions must be exercised with restraint and legal transparency to avoid misuse or fear among compliant taxpayers.

President Maaz Mahmood said that most responsible businesses are ready to adapt, but they require time, technological support, and a clear understanding of the operational changes involved.

The forum assured the government of its willingness to collaborate in public outreach efforts, policy feedback loops, and awareness campaigns designed to equip the business community with the tools needed for smooth compliance.

While the All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) expressed satisfaction that the government is taking strong action to curb tax evasion and undocumented trade, it urged that the voice of legitimate businesses be heard and addressed during the implementation phase. Reforms are more effective, the forum noted, when they are co-owned by the stakeholders who are subject to them.

## BMP warns of severe backlash as FBR refuses to roll back controversial law

### F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Mounting anger is sweeping through Pakistan's industrial and trade sectors as the Businessmen Panel (BMP) of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) sharply criticized the Federal Board of Revenue's refusal to withdraw controversial tax measures, particularly the arrest powers granted under new income tax laws.

In a forceful statement on Sunday, BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar warned that the entire business community, backed by all major chambers and associations, is gearing up for a nationwide agitation if the government fails to reverse the "anti-business" steps and continued enforcement

of e-invoicing and harsh cash transaction penalties.

He said that the authorities have chosen a confrontational path at a time when the economy is still recovering from years of instability, high inflation, currency depreciation, and shrinking purchasing power. According to him, empowering the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to arrest taxpayers on mere allegations of fraud, without due judicial process, violates the fundamental principles of justice and commercial trust.

Mian Anjum warned that if these draconian powers are not repealed, it will become nearly impossible for the business community to cooperate with the tax administration.

The use of coercive instruments to force compliance will only lead to

distrust, fear, and ultimately the collapse of whatever formal economic activity remains.

He said the entire industry, including textile, retail, manufacturing, services, and even the export sector, is disturbed by the growing interference of tax authorities in day-to-day operations, particularly the mandatory deployment of FBR staff in factories, the compulsion of e-invoicing, and restrictions on cash dealings.

He emphasized that businessmen across the country are not against documentation or reform, but such changes must be introduced through consultation, confidence-building, and reasonable timelines. Forcing compliance through fear will not only hurt genuine tax filers but will also discourage new

entrants into the tax net, which is contrary to the stated goals of broadening the base.

He echoed similar concerns, stating that the new rules introduced under Section 21 of the Income Tax Ordinance are impractical and insensitive to ground realities. He pointed out that small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which form the backbone of Pakistan's economy, often rely on partial cash dealings due to supplier terms, payment cycles, or banking limitations in remote areas.

Penalizing 50% of such expenses by treating them as income is an unfair and illogical step that could wipe out profitability for small businesses and retailers.

He added that the inclusion of provisions that dis-

allow purchases from suppliers not registered under the National Tax Number system further complicates supply chains and encourages informal transactions rather than reducing them. He warned that such clauses will backfire, leading to evasion, under-invoicing, and a surge in informal trade rather than promoting transparency.

He said that the business community has made repeated attempts to engage the government with workable proposals. However, the response from tax policymakers remains rigid and unaccommodating.

He said the Finance Bill was passed without adequately addressing industry's core concerns, and if the government continues to ignore the voice of the business community, they

will have no option but to take the protest route.

He warned that a nationwide agitation cannot be ruled out if the authorities continue on the same path.

The BMP leaders expressed dismay over the fact that while businesses are striving to stay afloat amid rising input costs, energy shortages, and weak demand, the government has opted to further burden them with compliance threats.

They noted that industries are still reeling from the consequences of inflation and high interest rates, and instead of creating an enabling environment, the state has decided to pursue policies that appear more focused on penalization than facilitation.

Mian Anjum Nisar stressed that the business

community has always stood by the state in times of crisis, be it during natural disasters, global shocks, or pandemics, but this one-sided approach is breaking that trust.

He called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb to immediately intervene and

suspend the implementation of these harsh fiscal clauses.

He proposed forming an independent advisory committee comprising senior private sector representatives to work with FBR on sustainable reforms that ensure revenue growth without disrupting commerce.

**اطلاع عام**

برخاس دعام کوٹھ کیا جاتا ہے کہ پائٹ نمبر 1/ا سرورے نمبر 382/1-ا 382/1-ا 401.905 مرلے کو واقع کوٹھ کینٹ جو کہ شہر کے طور پر افغانی اور غیرہ کے نام لیز شدہ دل (Sch-IX-C) درکار کا رطلی آئینس آفس کوٹھ کینٹ درج ہے۔ مسماۃ افغان افغان مورسہ 27/01/2025 کوٹھ ہو چکے ہے۔ آگے درج ذیل دواء نے مندرجہ بالا جائیداد میں مالک احصا ہے نہ کی درخواست کی ہے۔

1- افغان (غور) 2- لایبیا (جینی) 3- عیاض (جینی)

اگر کسی شخص یا ادارہ کو مندرجہ بالا جائیداد میں مسماۃ افغان افغان افغان کے حصے کی منتقلی پر کسی شخص کا کوئی اعتراض ہو تو اندر معیاد 15 عم بعد از اذاعت ٹوس بذا دفتر زیر دخیلی کو تقریری طور پر مطلع کرے۔ ورنہ مندرجہ بالا جائیداد ان کے حصے کے حقوق لیز مندرجہ بالا دواء کے نام منتقل کر دیئے جائینگے۔ اور بعد میں کوئی مداخلت قابل قبول نہ ہوگا۔

رطلی آئینس آفیسر کوٹھ کینٹ فون نمبر: 0922-9260201





## In brief

### PCB to assess PSL's worth

**L A H O R E** (Monitoring Desk): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has initiated a valuation process for the Pakistan Super League (PSL) as it gears up for major commercial decisions ahead of the next season, media reports revealed on Sunday. The evaluation will cover all six franchises along with media rights, title sponsorship, and other commercial assets, which will be key in determining the league's future direction. The move follows a series of debriefing sessions held earlier this week at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Lahore. These sessions were led by PCB CEO Salman Naseer and included top representatives from franchises, sponsors, broadcasters, and commercial partners. During the meetings, PSL management presented comprehensive performance analytics and growth data, comparing the ninth and tenth editions of the tournament to highlight the league's accelerating trajectory. Reflecting on a decade of development, Salman Naseer described PSL 10 as a landmark season: "The tenth edition wasn't just a tournament—it was a celebration of passion and unity. PSL X broke several records, especially in viewership and digital fan engagement," he said. He also highlighted a 647% increase in live streaming, underscoring the league's surging popularity in the digital space. With the PSL now established as a globally recognised brand, the PCB is positioning itself to take strategic steps that could reshape the league's commercial and operational structure in the seasons to come.

### Australia shuffle squad

**MELBOURNE** (Web Desk): Australia have made two key changes to their 16-man squad for the upcoming five-match T20I series against the West Indies, bringing in Jake Fraser-McGurk and Xavier Bartlett in place of Josh Hazlewood and Spencer Johnson. Johnson is sidelined with a lingering back injury, while Hazlewood has returned home to prepare for the forthcoming red-ball series against South Africa. Fraser-McGurk, known for his explosive batting in franchise leagues, is looking to make his mark after being left out of Australia's central contract list. Bartlett, on the other hand, continues his upward trajectory as a dependable pace option. The series begins on July 21 with the first two matches set for Kingston, Jamaica, followed by three T20Is in Basseterre, St Kitts and Nevis. Skipper Mitchell Marsh leads a side in red-hot form, with Australia having won 12 of their last 14 T20Is. The tour is seen as key preparation for the 2026 ICC Men's T20 World Cup, to be co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka. Senior players including Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, and Travis Head will return home after completing the ongoing Test series in the Caribbean. Australia T20I squad vs West Indies: Mitchell Marsh (capt), Sean Abbott, Cooper Connolly, Tim David, Ben Dwarshuis, Nathan Ellis, Cameron Green, Aaron Hardie, Xavier Bartlett, Josh Inglis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Matt Kuhnemann, Glenn Maxwell, Mitch Owen, Matthew Short, Adam Zampa.

## Merlier wins sprint finish as Van der Poel denied epic breakaway triumph



**CHÂTEAUROUX** (Agencies): Tim Merlier won stage nine of the Tour de France in a sprint finish after Mathieu van der Poel's hopes of an audacious breakaway victory were dashed inside the final kilometre.

Van der Poel and his Alpecin-Deceuninck team-mate Jonas Rickaert attacked at the start of the 174.1km run from Chinon to Chateauroux and the Dutch former world champion produced a gutsy effort that just fell short of delivering his second win in this year's race.

Instead, Belgium's Merlier was able to celebrate again, having also won stage three, as he came past Jonathan Milan and held off fast-finishing compatriot Arnaud de Lie. "Five minutes [to Van der Poel in the break] is a lot but we tried to chase and also the other teams started to help. The pacing was quite high at the front, but it was hard for all the guys - the bunch was nervous," said Soudal Quick-Step rider Merlier.

"In the end we just went all in and I'm happy I can win my second stage here." There has been debate in recent days about the long-term value of flat sprint stages in the Tour, which can unfold in predictable fashion, with the interest confined to the final stages.

Chateauroux, which was dubbed 'Cavendish City' in honour of Sir Mark, who took the first of his Tour-record 35 career stage victories here in 2008, has long been the preserve of sprinters.

However, Van der Poel's valiant attempt to end that streak and the race for position in the wind broke the race apart. And the Dutchman revealed afterwards that he had embarked on the two-man expedition because team-mate Rickaert had a dream that he has now achieved after winning the day's combativity award.

"We wanted to go for it today because it's his dream to be on the podium of a Tour de France," Van der Poel said. "It's hard not to be able to finish it off but we put up a good show today." There was no change at the top of the general classification, with defending champion Tadej Pogacar remaining 54 seconds clear of Remco Evenepoel. Two-time winner Jonas Vingegaard is fourth, one minute 17 seconds off yellow.

It was not all plain sailing for Pogacar and UAE Team Emirates, as the three-time champion's key lieutenant Joao Almeida abandoned the race as a result of injuries suffered on stage seven, with his absence likely to be felt in the mountains. On Monday, the race takes in eight categorised climbs on Bastille Day as it travels 165.3km from Ennezat to Le Mont-Dore Puy de Sancy in the Massif Central.

## Sweden sweep aside 10-woman Germany to top Euros Group C



**ZURICH** (AFP/APP): Sweden laid down a marker at Euro 2025 by confidently beating 10-woman Germany 4-1 on Saturday and topping Group C with a perfect nine points.

Peter Gerhardsson's team will face the runners-up from Group D, potentially European champions England, in the quarter-finals after sweeping aside Germany with a powerful display in Zurich. Sweden fans sung ABBA songs in the stands of the Letzigrund Stadium as goals from Stina Blackstenius, Smilla Holmberg, Fridolina Rolfö and Lina Hurtig saw off the Germans.

Sweden were hammered 4-0 by England in the semi-finals of the last European Championship three years ago but Gerhardsson said he is looking forward rather than backwards to that heavy defeat. "I don't focus on that game. That's history, it's a new game if we play England, we'll write a new history, a better history, a good history," he told reporters. "We can only take it one game at a time. Today we had Germany and now we have the quarter-final. Maybe it's a dull answer but that's how I work."

Germany were among the favourites for overall victory ahead of the tournament but after taking an early lead through Jule Brand, Christian Wueck's team did little else to justify their billing. And they were done for once Carlotta Wamser was sent off for handballing a goal-bound shot in the 31st minute.

Germany finished on six points and will face the winner of Group D in the next round, with France currently leading the way ahead of Sunday's final round of matches before the knockout stage. "We were playing very well until we conceded and then you could see the quality of Sweden, and with the red card it became very difficult," said Wueck. "We'll shake it off and we're happy to play in the quarter-finals, whether it's against the French, the English, or whoever."

- Rampant Sweden -

Both teams were already through to the quarters before kick-off, with Poland winning their dead rubber with fellow eliminated team Denmark 3-2 in Lucerne.

And Germany, who are now on the same side of the draw as world champions Spain, looked in fine form when Wamser put through Brand to squeeze the opening goal past Jennifer Falk in the seventh minute. But Blackstenius levelled five minutes later, just as the Germans looked to be on top, when she was given a baffling amount of space to stride through onto Kosovare Asllani's pass and drill the equaliser into the bottom corner. From that point onwards Sweden were in complete control of the game and Holmberg gave them a deserved lead in the 25th minute when she weaved her way past Klara Buehl and Sarai Linder. Trying to recover, Linder slid in to stop Holmberg from shooting but instead booted the ball off her opponent and into the net. And the game was up for Germany just after the half-hour following Wamser's acrobatic handball of Rolfö's shot in a desperate attempt to cover for wayward goalkeeper Ann-Katrin Berger.

## Japan outclass Pakistan 3-0 to win U-18 Asia Hockey Cup final

**DAZHOU** (Monitoring Desk): Japan emerged victorious in the final of the U-18 Asia Hockey Cup 2025, defeating Pakistan 3-0 in a commanding performance that sealed their claim to the title.

The tournament concluded with a one-sided final in which the Japanese side outclassed their Pakistani counterparts across three quarters of the game.

The match, held in the Chinese city of Dalian, saw Japan take an early lead and never look back, ending Pakistan's unbeaten streak in the tournament.

Yuma Fujiwara was the star of the final, scoring a brace with goals in the 22nd and 38th minutes, giving Japan a comfortable cushion by halftime.

The third goal came in the 49th minute when Tatsuki Yasui successfully

converted a penalty corner, effectively sealing the win and Japan's hold on the prestigious youth title.

Pakistan had entered the final with an impressive unbeaten record. They edged past Malaysia in a dramatic semi-final that ended in a 3-3 draw in regulation time and was decided by a nail-biting 4-3 victory in the penalty shootout.

The Green Shirts had shown strong form throughout the tournament, defeating hosts China 2-1 in the quarterfinals to secure their place in the final four. In earlier group-stage matches, Pakistan delivered dominant performances, routing Hong Kong 8-0, thrashing Sri Lanka 9-0, and overpowering Bangladesh 6-3.

The team appeared to be on a steady path toward clinching the title before



falling short in the final showdown.

The defeat, however, marks another missed opportunity for Pakistan's junior team, following their 6-2 loss to New

Zealand in the final of the FIH Nations Cup last month in Kuala Lumpur, where the Kiwis successfully defended their title.

Japan's emphatic win in the U-18 Asia Cup further

cements their rising stature in youth hockey, while Pakistan will look to build on their strong campaign and address critical gaps ahead of future international competitions.

## Messi at the double again to lift Miami to MLS win over Nashville



**MIAMI** (AFP/APP): Lionel Messi continued his historic Major League Soccer scoring run Saturday, netting two goals for the fifth game in a row to lift Inter Miami to a 2-1 victory over Nashville.

Just days after he became the first player to score multiple goals in four straight MLS matches, Messi did it again as Miami continued their climb up the Eastern Conference standings after their league hiatus for the Club World Cup.

Messi, the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner, opened the scoring in the 17th minute with a trademark left-foot free-kick, which found the only gap in Nashville's defensive wall to go past goalkeeper Joe Willis.

Miami dominated in the first half

but, just four minutes after half-time, Hany Mukhtar's header pulled Nashville level.

Messi grabbed the winner in the 62nd minute when he capitalized on a bad mistake from Willis, who misjudged a pass to tee up the Argentine for the strike.

The two goals -- on the heels of his two in a 2-1 win over New England on Wednesday -- took Messi's total to 16 in 16 appearances this season, tied with Nashville's Sam Surridge, who was unable to add to his tally of 16 on Saturday.

"There are not many words. It's incredible what he keeps doing, breaking records now every three days, not even every weekend," Miami coach Javier Mascherano

said.

"He is the standard-bearer of our team that shows us the way to compete. He is the leader. It's a blessing for me to accompany this stage of his career."

Miami were playing their third match since returning to MLS action in the wake of a month-long Club World Cup campaign that ended when they were eliminated in the last 16 by Paris Saint-Germain.

With 38 points from 19 matches, they are in fifth place in the East, five points behind leaders Philadelphia with three games in hand.

Philadelphia went top with a 2-0 victory over New York Red Bulls, Indiana Vassilev and Bruno Damiani delivering the goals. Cincinnati slipped to second in the East on 42 points after falling 4-2 to Columbus. Nashville and Columbus both have 41 points.

Miami's jam-packed schedule continues Wednesday against Cincinnati, with the New York Red Bulls coming up next weekend.

Mascherano knows he will have to find time to give the 38-year-old Messi some rest. "At some point we are going to have to find a space to give him some rest, we are going to talk about it day by day," he said. "He is feeling good and when we think it is time to give him some rest, we will do it."

## Pak cueists win matches in IBSF World Snooker C'ships

**ISLAMABAD** (APP): Pakistani cueists Muhammad Asif and Shahid Aftab earned victories in the IBSF World Masters, U17, U21 & Men 6Red Snooker Championships 2025 at Manama, Bahrain.

A total of 43 players from 15 nations have been divided into 11 groups. After the league matches 2 players from each group will qualify for the knockout last 22 round.

On Day 1, Muhammad Asif (Pakistan) beat Haitham Bin Ali (Oman) 3-0 (89(61)-33, 69(46)-4, 53-6); Shahid Aftab (Pakistan) beat Mohamed Noweir (Egypt) 3-2 (68-43, 47-64, 88(88)-35, 31-60, 94-36); Muhammad Asif (Pakistan) beat Jay Chopra (Ireland) (68-33, 79-14, 67-16).

## Mughal sets another Guinness World Record

**ISLAMABAD** (APP): Pakistan's 6-year-old martial artist Sufian Mughal, has achieved yet another Guinness World Record, solidifying his position as a record-breaking prodigy.

Sufian has broken the challenging world record of 30 step-ups in 30 seconds, set by Guinness World Records, by completing 45 step-ups, said a press release.

This remarkable feat shows Sufian's dedication, hard work, and exceptional talent. Notably, Sufian is already a Guinness World Record holder, having set four records at the age of six. He has previously broken two records held by India, further showcasing his impressive skills.

Sufian's achievements serve as an inspiration to young athletes and martial artists around the world. His determination and passion for martial arts have earned him international recognition.

## World Cup Qualifiers schedule announced

**ISLAMABAD** (APP): The second half of 2025 sees the EAP and Asia regions host two high stakes ICC Women's pathway event here in Suva, Fiji. This marks a major achievement for us, not only as our inaugural women's event at this level, but also as the largest ICC Qualifier ever held in the East Asia-Pacific region, with the participation of eight nations."

"We are especially excited to welcome all participating teams and extend a warm "Bula vinaka" to each one of them. "A special acknowledgment goes to the Philippines women's team, who will be making their debut in an ICC pathway event. This tournament stands as a testament to the growth, inclusivity and regional collaboration that continues to drive the advancement of women's cricket across the East Asia-Pacific.

Cricket Fiji, Sitiveni Rokoro said, "We are proud to host our first ICC Women's pathway event here in Suva, Fiji. This marks a major achievement for us, not only as our inaugural women's event at this level, but also as the largest ICC Qualifier ever held in the East Asia-Pacific region, with the participation of eight nations."

Chief Executive of

"We are deeply grateful to the ICC and the EAP Regional Team for their continued support and commitment in helping us bring this event to life."

From October 8, Oman will stage the combined ICC Men's T20 World Cup Asia & East Asia-Pacific Qualifier with the ultimate goal of three World Cup spots up for grabs. Sub-regional qualifiers from 2024 Kuwait, Malaysia, UAE, Qatar, Japan and Samoa will join Nepal, Papua New Guinea, and the hosts, to do battle over the 10-day event.

The tournament will take place in two stages: a Group Stage from October 8 to 10, followed by a Super Six Stage from October 12 to 17. Teams are split into three groups of three, and the top two teams from each group will advance to the Super Six stage. At the end of the Super Six, the top three teams will

earn their place in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, alongside some of the biggest names in world cricket competing in India and Sri Lanka next year.

Alkesh Joshi, Oman Cricket Treasurer said, "As a board, we are fully committed to providing our players with world-class preparation platforms. We also want this tournament to be a celebration for fans, that's why entry to all matches at Amerat will be free. We invite the community to turn out in their numbers and cheer for the team."

"We sincerely thank the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for their unwavering support in Oman's cricketing journey. Hosting major ICC events elevates Oman's status in the global sporting arena."

"This tournament is a celebration of associate cricket.



**PROVIDENCE:** Usama Mir had figures of 4-0-15-3 for Hobart Hurricanes vs Rangpur Riders, GSL 2025.





## In brief

### Dacoit gang busted

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, Noon Police station teams on Sunday apprehended three members of a notorious criminal gang allegedly involved in a series of armed robberies, including snatching motorcycles, mobile phones, and cash from citizens at gunpoint. An official told APP that the arrested suspects—identified as Ubaid, Muneeb, and Abu Zar—were wanted in several robbery and theft cases registered at Noon Police Station. He said the police recovered stolen motorcycles, mobile phones, cash, and weapons with ammunition used during the crimes from the possession of the arrested accused. He said cases have been registered against the suspects, and all legal procedures are being completed to ensure they receive exemplary punishment. He said large-scale operations are being carried out against organized and active criminal gangs across the federal capital under the special direction of DIG Muhammad Jawad Tariq.

### Action against adulteration

RAWALPINDI (APP): Punjab Food Authority (PFA) has launched a strict crackdown against milk carriers to stop the supply of sub-standard and adulterated milk. According to a PFA spokesperson, inspection teams carried out operations at Motorway Toll Plaza, Thalain, and Chakri Interchange. During these checks, 103,000 liters of milk from 20 milk transport vehicles were tested. Out of the total, 5,500 liters of milk were found to be mixed with water. The adulterated milk was destroyed on the spot. PFA also imposed fines worth Rs 348,000 on the vehicle owners involved in supplying low-quality milk. The spokesperson added that milk transporters are checking regularly to ensure that only clean and safe milk reaches the public. Citizens have been urged to report any complaints regarding milk quality by calling the PFA helpline at 1223.

### 13 outlaws nabbed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police teams from Sumbal, Khanna, Kirpa, and Lohi Bher police stations arrested 13 accused involved in various criminal activities on Sunday. A police spokesperson told APP that the teams recovered 528 grams of hashish, 770 grams of heroin, 125 grams of ice, 60 bottles of wine, seven pistols and daggers from the suspects' possession. Cases have been registered against the arrested individuals, and further investigations were underway. He said that during a special campaign launched for the arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders, various police teams also apprehended five criminals. He said that following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the Islamabad Police continues its effective crackdown against crime and criminal elements to ensure peace and tranquility in the federal capital. He said that Islamabad Police is committed to protecting the lives and property of citizens and will not allow any elements to disturb public peace. Ensuring law and order remains the top priority of the force.



**RAWALPINDI:** Construction work is underway on the Rawalpindi Ring Road, also known as the Rawalpindi–Islamabad Ring Road—a 38.3-kilometer highway connecting Rawalpindi and Islamabad in Pakistan. The project, which began in March 2022, is currently under construction

## Indian sponsored terrorism to be foiled: Aleem Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan, visited Khanewal and Dunyapur in District Lodhran on Sunday to express condolences and solidarity with the families of those who martyred in the recent tragic bus attack in Balochistan.

In the village in Kacha Khoh, Federal Minister expressed sympathies with the bereaved family of Shaheed Lance Naik Ghulam Saeed and offered condolences over the martyrdom of the soldier and the passing away of his father.

While expressing love and affection with the children of Ghulam Saeed, Abdul Aleem Khan was quite sentimental. He prayed for the departed souls that may Allah Almighty grant them a place in His infinite mercy and strength and patience to bear this irreparable loss.

Talking to the media, Abdul Aleem Khan reaffirmed that the nation would eliminate terrorism at all costs and stand firm behind its Armed Forces. He emphasized that targeting residents of other

provinces by removing them from buses in Balochistan is a conspiracy aimed at creating divisions among the Pakistani people.

However, he asserted that the nation will remain united and resilient by the grace of Allah Almighty. Federal Minister pointed out that the world is aware of India's involvement in this proxy war and just as it faced humiliation in recent conflicts it will continue to suffer setbacks in the future.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that in recent past Pakistan defeated India and now its nefarious designs will again be neturized. He further stated that Pakistani soldiers are making the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty and the entire nation stands behind them like a solid wall.

Abdul Aleem Khan reiterated that his visit to Khanewal and Lodhran was to share the grief of the affected families and to express solidarity. He prayed for the swift eradication of this menace of terrorism from the country. He also noted with sadness that the victims of this incident were not wealthy or privileged but rather

belonged to poor, hardworking and common households.

In addition, Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan visited Dunyapur in Lodhran district where he offered condolences on the martyrdom of two brothers, Usman Toor and Jabir Toor in the Balochistan attack.

He especially commended the patriotic spirit displayed by their mother stating that no power in the world can defeat such nation blessed with brave and courageous mothers. Abdul Aleem Khan declared that this mother in Dunyapur has set a new global example of resilience and bravery and her courage is a matter of pride for every Pakistani.

He was accompanied by Central Party Leaders including Rana Nazir Ahmad Khan, Mian Khalid Mehmood, MPA Shoaib Siddiqui and Brigadier (R) Qaiser Mahey. The local administration of Khanewal and Lodhran along with political and social leaders, appreciated the visit and offered prayers for the martyrs.

## Mushaal Mullick pays rich tribute to July 13 Martyrs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mushaal Hussein Mullick wife of illegally detained senior Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Mohammad Yasin Malik paid heartfelt homage to the martyrs of July 13 1931 and said the day is not far when the people of Kashmir will hear the Azan of freedom and sacrifices of 22 martyrs will never go in vain as their blood has written the history of resistance that no power on earth can erase.

In a special message on the eve of Martyrs' Day during her interaction with news channels Mushaal Hussein Mullick wife of illegally detained Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Mohammad Yasin Malik paid strong tribute to the heroes of July 13 1931 and

said the struggle of the Kashmiri people is fueled by the courage of those who embraced martyrdom and their legacy will continue to inspire the resistance until the dawn of freedom rises over Kashmir.

She said the day of truth and justice is not far when the streets of Kashmir will echo with the Azan of freedom the 22 martyrs of July 13 1931 lit the flame of resistance with their blood a flame that still burns in the hearts of the Kashmiri people their sacrifice did not just shake the ground it shattered the arrogance of the Dogra rule they stood firm against tyranny and changed the course of history with unmatched courage.

She said those 22 brave sons of the soil looked

straight into the eyes of the Dogra soldiers and showed the world what it truly means to stand for truth they faced the hail of bullets without a trace of fear and with every drop of their blood they inscribed the message of freedom on the pages of history their fearless defiance became a timeless symbol of resistance.

Their sacrifice continues to echo in the heart of every Kashmiri who refuses to surrender before oppression she said their legacy is a guiding light and the day is not far when their dream of Azadi will become a living reality. She added that since 1931, the determination of Kashmiris has never been defeated.

## Five dead, 28 injured in Chakri bus crash

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least five people lost their lives while over two dozen sustained injuries in a tragic bus accident on M-2 Motorway near Chakri on Sunday, due to slippery road conditions caused by recent rainfall.

According to a spokesperson for the National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP), the ill-fated bus was en route from Rawalpindi to Multan when the driver lost

control, leading to the crash.

Upon receiving the alert, Motorway Police and rescue teams from the Frontier Works Organization (FWO) and Rescue 1122 promptly arrived at the scene and initiated relief operation.

Rescue teams from the FWO and Rescue 1122, transported the deceased and injured—seven of whom are in critical condition, while over 21 sustained minor injuries—to

the District Headquarters Hospital (DHQ) Chakwal.

Senior officials, including the Sector Commander M-2 North and the DSP Chakri Beat, were present at DHQ Chakwal and Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) to monitor rescue and medical operations.

Relief efforts were ongoing as authorities worked to manage the aftermath and assist victims' families.

## 86 buildings in dilapidated condition

RAWALPINDI (APP): Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi (MCR) in its survey report across the city, has identified 86 buildings as dangerous ones and served notices to owners for immediate evacuation to prevent loss of life.

The buildings have been deemed unsafe due to their deteriorating condition, posing serious risks to residents and surrounding areas, particularly during the ongoing monsoon season.

Municipal corporation Rawalpindi has issued formal evacuation notices to the owners and residents of these buildings to evacuate within the next

15 days under the Punjab Local Government Act 2022. The move is part of a broader effort by city administration to identify and mitigate threats posed by aging infrastructure, especially in densely populated urban zones.

These buildings need to be demolished/ rebuilt. Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi will provide full technical and administrative support in these measures to prevent any possible casualties or financial losses.

Chief Officer Imran Ali said that the protection of the lives and property of the citizens is our top priority,

so no negligence or delays will be tolerated.

Likewise, encroachers on the banks of Nullah Lai and other tributaries have also been strictly warned to immediately remove their encroachments and move to safe places. Failure of its compliance will face legal action and the encroachments will be forcibly removed.

Moreover, administration has requested general public to immediately implement these instructions to protect themselves and others and approach the Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi for any information or complaints.

## Man arrested with Rs 1 lakh in Counterfeit Currency

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Police Station have arrested a man for distributing fake currency notes during crackdown.

According to police, counterfeit currency worth Rs 100,000 was recovered from his possession. A case has been registered, and further investigation is underway.

SP Rawal, Muhammad Haseeb Raja, appreciated the efforts of the police team and said the accused would be presented in court with solid evidence.

He added that those involved in such illegal activities will not escape the grip of the law saying that other accomplices of accused will also be arrested soon.

**Rawalpindi police arrest thief, recovered vehicles worth over Rs 7.5 million:** In a major crackdown, the City Police Station have arrested thief involved in multiple vehicle theft cases.

According to police spokesman, two stolen vehicles worth more than Rs 7.5 million have been recovered from his possession during operation.



**ISLAMABAD:** A family captures video with their cell phones as a person feeds corn to a monkey on Margalla Road in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo

## Court upholds cancellation of e-parking contract with AJCL

ISLAMABAD (APP): A lower court in Islamabad has upheld the decision by the Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA) and Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) to cancel the e-parking contract awarded to AJCL company, terming the termination fully legal and in accordance with administrative procedures.

The court dismissed AJCL's appeal, reinforcing the government's commitment to transparency, legal supremacy, and public interest. Senior advocate Nazir Jawad, representing CDA and DMA, presented what the court described as "solid legal evidence" to defend the cancellation of the contract.

The contract with AJCL was officially revoked in June 2025 after the company was found to be in serious breach of multiple clauses, including financial irregularities and failure to implement a cashless system for parking.

The CDA spokesperson told APP that, multiple First Information Reports (FIRs) were also filed by both the DMA and concerned citizens against the company. AJCL subsequently challenged the contract termination, requesting that parking sites not be reclaimed and that the proposed re-auctioning of smart parking sites be halted.

However, the court

rejected all such claims, declaring them baseless and upholding the DMA's actions as legally sound and procedurally proper.

Legal experts and civic stakeholders alike have praised the decision, calling it a major step toward enforcing transparency, upholding the rule of law, and improving urban services in Islamabad.

"This judgment empowers us to take stronger, more effective steps for enhancing public amenities," said a senior CDA official. "This verdict is a testament to our commitment to good governance, transparency, and merit-based decisions," said Chairman Capital Development Authority

(CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa in a statement on Sunday.

The verdict has been hailed by CDA officials as a precedent-setting move under the leadership of Member Administration Talat Mahmood and Deputy DG Enforcement and Director DMA Dr. Anam Fatima. The CDA reiterated its commitment to modernizing urban infrastructure, promising that no lapses in governance or public service delivery would be tolerated. "All future projects, especially smart parking systems, will be executed with utmost transparency and accountability," the CDA said in an official statement.

## Polio vaccination drive from today in 25 UCs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Punjab Emergency Operations Centre has announced a special polio vaccination campaign across 25 union councils in Rawalpindi starting from Monday, in response to the detection of polio virus in environmental samples.

Dr Ehsan Ghani, who assumed charge as CEO of the District Health Authority Rawalpindi, confirmed that the three-day campaign will commence target over 124,000 children under the age of five

for polio immunization.

The affected union councils, located wholly or partially in Rawalpindi City and Taxila tehsils, are areas with frequent movement of populations from polio-affected regions, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Afghanistan.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, Dr Ghani emphasized that the campaign aims to ensure every child receives the polio vaccine to bolster their immunity against the disease.

To strengthen polio surveillance, Punjab has established 31 permanent environmental monitoring sites across 19 districts, including Lahore, Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Faisalabad, Sargodha, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Sahiwal, Okara, Bahawalnagar, Khanewal, Attock, Gujrat, Jhang, and Mianwali. Dr Ehsan Ghani urged the citizens to cooperate with the polio teams to protect our kids from falling in polio.

## RDA committed to protecting green zones

RAWALPINDI (APP): Director General, R a w a l p i n d i Development Authority (RDA), Kinza Murtaza, on Sunday said that housing schemes in green belt areas would be strictly prohibited, reinforcing the RDA's commitment to protecting green zones and curbing unauthorized development.

Emphasizing the importance of safeguarding the city's environment and maintaining ecological balance, she stated that

a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) would be signed soon with the Land Information and Management System (LIMS).

Kinza said that the partnership with LIMS aims to enhance data integration, planning oversight, and sustainable urban development in Rawalpindi.

By leveraging technology-driven solutions, the RDA seeks to foster smart governance practices that support long-term urban sustainability.

The MoU with LIMS is expected to facilitate advanced land data management, transparency in planning processes, and better monitoring of land use.

It reflects RDA's proactive approach to responsible urban planning and the implementation of smart governance solutions.

The initiative is expected to contribute significantly to responsible urban development and a better quality of life for Rawalpindi's residents, she added.

## ITP uses drone technology to enforce traffic laws

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has penalized over 300 drivers and educated more than 350 citizens during recent operations carried out using drone technology to monitor traffic violations on major highways, including the Expressway and Srinagar Highway.

An official told APP on Sunday that under the leadership of Chief Traffic Officer Captain (R) Syed Zeeshan Haider, the initiative aims to ensure strict enforcement of traffic rules through real-time monitoring. He said the drones are

being used to identify violations such as lane discipline breaches, overloading, one-wheeling, and other hazardous driving behaviors.

He said more than 300 drivers have already been penalized through legal action based on footage captured by drone cameras. In addition to enforcement, he said over 350 citizens have been educated about traffic laws as part of the campaign.

He said several vehicles involved in serious violations have also been impounded and shifted to

local police stations.

"Using drone footage, violations are being identified, challans are being issued on the spot, and in some cases, vehicles are being taken into custody," said CTO Zeeshan.

He said in the next phase, drone monitoring will be expanded to include all sectors and additional major roads across the city.

Zeeshan added that drones are also being utilized to detect congested points on roads, enabling rapid deployment of special teams to address traffic build-up and ensure smooth flow.



**Child rescued in Balkh**  
KABUL (Pajhwok): A child abducted in northern Balkh province has been rescued, the Ministry of Interior said on Sunday. Mol spokesman Mufti Abdul Matin Qani told Pajhwok Afghan News security forces successfully rescued the child, who had been abducted from Saleem square area of Mazar-i-Sharif city. He said in these operations – led by the governor – “all the kidnappers and their hideouts were destroyed” and the rescued child was handed over to his family.

**Children contract diarrhea**  
PUL-I-ALAM (Pajhwok): Diarrhea disease among children has increased at an unprecedented rate in Logar, an official said on Sunday. Governor spokesman Sediq Ahmad Sediqi said on Public Health Department statistics, more than 6,500 children suffering from diarrhea were brought to hospitals in Pul-e-Alam city and districts in the past month. He said among 435 of these children were referred to the Logar Provincial Hospital (Nayeb Aminullah Logari).

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

## Residents of Chal, Namak Ab urge action on basic services

TAKHAR (TOLOnews): Residents of Chal and Namak Ab districts in Takhar province say they face serious challenges due to poor road conditions, lack of school buildings, electricity shortages, and the absence of clean drinking water.

According to them, a three-hour journey can sometimes take over ten hours, and in some cases, patients lose their lives while being transferred to medical centers.

“We need a clinic, we have no roads, no schools, and no access to clean drinking water. We are in dire need of all these services,” said Amanullah, a resident of Chal district.

“We need clinics, electricity, roads, and drinking water so our problems can be solved,” said Ashiqullah, a resident of Namak Ab district.

“The roads in Chal are in poor condition, and we have a serious need for electricity and schools,” said Mohammad Jan, another resident of Chal district.

According to the residents, patients often die while being taken to treatment centers.

Residents continue to voice their concerns.

“We have problems with schools, roads, electricity, and clinics. During childbirth, women die on the way to see a doctor. We only have hydropower electricity for three months a year, and floods damage the dams,” said Firdaws, a resident of Chal.

“They should fix our roads. We have no clinics; they should send doctors. We have many patients and are facing difficulties,” said Zainuddin, another resident of Namak Ab.

Meanwhile, local officials in Takhar say they have plans to address these issues.

Mohammad Arif Arif, spokesperson for the Takhar governor, said: “According to the order of the Islamic Emirate leadership, a general hospital has been approved for this district. Preliminary work is complete, and practical work will begin soon. Problems in roads and education existed from before, and these are a priority in the local government’s agenda, with ongoing efforts.”

This is while Chal district contains the largest coal mines, and Namak Ab hosts the largest salt mine, making them among the most revenue-generating districts in Takhar. Millions of Afghans from these mines are added to the government treasury daily.

## Female doctor offers free healthcare to returning women

SHIBERGHAN (Pajhwok): Dr. Soraya Qayumi, an obstetrician-gynecologist in northern Jawzjan province, has started voluntarily providing free health services to Afghan women returning from Iran in the province.

Health services are one of the basic needs of thousands of Afghan migrants being deported from Iran, Pakistan and Turkey daily to the country in hot weather.

Dr. Qayumi, who has 25 years of experience in the obstetrics and gynecology department, explained she examined destitute returnee women and girls for free every day from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM and, if necessary, she performed necessary operations free of charge.

In addition to providing health services, she also provides essential medicines to patients in need to effectively help them with their treatment.

“I do not see this task as just a health task, but rather as a human obligation. My goal is to lift the burden off those who are in difficult economic circumstances through my profession”: she added while examining a returnee woman.

According to her, this was not the first action she had taken, last year she had provided free health services to 150 patients.

“We lived in Iran for six years, and after being deported, I faced many health problems; I suffered from severe anemia and gynecological pains, but now I am happy that Dr. Sahib examined me and gave me medicine for free, and I am very grateful to her”: Anahita, a returnee, said.

Anhita said she was also sick in Iran, but could not afford treatment due to economic problems.

According to Karima, another returnee, she has been facing gynecological problems for years, but due to financial problems, she could not see a doctor.

She described Dr. Soraya’s action as valuable and humanitarian, and added other doctors should take similar action.

## Pensioners protest non-payment amid



KABUL (TOLOnews): A number of pensioners in Kabul have once again gathered to protest the non-payment of their pensions.

They say that despite having spent many years serving the government, they now face severe financial hardship in their old age.

Abdul Wasi is one such pensioner who once dedicated his time to educating the next generation at a government school. Now, due to the non-payment of his pension, he is facing serious financial difficulties and is the sole breadwinner for his seven-member family.

“There are many of us, but all are waiting for pension payments. However, our hope that the Islamic Emirate will provide our pensions is fading,” he said.

“A decree was issued but not implemented. They said the judges would come, the judges did come, and they kept us waiting for six months. Now that the judges are here, the General Directorate of Pensions tells us they are waiting for the norm. What norm?” said Mirwais Salehzada, another pensioner.

The current demands of pensioners include the immediate payment of their pensions, resolution of economic issues, and serious attention from the caretaker government to their living conditions.

“We ask the Islamic Emirate and the Amir-ul-Mu’minin to pay our pensions for the sake of God, if not for their own will,” said Abdul Hakim, a pensioner.

“Why don’t they pay our pensions? What’s the reason? Is it forbidden? For God’s sake, give it to us, it’s our right. I swear to God, even if I die, I won’t forgive it; I want my right,” said Abdul Khaliq, another pensioner.

“Why are you confusing us? Why won’t you pay our rights? We spend all day wandering the streets,” said Mohammad Omar, another pensioner.

It has been nearly four years since pensioners last received their payments, and this has severely impacted their financial situation.

These pensioners, who served for years in various government departments, are now struggling with despair and economic challenges and are urging the caretaker government to take immediate action regarding their condition.

The issue of when the caretaker government will pay the pensioners’ dues still remains unresolved.

## Herat saffron expo aims to support local products, attract investment



HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): The Deputy Spokesman for Islamic Emirate during a visit to the National and International Saffron Exhibition in western Herat

province said Afghanistan was no longer just a consumer country, but had achieved self-sufficiency in 131 products.

At this exhibition, IEA’s

these products at national and international levels.

He said Afghanistan today was not just a consumer country, but had reached self-sufficiency in more than 130 production sectors.

Information and Culture Director Maulvi Ahmadullah Muttaqi explained the ground has been prepared to attract investment by ensuring complete security in the country.

His department always supports programs related to the growth of culture, production, and support for domestic businessmen and industrialists, Muttaqi added.

On the other hand, Mohammad Younus Qazizada, head of Herat Chamber of Commerce and Investment, called the holding of the exhibition a positive step in introducing domestic products.

The national and international saffron flower exhibition is being held at the Herat Industrial City with the aim of supporting domestic production. Domestic products are displayed through more than 100 booths.

Currently, Afghanistan, especially Herat province, has a high capacity in cultivation and production of saffron that has achieved first place globally, Qazizada explained while welcoming the holding of such exhibitions.

Along with Afghan industrialists, traders from neighboring countries have also participated in this exhibition, which will last for four days.

## Hanafi visits Islam Qala border

HERAT (BNA): Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs, Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi, conducted a visit to the Islam Qala border to oversee the ongoing repatriation process of Afghan migrants returning from Iran.

During his visit, Mawlawi Hanafi closely monitored the logistics of the repatriation, emphasizing the urgent need to address the affairs of returning migrants. He expressed appreciation to the committees responsible for providing essential services, including health care, food, and water, to those returning home.

Listening to the concerns and needs of the migrants, Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs, Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi instructed local officials to prioritize the basic requirements of returnees. He reaffirmed the commitment of the Islamic Emirate to leverage all available resources to improve the living conditions of these individuals.

The Deputy Prime Minister also praised the Afghan public for their support and cooperation with returnees, highlighting that the commendable actions of citizens are a testament to the solidarity and brotherhood prevalent in Afghan society.

## Ghazni governor says fully support media, journalists

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): The governor of southern Ghazni province has assured local media and journalists of his full support and emphasized on their access to information during a coordination meeting with media representatives.

Mullah Abdul Samad Javid, at a meeting with local journalists and representatives of media outlets, said that his administration offered comprehensive support to all media organizations in the province.

He said there were currently no serious challenges facing the media in Ghazni and if any journalist or media outlet encounters any problems, efforts would be made to find a swift solution.

He added that the provincial administration was committed to improving access to information for journalists.

“We are dedicated to supporting the media, both in terms of providing information and in other areas,” he said. “However, we also expect the media and journalists to operate within the framework of Islamic values and national interests.”

At the same time, Information and Culture Director Mullah Hamidullah Nisar said his department maintained good ties with the media and held monthly coordination meetings to address journalists’ challenges and achievements.

He added: “Over the past one and a half years, we have introduced media officers in many departments to ensure journalists can access information more easily.”

Meanwhile, Gulab Amiri, Head of the Journalists’ Safety Committee for the Southeastern Zone, said: “Access to information and reporting are human rights and recognised values under Afghanistan’s current laws. Officials must take this seriously.”

Mohammad Arif Lewal, a journalist in Ghazni, told Pajhwok Afghan News that there were still challenges in accessing information, especially regarding security and investigative matters.

He said the Islamic Emirate should take steps to facilitate timely and accurate access to information for journalists so they could inform the public responsibly.

At the end of the meeting, journalists called for more such gatherings to help resolve issues through dialogue.

## Exhausted Afghans return from Iran in pain

HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): As the deportation of Afghan migrants from Iran intensifies, thousands of exhausted returnees are arriving back in Afghanistan — bringing with them heartbreaking stories of pain, suffering, and unspoken hardship.

Alongside the anguish of return, many speak of harrowing experiences in Iranian detention camps — facilities overwhelmed by overcrowding, unbearable conditions, and mistreatment that turned their days into a nightmare.

Hasibullah, a young Afghan who legally entered Iran with a passport and visa, tearfully recounted his ordeal to a Pajhwok Afghan News reporter: “They tore up my passport and ID. Right before my eyes, they killed a sixteen-year-old boy. The cost of returning used to be two million toman; now they demand ten million per person.”

After spending over a week in Iranian camps, Hasibullah described harrowing scenes: “I saw several corpses of Afghan migrants — people who were either killed without reason or left under the scorching sun.”

He added, with tears in his eyes, that young men were frequently beaten in the camp where he was held. Hasibullah urged the Iranian government to end what he called its oppression of Afghans who had migrated out of sheer desperation.

Zabihullah, another recently deported Afghan from Balkh province, who also returned through Islam Qala crossing, shared a similarly painful story. He explained that the detention camps in Iran are overwhelmed and can no longer accommodate the growing number of deportees.

According to him, a facility designed for 1,000 individuals now holds over 2,000 — all in sweltering heat and degrading conditions.

Zabihullah, who had also entered Iran legally in search of work, said he was

beaten by police during his arrest and wasn’t even allowed to take his clothes or personal documents.

“I spent two days and nights in the camp,” he said. “During that time, we weren’t given even a piece of bread. Despite the extreme heat and overcrowding — with women and children among us — police treated Afghans like animals.”

He further stated that Iranian security forces threatened them not to speak with the media, warning that doing so would lead to further repercussions.

But returning to Afghanistan has not ended their ordeal.

Rahim Shah, who arrived in Islam Qala with his elderly parents, described continuing difficulties: “It’s been two days, and we still haven’t been able to get to Herat city. Everyone has to stand in line for food. My elderly parents couldn’t stand, so they didn’t receive any. I

only managed to get my own portion. I have no complaints against strangers — I’m disappointed by our own people. Why is there so much disorganization in assisting returnees?”

Despite the challenges, Afghan officials have pledged to support the returnees and ensure a dignified life inside the country. They say comprehensive measures have been taken to manage the situation effectively.

These include the establishment of registration and biometric centers, the provision of medical and transportation services at the Islam Qala border, and the construction of dedicated housing for returnees in 25 provinces.

Maulvi Ahmadullah Muttaqi, head of Herat’s Information and Culture Department and chair of the Public Information Committee of the Commission on Migrant Affairs, told Pajhwok that these efforts are ongoing daily in coordination with

charitable organizations and the commission.

He noted that each returnee is being provided with food, medical care, and a cash allowance of 2,000 afghanis to cover travel expenses to their final destination.

Meanwhile, Maulvi Asif Asif, head of the Commission’s Transport Committee in Herat, assured that round-the-clock efforts are being made to resolve transport issues, enabling migrants to return to their home provinces as quickly and smoothly as possible.

These stories represent only a fraction of the immense suffering endured by thousands of Afghans affected by this latest wave of deportations.

From the detention camps of Iran to the long lines at Afghanistan’s border checkpoints, Afghan migrants remain caught in a relentless cycle of hardship — their eyes still searching for a future beyond uncertainty.

## Once thriving Herat silk thread industry about to vanish

HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): The once-thriving silk thread industry in western Herat province has nearly vanished, with only one workshop left standing out of more than 250 that once buzzed with life and craftsmanship.

Silk artisans complain about severe stagnation of the market and the indifference of government officials. They say the export of raw materials (cocoons) abroad and the lack of domestic support have brought this historic industry to the brink of collapse.

Mohammad Rafi, 45, a worker at the only remaining silk thread factory who has been engaged in this profession for more than three decades, explained he uses a simple, old-fashioned machine against 300afs per day to transform cocoons into thin, delicate silk threads.

“I have been working in this workshop for more than 30 years against 300afs daily, but the number of workers in this industry is decreasing day by day, so that now only my brother and I are working in this workshop and producing silk thread.”

Mohammad Rafi considers the reduction in wages, the difficulty of work, lack of a sales market, and lack of government support the most important factors behind the industry’s recession.

In previous years, more than 3,000 families earned their income solely through the production of silk thread in the province, but now only one small workshop remains, and that too is rarely active, he added.

According to Naseer Ahmad, another yarn producer, he has been working and producing silk yarn for

more than 15 years, but due to economic problems and low wages, he works three days a week so that the silk yarn production industry does not disappear.

There are no more silk thread production workshops in the province because most of them have ceased operations due to economic problems and lack of support, he added.

The export of cocoons to the markets of neighboring countries and import of low-quality goods have dealt a severe blow to this industry, currently, showing decline, Naser Ahmad explained.

On the other hand, Abdul Latif, the owner of this workshop and silk thread seller, told Pajhwok he has been earning money through this job for more than 60 years, but now the situation of this industry is worrying.

He said across of the country, there is only one silk thread production workshop operating in Herat; and that too is not very active due to the lack of cheap cocoons and lack of a suitable market for selling.

Previously, more than 25 silk spinning wheels create yarn in his workshop, but now only two machines remain active, he claimed.

Abdul Latif added on the one hand, the price of silk thread in the Afghan market is low, and on the other, their work process is difficult and exhausting.

According to the owner, even though it takes a week to produce one kilogram of silk thread, he is forced to offer it to the market at a price of 5,000af.

He asked the government to take action to prevent the cessation of the silk production cycle in the

province.

However, Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Department officials say there are no silk productions and processing factories in the province, and due to the lack of advanced equipment for processing cocoons, this raw material is exported to global markets. They said the department is trying to provide the basis for the expansion of cocooning and silk thread production in cooperation with international institutions.

Fahim Fayeze, Director of Birds, Fish and Insects told Pajhwok this year, he distributed more than 6,000 boxes of silkworms to residents of Injil, Guzra and Zindajan districts with the aim of preventing the disappearance of this industry.

Currently, there is only one silk thread production



factory, and for this reason, most cocoon producers offer their raw materials to the market at a low price, and traders also sell them to world markets at low prices, but his department is trying to provide the basis for silk processing in Herat, Fayeze explained.

Earlier, more than 250 workshops producing silk yarn and fabrics were active in the province, but now only one workshop remains semi-functional.

The silk spinning industry, which was considered part of Herat’s cultural and economic identity, is facing serious challenges today and is on the verge of complete stagnation due to lack of support.



# Trump to meet NATO secy general as plan takes shape for Ukraine weapons sales

BRIDGEWATER, NJ (AP): NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte is set to meet President Donald Trump this week on the heels of the U.S. leader announcing plans to sell NATO allies weaponry that it can then pass on to Ukraine.

NATO in a statement said Rutte will be in Washington on Monday and Tuesday and would meet with Trump, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth as well as Congress. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the visit.

The visit comes as Trump last week teased that he would make a “major statement” on Russia on Monday and as Ukraine struggles to repel massive and complex air assaults launched by Russian forces.

Rubio said Friday that some of the U.S.-made weapons that Ukraine is seeking are deployed with NATO allies in Europe. Those weapons could be transferred to Ukraine, with European countries buying

replacements from the U.S., he said.

“It’s a lot faster to move something, for example, from Germany to Ukraine than it is to order it from a (U.S.) factory and get it there,” Rubio told reporters last week during visit to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

French Defense Minister Sebastien Lecornu in an interview published Sunday in La Tribune Dimanche said that European officials have been making the case to the Trump administration to bolster air defense capabilities with any coming packages.

He added that France is in a “capacity hole” and will have to wait until next year before being able to provide Ukraine new ground-air missiles.

Trump is also facing calls from Republicans and Democrats as well as European allies to support legislation in the Senate that aims to cripple Russia’s oil industry and hit Moscow with U.S. sanctions for its ongoing invasion of Ukraine.

The legislation, in part,

calls for a 500% tariff on goods imported from countries that continue to buy Russian oil, gas, uranium and other exports. It would have an enormous impact on economic behemoths China and India, which account for roughly 70% of Russia’s energy trade.

That revenue is critical in helping keep the Russian war machine humming as the U.S. and Europe have imposed significant import and export bans on a wide range of goods to and from Russia, affecting sectors like finance, energy, transport, technology, and defense.

Trump for months had threatened, but held off on, imposing new sanctions against Russia’s oil industry.

But the Republican leader has become increasingly exasperated with Putin in recent days and has laid into the Russian leader for prolonging the war.

“We get a lot of bull--- thrown at us by Putin, if you want to know the truth,” Trump said last week in an exchange with reporters.

“He’s very nice all the time, but it turns out to be meaningless.”

Congress has been prepared to act on the legislation, sponsored by Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Democrat Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, for some time.

The bill has overwhelming support in the Senate, but Republican leadership has been waiting for Trump to give the green light before moving ahead with it.

The White House had expressed some reservations about the legislation.

Trump made clear he wants full authority over the waiver process to lift the sanctions, tariffs or other penalties, without having to cede control to Congress.

Under the initial bill, the president “may terminate” the penalties under certain circumstances, but immediately reimpose them if the violations resume. Graham has said the president would be allowed to waive the sanctions, for 180 days, and could also renew a waiver.



**BARCELONA:** Severe storms strike Catalonia, causing major damage and flooding across several towns. Two people remain missing in Cubelles, south of Barcelona, after the Foix river overflows. Emergency services deploy a large search operation in the area. The storm also affects towns like Suria, Igualada, and Vilafranca del Penedes, where the local hospital is temporarily evacuated and closed. First responders handle hundreds of incidents throughout the region as roads are cut off and rivers burst their banks.

## Sindh can take country out of energy crisis: Sharjeel

E.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that Sindh possesses ample resources to help pull the country out of its energy crisis.

However, the province's energy sector development is being severely hampered by the policies of the federal government. He added that if Sindh is granted the authority and facilities in line with its resources, it could bring about a revolution in the energy sector.

In a statement, Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the time has come for stakeholders, experts, and policymakers to engage in an open discussion on the province's vast energy reserves and sustainable energy solutions.

He said that over the past six years, 30 million tons of coal had been supplied to various independent power producers (IPPs) under the Thar Coal Project. This coal generated 31 gigawatts of electricity, which powered approximately 3 million homes. He added that Thar

coal has the potential to meet Pakistan's electricity needs for decades to come.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that a 105-kilometer railway line is being constructed through the efforts of the Sindh government to connect Thar coal with national and international markets.

He said that Sindh has also taken significant steps in the alternative energy sector. The province's wind corridor is operational, and several solar energy projects are nearing completion. The Nooriabad Power Project is currently supplying 100 megawatts of electricity to Karachi.

Additionally, the provincial government has allocated Rs 2.5 billion for solar energy initiatives and is covering electricity bills of up to 200 units for deserving residents of Thar.

He said that two new solar parks are being planned for Karachi, along with a solar project in Manjhand for the Hyderabad region and additional solar parks for Sukkur and Larkana.

He urged the federal government to remove obstacles hindering the province's

projects and to extend full cooperation.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the federal government should stop opposing Sindh's solar and wind power projects and extend full cooperation to the provincial government to help meet Pakistan's energy needs.

He said that indiscriminate action is being taken against illegal constructions and encroachments across the province. In urban areas, the Sindh Building Control Authority has issued notices to 37 dangerous buildings in Sukkur alone.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that building inspections are also underway in Karachi, Hyderabad, Larkana, and Nawabshah. He added that departmental and legal action will be taken against officers found involved in illegal constructions.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the water level in the Indus River is continuously rising, with reports of low-level flooding at Guddu and Sukkur barrages.

He added that the Sindh Irrigation Department and the Provincial Disaster

Management Authority are closely monitoring all barrages, embankments, and sensitive areas.

He said that relief camps and essential logistics have already been activated in the Katcha areas and low-lying settlements. The citizens have been told to cooperate completely with the authorities in case of any potential evacuation.

Sharjeel Inam Memon informed that after the monsoon rains, there has been an increase in gastroenteritis, diarrhea, and viral infections cases throughout the province.

He added that the Health Department has activated emergency units in all government hospitals and set up mobile medical camps in Karachi, Thatta, Badin, and other districts. The public has been advised to use clean water and avoid consuming substandard food and drinks. He also said that baseless propaganda is being spread about the new vehicle number plate scheme. He clarified that the initiative has been launched to modernize the registration process, prevent crime, and address issues such as vehicle theft.

## Ukraine’s security agency says it killed Russian agents

KYIV, Ukraine (AP): Ukraine's security agency said Sunday it tracked down and killed Russian agents suspected of shooting one of its senior officers to death in the Ukrainian capital.

The Security Service of Ukraine, or SBU, said in a statement that the suspected Russian agents were killed in the Kyiv region after they offered resistance to arrest. A video released by the agency showed two bodies lying on the ground.

The agency said earlier that a man and a woman were suspected to be involved in Thursday's assassination of Ivan Voronych, an SBU colonel, in a bold daylight attack that was caught on surveillance cameras.

Media reports claimed that Voronych was involved in covert operations in Russia-occupied territories of Ukraine and reportedly helped organize Ukraine's surprise incursion into Russia's Kursk region last

year.

After a series of massive attacks across Ukraine involving hundreds of exploding drones, Russia launched 60 drones overnight, Ukraine's air force said. It said 20 of them were shot down and 20 others were jammed.

The Ukrainian authorities reported that four civilians were killed and 13 others injured in Russian attacks on the Donetsk and Kherson regions since Saturday.

## Iranian president lightly injured in Israeli strike

TEHRAN (AA): Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian sustained minor leg injuries during an Israeli strike that targeted a meeting of Iran's Supreme National Security Council last month, Fars News Agency reported.

According to the report, the missile attack occurred on June 17 as top Iranian leaders, including the heads of the three branches of government, were meeting in a secured lower level of a building in western Tehran.

The strike involved six projectiles that hit the entrances and exits of the building, an approach similar to an assassination operation on Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, Fars said.

Officials managed to evacuate using a pre-planned emergency hatch, the agency reported, noting that Pezeshkian was “injured during the evacuation but was able to exit safely.” The report also said Iranian authorities suspect a possible internal leak, citing the accuracy of the strike.

Fars criticized Western and Israeli-affiliated media outlets for ignoring a “blatant act of state terrorism” while condemning Iranian leaders’ religious rulings against figures like US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

A 12-day armed conflict between Israel and Iran erupted on June 13 after Tel Aviv launched airstrikes on the Iranian military, nuclear, and civilian sites, killing at least 606 people and injuring 5,332, according to Iran's Health Ministry.

Tehran launched retaliatory missile and drone strikes on Israel, killing at least 29 people and wounding more than 3,400, according to figures released by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The conflict came to a halt under a US-sponsored ceasefire that took effect on June 24.

## Masjid Rajgan: 153-year-old monument emerges from beneath Khanpur Dam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Beneath the still waters of Khanpur Dam lies a submerged chapter of history—one that returns only when the lake surrenders its depths. Masjid Rajgan, a 153-year-old mosque built in 1872, rises like a ghost of reverence and resilience.

Though abandoned by time and unreachable for most of the year, it reclaims its place in the hearts of locals every summer, when its minarets break through the water's surface and the call to prayer echoes once more.

Commonly known as Rajon ki Masjid (Mosque of the Rajas), this 153-year-old mosque was once part of the old Khanpur town, submerged in the late 1970s with the construction of the Khanpur Dam. The dam displaced the local community, forcing them to move to the new Khanpur. Left behind were the mosque and the nearby royal palace, built by Raja Jehandad Khan, the grandfather of former NWFP Chief Minister Raja Sikandar Zaman Khan.

“Our hearts are still there,” says 82-year-old Haji Fazal Din, a lifelong resident. “We grew up hearing the azaan from Masjid Rajgan. Even today, when



we visit during Eid, the air feels sacred.”

Designed by artisans from Delhi, the mosque's architecture is inspired by Mughal grandeur, with two large and two small minarets, a central dome, and grand arched entrances similar to Delhi's Jama Masjid. Built from black stone and locally fired bricks, it once hosted nearly 1,000 worshippers.

Today, it stands mostly abandoned, used only during Eid prayers. Surrounded by water in monsoon season, its foundations are weakening. The mosque is exposed to the elements, with no caretaker or protection. Parts of it are visibly deteriorating, and the surrounding courtyard is neglected.

For locals like Hassan

Nisar, CEO of Metrix Pakistan, the mosque represents more than history. “We go there almost every weekend,” he says. “It's not just a place of prayer; it's where we grew up. The breeze, the stones, the echoes—all remind us of home.”

Nearby, the ruins of the royal palace, also built by Raja Jehandad Khan, stand in silence. Once luxurious, with Belgian glass and Italian tiles, the palace now lies in ruin, much like the mosque. Historical records suggest it cost Rs1.2 million to build and took a decade to complete.

Despite its cultural and historical significance, Masjid Rajgan has never been declared a protected heritage site. No efforts have been made for its

preservation, even as it attracts heritage enthusiasts. For locals, however, it is a living memory of a community now gone.

“It's not just stone and mortar,” says elder Bashir Ahmed. “It's faith, identity, and memory. As long as it stands, so do we, even if we can't go there as we once did.”

Across Pakistan and the world, several historical sites reappear when water levels in dams or reservoirs recede, offering rare glimpses into the past. In Pakistan, the 153-year-old Masjid Rajgan resurfaces from Khanpur Dam each summer, while the Shah Daula Shrine occasionally emerges from the waters of Mangla Dam, recalling the spiritual and cultural history of the region. Globally, similar examples include the submerged village of Aceredo in Spain, the ancient city of Heracleion in Egypt, and the Tigris River ruins in Iraq—all of which reappear during droughts or low water periods.

These resurfacing landmarks, though often forgotten beneath water, serve as powerful symbols of memory, resilience, and the enduring traces of human civilization.

## Kashmir Martyrs’ Day: A legacy of defiance and a call for justice

Faiza Abid

EVERY year on 13 July, Kashmiris pause to remember a day that is not just about grief but also resistance. On this day in 1931, twenty-two unarmed Kashmiri Muslims were shot dead by the Dogra regime for giving the adhan (call to prayer) outside Srinagar Central Jail during the trial of Abdul Qadeer. They were not armed rebels. Their only rebellion was faith and the unyielding desire to speak. This day does not mark the beginning of Kashmir's struggle but symbolises a moment when oppression was met with unwavering courage, when prayers were louder than pellets,

and when martyrdom became the heritage etched into the soul of the people.

Kashmir bleeds again, but this time under a different guise. The uniforms may have changed, the weapons have become more modern-Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), pellet guns, digital surveillance-but the intent feels eerily familiar.

It is still about silencing Kashmiri identity, erasing memory, and undermining resistance. In many ways, it echoes the events of 1931, when Dogra forces responded to dissent with gunfire. Today, it manifests in curfews, raids, and the slow suffocation of a people's will. What have we actually learned if the interna-

tional community continues to remain silent, masking its inaction as neutrality?

Since the revocation of Article 370 in August 2019, thousands of people, including minors, have been arrested under draconian laws such as the Public Safety Act (PSA) and Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA).

The region has seen intermittent internet shutdowns, disruptions to education, and limitations on access to healthcare, a humanitarian aspect frequently overlooked in the global arena.

The abrogation of Article 370 enabled India to justify militarising Kashmir and staging false flag operations. The Pahalgam incident this

April speaks volumes, shrouded in ambiguity and exploited by India to intensify repression and military aggression.

The way India responded with “Operation Sindoor”, bombarding areas in Azad Kashmir along the Line of Control (LoC) and mainland Pakistan, was anything but precise. However, the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) delivered a befitting response to the Indian strikes and shot down seven Indian aircraft including three Rafales and Heron Drone. Following Pakistan's decisive retaliation, India was left no choice but to plead with the US President Donald Trump to mediate a ceasefire and seek Pakistan's cooperation to defuse tensions.

Furthermore, in a tweet on the social media platform X, President Trump publicly expressed his willingness to work with both India and Pakistan toward a lasting resolution on Kashmir. He stated that even if the issue had not been formally discussed, he would “work with [India and Pakistan] to see if, after a thousand years, a solution can be arrived at concerning Kashmir”.

His remarks reinforced what has long been evident: Kashmir is not just a bilateral matter; it is a critical nuclear flashpoint with significant global consequences.

Yet, despite diplomatic efforts, India's militarisation and suppression of Kashmiri identity persist unabated. When narratives becomes

weaponised, it is the innocent who pay the price, and once again, Kashmir suffers.

But history has a longer memory than power does. The movement that began in 1931 was not about borders, it was about dignity. That fire has not gone out. While official statements are often dismissed as rhetoric, Pakistan's solidarity with Kashmir is rooted in something deeper than diplomacy.

It is felt in the sorrow of our poets, in the prayers of our people, in the silence that follows every news bulletin from the Valley. We do not support Kashmir because it is convenient. We support it because we must. Because silence, in the face of such suffering, would make us

complicit.

Until Kashmiris are allowed to speak freely, live freely, and decide their own future, Pakistan's commitment cannot waver.

Kashmiris have not given up. Resistance has simply changed shape. Where once it was mass protests, it is now poetry, journalism, photography, and quiet acts of resilience. Students, writers, doctors, and civil society activists are continuing the struggle, even when it is less visible to the outside world.

Thus, as we mark this year's Kashmir Martyrs' Day, the question we must ask is not merely how do we remember, but how we honour. Memory is not passive; it is a political act. To remember is to take responsibility. To

commemorate is to commit. The 22 martyrs of 1931 did not die to become names in history books or hashtags on social media. They died for a future they believed in-a future where the Kashmiri people could live with dignity, speak without fear, and pray without being punished. That future remains unfinished. And so, our work continues. Let us remember not only the sacrifice but also the vision. Let us not only glorify the past but fight for a just future. For in the echoes of July 13, there is not just sorrow but strength.

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